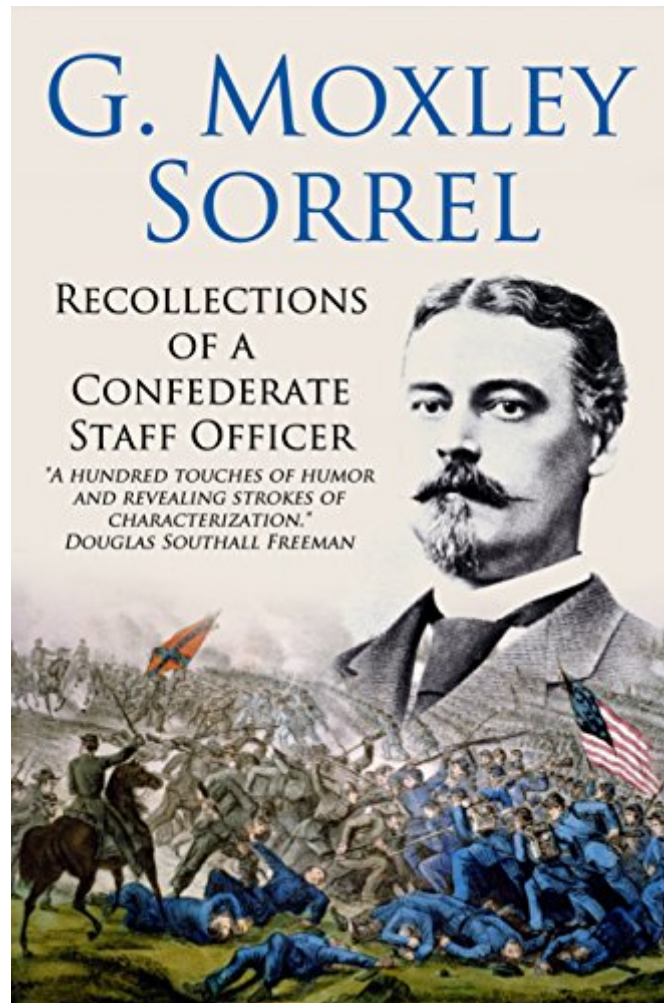




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# Recollections Of A Confederate Staff Officer



## Synopsis

“[Longstreet’s] de facto chief of staff, Lieutenant Colonel Moxley Sorrel, was the best staff officer in the Confederacy. The Journal of Military History

At the tender age of just twenty-three Gilbert Moxley Sorrel earned his commission as captain and was posted as General James Longstreet’s chief-of-staff. Through the next three years he would remain by Longstreet’s side, rising to the ranks of Major and Lieutenant Colonel, until he was eventually given command of his own brigade within Major General William Mahone’s division. Moxley Sorrel made an immediate impression on Longstreet who wrote that he “came into the battle as gaily as a beau, and seemed to receive orders which threw him into more exposed positions with particular delight. Indeed he went on to witness some of the most famous battles of the American Civil War and his experiences are recorded here, from Manassas to Seven Pines, Sharpsburg to Fredericksburg, Gettysburg to Petersburg. He was even with Longstreet at the Battle of Wilderness when Longstreet was struck down by a bullet coming from their own men. As Longstreet’s right hand man through the war until 1864 Moxley Sorrel was put into contact with some of the most remarkable figures of the Confederate army, and they are all vividly portrayed within his memoirs. At Petersburg, during the Battle of Hatcher’s Run, he was wounded and feared mortally so, eventually he recovered but his military career ended here. The historian Douglas Southall Freeman wrote that Moxley Sorrel’s Recollections of a Confederate Staff Officer contains “a hundred touches of humor and revealing strokes of swift characterisation. Once the war ended Moxley Sorrel returned to the south where he entered business. His Recollections of a Confederate Staff Officer was published in 1905. He died in 1901 in Roanoke, Virginia.

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Short & sweet, I just started to read this book last night. I been reading civil war books for 50 plus years and a long time member of the Sons of Civil War Veterans, so you know I'm into it. BUY THIS BOOK, it has more insight into the officers who fought the war, then any other book, I ever read. He makes it clear, its his insight, he calls it like he feels is right. He gets down and dirty, after the war, he was sitting with General Johnson talking about his scars. One big one on his head, he asked where that came from. Johnson reply was a cherry tree that he fell out of and had to run for it, with the farmer close behind. Buy it.

Sorrel's prose is graceful and direct. His 'Recollections of a Confederate Staff Officer' is admirably accessible, interesting, revealing and colorful. Reading this short book, I was repeatedly conscious of deja vu: Sorrel's 'Recollections' must, as a matter of ratio of quotation and/or paraphrase to its entire text, be among the most frequently utilized of Civil War memoirs in the preparation of newer and broader histories and analysis.

But he was essential to General Longstreet. He had the job of understanding and interpreting the general's intentions. This meant understanding his language and way of expressing himself.

For the CW buff, especially Southerners, very interesting read offering insights into the character and mindset of some of the most well known Confederate officers, as well as anecdotal stories.. General Sorrel clearly was a well educated Southern gentleman and the quintessential officer of the CSA. Some specific recollections don't go into as much detail as some readers might like, but thankfully, neither does he bore us with minutia of detailed troop movements, etc, either. As close as any of us will come to actually listening to an old war veteran tell tales of his experiences during this war.

Excellent memoir of one who was in a position to see the inner workings of the high command of the Army of Northern Virginia. The descriptions of the appearance, foibles, and character of key Confederate commanders are extremely valuable. As one who writes about this period, the information in Sorrel's work is invaluable.~ ~ Conflicting Loyalties (Navy Gray Book 1)

This book was written some period of time after the Civil War and I enjoyed reading as he was close to Gen. Lee and Longstreet. You got the feeling of the urgent request for information from the commanders to make decisions in their favor. I enjoyed reading it and found it good to follow.

Good good book

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