



Brigadier General John D. Imboden: Confederate Commander in the Shenandoah

Spencer C. Tucker

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" John D. Imboden is an important but often overlooked figure in Civil War history. With only limited militia training, the Virginia lawyer and politician rose to the rank of brigadier general in the Confederate Army and commanded the Shenandoah Valley District, which had been created for Stonewall Jackson. Imboden organized and led the Staunton Artillery in the capture of the U.S. arsenal at Harper's Ferry. He participated in the First Battle of Bull Run/Manassas and organized a cavalry command that fought alongside Stonewall Jackson in his Shenandoah Valley Campaign. The Jones/Imboden Raid into West Virginia cut the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad and ravaged the Kanawha Valley petroleum fields. Imboden covered the Confederate withdrawal from Gettysburg and later led cavalry accompanying Jubal Early in his operations against Philip Sheridan in Sheridan's Shenandoah Valley Campaign. Imboden completed his war service in command of Confederate prisons in Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi. Spencer C. Tucker fully examines the life of this Confederate cavalry commander, including analysis of Imboden's own post-war writing, and explores overlooked facets of his life, such as his involvement in the Confederate prison system, his later efforts to restore the economic life of his home state of Virginia by developing its natural resources, and his founding of the city of Damascus, which he hoped to make into a new iron and steel center. Spencer C. Tucker, John Biggs Professor of Military History at the Virginia Military Institute, is the author of *Vietnam* and the author or editor of several other books on military and naval history. He lives in Lexington, Virginia.

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