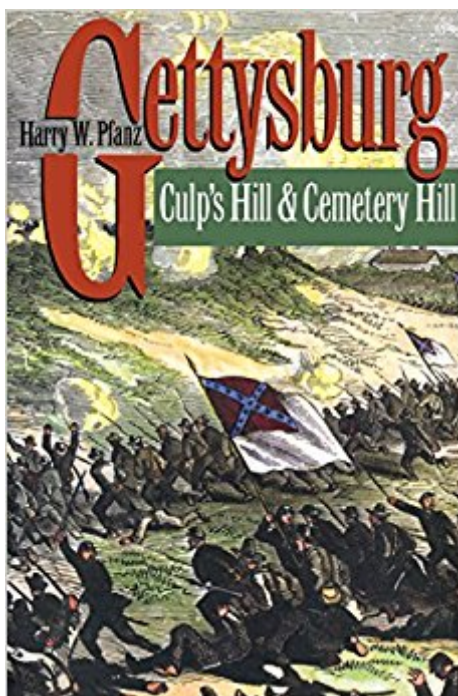


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Gettysburg--Culp's Hill And Cemetery Hill



Synopsis

In this companion to his celebrated earlier book, *Gettysburg--The Second Day*, Harry Pfanz provides the first definitive account of the fighting between the Army of the Potomac and Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia at Cemetery Hill and Culp's Hill--two of the most critical engagements fought at Gettysburg on 2 and 3 July 1863. Pfanz provides detailed tactical accounts of each stage of the contest and explores the interactions between--and decisions made by--generals on both sides. In particular, he illuminates Confederate lieutenant general Richard S. Ewell's controversial decision not to attack Cemetery Hill after the initial southern victory on 1 July. Pfanz also explores other salient features of the fighting, including the Confederate occupation of the town of Gettysburg, the skirmishing in the south end of town and in front of the hills, the use of breastworks on Culp's Hill, and the small but decisive fight between Union cavalry and the Stonewall Brigade.

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Customer Reviews

Pfanz follows *Gettysburg--The Second Day* with a definitive reconstruction of the fighting in a sector which has been neglected by historians. In early July 1863, the Union right wing was based on Cemetery Hill and Culp's Hill. Had the Confederates broken through these positions, Pickett's charge would have been unnecessary. The South nearly succeeded in a series of attacks between July 1 and 3. Pfanz describes Richard Ewell's failure to storm Cemetery Hill on July 1 as a reflection of command friction rather than of incompetence. It nevertheless gave Union troops the respite they

needed. Pfan, a master at describing the tactical details that shaped Civil War battles, is especially adept at evaluating the commanders. Union generals Alpheus Williams and Adolph von Stinewehr and Confederates like "Maryland" Steuart and "Extra Billy" Smith emerge in full dimension in a book that Civil War buffs and scholars will greet with enthusiasm. Copyright 1993 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

After visitors have recoiled in horror from the kitschy tourist trade, their first impression of present-day Gettysburg is the spaciousness of the battlefield that lies just south of the town. The opposing lines of regimental cenotaphs march for miles through the hilly countryside, conveying the distinct sense that in July 1863, the left wing of the line could have had but a hazy notion what the right wing was doing. In actuality, the battle was a series of disjointed improvisations, which, combined with the endless fascination with this turning point in the Civil War, constantly inspires titles on the minutest aspects of the fighting. And who better to supply the insatiable demand for such facts than Pfan, once official historian at Gettysburg's national park. His previous declamations have perhaps been listened to by the likely reader of this exacting narrative chronology of the struggle for the northern end of the Union line. If a cannon, caisson, or colonel had a shred of importance, Pfan will speculate about how differently the entire battle could have turned out. Best for the lifelong Gettysburg buff. Gilbert Taylor --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

This is a very good book for Gettysburg enthusiasts. Pfan does justice to an important part of the Union position that is always overshadowed by stories of the assault on Little Round Top and Pickett's Charge. The casual Civil War buff may be overwhelmed. Pfan is very detailed and much of the book is written at the regimental level. One not generally familiar with the right part of the Union line and the generals involved may find themselves getting lost. But for those who want to know the Battle of Gettysburg, this is an excellent work that gives great detail while preserving the flow of the story. I always enjoy Gettysburg works that focus on General Greene and his defense of Culp's Hill against superior Confederate numbers. One could argue that he did the same service in holding the right flank that Chamberlain performed on the left with the 20th Maine. Greene, who was old, did not have the further battle opportunities Chamberlain would enjoy, and did not go on to be a Governor and become known, is unfortunately an unsung savior of the Union cause. This book does him and his men justice. I was struck by the fact that both Union and Confederate battle reports (through more Confederate) from Cemetery Hill / Culp's Hill don't seem to go into the detail that has

produced fairly certain histories of other parts of the battle. Perhaps the fact that some of the fighting was at night or late evening and much of it in wooded terrain made the General less sure of their positions had something to do with it. Or perhaps Pfan (this is the first one of his books I have read) is more diligent in writing about what is not known than other authors, but the difference is noticeable to the serious student of the battlefield. The book is almost all action. Bios of various commanders (down to the regimental level) who figure in the fight are given, but thankfully the author did a nice job of performing this background in a paragraph and not digressing from the battle progression the way some authors do. A very good and highly detailed work that is accessible and holds the reader's interest.

Harry Pfan is easily one of the most recognized names when it comes to knowledge on the battle of Gettysburg. Pfan, the former Chief Historian of the National Park Service, has also written two outstanding books on the battle, *Gettysburg: The First Day* and *Gettysburg: The Second Day*. These books are simply mandatory reading for anyone trying to gain an understanding of the importance of the most definitive battle of the American Civil War, and this book offers terrific insight into why July 2nd is ultimately what decided Gettysburg. This work sets the scene perfectly for the second day, giving the reader an enormous amount of information as to why July 2nd represented the best opportunity for the South to achieve ultimate victory at the battle, as well as possibly the war. The second day of the battle of Gettysburg is easily the most impressive and important day of the three-day struggle in south-central Pennsylvania. Places like the Devil's Den, Peach Orchard, Little Round Top, and the Wheat Field are cemented in the American psyche, and the sheer mention of their name remunerates the reader with scenes of blatant tenacity and bloodcurdling horror. However, other places like Culp's Hill and East Cemetery Hill encompassed just about as much carnage and importance as these aforementioned locations. Pfan does these places justice by meticulously recounting the actions on the evening of July 2nd, 1863, and the consequences they had on the battle at large. This book covers every minute aspect of the action at Culp's Hill and East Cemetery Hill on July 2nd, 1863. Most impressively it showcases how porous the southern leadership from the top down was on July 2nd, while also showcasing the terrible performance of Pendleton's artillery wing during the engagement. Pfan offers a scything assessment of every southern leader's performance during the battle, and it really made me rethink my how different the battle could have been, had July 2nd been a more concerted effort on the part of Lee and his lieutenants. Pfan's retelling of the intrepid assault by Harry Hays' Louisianaans and Isaac Avery's North Carolina

Brigade on the evening of July 2nd, is simply the best telling of this attack I have ever read. Why these locations remain relatively unknown is a mystery to me, and after reading this book, it has become moreso. The actions taken on the northern end of the Union defenses was as tenacious and bitter as anything at the Wheatfield or Peach Orchard, and could have reaped immense rewards for Lee and his Army of Northern Virginia, had these efforts been better exploited by men like Jubal Early and Robert Rodes. While Pfanzer takes little time pointing the finger at anyone particular, the reader is made aware, and remains well aware that there were fundamental problems with southern command during the Gettysburg campaign. These issues that are brought to light by Pfanzer makes the reader openly question how different this campaign could have been had the southern command structure been handled more efficiently in July of 1863. While this question will remain lost to history, Pfanzer's work does its best to answer whatever questions one may have about the action on Culp's Hill and East Cemetery Hill. Pfanzer's work is as close to essential on Gettysburg as anything I have ever read before. The book offers immense, and sometimes inundating details about the battle and the men who waged it, but it never lets the reader forget that this battle was more of street brawl than a boxing match. I challenge anyone to read over the actions on Culp's Hill and East Cemetery Hill and not be totally confused as to unit locations and performances. It simply, at times, leaves you needing time to digest all of the research. While this, in itself, may be off-putting to less-than-serious students of the battle, I was fascinated by Pfanzer's research and knowledge, and I gained a much more focused understanding of the second day at Gettysburg. I recommend this work for anyone that is in need of a better understanding of the battle of Gettysburg. This book, along with Pfanzer's other books on the battle, are simply must own for fans and scholars alike. I bought the set for my dad for Father's Day and liked them so much I got myself a set, too. No serious student of the battle of Gettysburg should be without Pfanzer's essential works on July 1st and 2nd, and I only wish he would have done one on the 3rd of July as well. I guess we will never see that book, but here is to hoping Harry would consider it

Do you want a classic hour-by-hour account of what took place on Culp's Hill and Cemetery Hill beginning at the end of Day 1 and ending with the Confederate withdrawal on Day 3 of the Battle of Gettysburg? If you are a serious student, historian, or follower of the battle, then this is a good book for you. If you are looking for some light reading, then choose something else. Mr. Pfanzer meticulously researched this book and it is alive with minute details relating to the movements, decisions - both good and bad - of the commanders, soldiers and citizens impacted by 3 days of

battle on Culp's and Cemetery Hill. It should be read with the other books by Mr. Phanz relating to the battle as it provides ancillary detail associated with the retreat by union forces back into the town of Gettysburg and how they recovered from the Day 1 defeats and took advantage of many mistakes made by Confederate decision makers during the subsequent days of the battle.

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