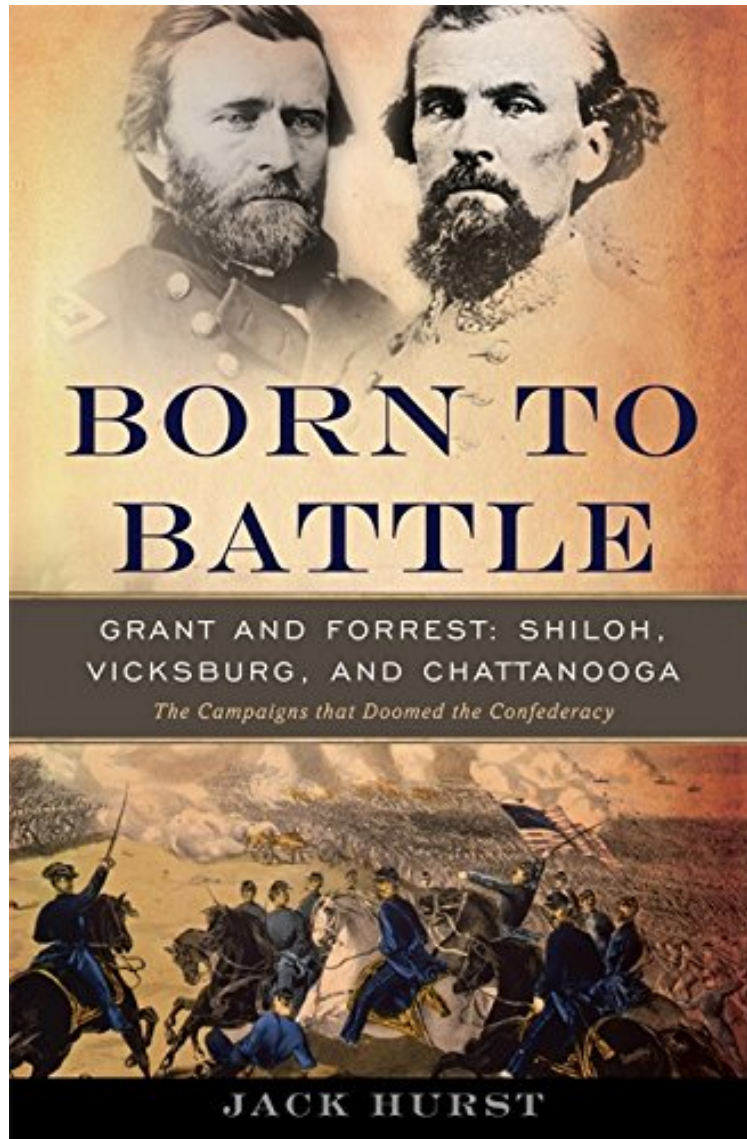


[Free] Born to Battle: Grant and Forrest--Shiloh, Vicksburg, and Chattanooga

Born to Battle: Grant and Forrest--Shiloh, Vicksburg, and Chattanooga

Jack Hurst

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Jack Hurst : Born to Battle: Grant and Forrest--Shiloh, Vicksburg, and Chattanooga before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Born to Battle: Grant and Forrest--Shiloh, Vicksburg, and Chattanooga:

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Grant and Forrest had great instincts to win battlesBy D.

RackiewiczHurst makes one thing very clear - the best generals were not always put in positions of command, when politics and social status got in the way. The politics behind selection of commanders caused missed opportunities for North and South, but everybody knows examples of this. Hurst seems to think it was elitism that failed to recognize real talent on the battlefield. Grant, a West Pointer, was pigeonholed as a drunk (which was not generally the case) by those who vied with him for command in the West. Grant had to keep winning battles to keep the politics from overcoming his talent, but he caught Lincoln's eye which saved him - "He fights!", Lincoln said, and his string of victories in the West assured him of the recognition. Forrest was a self made man from humble beginnings and his inability to speak or write well made other more educated and formerly trained military officers reluctant to serve under him. Although not formerly trained in the military, he had an uncanny sense on the battlefield, particularly when he could plan out a strategy ahead of time. Unlike Grant, Forrest never found a champion who would fight behind the scenes to make the most of his talents. This failure to create loyalties in high places ultimately assured the rough-edged Forrest of second rate command responsibilities. In my opinion, Hurst's attempts to attribute the South's failure in the West to the inability to recognize Forrest's talent is pretty far-fetched. His assessment of the behind the scenes struggles for command, however, is quite interesting. The book printer messed up the pages in the hard back and so you have to figure out where to go to follow the out-of-order pages in the last few chapters.6 of 7 people found the following review helpful. Problems of ScaleBy Marco Antonio AbarcaThere have been thousands of books published in the last 150 years about the Civil War and it is difficult to say anything new. Jack Hurst hoped to do something new by doing a joint biography of Grant and Forrest and following their careers from Shiloh to Chattanooga. By focusing on arguably two of the greatest generals of the Civil war, Hurst's approach has interest. Fortunately, he writes very well and his book is entertaining. But in the final analysis there is a problem of scale. U.S. Grant commanded armies whereas Forrest commanded much smaller cavalry formations. I do not want to slight the brilliant Forrest but his impact on the war was significantly smaller than Grant's contributions. What this means for this book is that small cavalry engagements get the same attention from Hurst as does the large scale actions of armies. This dual approach warps the scale of their actions. Having said this, "Born to Battle" is an entertaining and well written book. Reading this book will bring more pleasure than insight into the Civil War.2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. truth for our timeBy Richard I. PervoH seeks to study the effect of social prejudice in the Civil War. He shows the varying careers of Grant and Forrest. I do not believe that he was entirely successful, as Forrest ended the war as a Lt. General. Did he deserve higher command? hard to argue. F. was insubordinate, uncontrolled, and unpredictable. His aggressiveness could have made him another Jn. Bell Hood. F. could treat his own people and opponents like his slaves, using violence, intimidation, and threats, not always in accordance with the laws of war. the study is interesting, to be sure. This is the most candid book about race in the Civil War that I have read. H. clearly states that the killing of black prisoners became policy. he is candid about prejudices in many places. For that alone i urge those interested in Civil War history to read Hurst. (This is written in the last week of June 2015, when the claim that the war was not about slavery and a just if lost cause is coming to an end--and Forrest's bust is leaving the state capitol. Doubters of this change have something to learn from this southerner.)

Hurst shows how Grant and Forrest brought to the battlefield the fabled virtues of the American working-class: hard work, ingenuity, and intense determination. Each man's background contributed to his triumphs on the battlefield, but the open-mindedness of his fellow commanders proved just as important. When the North embraced Grant, it won a stalwart defender. When the South rejected Forrest, by contrast, it sealed its fate.

Ernest B. Furgurson, author of *Chancellorsville 1863* and *Not War But Murder: Cold Harbor 1864* "In a finely wrought battle narrative and character study, Jack Hurst shows how two men seemingly so different—one flamboyant and daring, the other solid and determined—became great soldiers by struggling not only against their enemies, but against their own inner demons." Robert Hicks, author of *The Widow of the South* and *A Separate Country* "It is rare indeed to have a writer like Jack Hurst, both a careful and meticulous historian and a first-rate storyteller. *Born to Battle* is what Jack Hurst does best. Drawing on many years of examination and research, Hurst has laid out the details of history as if he were crafting an epic myth. Grant and Forrest come alive as they take on the roles of the very human giants of the war, battling through the western campaign in what would be the death knell of the Confederacy. Hurst's epic tale of history gives us a better understanding of why the war would be won or lost far from borders of Virginia."