

H-Net Reviews

in the Humanities & Social Sciences



Terry L. Jones. *Historical Dictionary of the Civil War.* Lanham: Scarecrow Press, 2002. lv + 1700 pp. \$269.50 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-8108-4112-3.

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Civil War Dictionary Continued

Terry Jones, a professor of history at Louisiana University at Monroe, has produced an important reference work. The most remarkable single thing about this historical dictionary is the fact that it was not edited but produced by one person, obviously a labor of love. Let us pick up the second volume, which begins with M, and thumb through it. I have never heard of William Whann Mackall. His birth and death dates are followed by CSA to show his role in the Confederacy. The pronunciation is indicated (MAKE-awl). His experiences before the war are covered in a paragraph, then his Confederate accomplishments occupy two paragraphs. He was a staff officer for Albert Sydney Johnston, Braxton Bragg, and Joseph Johnston. A single sentence covers his postwar farming career. The next few pages cover more familiar people like John Magruder, Dennis Hart Mahan, William Mahone, and Stephen Mallory. The only entry prior to a long description of the battle of Malvern Hill is a summary of the roll of the state of Maine during the War. Separate entries on the Confederate and United States

Marine Corps organizations deftly summarize these organizations. There is no description of malaria.

A longer review of these volumes amplify the impression garnered from the four of the first pages of the second volume. This dictionary is very strong on individuals, especially those with military experiences. The letter D lists 73 different departments. There is a paragraph on the Department of Annapolis (Union) and the Department of Alexandria (Confederate) but no entry for the Department of the Treasury or any other government department. The dictionary is also strong on individual battles. The Battle of Gettysburg covers six pages; total casualties are given but are not separated into categories such as deaths. The work is weaker on political and economic matters and is very weak on medicine; only one of the six surgeons general has an entry.

Overall, whoever reads about the battles and leaders of the Civil War will need this volume at his fingertips to provide clear and instant information.

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