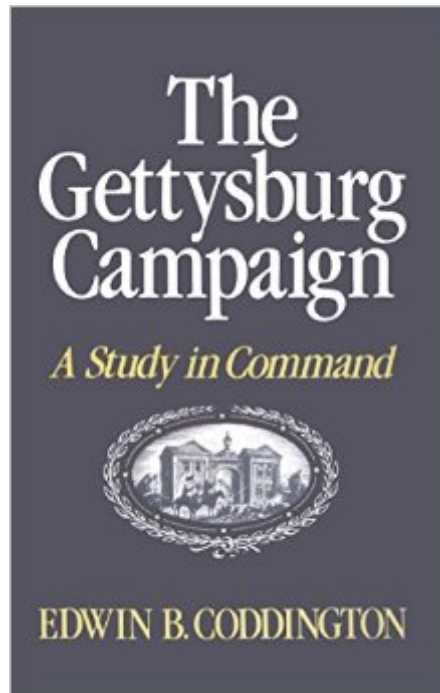


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The Gettysburg Campaign: A Study In Command



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.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Edwin Coddington's (1905-1963) "The Gettysburg Campaign" (1963) remains not only the seminal account of the Battle of Gettysburg but also a model of Civil War and historical writing. The book is an inspiring example of scholarship at its best. Coddington writes in a clear, eloquent, yet non-polemical style as he explores his subject. He does not back away from offering opinions and conclusions, which flow clearly from his narrative account. The reader can understand the basis of the judgments which Coddington offers. The account is detailed and yet selective. Coddington focuses on the broad picture of the Gettysburg story without getting bogged down in the minutiae and legends that mar some otherwise excellent treatments of this battle. Coddington focuses on "why" things happened as well as "what" happened. The reader is given a context for the Gettysburg campaign and is seldom at a loss over the reason the author is discussing and devoting

time to an issue. The book is thoroughly documented and the footnotes include much essential material. Coddington begins with a lengthy consideration of the factors that led Robert E. Lee to propose an invasion of the North following the Battle of Chancellorsville. He concludes with a discussion of the Confederate retreat from Gettysburg, culminating in the return to Virginia on July 14, 1863. He discusses well the Union pursuit and considers judiciously whether Meade should have been more aggressive in trying to cut off the fleeing foe. I found the factual account comprehensive on the major points of the Battle and careful and circumspect in its conclusions.

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