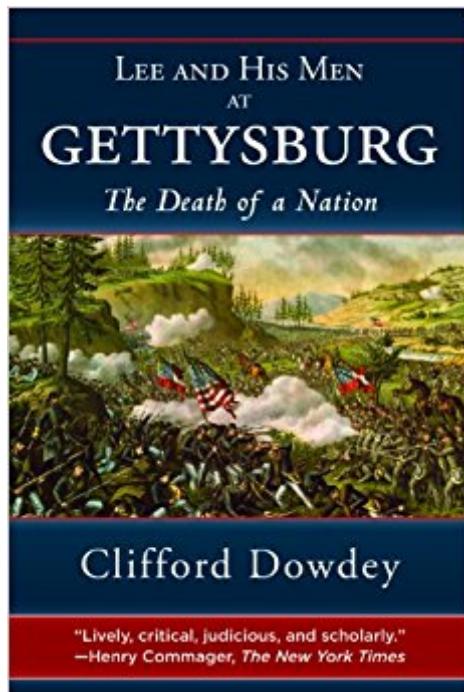


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Lee And His Men At Gettysburg: The Death Of A Nation



Synopsis

In this sweeping account Clifford Dowdey recreates one of the most important battles in U.S. history. With vivid and breathtaking detail, Lee and His Men at Gettysburg is both a historical work and an honorary ode to the almost fifty thousand soldiers who died at the fields of Pennsylvania. Written with an emphasis on the Confederate forces, the book captures the brilliance and frustration of a general forced to contend with overwhelming odds and in-competent subordinates. Dowdey not only presents the facts of war, but brings to life the cast of characters that defined this singular moment in American history.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is a southern view of Gettysburg written in the 1950s. The author's southern heart is shown by referring to the Confederate troops as patriots. The book provides a good discussion of the role that Davis played in limiting Lee's plans. Something that is missing in many accounts of Gettysburg. This book is strictly devoted to Lee's men so don't look for anything except passing reference to what was going on with Union troops. Detailed discussion of where various troops were during the battle are the meat of the book. Dowdey provides timelines for some of the events. In some cases

the timelines, especially regarding Longstreet's attack on the second day, don't support common wisdom. The story I learned was that Lee planned for Longstreet to lead an early morning attack on the second day. Yet the timelines show that Lee was studying the area where the attack to take place in the 8-9 AM time period, send a staff officer to find a route to move Longstreet's troops later than this all of which indicates that no dawn attack was planned. Much of the book is devoted to pointing out how Lee's generals failed him by basically not being Stonewall Jackson. Longstreet is given the bulk of the blame several pages are devoted to Longstreet's state of mind and pouting because Lee wouldn't take his advise. The best parts of the book are the sections that detail the fighting spirit of Lee's men. The major failing of the book is leaves the impression that Lee deserved victory and his brilliance was overcome by failure of those under him. I think that Lee must, as he did, take most of the blame for the defeat. He failed to plan the second and third day battles in sufficient detail. The disjointed attacks, some of which he directly observed, could have been prevented by prompt action of the commanding general. When I was learning to be an army officer we were taught that the leader is responsible for everything his unit does or fails to do. Lee obviously believed this and those writing about him and his men should also.

I found this analysis of the interactions of the Confederate Army leaders to be absolutely fascinating. Despite having read many other accounts of the battle at Gettysburg, this account from the perspective of the leaders in Lee's Army of Northern Virginia added significant clarification to the failures of the army to take advantage of opportunities as they occurred. Whether it is Ewell's failure to continue the battle for Culp's Hill, or Longstreet's reluctance to support Lee's battle strategy at the Round Tops and the final charge, this book offers plausible and well researched explanations of how and why they occurred. For a battle that ultimately determined the outcome of the war and the future of the nation, this book offers a view of exactly how close it came to being a completely different outcome. We tend to forget that outcomes in battles are not only defined by what happens in the "fog of war", but in the mentality and focus of the commanders. I highly recommend this book for those seeking to better understand how this seminal event in our history transpired from a different perspective.

Describes just one side of the battle, hardly mentioning the Federals. A lot of speculation on the inner thoughts and motivations of various Confederate officers without documentation. Particularly hard on Longstreet and Ewell and light on Lee.

Very interesting book, especially for those who have a great interest in the Civil War.

Great Read

Well researched

Not sure of star rating- I like the book. It is very personal in a sense and deals with INDIVIDUALS---not just sterile battles. More later when I finish it.

I love it

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