



The Confederacy's Last Hurrah: Spring Hill, Franklin, and Nashville (Modern War Studies) (Modern War Studies (Paperback))

Wiley Sword

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Following the fall of Atlanta, rebel commander John Bell Hood rallied his demoralized troops and marched them off the Tennessee, desperately hoping to draw Sherman after him and forestall the Confederacy's defeat. But Sherman refused to be lured and began his infamous "March to the Sea," while Hood charged headlong into catastrophe.

In this compelling dramatic account of a final and fatal invasion by the Confederate Army of Tennessee, Wile Sword illuminates the missed opportunities, senseless bloody assaults, poor command decisions, and stubborn pride that resulted in 23,500 Confederate losses including 7,00 casualties in one battle and the pulverization of the South's second largest army.

Sword follows Hood and his army as they let an early advantage and possible victory slip away at Spring Hill, then engage in a reckless and ill-fated frontal attack on Franklin, often called the "Gettysburg of the West." Despite that disaster, Hood refuses to yield and presses on the Nashville and a two-day bloodbath that unhinges what is left of his battered troops the worst defeat suffered by any army during the war.

Telling the story from both the Confederate and the Union perspectives, Sword pursues personalities as well as battles and troop strategy. He portrays Hood as a gutsy yet irresponsible leader "a fool with a license to kill his own men" whose valiant but rapidly dwindling troops were no match for the methodical General George G. Thomas and his better prepared and entrenched Union army. Hood, however, was not entirely to blame for Confederate failures, says Sword, who shows how decision making and actions both good and bad, logical and chaotic by key players on both sides helped determine the battles' outcomes.

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