

## John Bell Hood and the War for Southern Independence

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future. Grant examines working communities in Missouri and Colorado in detail, along with similar schemes that existed only in futurists' fertile imaginations. The nineteenth century's most successful intentional community, the Mormons of Utah, receives only passing reference. Grant might have related the Mormons' efforts to the overall idea of self-help. Grant concludes with a review of more recent self-help programs, including victory gardens, barter systems, crop gleaning, farmers' cooperatives, short line railroads on abandoned routes, and such communal projects as the Catholic Workers Movement's Tivoli Farm and Jim Jones's ill-fated People's Temple. The actual connections between the 1890s efforts and these later programs are not well-defined, however, and Grant concludes his work rather abruptly, with some loose ends remaining.

The self-help programs of the 1890s had much in common, especially the idea that hard work could solve the nation's problems. Also central was the idea that workers could not wait for government or large corporations to provide answers. A third common feature was the temporary nature of the schemes. Once prosperity returned, community gardens reverted to other uses and workers abandoned cooperative efforts for more rewarding jobs. Nonetheless, as Grant's informative work demonstrates, the idea of self-help has become a permanent feature of Americans' response to economic hard times in the twentieth century. This book serves as a good introduction to a topic that has received scant scholarly attention. It is too brief, however, to accomplish much more than that. Scholars of economic history or the Gilded Age, as well as the general public, will find a wealth of information and insight in this skillfully researched and highly readable monograph. Perhaps more extended studies of the subject will grow out of what Grant has begun.

UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA

KEVIN BOATRIGHT

*John Bell Hood and the War for Southern Independence*, by Richard M. McMurry. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1982. xi, 239 pp. \$19.50 cloth.

This well-researched and equally well-written work, winner of the 1982 Mrs. Simon Baruch University Award of the Daughters of the Confederacy, seeks to show how the tragic career of John Bell Hood reflected the virtues and failures of the antebellum South and profoundly influenced the conduct and outcome of the Civil War. Born in Kentucky in 1831, Hood entered the United States Military Academy in 1849. He had both academic and disciplinary problems at West

Point. Upon graduation in 1853 he was relegated to service with the infantry—the least desirable assignment. During the fifties Hood served at isolated posts in California and Texas where he lived the usual humdrum and trying existence that caused so many of his fellow army officers to resign their commissions. He grew to love Texas, however, and when his home state failed to secede from the Union, Hood decided to enter the Confederate army as a volunteer from Texas in 1861.

Because of his West Point background, some combat experience against the Indians, and his service in Texas, in the spring of 1862 he was appointed a brigadier general in command of the Texas Brigade that would gain such fame as a part of the Army of Northern Virginia. It was during the peninsular campaign that Hood first achieved recognition as an audacious battle leader. He was instrumental in achieving the Confederate victory at Gaines Mill. Later Hood won further recognition for bravery at the second Battle of Bull Run and probably staved off total defeat for Lee's army in his first setback at Antietam. Hood's troops, however, always suffered heavy casualties. The wonder is that he was not killed or wounded long before his left arm was shattered at Gettysburg. By this time he was a major general in command of the Texas Division.

Upon recovery, Hood's division as part of James Longstreet's 1st Corps was transferred to the western theater of operations in support of the beleaguered Army of Tennessee that had been driven from Chattanooga into northwest Georgia. While rallying his Texans at a critical moment during the Battle of Chickamauga, Hood was struck in the right leg and fell from his horse. His damaged limb was taken off at the thigh. He then spent the winter of 1863-64, an unusually frivolous social season in Richmond, basking in the glory he had achieved. It was at this time that the "martyr to the Confederacy" as Mrs. Stephen Mallory described Hood, was promoted to the rank of lieutenant general and assigned, despite his lack of administrative and logistical experience, to command a corps in the Army of Tennessee, now under the command of Joseph E. Johnston, who had replaced Braxton Bragg following the disasters of Missionary Ridge and Lookout Mountain.

The climax to Hood's career came on July 17, 1864, when he was advanced to the rank of four-star general and given command of the Army of Tennessee following the months of retreat from Dalton, Georgia to Atlanta. Five months later, he witnessed his army fleeing in complete disorder after its almost total destruction by George Thomas's army at the Battle of Nashville. Following the Civil War Hood married and eventually settled in New Orleans. His business

activities provided him with an adequate living. He was most interested, however, in defending his military record against the charges that he was guilty of so many blunders. The final tragedy in his life came in 1879 when both he and his wife died of yellow fever during the terrible epidemic of that year. In addition, one of his eleven children preceded him in death and the others were orphaned.

McMurry, a Civil War historian who teaches at North Carolina State University, tries to show that the very qualities that made Hood famous as a superb brigade commander—personal courage, elan, consummate horsemanship, constant readiness to attack and conduct bold assaults, plus an over reliance on luck—in the end proved to be his undoing in upper echelons of command. He paid too little attention to planning and often violated the key principle of coordination of command. Hood was, indeed, something of a hopeless romantic. Along with so many products of the militant South he believed “any one Southerner could lick any ten Yankees,” and failed to understand that the Civil War was a stepping-stone to total war wherein the material resources of the North foredoomed the total defeat of the South. In a sense, the decision to attempt secession under such circumstances was just as rash a gamble as was Hood’s attempt to gain some astonishing victory in Tennessee or Kentucky, in the aftermath of the fall of Atlanta and Sherman’s subsequent march to Savannah. In the final analysis, the issue of defeat or victory in the Civil War was decided not so much by generalship as the ability of one side or the other to replace its manpower, material resources, and monetary losses more adequately than the other in the desperate quest for total victory.

There are a few typographical errors in the book. Despite such minor faults, and a need for more attention to the Gettysburg campaign, the book was delightful to read. Particularly enlightening and enjoyable was the section on Hood’s activities in pleasure-driven Richmond in the winter of 1863–64. It reads like the last effort of members of a society to live the good life before the final disaster befalls them.

UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA

ALVIN R. SUNSERI

*God and General Longstreet: The Lost Cause and the Southern Mind*, by Thomas L. Connelly and Barbara L. Bellows. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1982. 158 pp. Note on sources, index. \$12.95 cloth.

According to the authors of this little book, the southern mind cannot unburden itself of the memory of a lost civil war. Obviously, the term

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