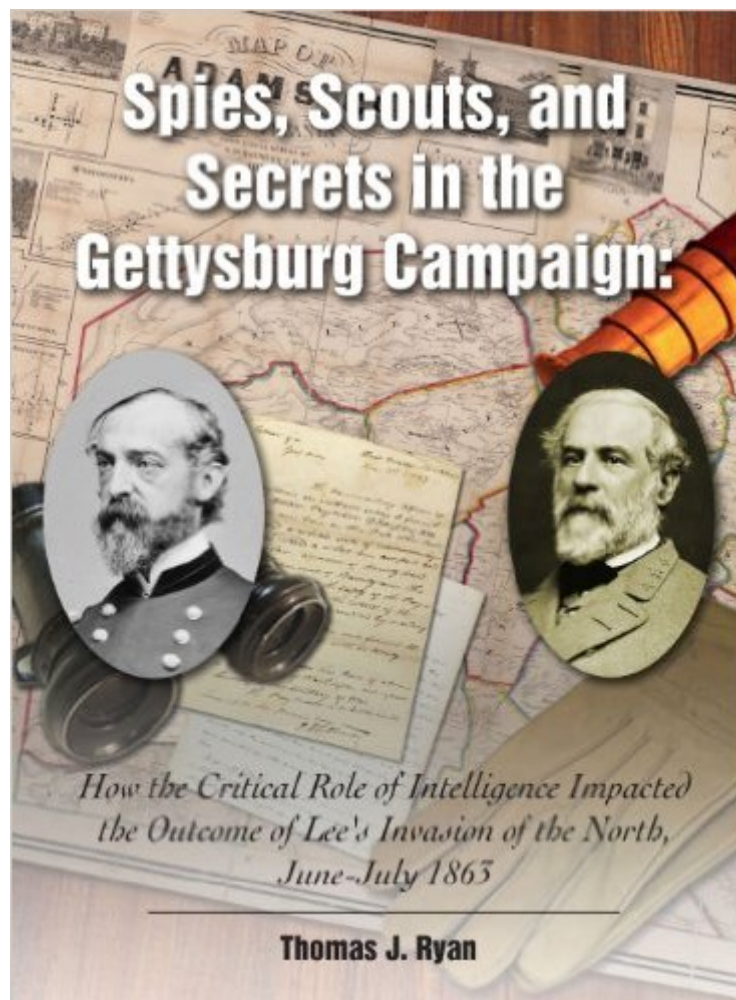


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Spies, Scouts, And Secrets In The Gettysburg Campaign: How The Critical Role Of Intelligence Impacted The Outcome Of Lee's Invasion Of The North, June-July 1863





Synopsis

Spies, Scouts, and Secrets: WINNER of the 2015 BACHELDER-CODDINGTON LITERARY AWARDAs intelligence experts have long asserted, "Information in regard to the enemy is the indispensable basis of all military plans." Despite the thousands of books and articles written about Gettysburg, Tom Ryan's groundbreaking Spies, Scouts, and Secrets in the Gettysburg Campaign: How the Critical Role of Intelligence Impacted the Outcome of Lee's Invasion of the North, June – July 1863 is the first to offer a unique and incisive comparative study of intelligence operations during what many consider the war's decisive campaign. Based upon years of indefatigable research, the author evaluates how Gen. Robert E. Lee used intelligence resources, including cavalry, civilians, newspapers, and spies to gather information about Union activities during his invasion of the North in June and July 1863, and how this intelligence influenced General Lee's decisions. Simultaneously, Ryan explores the effectiveness of the Union Army of the Potomac's intelligence and counterintelligence operations. Both Maj. Gens. Joe Hooker and George G. Meade relied upon cavalry, the Signal Corps, and an intelligence staff known as the Bureau of Military Information that employed innovative concepts to gather, collate, and report vital information from a variety of sources. The result is an eye-opening, day-by-day analysis of how and why the respective army commanders implemented their strategy and tactics, with an evaluation of their respective performance as they engaged in a battle of wits to learn the enemy's location, strength, and intentions. Spies, Scouts, and Secrets in the Gettysburg Campaign is grounded upon a broad foundation of archival research and a firm understanding of the theater of operations that specialists will especially value. Everyone will appreciate reading about a familiar historic event from a perspective that is both new and enjoyable. One thing is certain: no one will close this book and look at the Gettysburg Campaign in the same way again.

Book Information

Hardcover: 482 pages

Publisher: Savas Beatie (June 19, 2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1611211786

ISBN-13: 978-1611211788

Product Dimensions: 6.1 x 1.3 x 9.1 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.8 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.9 out of 5 stars – See all reviews (33 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #257,730 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #62 in Books > History > Americas > United States > Civil War > Campaigns & Battlefields > Gettysburg #443 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Politics & Government > Specific Topics > Intelligence & Espionage #2418 in Books > History > Military > United States

Customer Reviews

Spies, Scouts, and Secrets in the Gettysburg Campaign is very likely the first study that compares and contrasts the Confederates' and Federals' work of gathering, using, and misusing strategic and tactical intelligence during the Gettysburg Campaign. Ryan, former U.S. Army and U.S. Department of Defense intelligence analyst, presents an informed and compelling narrative that at times becomes suspenseful though, of course, the reader knows the outcome. Having published six related articles between 2002 and 2005 in Gettysburg Magazine, the only magazine ever to focus on a single campaign and battle, Ryan has expanded and deepened his research in the Official Records of the Civil War, primary sources, secondary sources and online sources. In the Forward, Stephen Sears notes that Lee explained the loss at Gettysburg "was occasioned by a combination of circumstances." One of which, Lee stated, was that "it was commenced in the absence or correct intelligence." Additionally, Sears notes that Meade, if asked, may have stated that "the battle was won because of the timeliness and accuracy of intelligence." Predecessor to Spies, Scouts, and Secrets in the Gettysburg Campaign is Edwin C. Fishel's 1996 The Secret War for the Union: The Untold Story of Military Intelligence in the Civil War. It is an extensive rendering of the evolution of Federal intelligence operations during the war. Until Spies, Scouts, and Secrets in the Gettysburg Campaign a comprehensive documentation of Confederate intelligence efforts during the Gettysburg Campaign was nearly non-existent. Ryan offers a nearly hour-by-hour and day-by-day focus on both the Federal and Confederate generals' efforts to find and describe the movements of the opposing army.

The Civil War has been described as "a black hole into which historians disappear and are never heard from again." • No doubt. No person can possibly know everything about the war, but, until I read Tom Ryan's seminal work on mid-war intelligence, I didn't realize how fully the crucial aspect of military intelligence has been bypassed by most writers. Most Civil War books concentrate on the battles themselves, as infantry units form and march onto the field, buglers call commands and generals bark orders. Cannons roar, the cavalry charges and glory covers the Blue and the Grey as flags are unfurled and mortal combat ensues. But, as in all wars, knowledge is power,

success and victory. A commander who knows everything about his enemy's intentions, plans and capabilities, while keeping the same secret from his enemy, could win without firing a shot. Military intelligence has been more important than any weapon since the days of SunTzu. Former U.S. Army intelligence officer Tom Ryan has produced the definitive work on how spies, scouts and secrets made Gettysburg what it was. Ryan deftly shows how cavalry gathered information on both sides, how military telegraph systems and other high-tech capabilities of the mid-Victorian era transmitted info to and from commanders and how these factors ultimately provided Meade and Lincoln with a crucial victory at the largest battle ever fought in the Western hemisphere. The book is detailed enough (and thoroughly footnoted) to enable a student of the war to correlate the big picture with the very small events that add up to victory or defeat.

There is no doubt in my mind that the Gettysburg Campaign is the most written about campaign and battle than any other in the American Civil War. In all of American History, the only campaign which rivals Gettysburg, I believe, is D-Day. All aspects of Gettysburg seemed to have been covered from the organization of the artillery to even, yes, the fences. When I saw this book coming, however, I was intrigued and looked into the subject. Scouting and espionage was not yet covered in depth in the campaign. Well now, the subject has been given due research and the product is amazing. Thomas J. Ryan is the former president of the Central Delaware Civil War Round Table and a longtime member of the Gettysburg Foundation and Civil War Trust. He served three years in the United States Army and more than thirty years with the U.S. Department of Defense in various intelligence operations. He has published more than one hundred and twenty-five book reviews and articles on Civil War subjects, many of them dealing with the intelligence gathering of the war, and writes a bi-weekly column called "Civil War Profiles" for Coastal Point: a Delaware newspaper. He authored the essay, Delaware during the Civil War: A Political, Military and Social Perspective. Many already know of the spy which set off the Battle of Gettysburg, Harrison. And for most people, the use of spies during the campaign ends there. But Ryan, within the first few pages of the book, gives you so much new information in the realm of espionage that it made me wonder why there were so little works devoted to intelligence. Much of the book dealt with the month of June in 1863 and the ways in which the armies were scouting each other.

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