# IOWA IN THE CIVIL WAR: A REFERENCE GUIDE

Compiled by James J. Robertson, Jr.\*

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A scant century ago the United States underwent near-fatal convulsions. Civil war was not totally unexpected; the events which led to an outbreak of hostilities — conflicting opinion over ultimate sovereignty, economic rivalries, slavery, the jockeying for representative superiority, a general misunderstanding between North and South — were the same events that had characterized the American political scene for a full two score years.

Until 1860 Americans had been able to settle, or at least live with, their disagreements through bargaining and compromise. For a generation the democratic process had somehow managed to dissipate the black clouds of civil war. But the election of a Republican unknown named Lincoln, on a platform odious to most Southerners, spurred to reality what William H. Seward two years earlier had termed the "irrepressible conflict." The machinery of national government shuddered and ground to a halt as South Carolina's cog, followed successively by those of ten other Southern states, broke away and rolled off into the distance.

While a few moderates earnestly besought again the already-worn tools of compromise, the majority of Northerners and Southerners were too weary of negotiations, niceties, and nostrums. The New York Tribune's Horace Greeley voiced the prevailing sentiment when he shouted editorially: "Let this suspense and uncertainty cease! If we are to fight, so be it."

Events moved rapidly and inexorably toward civil war. Yet the artillery salvos delivered at Fort Sumter in April, 1861, were but the dull echoes of a people confident in their complacency and fraught with the misconception that the democratic process would once more avert an internal hemorrhage—when, in actuality, the prerogatives of democracy had been stretched time and time again until they had broken into the fragments of a disunited nation.

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War, the most insolvent ingredient of mankind, nevertheless seemed the only solution. Armed with little more than cultivated bitterness, 30,000,000 Americans took sides for a fight few people thought would last over six months. Four years later, over 618,000 men lay dead, mute evidence of a struggle simultaneously brutal, dramatic and epochal. Perhaps above all else, from the heartache of the Civil War emerged a nation whose unity would never again be challenged.

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In 1861 the State of Iowa was but fourteen years old. It possessed no forts, no garrisons, no organized military units. A handful of local militia companies performed their primary peacetime function of drilling snappily to the delight of Sunday afternoon gatherings. When President Lincoln in mid-April called on Governor Samuel J. Kirkwood to supply a regiment for immediate service, the busy executive had to consult his aides and a military dictionary to ascertain the definition and size of a regiment.

Thenceforth, however, Iowa lost its amateur standing. Amid cheers and joyful farewells, the 1st Iowa Infantry steamed down the Mississippi in May, 1861. Two months later the 2nd and 3rd Regiments were en route southward. By the close of 1861 nineteen units were in the field. In all, fifty-eight regiments and four artillery batteries were organized during the war years.

From an 1860 population of 674,000 people, 76,000 men - 11% of the total population - went into the Federal armies. Hard-cored Westerners, these courageous Iowa frontiersmen campaigned from Wilson's Creek to Bentonville in some of the most bitter fighting in history. Iowa's first battle fatality occurred in August, 1861; one out of every four bluecoats who fell at Shiloh was an Iowan; Hawkeye warriors spearheaded Grant's drive on Vicksburg and Sherman's March to the Sea. In the Western theater, where the outcome of the war was largely decided, Iowa troops were an integral part of every major campaign. But the cost of valor ran high: 13,000 Iowa soldiers — better than one out of every six who entered military service succumbed to disease and bullets. That twenty-eight Billy Yanks from Iowa received the Congressional Medal of Honor is testimony enough of their gallantry and devotion to duty. The deeds of soldiers on faraway battlefields were matched by the perseverance of the "homefolk," most of whom weathered with understanding and patriotism the ordeal through which the nation passed.

This bibliography of over 600 entries is intended not only to commemo-

rate Iowa's valiant hour but also to make modern generations increasingly mindful of the role played by Iowans in the unifying struggle of 1861-1865. The people of Iowa are rightfully proud of their Civil War heritage; for if men of determination carved this state from the Western wilderness in the 1840's, men of devotion assuredly preserved it in the 1860's.

It is hoped the appearance of this Reference Guide may give rise to more and needed volumes on Iowa's participation in the Civil War. Particularly is this need acute in the case of regimental and civilian reminiscences. Only through the publication of wartime letters, diaries, and reminiscences can we learn the intimate story of the sectional struggle and those who were part of it. Iowans can perform no simpler yet more lasting service in this commemorative period than in searching their attics, basements, old trunks and desks for these materials. If any such collections are uncovered, please alert the State Historical Society of Iowa of their existence.

Three points should be borne in mind in using this bibliography. First, many of the works cited (especially regimental studies) are so scarce that in some instances only one copy is known to exist. If a desired volume is not available in your local library, queries should be directed to the State Historical Society of Iowa in Iowa City. In cases where volumes were published by the State Historical Society of Iowa, the initials SHSI will be found in parentheses with the place and date of publication.

Secondly, the entries herein are grouped under eleven headings:

Slavery in Iowa
John Brown in Iowa
Lincoln and Iowa
Iowa and the Civil War — General
Civilian Leaders
Military Leaders

Regimental Histories and

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Where applicable, cross-references are included to facilitate research. In some instances it may be necessary to consult several headings for complete references on particular subjects. General readers and students new to the field can obtain better results by starting with the fourth heading: Iowa and the Civil War — General.

Thirdly, for the sake of brevity short titles have been incorporated for

those volumes cited frequently in the bibliography. The following key explains the short titles used:

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Annals — Annals of Jowa have been published in three series, distinguished in this listing by the figures (1), (2), and (3).

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Jowa Journal — Jowa Journal of History (58 vols., Iowa City, 1903-1960). The Jowa Historical Record was supplanted by this quarterly. Under its three titles the State Historical Society of Iowa has issued a quarterly for 91 years.

MOLLUS — Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States, followed by the particular state commandery that published the recollections. Titles of the volumes varied with each commandery, such as Iowa's War Sketches and Incidents and Illinois' Military Essays and Recollections.

National Tribune — Washington, (D. C.) National Tribune. At the turn of the century this well-known newspaper ran a series of personal recollections. Many were written by Iowa veterans.

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War Sketches — War Sketches and Incidents as Related by Companions of the Jowa Commandery, Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States (2 vols., Des Moines, 1893-1898).

In an article such as this, it is not customary to acknowledge outside assistance. Yet the compiler would be woefully remiss if he did not extend his sincere thanks to two persons who contributed much to the final product. Dr. William J. Petersen, Superintendent of the State Historical Society of Iowa and member of the Iowa Civil War Centennial Commission, laid the groundwork for this bibliography with his detailed *Jowa History Reference Guide* published by the State Historical Society of Iowa in 1952. His encouragement in other, numerous ways cannot be overestimated. Mr. Charles E. Dornbusch of the New York City Public Library took time out from his painstaking revision of the *Bibliography of State Participation in the Civil War* (originally published in 1913) to contribute a large number of the regimental reminiscences. The first volumes of his up-to-date *Bibliography*, sponsored by the Emily E. F. Skeel Fund, will be published in the fall of 1961. Both of these gentlemen merit appreciation gratefully rendered.

Some Iowans may feel a bit skeptical at a Southerner undertaking a study of a Northern state's role in the Civil War. But in a sense this is the spirit of the Civil War Centennial. Time has cleansed the tragedy and bitterness from the conflict of the 1860's. Today we commemorate without prejudice this era of courage, drama, and inspiration — a period packed with all the ingredients that, in molding us together, continues yet to sustain us. People of the North and South, for example, can and should take equal pride in Pickett's Virginians assaulting at Gettysburg and in Crocker's Iowans charging at Shiloh.

For, after all, were not both Americans then? Are not both Americans still?

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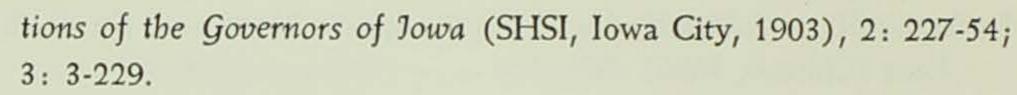
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### A CIVIL WAR READING LIST FOR IOWANS

How many books have been written on the Civil War? No accurate count exists, but rough estimates place the number in excess of 40,000 volumes. If the present publishing trend continues through the centennial years and beyond, that number may well double before the flood abates.

Obviously, hundreds of these works contribute nothing new save personal conjecture and interpretation. But the very mass of literature is so overwhelming as to plague order librarians and readers alike who seek the better, more authoritative treatments of the war, its battles and its leaders. It seems appropriate, therefore, to add as an appendix to the Civil War bibliography of Iowa a critical listing of those works most in demand and most consulted by historians in the field.

Space limitations precluded a full listing of every study of real value. Moreover, in some instances deserving works have been omitted in order to restrict titles to those still in print. Any evaluation of a study is essentially a matter of personal opinion; thus, the comments contained herein are as open to challenge as they are to agreement.

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Milhollen, Hurst D., ed., They Who Fought Here (New York: Macmillan, 1959). Combine the talents of the authority on Civil War illustrations — Mr. Milhollen, with the undisputed champion of the common soldier — Dr. Bell I. Wiley. Mix well the selected pictures of one with the skillfully narrated text of the other. The result is a graphic picture of the men in the ranks.

Miller, Francis T., ed., The Photographic History of the Civil War (10 vols. in 5. New York: Yoseloff, 1957). This set, first published in 1911, is the largest printed collection of Mathew Brady photographs. Unfortunately, both this work and Battles and Leaders of the Civil War were republished by the offset method; illustrations in both consequently tend to be fuzzy.

Nevins, Allan, Ordeal of the Union (2 vols. New York: Scribner, 1947).

\_\_\_\_\_, The Emergence of Lincoln (2 vols. New York: Scribner, 1950).

\_\_\_\_\_, The War for the Union (2 vols. New York: Scribner, 1959-1960).

Winner of two Pulitzer Prizes, Mr. Nevins demonstrates throughout these six of ten proposed volumes a mastery of historical technique. The study treats only of Northern political history, but it does so with such adroitness that events on the battlefields seem secondary.

Owsley, Frank L., King Cotton Diplomacy (Chicago: Un. of Chicago, 1959). Why the South failed to attain the one ingredient it had to have for victory — European intervention on the side of the Confederacy, is dexterously presented in this classic study of Southern diplomacy.

Randall, James G., and Donald, David, Our Divided Nation (Boston: Little, Brown, 1961). This volume is a new, revised edition of Dr. Randall's The Civil War and Reconstruction, which for years has been the standard college text for the period. The work deservedly remains the outstanding single volume for the 1850-1877 era.

Ronald, Charles P., The Confederacy (Chicago: Un. of Chicago, 1960).

On the theory that a nation based on states' rights and agriculture could not endure, the author summarizes the causes for the Confederacy's downfall. The emphasis here is on politics.

Turner, George E., Victory Rode the Rails (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1953). This is the better of two extant volumes on railroads during the war. An equally good study for Southern lines only is Robert C. Black's The Railroads of the Confederacy (Chapel Hill: Un. of North Carolina, 1952).

West, Richard S., Jr., Mr. Lincoln's Navy (New York: Longmans, 1957). Professor of history at the Naval Academy, Dr. West recounts in fast-moving style the basic campaigns of the Federal navy. A more concise treatment of the same subject is James M. Merrill's The Rebel Shore (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1957).

Wiley, Bell Irvin, The Life of Billy Yank (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1952).

These two volumes are unquestionably the definitive study of the common soldier in the struggle. Both are based in large part on unpublished letters, diaries and reminiscences.

#### BIOGRAPHICAL STUDIES — NORTHERN

For analyses of the generals, and the roles each played in the total war effort, the following works are available:

Catton, Bruce, Glory Road (New York: Doubleday, 1952); Mr. Lincoln's Army (New York: Doubleday, 1949); A Stillness at Appomattox (New York: Doubleday, 1954). This highly popular trilogy on the Army of the Potomac characterizes the generals in the East and, through the use of regimental histories, provides human insights into the obscure bluecoats who did the fighting and dying. Of the three books, A Stillness at Appomattox is the superior.

Williams, Kenneth P., Lincoln Finds A General (5 vols. New York: Macmillan, 1949-1959). A work of prodigious research and laborious detail, these volumes carry the story of the Federal armies East and West through the fall of 1863. The author was a man of strong feelings who too often tended to overpraise generals he liked and to upbraid strongly those who failed to meet his standards.

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Williams, T. Harry, Lincoln and His Generals (New York: Knopf, 1952). One of the foremost Civil War historians clearly and skill-fully discusses the top brass in the Federal armies and the difficulties Lincoln had with each of them. This is highly recommended reading, especially for those entering the field of military history.

Listed below by subjects are the better biographies of Northern leaders:

Butler, Benjamin F. Several writers have tried to recount accurately the story of "Beast" Butler, the politician-general who incurred through his wartime actions the wrath of people North and South. To date, none have succeeded. The best study available is Hans L. Trefousse, Ben Butler (New York: Twayne, 1957); close behind it is Robert S. Holzman, Stormy Ben Butler (New York: Macmillan, 1954).

Custer, George. Jay Monaghan's Custer (Boston: Little, Brown, 1959) is the most balanced study of the flamboyant cavalryman who became a general at the age of twenty-three.

GRANT, ULYSSES S. In 1950 Lloyd Lewis published the first of three planned volumes on Grant: Captain Sam Grant (Boston: Little, Brown, 1950). Lewis died midway through research on the next volume. Bruce Catton agreed to complete the set, and his Grant Moves South (Boston: Little, Brown, 1960) is a worthy continuation of Grant's life through the Vicksburg campaign. J. F. C. Fuller, the noted British military analyst, has also written two commendable studies of Grant, both recently republished by Indiana University Press: The Generalship of Ulysses S. Grant and Grant and Lee: A Study in Personality and Leadership.

LINCOLN, ABRAHAM. No other American has been the subject of so many studies as Lincoln. Yet few of the countless volumes contribute much to our further knowledge or understanding of the Great Emancipator. The outstanding multi-volume study is James G. Randall, Lincoln the President (4 vols. New York: Dodd, Mead, 1945-1955); the most revealing single volume is Benjamin P. Thomas, Abraham Lincoln (New York: Knopf, 1952). While Carl Sandburg's six-volume study has merit, it reflects too much of the author's romanticism. Of interest and unusual scope is Ralph G. Newman, ed., Lincoln for the Ages (New York: Doubleday, 1960),

a collection of some seventy-five essays by the leading Lincoln scholars of our times. In addition to other works mentioned, T. Harry Williams' Lincoln and the Radicals (Madison: Un. of Wisconsin, 1961) and William B. Hesseltine's Lincoln and the War Governors (New York: Knopf, 1948) are above-average treatises.

McClellan, George B. Although an overly sympathetic treatment of one of Lincoln's great disappointments, Warren W. Hassler's George B. McClellan: Shield of the Union (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 1957) is the most thorough study of "Little Mac."

SHERMAN, WILLIAM T. Recently reissued, Lloyd Lewis's Sherman: Fighting Prophet (New York: Harcourt, 1958) is the leading study of the fiery Ohioan. Running a close second, and also available in a new edition, is B. H. Liddell Hart's Sherman: Soldier, Realist, American (New York: Praeger, 1959).

Stevens, Thaddeus. This Radical demagogue who led the congressional fight against Lincoln and who railroaded Andrew Johnson to impeachment charges defies objective treatment by biographies. The definitive study of Stevens is yet to be written; the better of several works published to date is Ralph Korngold, *Thaddeus Stevens* (New York: Harcourt, 1955).

#### BIOGRAPHICAL STUDIES - SOUTHERN

Three available works offer excellent sketches of Southern military leaders and their participation in the war:

Freeman, Douglas S., Lee's Lieutenants (3 vols. New York: Scribner, 1942-1944). This is the most exhaustive study ever written of an army and the men who led it and its corps. No writer can ever improve on this history of the Army of Northern Virginia.

Horn, Stanley F., The Army of Tennessee (Norman: Un. of Oklahoma, 1953). The only modern study of the Confederacy's Western army, the work offers poignant views of such commanders as Braxton Bragg, Joseph E. Johnston, and John Bell Hood.

Warner, Ezra J., Generals in Gray (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 1959). Sketches and illustrations of the 425 men who attained the rank of general in the Confederate armies makes this a necessary reference.

For individual leaders, the following are the better works available: Beauregard, P. G. T. Harry Williams, Beauregard: Napoleon in

Gray (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 1955) is at present the unchallenged source, and most researched study.

Davis, Jefferson. A scholarly and comprehensive study of the Confederate president remains to be written. Two recent volumes by Hudson Strode (New York: Harcourt, 1955-1959), while possesesd of flawless grammar, nevertheless are unbalanced and pedantic. Earlier, out-of-print biographies by William E. Dodd, Robert W. Winston and Robert McElroy present more accurate and less sentimental pictures. Davis's political problems are discussed in a well-written but also out-of-print treatise by Rembert W. Patrick, Jefferson Davis and His Cabinet.

Forrest, Nathan Bedford. Slave trader, cavalry leader par excellence, and founder of the Ku Klux Klan, "Old Bedford" was an
unusual, but unusually exciting, figure. Robert Selph Henry's
"First with the Most" Forrest (Jackson, Tenn.: McCowat-Mercer,
1961) effectively removes the man from much of the myth that has
long shrouded his true nature and exploits.

Jackson, Thomas J. The incomparable "Stonewall" Jackson has been the subject of three outstanding biographies. Newest among the trio is Lenoir Chambers' farsighted Stonewall Jackson (2 vols. New York: Morrow, 1960). For pure readability, Frank E. Vandiver's Mighty Stonewall (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1957) is unexcelled. On the other hand, many military students still consider as the most accurate portrait of "Old Jack" G. F. R. Henderson's Stonewall Jackson and the American Civil War (New York: Longmans, 1960), originally published in 1890.

Johnston, Joseph E. Gilbert E. Govan and James Livingood, A Different Valor (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1956) is the only modern study of the enigmatic "Uncle Joe." Notwithstanding its detail and heavy documentation, the study is as pro-Johnston as the commander's own memoirs, Narrative of Military Operations, edited by Frank E. Vandiver (Bloomington: Indiana University, 1959).

Lee, Robert E. Awarded the Pulitzer Prize, Douglas S. Freeman's R. E. Lee (4 vols. New York: Scribner, 1934-1935) has often been termed the best biography in American literature.

Longstreet, James. Two works are available on "Lee's War Horse,"

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the giant who commanded the famed First Corps. D. B. Sanger and T. R. Hay have co-authored a penetrating study, James Long-street (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 1952), that elevates "Old Pete" from much of the censure of past generations. Longstreet's memoirs—detailed, prejudiced, and provocative—have also been annotated and republished: From Manassas to Appomattox, edited by James I. Robertson, Jr. (Bloomington: Indiana University, 1960).

Among the scores of new releases, the following stand out as worthwhile or stimulating contributions: Fo

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Battles of the Civil War [Kurz & Allison prints] (Little Rock: Pioneer Press, 1960).

Boatner, Mark M., III, The Civil War Dictionary (New York: McKay, 1959).

Catton, Bruce, The American Heritage Picture Book of the Civil War (New York: Doubleday, 1960).

Dawson, Sarah Morgan, A Confederate Girl's Diary, edited by James I. Robertson, Jr. (Bloomington: Indiana University, 1960).

Eisenschiml, Otto, The Hidden Face of the Civil War (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1961).

----, Why the Civil War? (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1958).

Esposito, Vincent, ed., The West Point Atlas of American Wars (2 vols. New York: Praeger, 1959).

Fay, Edwin H., This Infernal War, edited by Bell I. Wiley (Austin: Un. of Texas, 1958).

Jones, Katharine M., Heroines of Dixie (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1955).

Kean, R. G. H., Inside the Confederate Government, edited by Edward Younger (New York: Oxford University, 1957).

McKitrick, Eric L., Andrew Johnson and Reconstruction (Chicago: Un. of Chicago, 1960).

Sharkey, Robert P., Money, Class, & Party: An Economic Study of Civil War and Reconstruction (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1959).

Silber, Irwin, ed., Songs of the Civil War (New York: Columbia University, 1960).

Tucker, Glenn, High Tide at Gettysburg (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1958).