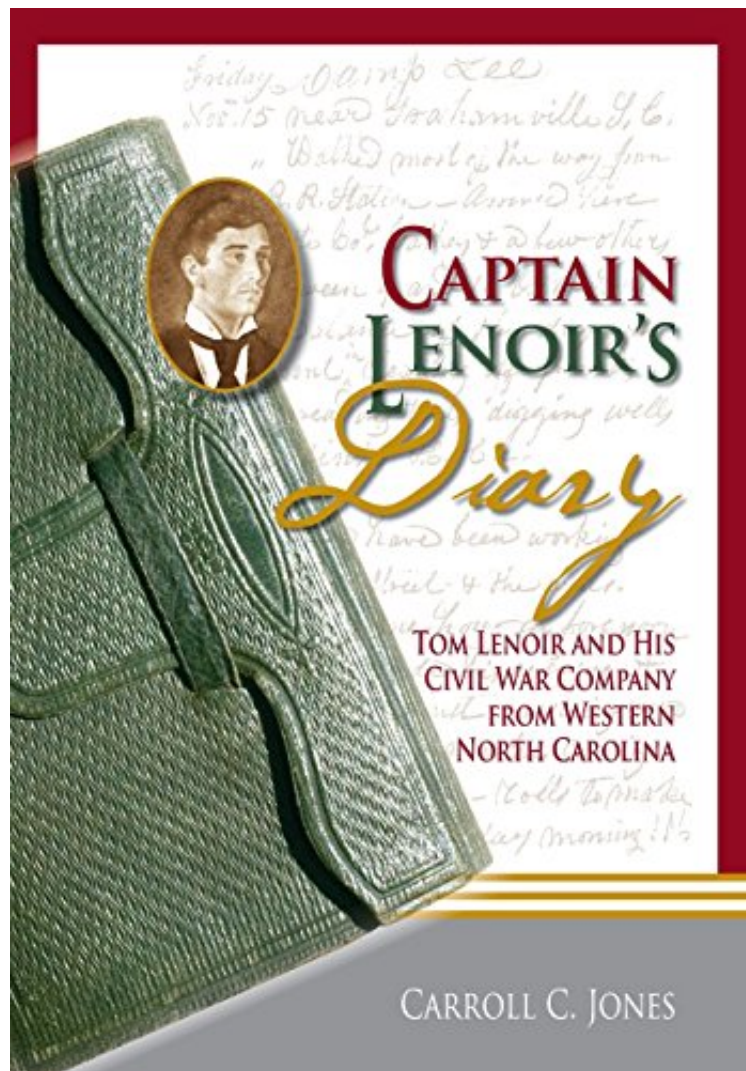


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Captain Lenoir's Diary: Tom Lenoir and His Civil War Company from Western North Carolina

Carroll Jones

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After the fall of Fort Sumter in April 1861, Thomas Isaac Lenoir, a landholder, slaveowner, and farmer from the Pigeon River's East Fork region, and Col. Joseph Cathey, a respected farmer, merchant, and politician in the Forks of Pigeon community, assembled a band of zealous volunteers who had poured out of the North Carolina hills to fight the Yankees. Lenoir, at the age of forty-three, was unanimously elected captain of the fledgling military unit his mountaineers styled the "Haywood Highlanders." On July 18, 1861, after the requisite number of men had enlisted to form a company, Captain Lenoir marched the Haywood Highlanders off to Asheville to join the fray. The Haywood volunteers began learning the rudiments of soldiering and were quickly assimilated into the 25th Regiment North Carolina Troops as Company F. For the ensuing months the captain recorded in his personal diary the various activities and movements of his company as well as many other events and impressions as the mountaineers defended the Carolina coastal regions. The commander's recordings not only lay bare the plight and lifestyle of the average Civil War soldier, but reveal the initial modest military contributions made by the Haywood Highlanders during the first year of the war. In his thoroughly annotated transcription of this previously unpublished and little-known document, award-winning historian Carroll C. Jones brings to light the captain's daily life in the field. Lenoir's capability as an officer, his concern for his men, and the difficult decisions he faces are delineated in regular entries full of keen observations. Jones expands his coverage by including an account of the Highlanders for the entire duration of the war and enriches the edition with more than 140 photographs and illustrations and selected letters from the Lenoir Family Papers, many never before published. To the list of the most revealing editions of wartime documents, Captain Lenoir's diary adds an extraordinarily valuable resource—the portrait of an officer *malgré lui* who served the Confederacy honorably and returned to become a leading citizen in his mountain homeland.