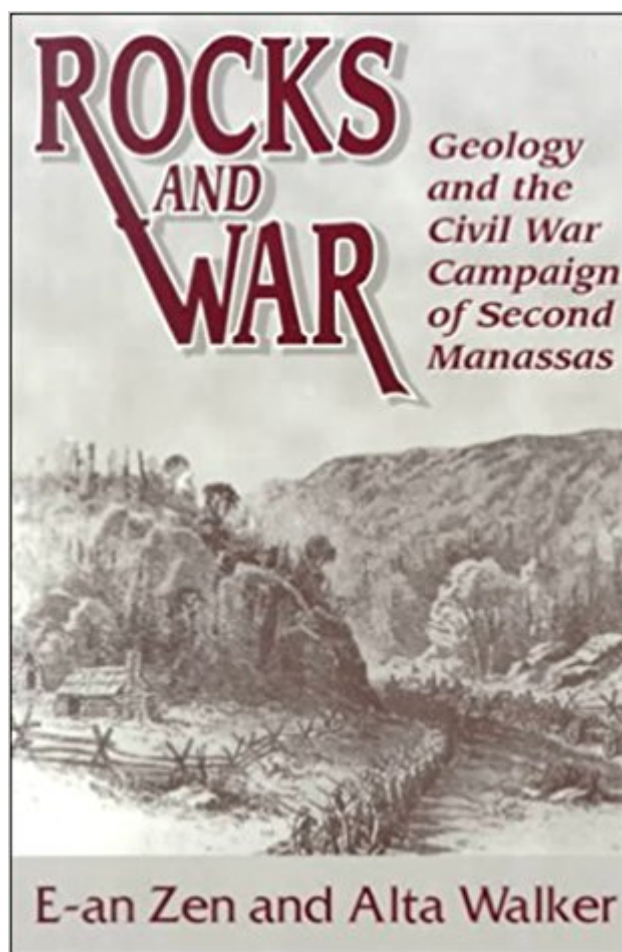




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Rocks And War: Geology And The Civil War Campaign Of Second Manassas



Synopsis

Here is the first study of the Battle of Second Manassas to show the importance of the landscape through which the opposing generals maneuvered.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

A novel approach to the study of the interplay between war and terrain. Readers of this book will gain a new way of interpreting Civil War battles.

Dr. E-an Zen, a geologist, retired from the U.S. Geological Survey, is now an Adjunct Professor at the University of Maryland. Dr. Alta Walker, a specialist in military geology, currently with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, is a published free-lance writer.

Rocks and War, a new publication by Dr. E-an Zen and Dr. Walker, is an interesting new perspective on the 2nd Bull Run/Second Mansass Campaign of 1862. In this book, they discuss topographic mapping, geologic provinces, and even the hardness of rocks that Confederate soldiers threw at advancing Union troops. The application of military geology to the campaign and battle show how land forms were used by both sides in their tactics both to their advantage, and to their disadvantage. The book has a number of interesting tidbits, such as how maps or the lack of them contributed to the sucess and confusion of the armies. Or how the Union troops used gullies and other landforms in their retreat from Chinn Ridge to Henry Hill. I recommend this book for anyone

with an interest in this campaign, as it gives added insights and information into the "whys" and "wherefores" of the actions and reactions of the two armies. And it's a good read. I look forward to seeing more books showing the military geology of different Civil War campaigns.

This is an interesting study of the geology of Northern Virginia and its significance in the second battle of Bull Run. It's a thin volume and I recommend it to students of the Civil War even if you aren't particularly into geology. Knowledge of landforms was vital to officers as they planned strategy and movements. For example, a steep slope can cut off an escape route and provide a likely spot for an ambush. I wish the illustrations had been larger; some of the maps have been shrunk down to the point where they are difficult (even impossible) to read. The book does have a generous supply of photographs and I found the day-by-day narrative of the campaign to be easy to follow. I hope that the authors will produce more books on Civil War campaigns and the influence of geology.

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