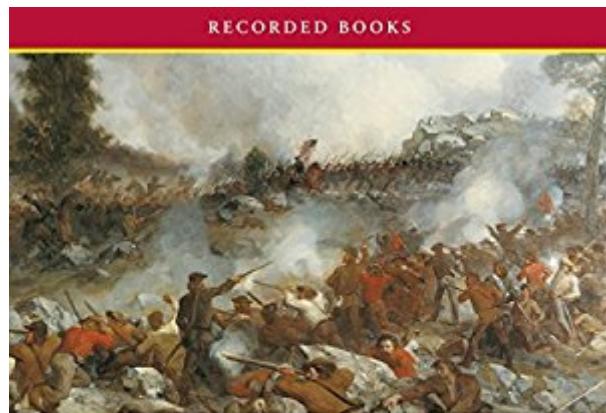


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Gettysburg



Stephen W. Sears
GETTYSBURG

voiced by Ed Sala



Synopsis

Best-selling author and acclaimed Civil War expert Stephen W. Sears, hailed by The New York Times Book Review as "arguably the preeminent living historian of the war's eastern theater," crafts what will stand the test of time as the definitive history of the greatest battle ever fought on American soil. Drawing on years of research, Sears focuses on the big picture, capturing the entire essence of the momentous three day struggle while offering fresh insights that will surprise even the best versed Civil War buffs.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Great book on Gettysburg. Very detailed, goes through the battle hour by hour. Also gives opinions on the various people who made fateful decisions, good and bad. Bought this on ebooks so hard to follow the action sometimes. Better to have a map of the battlefield handy. Well written but not in a textbook kind of way. Learned a lot, now when I go to Gettysburg will have a great picture in my mind of what took place and who was where.

If you are one who enjoys the study of Gettysburg, then this book should be on your list to read. A fascinating overview of why and how this battle was fought. As others have stated, I think we take The Killer Angels, and the movie Gettysburg and inadvertently believe it to be the definitive history of the battle. This book will help dispel the legends, and reveal what really occurred. It is nice to see (from my perspective) someone finally give General Meade, and the Army of the Potomac, the

credit they deserve. Gettysburg has always seemed to me to be the one place in time where history was written by the defeated, making the General almost an after thought to the result. Mr. Sears does a fantastic job laying out the criticism and the praise for men on both sides, and will bring the events together clearly and easy to understand. I highly recommend this book.

I was working in the Northeast for a couple of months last year (2015) and I would always drive past the exit for Gettysburg on US 15. (I drive charter buses, by the way) I always wanted to stop, however, I was driving a group of tourists around from NYC to Philly, and DC, then to Niagara and Boston. and this wasnt on our stops. So after my time was done with this group of people, I started heading back to Dallas. This time by myself and I decided I HAD to stop at the battlefield to look it over. I only spent four hours and never got to the west side of town where the initial battles took place. This book has me wanting to go back and explore that early battle area. I had heard of Lee, Jackson, Davis, Meade and a few others while taking American history in school, but to see the battlefield and all the monuments blew me away. I really had no idea what to expect when I got there and didnt know much of the battle itself. I can say that by reading this book, I now have a better understanding of what happened and how it happened. I am still reading the book and am learning more than I ever thought I would learn about the battle, and the days before it took place. The maps that are included also help draw a picture in ones mind where both sides and their lines were at during key times in the battle.

By far the best description of the Day 1 fighting that I have ever read. It was very clear about who was doing what, minimizing the listing of regiment number after regiment number which are meaningless to me. The day 2 fighting was particularly good on Sickles front. Picketts charge was also good, but the others have written better about the fighting at the Angle. Sears is more direct than Coddington in pointing out the numerous command failures by Lee, deliberately contrasting them with Meades sensible, defensive, comprehensive and consensus approach. No one has described better Meades defensive changes on Day 2. Lees hands-off management style just didn't work with his new and inexperienced lieutenants from his re-organization of the Army of North Virginia after the death of Stonewall Jackson. Longstreet's difficulties with Lees strategies are also fully and sympathetically aired. In a larger context, Sears shows a little bit more clearly than Coddington and Guelzo how Lee sought a Gettysburg - a climatic, decisive battle in Pennsylvania to force settlement negotiations. With Vicksburg lost, it was the only option left for the Confederacy. Lee got what he wanted, but clearly wasn't prepared for Gettysburg itself as Sears concisely

describes the series of cascading events that lead to his defeat. In my pantheon of the best books on Gettysburg, Sears ranks first, then Coddington, and then Guelzo. This is no criticism of Guelzo, who wrote quite a good book.

I reread this book recently (Kindle version) after having read the print copy a number of years ago. It is one of the rare books that is worth a second read. The research that has gone into this masterpiece is simply amazing. If you read only one book about Gettysburg, this is the one. Sears is a fine writer and the book holds up even though it was written more than a decade ago. If you have visited the town and battlefield, "Gettysburg" will bring it back to life. The cacophony of carnage, heroism, geography, needless loss of life, politics and pure chance that occurred over three days at this Civil War crossroad combine to make an indelible chapter in American history. Even though historians still debate a few points, including the actions of General Daniel Sickles on that fateful July 2nd, the historical accuracy and the evenhanded treatment of both sides adds luster to the book. You won't be disappointed.

Fascinating book, especially for anyone tired of books scapegoating individuals and oversimplifying the battle. I admit I read it slowly in order to take in the detail and study the maps but the history does pull you in. For me, it was better than any fiction account.

After my annual viewing of the film Gettysburg I was hungry for more detail and chose Stephen Sears book. There are many more complexities and nuances to the evolution of the Battle than you get in high school history. Sears describes the genesis of the campaign, the logic and reasoning behind it, and switches between both camps as they blunder towards each other to give you a sense of suspense. There were heroes and villains, laggards and fools, inspired moves and colossal failures. It is fascinating to watch how the fortunes of both sides sway one way or the other during the conflict. Sears places most of the blame for the catastrophe on Robert E. Lee, who handled his forces poorly and seemed not to recognize some of the weaknesses of his command decisions. A good read.

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