



High Tide at Gettysburg

Glenn Tucker

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High Tide at Gettysburg tells the story of the Army of Virginia. How near the South came to victory is clearly set forth in these pages. The author vividly conveys the background of the crucial battle of the Civil War so that the reader can fully appreciate its unfolding.

High Tide at Gettysburg Details

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Shirley Brown says

I really loved this book on the Battle of Gettysburg. It provided more personal details about the individuals involved in the Civil War and their personalities. Both sides of the Battle had excellent leaders and then some that were not so great. I had always read that General Robert E. Lee was a true gentleman, and from reading this book I think he was more than that. He truly cared about people regardless of which side of the they stood for. General Meade, I still don't think much about him as a great General, he was just there. The fighting was truly horrific for both sides, the Gray and the Blue. Actually, more deaths happened for the North than the South, even though the South lost the battle, or at least gave up and left before they were totally annihilated. A must read of Civil War Buffs!!

Michele says

One of the problems with this book is that when originally written (1950s) the style for historical works wasn't what you see today. It was okay to write things like "No army ever had more latent talent than the Army of Northern Virginia" without any reasoning. I am a bit surprised that there was ever a time when those sorts of blanket statements could be found in historical texts. I had a difficult time overlooking the style of writing. Tucker also spends an inordinate amount of time detailing who was riding where with whom and trying to set aright all sorts of Gettysburg Controversies.

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Bill Mason says

Outstanding historical account of the battle that decided the outcome of the war. So many mistakes committed by Lee, and he still almost won.

Ryan Adams says

This is a good comprehensive book on the battle of Gettysburg and 20 years ago it would have received 5 stars. The problem is that quite a few of the details are now wrong and facts are misrepresented. For example, this book still perpetuates the myth that the Confederates were going to Gettysburg for shoes. This is wrong and has been misquoted in textbooks and history books for too long. In addition, some of his facts on the third day come from 1st person narratives that have since been discredited. Also, his descriptions of Little Round Top also are from questionable sources. In his day, Glen Tucker did great research and wrote a definitive history of the battle, but we have learned so much more about the accuracy of what happened in the last 25 years that it is better to read one of the more modern accounts of the battle.

Scott says

This book is very detailed about the battle of Gettysburg - troop movements, placements, and strategy. It gives very interesting insight about the battle, but it may be a little Confederate heavy.

Paul says

Although the book is relatively old (1994, with the date missing in the book!), this is still the best of the books on Gettysburg that I have read. It is not too detailed, it tells a good story and it analyzes the reasons for the outcome of the battle in better summary form than any other book on Gettysburg that I can think of.

Keith says

If you love in depth information about the Battle of Gettysburg, this is a great read.

Robin Friedman says

A Good Introduction To The Battle Of Gettysburg

The Battle of Gettysburg (July 1 -- July 3, 1863) is the most - discussed battle of the Civil War. It provides endless materials for discussion on questions ranging from the reasons for the Confederacy's invasion of the North, the factors leading up to the battle, the strategy and tactics employed by the armies, how close the South came, or could have come, to achieving victory, and -- most importantly -- the significance of it all for our country.

Even with such recent studies of Gettysburg as those by Steven Sears (2003) and Noah Trudeau (2002) Tucker's 1958 book, "High Tide at Gettysburg" remains worth reading. There are immeasurable perspectives on this battle. I am finding that the reader can only work towards an understanding of it by reading several accounts. Tucker's book is less detailed than are the studies of Sears and Trudeau. But it is an easier read, it is well told, and it features many interesting biographical detail on many of the key figures of the battle. In terms of getting a grasp of the complex military actions, it might be better for the reader to start with Tucker before approaching Sears or Trudeau.

Tucker differs from Sears and Trudeau in that he takes a pro-South perspective. His focus is on the Army of Northern Virginia and on its heroics -- and its failures -- during the battle. There are moments when I felt Tucker was downplaying the Union effort at the battle to such a degree that he thought that the ultimate success or failure of the Southern effort was entirely in the South's hands. (Many years after the battle General George Pickett was asked why his charge failed. He replied "I think the Union Army had something to do with it.")

Tucker also takes a markedly Southern view of the meaning of the War. He sees it as a War for Southern Independence which reached its high tide at Gettysburg. He tells his story with drama and passion. He greatly downplays slavery as a motivating factor for the Civil War, contrary to most more recent accounts of

Civil War History. Again, he also tends to minimize the moral force of the Union's commitment, exemplified by the determination of President Lincoln to hold our country together as one nation rather than have it divide in two.

Tucker's approach is valuable because it emphasizes how people on both sides of the conflict were fighting for what they perceived as ideals. This is sometimes forgotten in more recent accounts and it goes a considerably way to explain the ferocity of the fighting. There is a great deal to be learned from Tucker as long as the reader approaches the book critically.

There has been endless discussion about why the Battle of Gettysburg turned out the way it did. In the final chapter of his book Tucker offers a list of his reasons. His list is thoughtful if not particularly surprising to students of the battle. The list will help the reader focus on the critical events of this fascinating battle and to reflect on their meaning.

Robin Friedman

Dianna says

Although I've been interested in the American Civil War for a long while, I haven't read as much on it - as is my practice with most historical periods, I've read overall histories supplemented by very singular ones and historical fiction (The Killer Angels and its accompaniments) - in the case of the Civil War, Bruce Catton's short history and a book called The Generals at Gettysburg, which provides brief biographical information about each of the commanders, done to the regimental level. Those at least stick in my memory - there have been more, but it's been awhile.

Mind you, then, this battle history ended up being a bit of a shock. It was at the point I got 6 chapters in and hadn't even heard about the Union army that I got a bit curious. I waltzed in expecting a reasonably bland account of a battle, and ended up knee deep in a lyrical history of the Army of Northern Virginia at Gettysburg (staring North Carolina) featuring "those people" over there. The title should have been a bit of a giveaway, I admit.

The writing however, is top notch. As a person who is dreadful at understanding tactics, reading this book made how the battle happened very clear - it also has very good maps. I do enjoy reading about personal characteristics and anecdotes - I just wouldn't mind having some for the other side. Lastly, the author really is an excellent writer - there are some absolutely lovely passages in this, a history of a battle.

I can't recommend this as an overall history of the Battle of Gettysburg because it's coverage is just too narrow. At the same time, I could see a British history of Trafalgar taking a similar stance without my minding it so much - perhaps because I would have been forewarned about it? It's hard to say. Definitely a book worth reading, for those interested in the Battle of Gettysburg, but I do feel that it needs to be supplemented by something which covers the Union side a bit better.

'Aussie Rick' says

When the movie on Gettysburg was first released in Australia I tried desperately to find a book to read about

the battle. I found this one and I enjoyed it a great deal.

It may not be the most detailed account available but I found it to be one of the best that gave a complete overview of the 3 days fighting without getting lost or bored. The authors style of writing was refreshing and enjoyable and I found it hard to put the book down. Still one of my favourite books on this battle although I have read many since.

Scott says

It's long and at times tough to get through. But I live near the battlefield, and the book's level of detail helps me understand the land and the battle on a deeper level.

Seamus says

awesome

Caleb says

A good introductory history of the battle, with prose-like narrative.

Robert Jr. says

I'm a huge fan of Tucker. I've read a number of books about Gettysburg, but Tucker's ranks well above the others.

Chuck says

This is a very good book filled with enough information to cover an entire war. It is very hard to believe that all of this took place in one battle. Being out of school for quite some time, it was really interesting to get back to history and read about the most important battle of the Civil War and that it took place in my home state. This is a very detailed read that goes through every part of the Gettysburg Battle.
