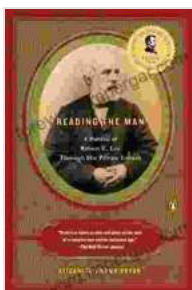


The Intimate Robert E. Lee: A Portrait Through His Private Letters



Robert E. Lee, the iconic Confederate general, is often portrayed as a stoic and enigmatic figure. However, a collection of his private letters reveals a more intimate and human side to this legendary commander.



Reading the Man: A Portrait of Robert E. Lee Through His Private Letters by Elizabeth Brown Pryor

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 3673 KB

Text-to-Speech : Enabled

Screen Reader : Supported

Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
Word Wise : Enabled
Print length : 692 pages



In *Portrait of Robert E. Lee Through His Private Letters*, historian Elizabeth Brown Pryor presents a comprehensive selection of Lee's correspondence from his youth to his final days. These letters, written to family, friends, and colleagues, offer a candid glimpse into Lee's thoughts, feelings, and beliefs.

Early Life and Education

Lee was born in Stratford Hall, Virginia, in 1807. His father, "Light-Horse Harry" Lee, was a Revolutionary War general, and his mother, Ann Carter Lee, came from a wealthy and influential family.

Lee's early letters reveal a close relationship with his siblings and a deep love for his family. He was also a gifted student, excelling in mathematics and engineering. In 1825, he entered the United States Military Academy at West Point, where he graduated second in his class.

Military Career

After graduating from West Point, Lee served in the U.S. Army for over 30 years. He distinguished himself in the Mexican-American War, where he earned the rank of colonel. However, when the Civil War broke out in 1861, Lee faced a difficult decision.

Lee's letters from this period reflect his inner turmoil. He was deeply patriotic and struggled with the idea of fighting against his own country.

However, he ultimately chose to side with his home state of Virginia and the Confederate cause.

Confederate Command

Lee commanded the Army of Northern Virginia, the most famous and formidable fighting force in the Confederate army. His brilliant leadership and tactical prowess earned him the respect of friend and foe alike.

Lee's letters from the war years provide a detailed account of his military campaigns. He shared his thoughts on strategy, tactics, and the challenges faced by his troops. He also expressed his growing disillusionment with the war and its devastating human cost.

Surrender and Legacy

After the surrender at Appomattox Court House in 1865, Lee returned to Virginia a broken man. His letters from this period reveal his deep despair and his struggle to find meaning in defeat.

Despite his failures on the battlefield, Lee's reputation as a great general and a noble character remained intact. He became a symbol of the Lost Cause of the Confederacy and a respected figure in both the North and the South.

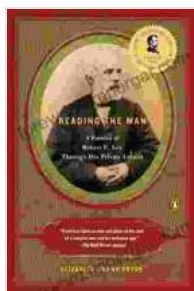
Personal Life

Beyond his military career, Lee was a devoted husband and father. His letters to his wife, Mary Custis Lee, are filled with love, affection, and concern for her well-being. He also wrote frequently to his children, offering them advice and guidance.

Lee's letters also reveal his deep faith in God. He was a devout Episcopalian who found solace and strength in his religion. He believed that God's will would ultimately prevail, even in the darkest of times.

Portrait of Robert E. Lee Through His Private Letters paints a fascinating and nuanced portrait of one of the most complex and enigmatic figures in American history. Through his own words, we gain a deeper understanding of Lee's motivations, beliefs, and personal struggles.

This book is an invaluable resource for anyone interested in the Civil War, American history, or the human story behind the legend of Robert E. Lee.



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