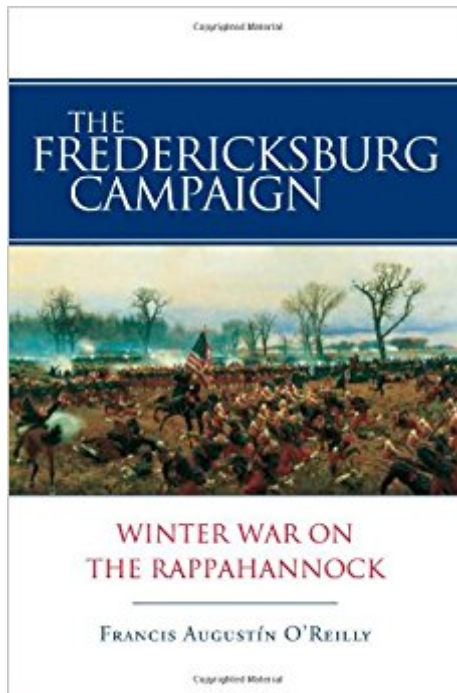




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# **The Fredericksburg Campaign: Winter War On The Rappahannock**



## Synopsis

The battle at Fredericksburg, Virginia, in December 1862 involved hundreds of thousands of men; produced staggering, unequal casualties (13,000 Federal soldiers compared to 4,500 Confederates); ruined the career of Ambrose E. Burnside; embarrassed Abraham Lincoln; and distinguished Robert E. Lee as one of the greatest military strategists of his era. Francis August O'Reilly draws upon his intimate knowledge of the battlegrounds to discuss the unprecedented nature of Fredericksburg's warfare. Lauded for its vivid description, trenchant analysis, and meticulous research, his award-winning book makes for compulsive reading.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Francis August O'Reilly is also the author of Stonewall Jackson at Fredericksburg: The Battle of Prospect Hill. He has written numerous articles on the Civil War and conducts extensive battlefield studies and tours throughout Virginia. He lives in Woodford, Virginia.

If you're looking for a good read on the battle of Fredericksburg, then this is what you want. O'Reilly does a great job breaking down the campaign, piece by piece and does not overdramatize as some historians do. He presents the facts in a clear and understanding way. Another great aspect of the book is that the author is not biased in his approach to his writing, he presents all facts on both sides of the coin and includes many examples of points of view from both north and south, how the men involved in the struggle experienced the battle and their thoughts of the results of the battle. All in all, an excellent history, one any true civil war buff or historian should read.

Francis Augustin O'Reilly's new book on Fredericksburg is well researched, well written and detailed in its micro-history approach to the Union defeat at the hand of Lee's Legions in December, 1862. O'Reilly's book is a military account of the battle eschewing the sociological implications of the battle delineated so well in George C. Rable's recent bestseller. I enjoyed both books but would recommend Rable's book for the reader who has a general interest in the battle and doesn't care for detailed accounts of military strategy. O'Reilly's book will be the standard military account for years to come. This impressive young historian now stands in the ranks of Robert K. Krick, Gordon Rhea and Peter Cozzens in the brilliant way he tells the story of the battle. Maps were helpful to the text (although more maps could always be used!). He did make the mistake of saying Lee's birthday was on Jan. 21 when the general was born on Jan. 19th. Fredericksburg was the last complete battle where the gray legions were led by the peerless tandem of Lee and Jackson. The battle featured the first urban street fighting on a major scale in the Civil War. Fredericksburg also saw widespread looting by Union troops on a heretofore unprecedented scale. Anyone planning to tour Fredericksburg should read this book. O'Reilly tells us of the important fighting on Prospect Hill and the slaughter before Marye's Heights (two separate battles). I would enjoy hearing O'Reilly speak at our Civil War Round Table in Knoxville or on Book TV! I am impressed by this outstanding author and Civil War scholar! An excellent work!

Great amount of detail. Best book out there on the Fredericksburg Campaign. Bought this prior to visiting Fredericksburg this summer and ended up carrying it all around the battlefield as my reference.

A well written account of the battle of Fredericksburg. It's obvious that Frank has studied this event for many years. I had a relative who fought for the Union army at Fredericksburg and this book has provided me with more information about his part of the battle than anything else I've found so far. Even if you are a novice about the US Civil War, this is a must have book to understand this battle.

The book describes the battle and layout of troops in great detail. I would be beneficial to have additional maps that are larger and better able to read. This book is a must read if you are researching the battle and the placement of troops.

Excellent book on all aspects of the battle. One of my most important sources for research.

Author Francis O'Reilly has put together a very thorough study of the Battle of Fredericksburg. O'Reilly brings the reader to the later part of 1862 by carefully explaining just why this battle was started and how it unfolded. O'Reilly explains how the Lincoln administration was eager for a victory and also quite bold in their plan to capture Richmond. The politics and situation that faced the Army of the Potomac was clearly identified early on. O'Reilly covered every aspect of the beginning of the battle, be it the desperate crossing of the Rappahannock, Confederate defensive works and just how the two armies became engaged. I liked how O'Reilly quoted the private soldier accounts through the beginning, landing of Fredericksburg, taking of the city and eventually the assaults upon Prospect Hill and Mary's Heights. O'Reilly's description of the battle from both Union and Confederate views was extraordinary. The carnage of battle was complete and it truly explained just how futile and reckless the Battle of Fredericksburg was. O'Reilly also brought forth how generals failed or worked successfully with one another that added a lot of weight to this great book. I highly recommend this thorough study of this great battle. It is an impressive book that defines every moment and situation with excellent writing.

Fredericksburg is one of those battles that while a major conflict, is often overshadowed by battles such as Gettysburg and Antietam. So it's nice to see a book that covers the entire campaign so completely. In fact I rank this book up there with what I think are some of the best Civil War books around such as Coddington's Gettysburg: A Study in Command. What is really outstanding about this work is that it both the Xs and Os of the battle and also the generals involved. I especially enjoyed the hard look O'Reilly takes at Burnside. This is Burnside's one and only time to really command the Army of the Potomac in battle and in many ways he was a man in over his head. O'Reilly also looks at the politics involved in the Army of the Potomac. A factor so often overlooked in the Civil War but one that had a major impact on everything in the Eastern Theater. There has been over the last 10 years quite a number of top quality books published about individual Civil War battles and this work by O'Reilly can stand up with the very best of them. It's a must read I think for anyone interested in the Eastern Theater of the Civil War.

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