



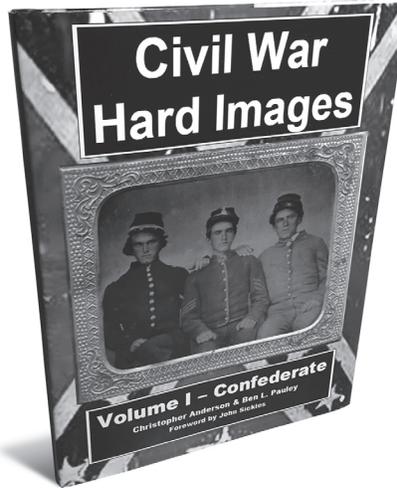
## 6-Point Scoring System Grades Images

By RONALD S. CODDINGTON

Photo enthusiasts cruise tables at Civil War shows hunting for that singular ambrotype or tintype that will take its rightful place as the crown jewel in their collections.

The appeal of that stellar image, according to Christopher Anderson and Ben L. Pauley in their new book, *Civil War Hard Images*, is based on defined criteria—brightness, clarity/resolution, condition, content and size. The soldier's identity and record, if known, adds luster to the jewel. These points form the criteria for a scoring system developed by the authors as a guide for evaluating quality and estimating cost.

The volume, the first in a planned series, is packed with approximately 100 tintypes and ambrotypes (see gallery beginning on page 16). Renowned collector and *MI* senior editor emeritus John Sickles observes in the foreword, "The ability to look into the eyes of those who fought and often died for the cause is very appealing to those who have learned to appreciate the sacrifice that the individual soldier paid in



### *Civil War Hard Images: Volume I—Confederate*

By Christopher Anderson and Ben L. Pauley  
Hardcover, 211 pages  
SoldierCollectibles.com  
\$60.00

the War."

The 50-point scoring system is applied to all the photographs in the book. Each image is graded and the individual scores appear on two-page spreads dedicated to each photograph. The four visual criteria, brightness, clarity/resolution, condition and content, are scored at 10 points each. Size and identity/record receive five points each.

None of the images receive 50 points, and only a few top 40. The system is a good one, though the authors acknowledge that scoring is subjective. Still, the lack of a perfect 50 suggests that Anderson and Pauley played by the rules they created and resisted the temptation to inflate grades. Some of the selected images are damaged and received grades that reflect the condition, including a badly cracked ambrotype of a lieutenant from a Georgia regiment that received a 21.

Is there a perfect 50 in your collection? Anderson and Pauley's scoring system and book may help you determine if your images make the grade.

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