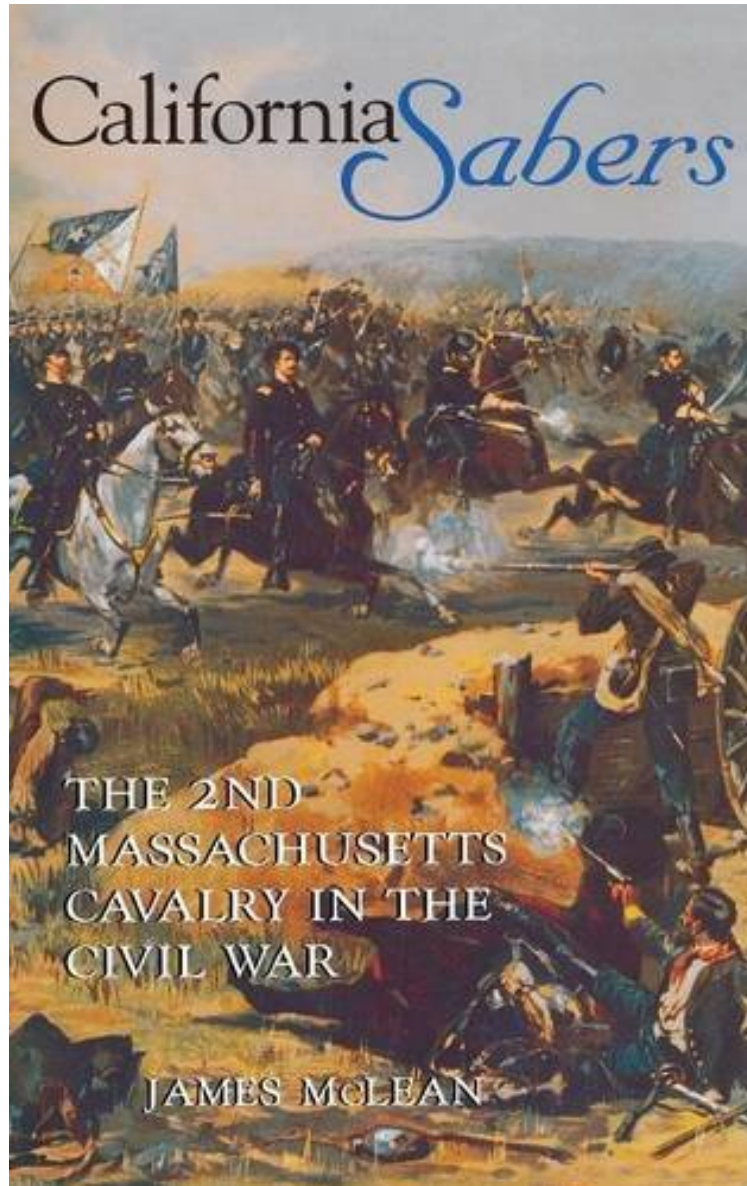


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California Sabers: The 2nd Massachusetts Cavalry in the Civil War

R. James McLean

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very much. I am not just saying that because I from California. This book covers from pre civil war to some post war(could been a little more). This book puts the reader down on patrol and around the camp fires. You think that regiment just rides around northern Virginia chases rebel raiders but tells the life outside the big battles and how even the mundain and boring can be dangrous. I love how the maps show the area of operations. It is a great read even for younger readers for some one who wants to know more about just not the big battles.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy Bryce A. Suderowgood book. arrived quickly0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. California Sabers Worth ReadingBy Jim Huffstodt, TallahasseeWell researched. Well written. Great emphasis on the human element, not just battles and campaigns. The opening pages depicting a duel between a Union man and a Southern sympathizer are terrific. Puts the reader right there.

California Sabers is the story of the California Battalion and Hundred, a group of 500 select men who were the only organized group of Californians to fight in the East during the Civil War. They volunteered their enlistment bounty to pay their passage across Panama and on to Massachusetts, where they became the cadre of the Second Massachusetts Cavalry. From mid-1863 to July 1864, the Second Massachusetts fought a bloody guerilla war in northern Virginia against John S. Mosby, the confederacy's "Gray Ghost." In July 1864 the regiment became part of Sheridan's Army of the Shenandoah, and that fall it played a major role in the decisive battles of Winchester, Toms Run, and Cedar Creek. In early 1865 the regiment was in the column that marched across Virginia destroying the vital railroad and canal that carried supplies from the Shenandoah Valley to the besieged Army of Northern Virginia. In late March, the Second Massachusetts was in the forefront of the battles at Dinwiddie Courthouse and Five Forks, the two actions that finally broke the stalemate at Petersburg and forced Lee to retreat to the west. In the ensuing chase, the regiment was the part of the cavalry spearhead that finally blocked Lee's army at Appomattox Courthouse. This work, based on extensive research, is the first comprehensive history of this relatively unknown group and will be of great interest to Civil War enthusiasts and historians.

About the AuthorA descendent of a pioneer family that came to San Francisco in 1848, McLean graduated from the University of California in 1956. During his service in the Korean War, he became interested in the Civil War when a Navy Librarian suggested he read Bruce Catton's trilogy on the Army of the Potomac. McLean started collecting volumes of the Official Records and any other books he could find relating to the Civil War. When his brother, the family genealogist, told him they had a great-great uncle who fought in the Civil War, he discovered the California Battalion and Hundred in the Official Records. In 1993 he retired to devote more time to the writing of the history of the Battalion and Hundred. This book is a culmination of this twenty-year effort.