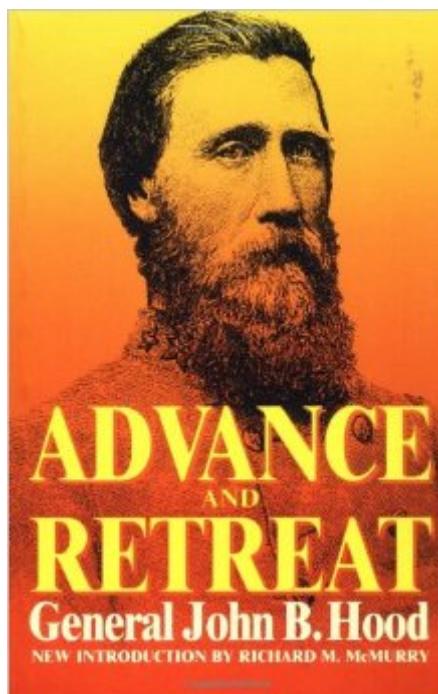


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# Advance And Retreat: Personal Experiences In The United States And Confederate States Armies



## Synopsis

When John Bell Hood entered into the services of the Confederate Army, he was 29 years old, a handsome man and courageous soldier, loyal to the ideal of Confederate Independence and eager to fight for it. He led his men bravely into the battles of Second Manassas, Gainesâ™s Mill, Sharpsburg, Fredericksburg, Gettysburg, and Chickamauga. He rose fast, attaining the temporary rank of full general, only to fall faster. Hood emerged from the war with his left arm shattered and useless, his right leg missing, his face aged far beyond his 33 years, and with his military reputation in disgrace. Blamed by contemporaries for contributing to the defeat of his beloved Confederacy, Hood struggled to refute their accusations. His most vehement critic, General Johnston, charged Hood with insubordination while serving under him and, after succeeding him in command, of recklessly leading Confederate troops to their "slaughter" and "useless butchery." Sherman, too, in his Memoirs, took a harsh view of Hood. Born of controversy, Advance and Retreat is of course a highly controversial book. It is also full of invaluable information and insights into the retreat from Dalton in early 1864, the fighting around Atlanta, and the disastrous Tennessee Campaign in winter of that year. Far from being a careful, sober, objective account, this book is the passionate, bitter attempt of a soldier to rebut history's judgment of himself as general and man.

## Book Information

Paperback: 368 pages

Publisher: Da Capo Press; Reprint edition (August 22, 1993)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0306805340

ISBN-13: 978-0306805349

Product Dimensions: 5 x 0.9 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 starsÂ See all reviewsÂ (16 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #791,026 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #68 inÂ Books > History > Americas > United States > Civil War > Regimental Histories #180 inÂ Books > History > Military > Regiments #978 inÂ Books > History > Americas > United States > Civil War > Campaigns & Battlefields

## Customer Reviews

After his decisive defeat on the third day at Gettysburg, General Robert E. Lee, as he rode among his men, was widely quoted as saying, "It's all my fault. It is I that have lost this fight, and you must

help me out of it the best way you can. All good men must rally." If only John Bell Hood had emulated his hero General Lee and accepted responsibility for the defeats at Franklin and Nashville, history would have been more sympathetic. Hood's defensive memoir, titled Advance and Retreat, is remarkable in what is not said. My copy of Advance and Retreat is a 1985 publication of The Blue and Grey Press. The first 68 pages provide a record of John Bell Hood's experiences up to the day that he reported for duty in the Army of Tennessee. The next 92 pages are Hood's detailed reply to General Johnston's criticism of Hood himself. The remaining chapters - Siege of Atlanta, Atlanta Untenable, Correspondence with Sherman on the Rules of War, Campaign to the Alabama Line, and Tennessee Campaign - are Hood's account of the disastrous period July through December, 1864. The final chapter titled Rashness - Johnston - Fabius - Scipio are Hood's reply to Sherman's pointed criticism: "I did not suppose that General Hood, though rash, would venture to attack fortified places like Allatoona, Resaca, Decatur, and Nashville; but he did so, and in so doing, played into our hands perfectly." John Hood was an ambitious man of great courage and valor that was promoted beyond his capability. The Confederacy was desperately searching for leaders in that summer of 1864 that could resist the inexorable Union tide. But how could any leader, even another Stonewall Jackson, have avoided defeat? Hood's tragedy was that he received what he coveted: leadership of the Army of Tennessee.

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