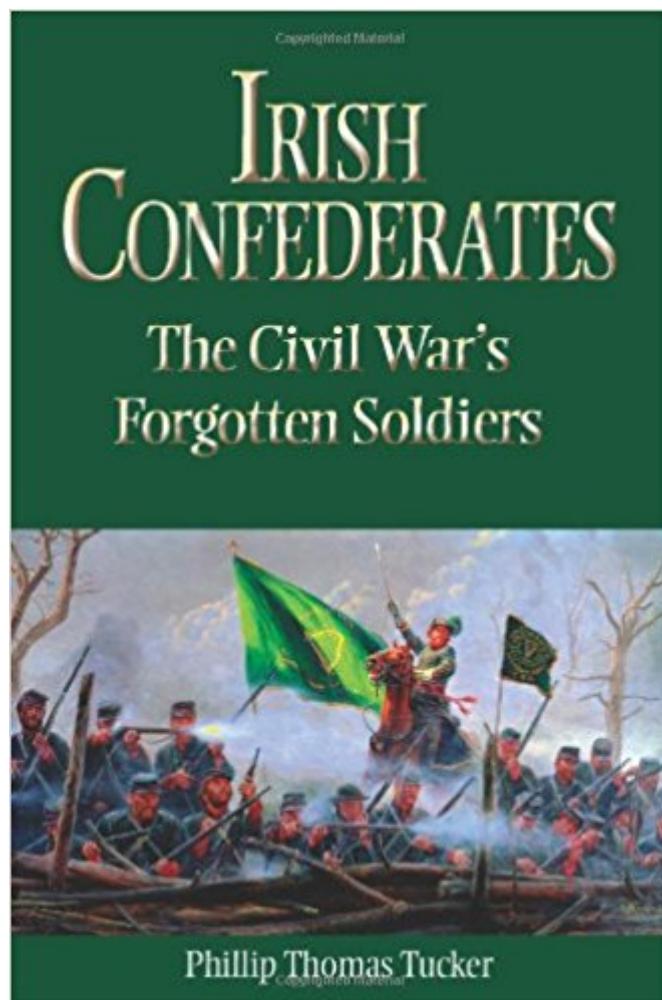


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# Irish Confederates: The Civil War's Forgotten Soldiers



## **Synopsis**

Contemporary Civil War scholarship has brought to light the important roles certain ethnic groups played during that tumultuous time in our nation's history. The axiom that the winners of wars write the histories is especially valid in regard to the story of the Irish who fought for the Confederacy from 1861–1865. Throughout the course of the Civil War, Irish Confederates made invaluable contributions to all aspects of the war effort. Yet, the Irish have largely been the forgotten soldiers of the South. In *Irish Confederates: The Civil War's Forgotten Soldiers*, Tucker illuminates these overlooked participants. ^

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Historian Phillip Thomas Tucker presents *Irish Confederates: The Civil War's Forgotten Soldiers*, an examination of some of the South's most overlooked fighting men. Chapters focus upon the Irish-Americans in specific regiments and brigades, such as the Irishmen who served in the First Missouri Confederate Brigade at the Battle of Champion Hill, and the Celtic-Gaelic rebels of the Tenth Tennessee Infantry Regiment of Volunteers. Black-and-white photographs, a bibliography, and an index round out this brief but illuminating collection of true stories of Irish Confederate ferocity and battlefield valor. A welcome and much needed addition to Irish-American history and reference shelves.

This slim volume (about 100 pages of text) is best described as an inexpensive brief introduction to

Irishmen who fought for the Confederacy. About a third of the book gives an overview of Irish in the South, their participation in the war and their motivations, and how some other Southerners viewed them. The balance consists of 8 brief chapters, each about various units with large numbers of Irishmen enrolled, usually describing an action in which they fought, and including some brief information on a few individuals in the unit. A fair amount of the book's ink is spent arguing that, despite their outstanding war record, the CS Irish have been swept under the rug and are just now being recognized. While the publisher claims it's due to the tired old cliche about Northern control of publishing houses, thankfully Mr. Tucker himself does not, attributing it instead largely to a low rate of literacy among surviving Irish vets. Tucker's contention has some validity, but the main reason this occurred is Lost Cause-ism, which attempted to portray Confederates as the "real" (read WASP) Americans fighting against immigrant hordes forced to fight for the "stay-at-home Yankee cowards". Once this claim was made, it would not do to have Irish seen around the CSA pantheon, so the Lost Cause advocates airbrushed them out of the picture. Although Ella Lonn demolished this almost 70 years ago, myths die hard. All in all, the book is okay for the casual student; there's just not a lot of meat if you're something more. It's not the in-depth study I'm hoping for, but to be fair I doubt Mr. Tucker was trying to produce one here. A lot of the units and personalities he describes are covered in greater detail in other works, including some of his own. If you're really interested in Irish in the ACW, I'd opt for them instead.

This fascinating book about the South's most colorful soldiers really packs a mighty punch. Tucker has presented the intriguing story of the Irish Confederates who fought and died in disproportionate numbers. He has taken a detailed and close look at the Irish contributions, from leading generals to common soldiers, in both the western and eastern theaters. Significantly, the author has emphasized the most important battlefield roles of the Irish Rebels, especially in major turning point situations, including at Antietam (the defense of Burnside's Brigade on September 17, 1862) and Gettysburg (the struggle for Little Round Top on July 2, 1863). In masterful fashion, Tucker also reveals the many complexities of the Irish experience in the South. In this fine book, he has also demonstrated that the Irish of the South were among the most zealous and hardest fighting soldiers of the Army of Northern Virginia and the Army of Tennessee. All is all, this is a wonderful story that is well-researched and well-written. Tucker has revealed many little-known and long-overlooked aspects of the Irish wartime experience across the South. In dismantling the time-honored myths and negative stereotypes about the Irish, this book provides the reader with a real education in regard to understanding the remarkable story of the most forgotten and neglected soldiers of the

Civil War. The reader of this book comes away with a fresh and greater understanding of the Irish experience in the Civil War. I very much enjoyed this book about these fascinating and intriguing Irish warriors, who fought and died in disproportionate numbers. This ground-breaking work is highly recommended.

This is a long overdue pen-picture of those from the Irish diaspora who found themselves, as always, involved (by choice) in other people's wars. The Mitchel family is an example of what I mean. Tucker does a good job and I look forward to reading his "God Help the Irish". I have heard it said of that expression (God help the Irish), that if He doesn't, we help ourselves anyway - and thank Him afterward!.

You hear only about the Union Irish Brigade and this book tells the rest of the story. It opens another fold hidden within history

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