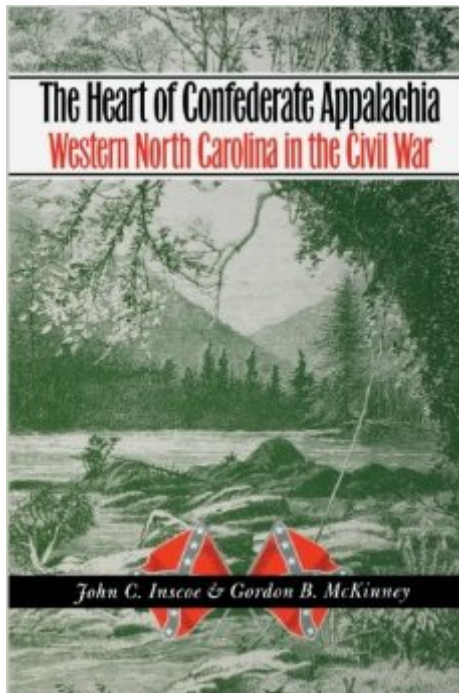


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The Heart Of Confederate Appalachia: Western North Carolina In The Civil War (Civil War America)



Synopsis

In the mountains of western North Carolina, the Civil War was fought on different terms than those found throughout most of the South. Though relatively minor strategically, incursions by both Confederate and Union troops disrupted life and threatened the social stability of many communities. Even more disruptive were the internal divisions among western Carolinians themselves. Differing ideologies turned into opposing loyalties, and the resulting strife proved as traumatic as anything imposed by outside armies. As the mountains became hiding places for deserters, draft dodgers, fugitive slaves, and escaped prisoners of war, the conflict became a more localized and internalized guerrilla war, less rational and more brutal, mean-spirited, and personal--and ultimately more demoralizing and destructive. From the valleys of the French Broad and Catawba Rivers to the peaks of the Blue Ridge and Great Smoky Mountains, the people of western North Carolina responded to the war in dramatically different ways. Men and women, masters and slaves, planters and yeomen, soldiers and civilians, Confederates and Unionists, bushwhackers and home guardsmen, Democrats and Whigs--all their stories are told here.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

In *The Heart of Confederate Appalachia: Western North Carolina in the Civil War*, John C. Inscoe and Gordon B. McKinney present a convincing account of antebellum and war-time culture in mountainous western North Carolina, a region they define as seventeen counties bordering four

states. More precisely, Inscoe and McKinney offer a revised portrayal of antebellum Appalachian North Carolina then emphasize its interplay with the Civil War in political, economic, and social terms. Primarily, this is an attempt to investigate the many ways the war influenced a regional community and the way in which the community responded to a war-time situation. Inscoe and McKinney's version of antebellum mountain culture is largely revisionist history: not-so-isolated mountains inhabited by diverse populations, an interdependent class structure in place since settlement, a political dominance by slave-owners, an economy connected to and somewhat dependent upon larger outside markets, the prevalence of slavery and a willingness by residents to participate in the slave system, slave-owners involved in non-agricultural pursuits, slaves engaged in non-agricultural work (mines, stores, mills, hotels), and so forth. In ways, the highlanders and their region appear very typical of people throughout the antebellum South. Inscoe and McKinney's treatment of the war is generally social history, although their account differs significantly from that of other social historians. For their study, they chose a relatively rural region which seldom hosted significant military operations – in essence, a more typical home front. As a result, they claim to offer better analysis about the war's impact on civilian life.

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