



Confederate Seadog: John Taylor Wood in War and Exile

John Bell

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John Taylor Wood, the grandson of President Zachary Taylor and a nephew of Jefferson Davis, was one of the most daring and remarkable participants of the Civil War and among the few people to hold dual rank in the Confederate military as a captain in the Confederate States Navy (CSN) and a colonel in the cavalry. Wood was widely known for his wartime activities, but at the time of his death in 1904, he had been largely forgotten.

This work combines a thorough biography of John Taylor Wood and three of his memoirs that were published in *Century* magazine between 1885 and 1898. The biography gives special attention to Wood's childhood and youth, such as his harrowing experiences in Florida during the Seminole Wars, his service in the United States Navy during and after the Mexican War, his experiences in California during the Gold Rush and his leading role among the members of the little-known postwar Confederate naval colony in Halifax, Nova Scotia, organized to fight the Fenian forces for the British in 1866.

His writings about the war and other literary activities, and his friendship with William Hall, the first African American to win the Victoria Cross are covered. The memoirs in this book cover his service on the CSS *Virginia*, the cruise of the CSS *Tallahassee* (of which he was the commander), and his gutsy escape from the South as the Confederacy collapsed.

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