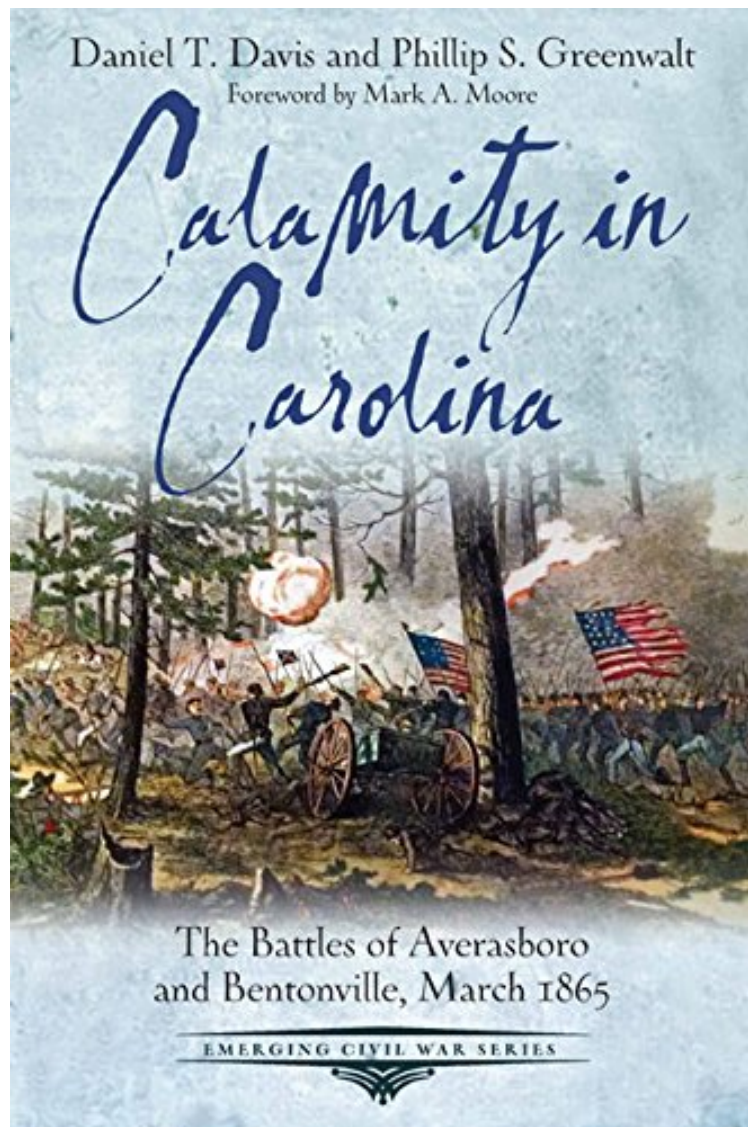


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Daniel T. Davis, Phillip S. Greenwalt
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Daniel T. Davis, Phillip S. Greenwalt : Calamity in Carolina: The Battles of Averasboro and Bentonville, March 1865 (Emerging Civil War Series) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Calamity in Carolina: The Battles of Averasboro and Bentonville, March 1865 (Emerging Civil War Series):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Concise generalized overview that enriched my trip to the sites by Kerry Cowman. While I am a heavy reader of Civil War history, this is the first in the "Emerging Civil War" series I have bought and read. The negative reviews correctly note that this short book lacks footnotes and a detailed index. However, this book does not seem to be intended to add new scholarly insights to the battles of Bentonville and Aversboro; or Sherman's Carolina campaign in general. There are already better books for that (including "No Such Army since the days of Julius Caesar", by the same publisher). Where this book shines is as a brief narrative history of both battles combined with a travel guide. I bought this prior to visiting both fields and the surrounding area. It served its purpose well in orienting me both geographically and historically. If the reader is generally unfamiliar with this aspect of the Carolinas campaign, and planning a visit to the two fields, this brief book is well worth its modest cost.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Biased History by Tex. The "Emerging Civil War" series of books is edited by Chris Mackowski. I've read four of these books so far and they all have a definite bias. According to all of the authors, the South never really won any battles. It was always the North that slaughtered the poor confused Rebels. I suspect that writing reflects Mackowski's own bias. As a historian he should know better than to report his own opinion as facts.

5 of 7 people found the following review helpful. Unpolished and Unprofessional by KJAGSYNOPSIS. Being a Civil War buff and having read many books on the war, including a number on the Carolinas Campaign, I purchased this book looking for additional information. The book is not designed to provide the details and depth to satisfy those with more than a casual interest in the battles of Aversboro and Bentonville. And for those just wanting to familiarize themselves with the battles by a concise, well organized overview, a convoluted discussion is provided instead, punctuated throughout by various side stories (some with questionable relevance), walking tour directions, and photos of markers, monuments, and of numerous fields and trees representing parts of the battlefields. The narrative concerning the battles is unmistakably written to appeal to Southern pride and the accomplishments of Confederate troops and chivalrous officers (e.g., Wade Hampton, whose exploits are highlighted at various points) against overwhelming odds in trying to stop the Yankee invaders. A number of quotes by Union troops complimenting their opponents are included to provide emphasis. The book also contains an appendix dedicated to Sherman's March, which largely focuses on Yankee barbarities, including murder, although no examples of murder are provided. What is not mentioned is that over the course of both the Savannah and Carolina Campaigns there were actually very few credible reports of rape (less than a handful), and even fewer of murder. In one credible case of rape and one of murder in NC, both soldiers were executed by their respective commands. Also not mentioned, the approximately 175 Union troops captured while foraging and found executed by hanging, being shot at close range, or with their throats slit, with some mutilated. There is no mention of the numerous reports by citizens or of the formal complaints by State and local governments in GA, SC, and NC of Confederate cavalry, soldiers, and civilians plundering businesses, government buildings, stores, and homesteads, including valuables, horses, mules, food, etc. A number of Confederate soldiers in the Army of Tennessee brought east to fight Sherman also reported in diaries and letters back home of comrades partaking in looting. And while the book characterizes the Battle of Bentonville (in which the Confederate Army suffered about 600 more casualties than the Union, then retreated) as a "relative Confederate success" and "raised the spirits of some in the ranks," there is no mention of the mass desertions afterward. In what seems as an afterthought, a story is added in the mix about black troops who courageously defend a bridge in North Carolina, although the troops were not attached to Sherman at the time and the action not associated with the subject battles. The troops were likely under Gen Terry, who moved from the coast to the Goldsboro area, and joined Sherman after the battles. An appendix was also added on the military career of Union General Mower. These two additions appear to lend themselves in an effort to demonstrate some sense of balance and appealing to a wider audience. This is the first non-fiction Civil War book I've read or seen that is without even a simple bibliography of references used. Most books actually go further and include footnotes or endnotes as well. These enable the reader to determine where stories, quotes, figures, etc. originate, enabling the reader to validate or judge the credibility of the material, to read about it in its original context, or to simply learn more about it. In effect the decision to leave out a bibliography and notes shortchanges and disrespects readers interested in additional information and in material relatively free of factual distortions, manipulation, bias, and BS—the hallmarks of responsible and ethical authors serious about the credibility of their work, especially when it is presented in an historical context.

GRAMMAR AND READABILITY. The book could have been improved with better editing, organization, and story-telling. I noticed a few grammatical/typographical errors. The narrative is not the easiest to read or comprehend, as it meanders with little emphasis on transitions or information structured in a way that flows well chronologically. The interspersed stories (some of questionable relevance), information on touring, and numerous modern-day photos of markers, monuments, and the battlefields make readability more difficult. The book and readers would have been better served by consolidating all the modern day battlefield-related information within the driving tour appendix and perhaps renaming it, or as a stand-alone appendix, perhaps as a "walking" tour.

ILLUSTRATIONS. The battle maps are well drawn, but there is only one map for Aversboro and two for Bentonville, depicting only selected pieces of the battles/battlefields. Other books and sources on the subject depict all the notable parts of the battles, or show the entire battlefield itself with the various engagements depicted across it. There are many period drawings, as well as

photographs of key leaders. For some reason, crude drawings of the faces of some leaders are provided, although photographs of them exist and can be found in other books. The modern-day photographs of the battlefields are dark and of poor quality in general. CONCLUSION AND AFTERTHOUGHTS The book provides helpful sections on a driving tour of the battlefields, an order of battle, and suggested reading. There are also some interesting stories and numerous photographs of markers and monuments. However, I cannot recommend the book for anyone interested in learning about these battles from an objective point of view. The book's title and introduction are somewhat deceptive, as many key details relating to them are not included, and much of the book actually focuses on the modern day battlefields and side stories, many of which have little or questionable relevance to the battles. Furthermore, the editing, organization, readability, subjective theme and analysis, and the absence of a bibliography are not on par with those books considered polished, professional, and a credible historical resource. I will avoid the Emerging Civil War Series in the future. If you just want to familiarize yourself with the actual battles, there are sources online for free that provide concise, objective overviews that are easier to read and comprehend. Just type the name of the battle into a search engine. These battles are also effectively summarized in the book "Sherman's March through the Carolinas" (John Barrett). Large-scale, detailed, colored battle maps can be viewed at, and downloaded for free from, the Civil War Trust Website (<http://www.civilwar.org/maps/>). For those who want a blow-by-blow account of the Aversboro and Bentonville battles along with maps, there are battle study books available written by reputable authors. I found mine at .com.

Robert E. Lee gave Joseph E. Johnston an impossible task. Federal armies under Maj. Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman had rampaged through Georgia on their "March to the Sea" and now were cutting a swath of destruction as they marched north from Savannah through the Carolinas. Locked in a desperate defense of Richmond and Petersburg, there was little Lee could do to stem Sherman's tide—so he turned to Johnston. The one-time hero of Manassas had squabbled for years with Confederate President Jefferson Davis, eventually leading to his removal during the Atlanta Campaign. The disgraced Johnston had fallen far. Yet Lee saw his old friend and professional rival as the only man who could stop Sherman—the only man who could achieve the impossible. "J.E. Johnston is the only officer whom I know who has the confidence of the army," Lee told Davis. Back in command, Johnston would have to assemble a makeshift force—including the shattered remnants of the once-vaunted Army of Tennessee—then somehow stop the Federal juggernaut. He would thus set out to achieve something that had ever eluded Lee: deal a devastating blow to an isolated Union force. Success could potentially prolong the most tragic chapter in American history, adding thousands more to a list of casualties that was already unbearable to read. Historians Daniel T. Davis and Phillip S. Greenwalt, co-authors of *Bloody Autumn: The Shenandoah Valley Campaign of 1864* and *Hurricane from the Heavens: The Battle of Cold Harbor*, now turn their considered gaze toward the long-forgotten battles of Aversboro and Bentonville. Written in the accessible style that has become the hallmark of the Emerging Civil War Series, *Calamity in Carolina: The Battles of Aversboro and Bentonville* includes more than a hundred illustrations, new maps, and thought-provoking analysis to tell the story of the last great battles of the war in the West.

From the Back Cover "This book will find a welcome home with history buffs that are looking to learn about the two last major battles of the Civil War in North Carolina. It is a worthy addition to the titles in this series." -Carolina Chronicles