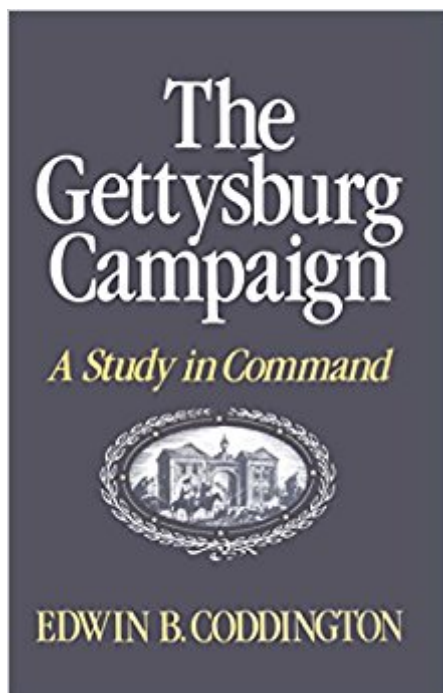


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The Gettysburg Campaign: A Study In Command



Synopsis

The Battle of Gettysburg remains one of the most controversial military actions in America's history, and one of the most studied. Professor Coddington's is an analysis not only of the battle proper, but of the actions of both Union and Confederate armies for the six months prior to the battle and the factors affecting General Meade's decision not to pursue the retreating Confederate forces. This book contends that Gettysburg was a crucial Union victory, primarily because of the effective leadership of Union forces—not, as has often been said, only because the North was the beneficiary of Lee's mistakes.

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Customer Reviews

I am not well read on the Civil War, so I cannot compare Coddington's work with true peers. That said, I am a well-read student of history; I have read countless histories, biographies, and battle descriptions. This is one of the absolute best books I have come across. I purchased this book in preparation for a trip to Gettysburg. My hope has been to learn about the battle on multiple levels and Coddington's work more than delivered. The narrative is engaging and writing with good color. The battle descriptions are technical and in loving detail. The discussion of strategy implied and realized is interesting and fair. I have enjoyed it immensely. As I continue to study the Civil War, I only hope that I have not read the best first.

This is a very comprehensive and well written account of the Gettysburg Campaign that flows

wonderfully. There are many books written about Gettysburg but none so straightforward and even handed as Professor Coddington. He framed the issues clearly and moved through the events and conflicting viewpoints effortlessly. This should be in every Civil War library.

This is the work which is chosen by battlefield guides as the primary source of information regarding the Gettysburg campaign. Well researched and documented; it offers insight into Lee's invasion into Pennsylvania. As the title suggests the reader understands the chain of command and why certain orders were not obeyed or coordinated properly. Did Lee take full command or delegate too much to his lieutenants? This is a question which will plague historians and may have haunted Lee himself. The facts for the most part have remained accurate in this book. We can never know what happened to exacting details during the battle due to the fog of war. However; because of Coddington's research we know the essence of the campaign and battle. There is a wealth of material on the campaign and battle to choose from. This still remains the go to work for historians and novices alike.

I'm not totally convinced that Coddington's work is the "Bible" of books on Gettysburg although it could be the closest on the subject. At least top "3" material! Coddington's details of the early Union and Confederate politics, strategy and marches to Gettysburg was very informative. Coddington's information builds the setting of this tremendous battle through both armies which allows for some very good reading. Coddington covers all three days of the battle with a good balance of coverage to the events. He also gets into the minds of popular key players such as Lee, Meade, Hancock, Sickles, Longstreet and others. His battle coverage at times is not the ultimate in detail as I have read in Harry Pfanz's work although it is valuable. I found Trudeau's book on Gettysburg to use more of that in his coverage though Coddington's use of references is a book in itself which is a true asset and superior to others. Written during the 60's Coddington was well ahead of his time in erasing popular battlefield myths that have grown over the years. He was very fair to veterans of the battle who have written about their experiences years after the battle in which may have conflicting reports. Coddington is very good at dispelling these accounts if needed which really gave this book a honest flavor without modern day politics getting into the way. It simply covers the campaign and leaves civilian life out of the battle that may leave some readers wanting more of it since the town of Gettysburg suffered from many hardships before, during and after the battle. Coddington sticks to the military drama with utmost focus. As the title states, it is a study of military command. This book is very complete and is an immense study with 574 pages of reading while the references stack this

monumental material well over 800 plus pages. If not a mandatory read, it is a must read for anyone serious about learning about Gettysburg. You can't be a good historian without this book as you owe to yourself to read it. 5 STARS

This is my favorite "Gettysburg book". Coddington renders a thorough analytical tome on the campaign. I found the writing to be impartial and guided mostly by historical facts. Yes, in parts Coddington does give his opinion but that is clearly implied in the narrative. I have the paperback edition and the maps are somewhat lacking in definition. Therefore, while reading have a Civil War Atlas handy. I found that this vastly increased my understanding and appreciation of the work. This work, in my opinion, is the gold standard of the Gettysburg genre. Excellent work.

great study material of civil war military leaders

Maybe the best single volume on the Gettysburg campaign.

I have been interested in the topic since studying it at West Point over 60 years ago. This has far more detail than we were exposed to back then. I found it fascinating but too much for the casually interested reader. Critiques commanders at levels down to division or brigade, often citing contemporary opinions of participants.

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