

Testimonials

As highlighted in the Acknowledgements, many people have supported my research. In line with “blurbs” commonly found on book covers, several of these kind individuals have graciously written testimonials for my eBook. This plays a vital role in building trust and credibility in the work. I am very thankful for their warm words, which I share below.

During my extensive Petersburg research, I became aware that the least understood and the most mysterious battle of the campaign was the Battle of Hatcher's Run, February 5-7, 1865. Consequently, I was eager to help Nigel Lambert with his research on the battle. Nigel has unearthed important primary sources that reveal new details on this important battle. His writing is crucial because it addresses important questions facing Civil War historians studying the 1865 Petersburg Campaign.

The Army of the Potomac (AOP) suffered heavy casualties during the 1864 Overland Campaign and the opening battles of the Petersburg Campaign. These losses affected morale. The quality and training of the recruits that replaced these casualties were often minimal. As the AOP's first significant fighting in 1865, Nigel's work on Hatcher's Run shines a light on the state of that army. In the 5th Army Corps in particular, many brigades possessed large numbers of poorly trained, raw recruits. On the second day of the offensive, this corps suffered a humiliating rout with panicked troops engaging in friendly fire. Witnesses claimed that it was the corps's worst defeat of the war. Only nearby new breastworks and the setting of the sun saved the force.

Lee's Army of Northern Virginia (ANV) also experienced substantial attrition during the summer of 1864, especially among its officers. During the Fall, Jubal Early's Army in the Shenandoah Valley suffered a series of stinging defeats at the hands of Philip Sheridan. Much of Early's demoralized army rejoined the ANV at Petersburg in December 1864. By this time, desertions were a significant problem for Lee's army. Nigel's work on the Battle of Hatcher's Run examines the fighting capabilities of Lee's army.

On February 5, Lee attacked the AOP's 2nd Army Corps led by General Andrew Humphreys. The former Confederate Valley troops, now organized as the Second Army Corps commanded by John B. Gordon, were ordered to attack the Union left. However, these attacks were feeble and failed to penetrate the thin Union picket line. Additionally, no counter-battery tactics were used against the few Federal cannons present. Lee showed his distress at the offensive capabilities of his troops.

On the following day, in a defensive role, Gordon's troops performed significantly better. However, it was Mahone's division under Barney Finegan, from the Third Army Corps, that dealt the crushing attack and routed the Federal force. These troops still maintained their fighting elan and, at this stage of the war, represented Lee's elite soldiers.

Nigel weaves all of this into a detailed and engaging account, featuring informative, colorful maps.

Bryce A. Suderow, is a renowned Petersburg Civil War historian and co-author of the award-winning two-volume work, *"The Petersburg Campaign"* (2014) with Edwin C. Bearss. Suderow has published widely in magazines and online sites. He was a primary editor in compiling the *Supplements of the Official Records*. His name appears in the credits of many seminal Petersburg works.

Retired Scientist Nigel Lambert has lent us a hand from across the water (from the United Kingdom, to be precise) to close one of the few remaining gaps in the studies of the nine Federal offensives at Petersburg. No previous historian has focused as fully on the Eighth Offensive, at Hatcher's Run, February 5-7, 1865. He has diligently researched, skillfully written, and creatively illustrated a state-of-the-art account of its orders of battle and its unfolding. His exploration of the topic has brought a superior work of Civil War scholarship out of the previously prevalent mists of history.

John Horn, is an award-winning Civil War author and speaker. A member of the Chicago Civil War Round Table, he has published articles in *Gettysburg Magazine*, *North & South*, *Civil War Times Illustrated*, and *America's Civil War*. His book *"The Petersburg Regiment in the Civil War"* won the 2019 Army Historical Foundation Distinguished Writing Award for Unit History. His other books include: *"The Petersburg Campaign"* (1993), *"The Siege of Petersburg: The Battles for the Weldon Railroad, August 1864"* (2015), and *Lee Besieged: Grant's Second Petersburg Offensive, June 18 to July 1, 1864* (2025).

The February 5-7, 1865, Battle at Hatcher's Run finally gets the scholarly attention it has long deserved with Nigel Lambert's excellent study on that wintertime offensive. Deeply researched and well explained, Lambert's work helps readers better understand the participants and the conditions in which this previously underexamined phase of the Petersburg Campaign unfolded. Lambert not only provides a clear picture of the general officers' strategic and tactical decisions and their results, he also includes the experiences of the common soldiers, skilfully blending both perspectives. With its completion, now each of Gen. Grant's Petersburg Offensives has its own individual study. It is a true accomplishment and a worthy addition to the growing body of Petersburg Campaign scholarship.

Tim Talbott, is currently the Chief Administrative Officer for the Central Virginia Battlefields Trust in Fredericksburg. Before this, he was Director of Education, Interpretation, Visitor Services, and Collections at Pamplin Historical Park. He is the founding member and President of the Battle of New Market Heights Memorial and Education Association. He is a contributor and former book review editor for the *Emerging Civil War* blog, and has published articles in both book and scholarly journal formats.

Nigel Lambert's *Hatcher's Run* has combined his considerable research and writing skills to capture the drama and human complexity of a campaign that sets the stage for the end of the American Civil War. He writes in a lively and readable style that anyone; Civil War buffs, military strategists, and non-historian types will find enjoyable and useful. He meticulously probes all known sources; letters, journals, Official Records, and newspaper accounts to

provide a fresh and well-reasoned perspective of what happened at Hatcher's Run and has established himself as a Civil War historian destined to make a substantial contribution to American history.

William Thomas Venner, *Civil War historian, author of the regimental histories; 11th North Carolina Infantry, 7th Tennessee Infantry, 30th North Carolina Infantry, Hoosiers' Honor: 19th Indiana, and The 19th Indiana at Gettysburg.*