
With Shadows of the Storm the National Historical Society introduces its six-volume series The Image of War. Intended as an outlet for unpublished Civil War photographs held by historical agencies and individuals, the series supplements Francis T. Miller's Photographic History of the Civil War and transcends that work's shortcomings. After six years of international research that uncovered 100,000 photographs, 4,000 were selected for publication; over half will appear in print for the first time. It promises to be the most significant publication on Civil War imagery since Miller's ten volumes appeared in 1911.

Volume I contains short essays by recognized historians designed to introduce the more than 650 photographs that follow. Intended for a general audience, most of these essays offer nothing new to the specialist. The only possible exceptions are Leslie D. Jensen's comments on southern photographer J.D. Edwards and Frederic E. Ray's overview of Civil War imagists. The captions are mercifully shorter than Miller's; despite some minor errors and misleading statements, they are also more accurate.

The scope of the work presents problems. Editor William C. Davis intended it to be "an expression of the Civil War through the photographers' eyes. What interested them interests us" (p. 11). That narrow view ill fits such a bold undertaking. The resulting approach is entirely documentary; deeper analysis of these newly published historical sources would have added immensely to the book's worth. Clarification of each volume's specific subject matter would also be welcome. Even in Shadows of the Storm it is difficult to determine what if any structure the editor intended.

The book's advantages, however, outweigh its defects. The photographic reproductions are superb, enabling specialists to view sources unmatched by the written word. Of special interest are the views of Fort Sumter and troops at Pensacola. Considering the volume's qualities its price is not unreasonable.

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