

What They Fought for 1861-1865

By James M. McPherson

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This slim volume from the Louisiana State University Press contains the typescript of the 1993 Walter Lynwood Fleming Lectures in Southern History. James M. McPherson, the Pulitzer Prize- winning author of BATTLE CRY OF FREEDOM (1988), presents three short commentaries on the essential question of why men in blue and grey assiduously tried to kill one another from 1861-1865. McPherson examines, in a cursory yet deliberate manner, why men enlisted and why they fought until death or the end of the war forced them to abandon the contest. This work is, admittedly only a prelude to a more complete study, but it is obvious that McPherson intends to explore new ground. In a frank and openly revisionist approach he asserts that ideology played a far more important role than previously believed. Generally speaking, the impression persists that Civil War soldiers, like their more modern counterparts, had little or no idea of what they were fighting for. In point of fact, the relevant monographs insist that masculine identity and unit loyalty were far more important to soldiers than freedom, patriotism, or other grandiose intellectualized sentiments. In the course of reading 25,000 letters and a hundred plus diaries, McPherson begs to differ. His reasoned and dissenting view was presented to three successive audiences at Louisiana State University in 1993. These lectures are only an appetizer: The main course awaits, but a mere taste is better than a sniff. The lectures are only slightly altered from their oral form and that may prove disappointing to some. Nevertheless, WHAT THEY FOUGHT FOR reveals that even the Civil War can produce new nuggets from the historical stream.

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Glenn Pryor:

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Ivan Dinkel:

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single aspect that maybe unidentified for but surely can become your mind friends. Imaging every single word written in a book then become one application form conclusion and explanation which maybe you never get ahead of. The What They Fought for 1861-1865 giving you a different experience more than blown away your mind but also giving you useful facts for your better life on this era. So now let us teach you the relaxing pattern this is your body and mind are going to be pleased when you are finished reading through it, like winning a casino game. Do you want to try this extraordinary spending spare time activity?

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