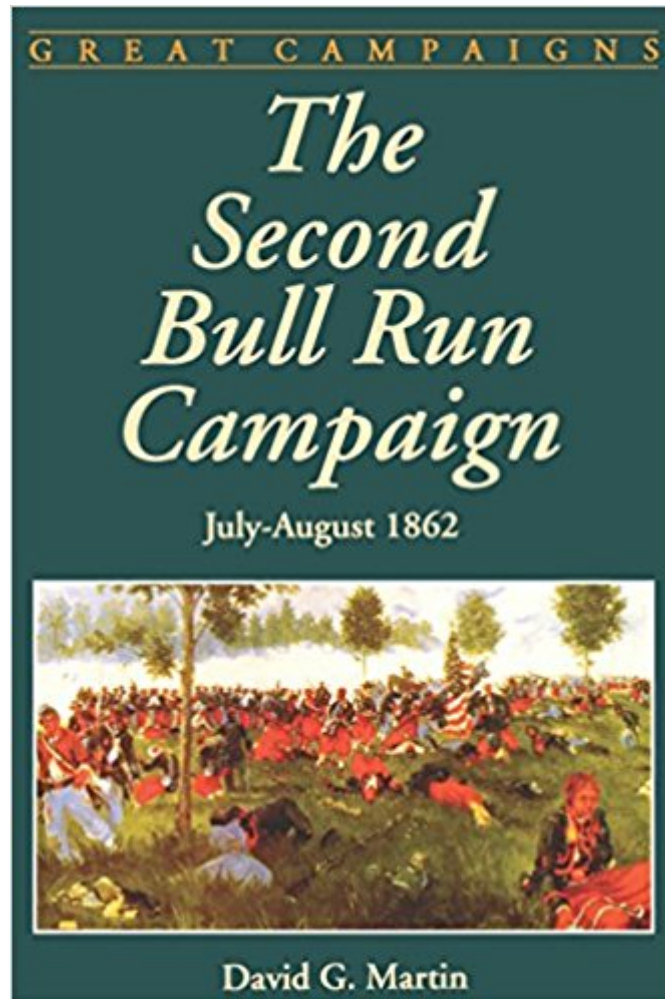


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The Second Bull Run Campaign: July-august 1862 (Great Campaigns)



Synopsis

A fully illustrated account, replete with detailed maps, of one of Robert E. Lee's greatest Civil War successes.

Book Information

Series: Great Campaigns

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Customer Reviews

This isn't a long book and in some ways that works to its disadvantage because the botched second battle of Bull Run was complicated. There were no grand sweeps around the enemy's flank, like Jackson's at Chancellorsville. There was no single outright blunder like Burnside's at Fredericksburg, no glorious Gotterdammerung like the Confederate charge against Cemetery Ridge at Gettysburg. Instead, the Union Army lost the initiative and finally the battle itself through a series of misjudgments and inexplicably misrouted orders on the part of General Pope and some of his subordinates. There is always what von Clausewitz called "the fog of war", of course. In this instance, there was a lot of confusion on both sides about who was doing what, and where, but as much as anything the Federal defeat could be attributed to one feature -- Pope's persistent conviction that the enemy was in full retreat and needed only to be cut off to be annihilated. This was less than the fog of war. It was garden-variety wishful thinking. I found much of it a bit hard to follow, often losing track of the movements of brigades and of whole divisions. (The author has helpfully put the regimental names in italics.) The fog of comprehension would probably have been lessened if I'd know more about the battle, or about the Civil War in general, to begin with. There are a series of easily read maps, and they were useful. They were limited too because the text

frequently mentions units or terrain features that don't appear on the maps. For anyone like myself, who is trying to win a victory -- ANY victory -- in the "Take Command" series of video games, not too much should be expected.

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