



# Military Memoirs of a Confederate: A Critical Narrative

*Edward Porter Alexander*

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**“If I don’t come and bear my part, they will believe me to be a coward. And I shall not know whether I am or not. I have just *got to go and stand my chances.*”**

Hearing that his home state, Georgia, had declared its secession, with these words 2nd Lieutenant Edward Porter Alexander resigned his commission in the U.S. Army and left to join the Confederates.

Over the four years that followed he would play an important role in many of the important battles of the conflict, notably under Maj. Gen. James Longstreet and Gen. Robert E. Lee.

At the outbreak of hostilities in 1861, although the Confederates had established an army — modelled after that of the Union — its organisation was almost non-existent, as was a wider infrastructure.

Similarly comprised of volunteers, and later conscripts, as the war progressed various reforms and reorganisations were enacted in a gradual development of the Confederacy’s war machine.

Despite its title, Alexander’s work also serves as a critique of each campaign, highlighting the good plays and the bad, the moves that influenced the outcome and a suggestion that might have altered the course of history.

Praise for *Military Memoirs of a Confederate*

“... altogether the best critique of the operations of the Army of Northern Virginia.” — **Douglas Southall Freeman**

**Edward Porter Alexander** (1835-1910) was a military engineer, planter, railroad executive and author. Graduating from West Point in 1857, he was participant in a number of weapons and experiments; he would become the first man to use signal flags to convey a long-distance message in combat. Having joined the Confederate States Army in 1861 he ended the war a Brigadier General, and “the South’s greatest artilleryman.”

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