others who have written on the antislavery movement. In spite of its title the book does not recapture the emotional climate of the period, nor does the author attempt to analyze the reasons for the intense emotions which abolitionism evoked.

Butler University

Emma Lou Thornbrough


This crisply and well-written little volume will not replace the more detailed histories of the Confederacy, but it will rank high in the literature of that ill-fated experiment. In carefully machined sentences Roland has told a clearer and more balanced story than many authors who have used several times as many pages.

The major shortcomings of the book appear to result from the limited wordage allotted to the volumes in this series and are most noticeable in the first two chapters. Flashing back from the South Carolina secession convention to explain the background of departure from the Union and of the birth of the Confederacy, the author seems forced into certain oversimplifications and generalizations that produce some distortion. His offense here, however, is not great. On the other hand, it is difficult to see why one-eighth of the work should be devoted to King Cotton diplomacy.

The desirable and undesirable characteristics and traits of the military and civilian leaders are analyzed, and the strengths and weaknesses of the policies of the central government are thoughtfully assessed. Occasionally, the possible results of a different course of action are explored. The states' opposition to the central government on numerous issues is objectively depicted, but this centrifugence is considered only one of many factors in the fall of the Confederacy. (One often wonders why this opposition in the South has been viewed as a legitimate and more or less expected manifestation of states' rights, while in the North comparable objection to the actions of the central government has been considered copperheadism or near treason.) In evaluating the causes of the Confederacy's defeat, Roland seems to subscribe to the Ramsdell idea that the handling of financial problems was the weakest link in the Confederate chain—but not the only weak link. Certainly, disastrous inflation seriously affected the esprit de corps, and the cresting and troughing of civilian and military morale is nicely related to financial and military success and failure.

Nor would this author single out failure of leadership as being responsible for defeat: in many instances the leaders performed admirably; at other times they made serious errors. The omission of those errors would not have insured victory, but "failure to avoid them made defeat certain" (p. 91). Roland's final conclusion on this matter is that the South "could triumph only by exercising over the North
sufficiently greater unity, skill, and will to compensate for the inadequacy of resources. In this she failed" (p. 193). Is not the amazing thing that the will to resist was sustained as long as it was?

This interesting narrative, concerned basically with broad movements, problems, and explanations, probably contains too little of the horror of the great American struggle, but it is a fine recounting of the tragic splendor of those four years.

Indiana University Chase C. Mooney


Somehow, the fact of Northern superiority in population, resources, and control of the seas has been contrasted with a myth of Union inferiority in tactics, leadership, and conduct on the battlefield—a myth now being fed a daily diet by television where it seems the Yankees never are able to win a battle, and most of them are scoundrels facing southern knights anyway. Books such as the two under review go a long way to dispel that myth, for here are recorded great deeds on the battlefield by the men in blue.

One volume is a story of a unit, told with all the detail which one finds in the unit histories of World War II, for example, but with considerably greater attention to documentation and verification than one usually finds in most recent accounts. The other is an account of a campaign, told in a way which captures the atmosphere of battle and its intense drama. Both will be welcomed by all students of the Civil War.

As a practicing lawyer in Indianapolis who is a graduate of Indiana University (1944) and Harvard Law School (1947), Alan T. Nolan, author of The Iron Brigade, would be listed as an "amateur" historian, but he has been a lifelong student of the Civil War, and he writes like a professional. He is a founder and past president of the Indianapolis Civil War Roundtable.

Initially composed of the Nineteenth Indiana Volunteers and the Second, Sixth, and Seventh Wisconsin Volunteers, and joined after Antietam by the Twenty-fourth Michigan, what came to be known as the Iron Brigade was formed on October 1, 1861, in Washington as the only completely western brigade in the Army of the Potomac. Its first commander was Rufus King, but it was the creation of John Gibbon, who outfitted it in its regular army grab of hard black hats, frock coats, and white leggings and made of it a hard-fighting team.

This brigade from the Old Northwest even in its first engagement at Brawner Farm, though struck by surprise in the flank as it marched down the road, turned and fought and more than held its own against