Few Civil War generals attracted as much debate and controversy as Pierre Gustav Beauregard. He combined brilliance and charisma with arrogance and histrionics. He was a Catholic Creole in a society dominated by white Protestants, which made him appear exotic compared with others.

He was reviled by Jefferson Davis and often mocked by diarist Mary Chesnut. Yet, he was popular with his officers and men. Outside of Lee, he was the South’s most consistently successful commander. But he lived his life in the shadow of his one major defeat: Shiloh.