



General Robert F. Hoke: Lee's Modest Warrior

Daniel W. Barefoot

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He was the youngest major general in the Confederacy. He fought in the first battle of the Civil War and was still fighting after Appomattox. In between, he led what U. S. Grant later called the worst drubbing I ever got, at Cold Harbor. He was even rumored to be Lee's hand-picked successor as commander of the Army of Northern Virginia. Yet General Robert F. Hoke was never the subject of a full-length biography until Daniel W. Barefoot came along. In 1996, John F. Blair, Publisher, released Barefoot's *General Robert F. Hoke: Lee's Modest Warrior* to great acclaim. In April 2001, Blair will proudly release a paperback edition of this important Civil War biography. Barefoot argues that his subject was ignored by biographers for so long because of the greatest of Hoke's qualities of character - his sincere modesty. Hoke refused to use his fame from the war as a tool for political or material gain. He even refused the governorship of North Carolina when it was virtually handed to him. Instead, he quietly went back to work, hitching his war-horse to a plow. A leader in the rebuilding of North Carolina's economy, he did not talk about the war or even attend veterans' reunions, insisting that Southerners needed to put the war behind them and move on. Hoke's father died when the boy was only seven. Robert studied briefly at the Kentucky Military Institute, then returned home to take responsibility for the family businesses at the tender age of 16. When the war began, Hoke received a second lieutenant's commission. Within three years, he was a major general. Barefoot recounts Hoke's meteoric rise, as well as the skill and daring in battle that brought it about. He provides gripping accounts of the Seven Days, Second Manassas, Antietam, and Chancellorsville. His account of the Confederacy's last stand against Sherman has been called among the best from a Confederate perspective.

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