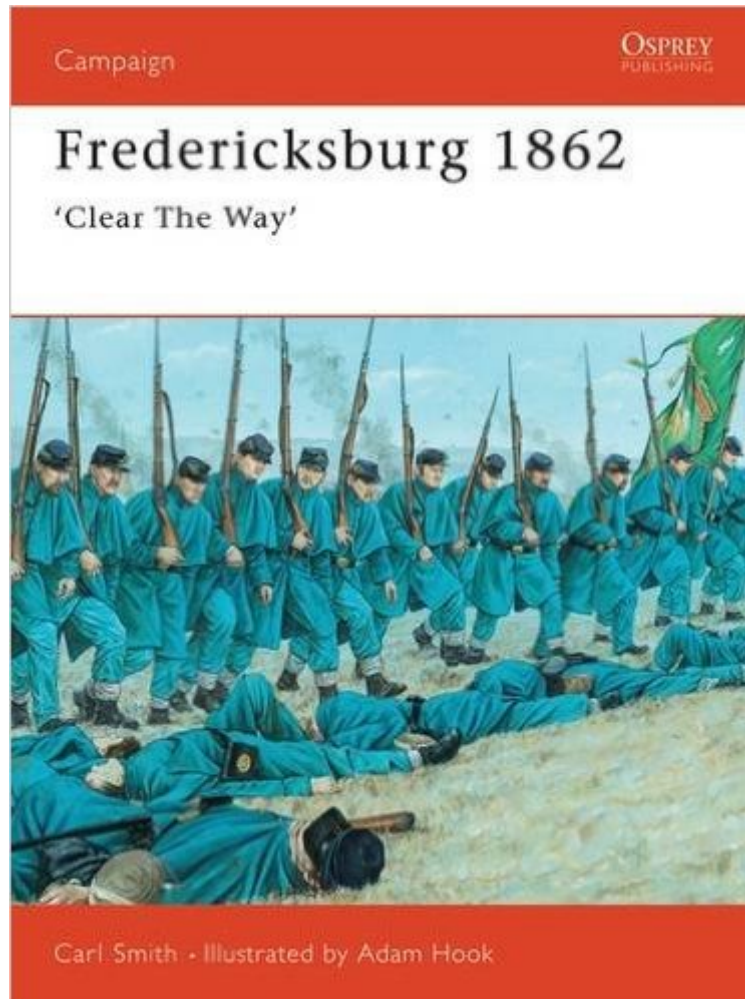


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Fredericksburg 1862: 'Clear The Way' (Campaign)



Synopsis

Osprey's examination of the Battle of Fredericksburg of the American Civil War (1861-1865). In December 1862, things were still confused for the Union. Antietam had been a failure for both sides, and although the battle showed that the Union army could bring the Confederates to bay, it couldn't pin them in one place long enough to destroy them. In December 1862, General Burnside, newly appointed to command the Army of the Potomac, planned to seize and secure the town of Fredericksburg, and then take the Confederate capital of Richmond. Carl Smith's book details the epic struggle that engulfed the Union side as it crossed the Rappahannock on December 11, encountering stiff opposition from Lee's men.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I hate to nit-pick, but I found Fredericksburg 1862 and Chancellorsville 1863 to be replete with errors, at least the versions I read, both Military Book Club editions. The lists of errors I sent to Osprey went on for a three and six pages respectively. Many of them were relatively minor, but there were enough of them, and some not so minor, to cause me to consider the books greatly flawed. Let me note here that I live near Fredericksburg and volunteer once a month at the Chancellorsville Battlefield Visitor Center, so I am fairly familiar with the battles in question. I also want to point out up front that Osprey was very receptive to my comments and implied that future editions may incorporate some changes. I own more than 75 Osprey titles and that this is certainly not the norm for their products, many of which are excellent. Some types of problems I noted with

the books included:- spelling errors such as Sedgewick for Sedgwick (not always, but several times), Siegel for Sigel and Hero Van Borke for Heros von Borcke.- geographic errors such as inaccurate descriptions of the road net, an incorrect locations for geographic features, and faulty relative positions.- graphical errors such as inaccurate troop dispositions (multiple instances), incorrect unit symbology and faulty depiction of vegetation on maps.- factual errors such as placing events on the wrong date, incorrectly identifying unit commanders and referring to Chancellorsville as a farmhouse rather than an inn.I recommend waiting for a revised edition.

The diagrams and orders of battle are very good. Some of the diagrams, including that of the attack on the town, are invaluable. However, if using this as a serious reference, make sure you have a second source. There are a number of disturbing errors. A quote credited to Longstreet was actually by Alexander Porter. The dates on the Mud March are wrong (or perhaps this section is just poorly written). The name of one of the two generals who criticized Burnside in Washington is wrong! These errors throw into serious question the editing and validity of the work.

Smith's is one of the better Osprey volumes, with some evocative Hook 'paintings' (I hesitate to use the word "art")and nicely detailed maps of the fighting in and around the town and Marye's Heights. While the narrative is a bit choppy, in terms of style, it makes its point. The detailed OoB is quite valuable . . .and would be more so if it weren't for the disturbing number of typos (The 22nd Mass regiment with 2100+ men? A battery with 21 Napoleons.) Not definitive, nor is it intended to be, but valuable nonetheless.

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