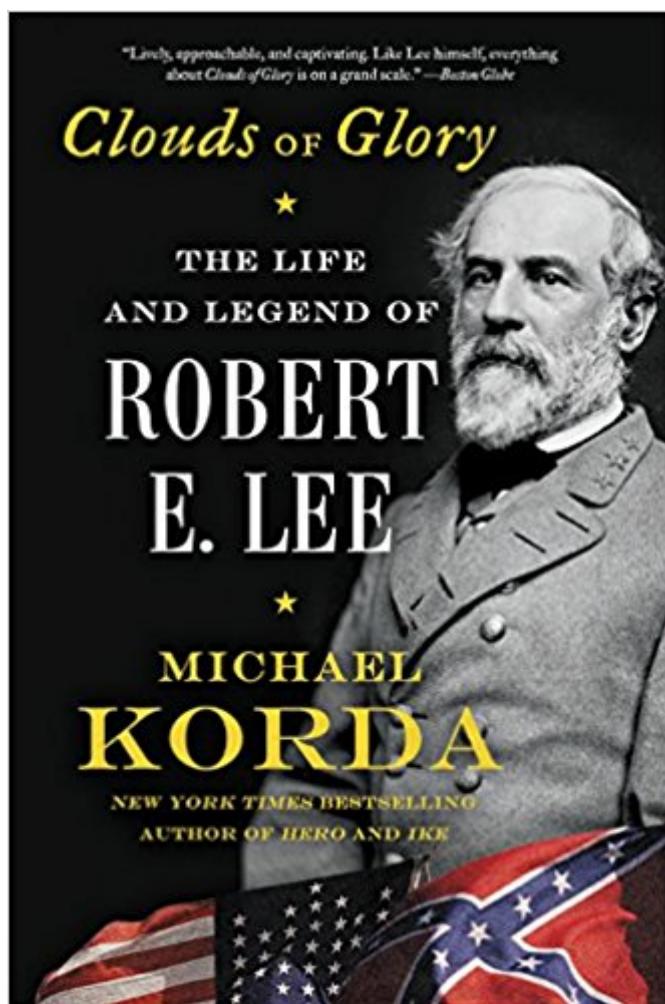


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Clouds Of Glory: The Life And Legend Of Robert E. Lee



Synopsis

In *Clouds of Glory: The Life and Legend of Robert E. Lee*, Michael Korda, the New York Times bestselling biographer of Dwight D. Eisenhower, Ulysses S. Grant, and T. E. Lawrence, has written the first major biography of Lee in nearly twenty years, bringing to life one of America's greatest, most iconic heroes. Korda paints a vivid and admiring portrait of Lee as a general and a devoted family man who, though he disliked slavery and was not in favor of secession, turned down command of the Union army in 1861 because he could not "draw his sword" against his own children, his neighbors, and his beloved Virginia. He was surely America's preeminent military leader, as calm, dignified, and commanding a presence in defeat as he was in victory. Lee's reputation has only grown in the 150 years since the Civil War, and Korda covers in groundbreaking detail all of Lee's battles and traces the making of a great man's undeniable reputation on both sides of the Mason-Dixon Line, positioning him finally as the symbolic martyr-hero of the Southern Cause. *Clouds of Glory* features dozens of stunning illustrations, some never before seen, including eight pages of color, sixteen pages of black-and-white, and nearly fifty battle maps.

Book Information

Paperback: 848 pages

Publisher: Harper Perennial; Reprint edition (June 23, 2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0062116304

ISBN-13: 978-0062116307

Product Dimensions: 6 x 1.4 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 2.1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 stars 306 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #27,892 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #10 in Books > History > Americas > United States > Civil War > Confederacy #18 in Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Historical > Latin America #20 in Books > History > Americas > United States > Civil War > Campaigns & Battlefields

Customer Reviews

Starred Review Our Civil War anointed at least one secular saint in Abraham Lincoln. Another strong candidate, despite fighting for the losing and morally questionable cause, is Robert E. Lee. One hundred and forty-four years after his death, Lee is still widely revered in both North and South for his tactical military brilliance and his personal qualities of courage, honor, and kindness. Korda,

the former editor-in-chief of Simon & Schuster and an acclaimed biographer, has no intention of knocking Lee off his pedestal in this excellent and generally laudatory biography. Korda stresses Lee's accomplishments even before the Civil War as a brilliant, visionary engineer and an expert at military maneuvers. His personal characteristics endeared him to his subordinates, both officers and those of lesser ranks. Despite a hot temper, he exercised patience, courtesy, and honesty. Yet Korda does not shrink from noting Lee's flaws and failures. His orders to his officers during the Civil War were often vague and open to misinterpretation, especially during the Gettysburg campaign. Despite his tactical brilliance, he lacked an overall, effective strategic vision for victory once he faced a relentless opponent in Grant. Still, this masterful and comprehensive single-volume biography is a worthy tribute to an icon whose greatness still shines brightly. --Jay Freeman --This text refers to the Audio CD edition.

“Korda clearly has command of his subject...[Clouds of Glory] is well-considered and amply documented. Military buffs will find much to feast on.” (Christian Science Monitor)
“Masterful...Korda delivers the goods.” (Kirkus Reviews (starred review))
“Superbly engaging.” (Publishers Weekly (starred review))
“Monumental.” (BookPage)
“Lively, approachable, and captivating.” (Boston Globe)

A very enjoyable book on a fascinating man, respected and admired even by his opponents. I learned quite a bit from it (with the caveat that I'm not really a serious student of the US Civil War in general or Lee in particular, so I might not catch factual errors). The author has some minor quirks but nothing too objectionable, and his ideas about why Lee failed at crucial points are plausible. My one serious complaint is that the book shares a problem that seems to plague Civil War books: the maps are lousy. It's not clear just where they are from -- each one is accompanied by a credit to the Freeman biography, even one or two which clearly didn't come from there (!), and there is no further explanation (at least not in the Kindle edition) -- but they don't fit this book well. In particular, they frequently violate the basic rule that any place or feature which is mentioned in the text *should be on the map*, so the reader is often left guessing about the details of the action. Not as bad as some I've seen, but not great. The limitations of the Kindle format don't help, either: some of the maps and images are too small, and enlarging them doesn't help because they were digitized at too low a resolution. (And speaking of limitations of the Kindle, endnotes that aren't properly linked to the text

are a tremendous pain to use, given that the page numbers are meaningless and it's difficult to quickly flip back and forth between text and notes. Including an apology for this isn't a substitute for fixing it.)

I enjoyed this book. The complete perspective on Lee's life and on-going analysis provided a real picture of this interesting historical character. The narrative itself flowed well and sucked me in to the story of Lee's life. The only real downfall was the number of typos / spelling errors, and the amount of repetition of some of the points being made.

This effort puts the Lee legend into perspective. He was a superb engineer, but used his knowledge of his enemy to prolong what he came to realize was a lost cause. Lee knew the moves of the Union and used them to his advantage. His own generals were somewhat deficient as well. Jackson was his biggest loss though. Korda portrays Lee as an opportunist . He could never seal the deal so to speak. He managed to keep the Confederacy's head above water until Grant took over the Army of the Potomac. Korda does not reveal anything earth shattering, but keeps a quick pace without sacrificing accuracy and continuity. His revelations regarding Longstreet and his impact are interesting and seem to clear up controversy around him and his attitude during the war. This is a very good read for both Civil War buffs as well as history buffs in general. The kindle edition was somewhat poorly edited which made some points difficult to discern without re- reading. All in all very informative and enjoyable.

For those who are amateur historians or just like to read history this might be a book that you will have a hard time putting down. Lee's writing details and the exposure of warts and all is great and the big bonus is learning the other great things that I definitely did hear about before involved with his life and family. For the historical buff this may add something you have not learned in the past, but maybe it would just a good read and not being too critical. Now if you like learning more about well known people this might be a book for to learn and understand about the past as well.

I bought this book for my husband to take on our cruise and he loved it. We live close to Stratford the Lee family home and so we went to visit the home and grounds and then he read the book after it was recommended to us by a friend. He loved it and learned so much about this incredible man. Definitely a good read.

Very interesting, although difficult to get into at first. I hated to finish it. The only criticism is that author uses foreign language on occasion without providing translation which seems a bit pretentious. Otherwise a good and informative read

Excellent read for Civil War enthusiasts. Well written, fast moving. Sometimes makes too much of REL's qualities and plays down faults.

great book on a great southern general more people should read about the southern heritage and not put it down

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