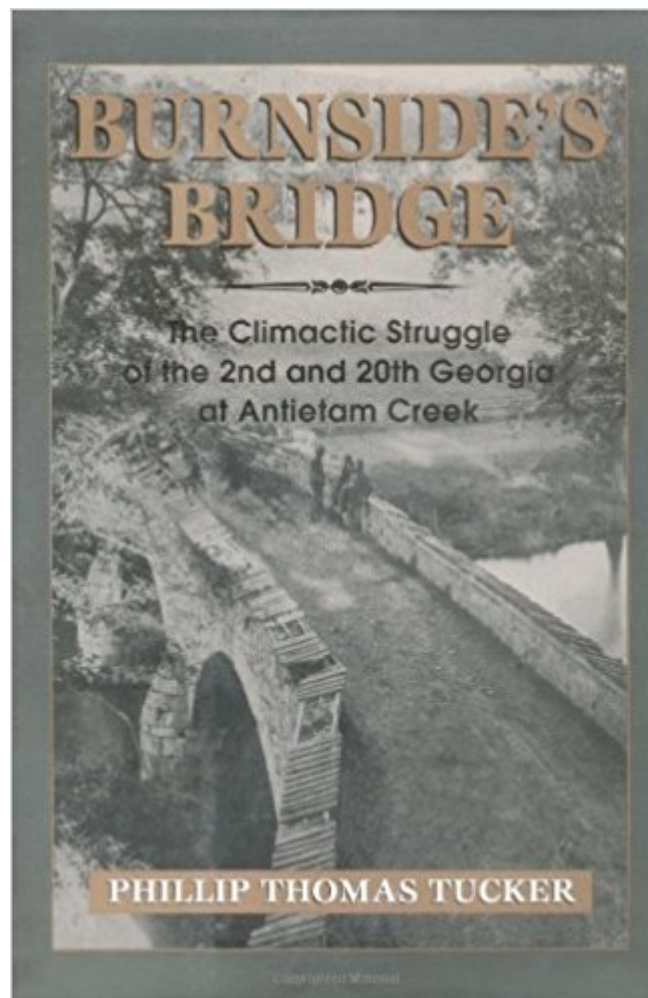




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Burnside's Bridge: The Climactic Struggle Of The 2nd And 20th Georgia At Antietam Creek



Synopsis

5 maps 6 x 9 * First thoroughly researched study of the struggle for Burnside's Bridge * New perspective on Robert Toombs's role in the Army of Northern Virginia Before the heroic stand of the 20th Maine at Little Round Top, the 2nd and 20th Georgia Infantries, led by Brig. Gen. Robert Toombs, held off a veritable Yankee juggernaut and triumphed at Burnside's Bridge on Antietam Creek in 1862. This detailed account profiles the troops whose last stand helped prevent the destruction of the Army of Northern Virginia, providing Robert E. Lee with yet another chance for a northern invasion. Phillip Thomas Tucker, chief historian of the 81st Training Wing, Keesler Air Force Base in Biloxi, Mississippi, is the author/editor of several Civil War titles, including The 1862 Plot to Kidnap Jefferson Davis (0-8117-1271-0).

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Customer Reviews

"'The Thermopylae of the Civil War'; . . . the single most remembered aspect of that fight [at Antietam], the contest for the bridge, has not until now been the subject of an in-depth book-length study.Â Â Phillip Thomas Tucker remedies that in Burnside's Bridge: The Climactic Struggle of the 2nd and 20th Georgia at Antietam Creek.Â As Tucker admirably demonstrates, it is not for nothing that those at the time and others since have called that fight the Thermopylae of the Civil War . . . In a work that is thoroughly researched and dramatically written, Tucker lays out the story of a day in which the fate of the Confederacy rested on the breadth of a hair . . . Burnside's Bridge is a fine example of the potential to be found in examining a

discrete segment of a major action in order to show how the part influenced the whole.Â On few battlefields of the Civil War, or any other conflict, did one such part prove to be so vital to the outcome.Â Tucker is admirably nonpartisan, paying equal attention to what happened at both ends of the Rohrbach [Burnside's] bridge, but inevitably the greatest drama, and the greatest glory, rests with those determined Georgians and their politicians-turned-general who very well may have saved Lee's army, and with it the Confederacy to fight another day."--William C. Davis"One Wednesday in September 1862 a few hundred Georgians held up an entire Federal corps for more than half a day and changed the course of the battle of Antietam.Â Burnside's Bridge details this story, one of the most dramatic of the Civil War."--Perry D. Jamieson, Ph.D.""Burnside's Bridge highlights a significant but neglected aspect of Antietam that still ranks as the bloodiest day in American history.Â The author's scholarship is sound, his grasp of tactics sure, and his writing vivid, making Burnside's Bridge both a good read and good history."--Edward G. Longacre, Ph.D."Burnside's Bridge over Antietam Creek is perhaps the best-known landmark on a Civil War battlefield [after Gettysburg].Â There, on September 17, 1862, two Georgia regiments, taking advantage of terrain superbly suited for defense, frustrated the efforts of General Ambrose E. Burnside's Ninth Corps to cross the Antietam Creek for five hours.Â In doing so, they bought precious time for the last Confederate reinforcements to arrive on the battlefield [to avoid] an early death blow to the Confederacy . . . Phillip Thomas Tucker offers a blow-by-blow account of the fight for the lower Antietam . . . Tucker deserves considerable praise for his efforts.Â Drawing upon a truly impressive range of primary and secondary sources, he has produced a thorough and highly readable narrative of the battle for Burnside's Bridge that will appeal to anyone with an interest in this aspect of the bloodiest day in American military history."--Journal of Southern History --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

Phillip Thomas Tucker is the author or editor of more than 20 books on the Civil War and African American, women's, and Irish history. He is a United States Air Force historian at Bolling Air Force Base in Washington, DC. --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

Exceptionally well-researched, Doctor Philip Thomas Tucker's "Burnside's Bridge: The Climactic Struggle of the 2nd and 20th Georgia at Antietam Creek" proves to be yet another edifying offering from the author. As a native of Portland, Oregon, this exposition drew my particular attention. The Burnside Bridge of Portland, Oregon divides my town's neighborhoods into North, South, East, and West, yet few know of much of its history or namesake. Divided into nine chapters, Dr. Tucker's book

reads more like a novel than an overly-repetitive piece of historical review. Through its pages, I became immersed in the lives of its soldiers who were duly quoted along the way. Ultimately a thorough and engaging exploration of a lesser-known turning point battle, I found myself deeply impressed by the author's breadth of knowledge and knack for storytelling.

Antietam was the bloodiest day in American history and on that fateful day there were many localized struggles, inside the larger framework of the battlefield. This battle was fought in three basic parts, that made up the whole. The morning fight on the northern end of the field centered between the Miller Cornfield and Dunker Church, the central fight for the sunken road known forever after as Bloody Lane and the southern end of the field. On the southern end of the battlefield, General Ambrose Burnside's federal soldiers in the IX Army Corps tried to take and cross the bridge over Antietam Creek and break General Robert E. Lee's hold on the town of Sharpsburg. If Burnside could get across and break Lee's thin ranks in that sector, then General George McClellan could put an end to Lee's Army of Northern Virginia and possibly put a speedier end to the Confederacy and the American Civil War. If you have read books on the Maryland Campaign and the Battle of Antietam (Sharpsburg), then you have a good idea of what happened on that deadly day. Go that one step further and learn more about a localized struggle in the battle and get a more in depth and detailed account of what took place there. If you thirst for a good tactical read and want to learn more on the fight for the bridge, this book gives you that. In an amazing story, of many more amazing stories from this battle and time period, the struggle and fight for the lower bridge is truly a memorial to both sides and what they had to endure. How was a thin line of ragtag Confederate soldiers mostly from Georgia going to keep a horde of Yankees back? Well, they did for several hours, giving rebel reinforcements from Harper's Ferry, under A.P. Hill, the time to arrive on the field, pitch into the Yanks in the afternoon and save Robert E. Lee from total defeat. This book is fun to read and is one of those great tactical reads. Every so often there comes a book written about a certain portion of a battle and gives the reader a more detailed and richer understanding of the people, weapons, lay of the land and obstacles that were faced in that sector. This is a book like that, an account on that specific fight, the fight for the lower bridge which eventually became Burnside's Bridge. A great book about the fight for Burnside's Bridge at the Battle of Antietam, or the fight inside the larger fight.

"Burnside's Bridge" breaks through the absence of research in this part of the battle of Antietam and attempts to paint a factual picture of what happened in that small area of the battlefield. The author

begins by giving a history of the two regiments (20th and 2nd Georgia). After this he gives an in-depth history of the leader of the two regiments, a man by the name of General Toombs. The author stresses the importance of researching the mysterious General Toombs, due to the fact, historians have overlooked this man because many considered he was only a small part of the Confederacy. Half way through the book the author begins to talk about the bridge and what happened at the battle of Antietam. Armed with the many facts Mr. Tucker (the author) tells the complete story of what happened when the Federal army charged the bridge five times. Even though this is a breakthrough book there are some weaknesses that appear within the book. The first weakness is the fact the book is only 154 pages long (154 pages + 43 pages of sources). Within these 154 pages the author does not approach the battle of Antietam until page 67 and then leaves the bridge at page 137, which allows him only 70 pages to deal with the actual events around the bridge. The second weakness is the fact the reader has to have a basic knowledge of the battle of Antietam. In fact, the author never gives an explanation of what was going on in the other parts of the battlefield. This is compounded with the fact the author only shows one map of the battlefield and this map is only dealing with Burnside's bridge. Finally and what I feel to be the weakest part of the book, is the manner in which the author presents the material. Mr. Tucker has researched this topic so much he attempts to push every fact into the story and thus sacrifices the readability of the book. In other words, when the author finally has the reader turning the pages to read more, he slows you down to a snail's pace by bombarding you with items such as a colonel's biography or a soldier's letter home. Even with these weaknesses the book is still a major piece of work for this subject. What this book will do is cause more historians to use it as a stepping stone and thus cause even greater research in the area. After all, every subject has to have a first book written about it. This reviewer only wished the author had expanded the book and attempted to centralize the facts on the everyday soldiers of the two regiments instead of constantly bowing to the immortal General Toombs.

Pros: 1) Groundbreaking research in the area of Burnside's Bridge 2) Very in-depth research by the author

Cons: 1) Lack of Dramatic effect causes poor readability 2) Author only spends 70 pages on what really happened at the bridge 3) Reader has to have knowledge of the battle of Antietam

I had two Great Grandfathers in this battle, one with the 9th New York, the other with the 51st New York. Over the year's, I read a number of books on Burnside Bridge and walked the field three times. No book gets you into the battle as this one does. I came away with a much better understanding of what took place there and who the men were, who fought there. Clearly, it was

these Georgia boys who saved Lee's Army. Of course, they had a lot of help from General Burnside.

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