

The Top 5 Greatest Confederate Generals: Robert E. Lee, Stonewall Jackson, James Longstreet, Nathan Bedford Forrest, and Patrick Cleburne

Charles River Editors



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Includes pictures and maps. Includes bibliographies on each general for further reading. *Includes a Table of Contents.

With the exception of George Washington, perhaps the most famous general in American history might be Robert E. Lee, despite the fact he led the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia against the Union in the Civil War. Lee had distinguished himself so well before the Civil War that President Lincoln asked him to command the entire Union Army. Lee famously declined, serving his home state of Virginia instead after it seceded.

Lee's most famous subordinate, Thomas Jonathan Jackson earned his famous "Stonewall" moniker at the First Battle of Bull Run, when Brigadier-General Bee told his brigade to rally behind Jackson, whose men were standing like a stone wall. Lee's other most famous subordinate was James Longstreet, the man Lee called his "old war horse." Had Longstreet died on the field in early May 1864, he would almost certainly be considered one of the South's biggest heroes. However, it was his performance at Gettysburg and arguments with other Southern generals after the Civil War that tarnished his image.

One of the only bright spots in the West for the Confederacy was Irish immigrant Patrick Cleburne, whose successes earned him the nickname "Stonewall of the West". Where so many Confederates were failing, Cleburne's strategic tactics and bold defensive fighting earned him fame and recognition throughout the South, even leading Lee to call him "a meteor shining from a clouded sky."

Confederate Lieutenant General Nathan Bedford Forrest is possibly the war's most controversial soldier. A self-made man with no formal military training, Forrest spent the entire war fighting in the West, becoming the only individual in the war to rise from the rank of Private to Lieutenant General. Forrest has been credited with having killed 30 Union soldiers in combat and having 29 horses shot out from under him.

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