

Confederate Soldiers in the American Civil War, Mark Hughes. Savas Beatie, California, 2019, 159 pages, \$15.95 (Paperback), a Tennessee Valley Civil War Round Table review by Ed Kennedy.

Mark Hughes has written a great primer for those who are new to studying the War Between the States. Chocked full of period “images”, this book gives a great overview into the culture of the period. It is not a definitive history but serves to whet the appetite of those who do not have an in-depth understanding of the war. It is a “picture book”. The table of contents gives a fast overview of the topics illustrated. They range from enlisting in the armies to technology, and POWs among other topics.

What should be interesting to the reader are the numerous descriptions and captions for images not usually seen in other publications. One would think that after all the books being printed, the images would be the same ones. Not so with this book. There are a plethora of images and they are well-annotated with interesting narratives.

Hughes does a very good job of tying the images to historical facts regarding the war. Prisoners are not just soldiers who are captured ---- they are used as teaching points. He uses the POW images to describe prisoner camps on both sides and the “exchange” system which eventually broke-down. The images serve as a means by which to discuss the war in finite “bytes”. For example, the war at sea is concisely addressed by giving the history of specific ships ---- such as the CSS Chicora. The Chicora’s history is the background for an explanation of the blockade. Hughes even includes an image of one of his ancestors, Andrew Jackson Hughes explaining what happened to each veteran. The end of the book has interesting information on the “last” Confederate soldier; researching Confederate ancestors; an excellent glossary of period terms; and geographic points of interest in the South (including short descriptions, website addresses and locations).

I highly recommend this book for high school students to senior citizens who don’t have a depth of knowledge regarding the war but would like to learn more.