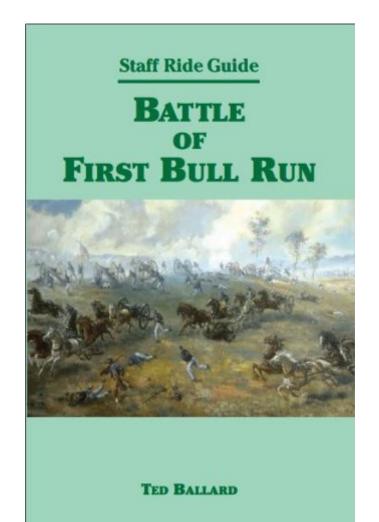
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Staff Ride Guide : BATTLE OF FIRST BULL RUN





Synopsis

The U.S. Army has long used the staff ride as a tool for professional development, conveying the lessons of the past to contemporary soldiers. In 1906 Maj. Eben Swift took twelve officer-students from FortLeavenworthâ [™]s General Service and Staff School to the Chickamaugabattlefield on the Armyâ ™s first official staff ride. Since that time Armyeducators have employed staff rides to provide officers a better under-standing of past military operations, of the vagaries of war, and of mili-tary planning. A staff ride to an appropriate battlefield can also enliven aunitâ [™]s esprit de corpsâ "a constant objective in peacetime or war. To support such Army initiatives, the Center of Military History pub-lishes staff ride guides, such as this one on the Battle of First Bull Run. This account is drawn principally from contemporary after action reports and from the sworn testimony of participants before the Joint Committeeon the Conduct of the War, a congressional entity created to investigatethe Union defeats at First Bull Run and Ballâ ™s Bluff.A First Bull Run staff ride can offer significant military lessons. Revisiting this battle through the â œeyesâ • of the men who were there, bothleaders and rank-and-file soldiers, allows one insights into decision mak-ing under pressure and the human condition during battle. The campaigncontains many lessons in command and control, communications, intelli-gence, logistics, the accommodation of advances in weapon technology, and mobilization in the absence of universal military training. First Bull Run was a first battleâ "a major engagement after a pro-longed period of peace. For some it constitutes a metaphor of the pricepaid for military unpreparedness. Hopefully, this volume will prove auseful tool for those conducting a staff ride to First Bull Run.

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