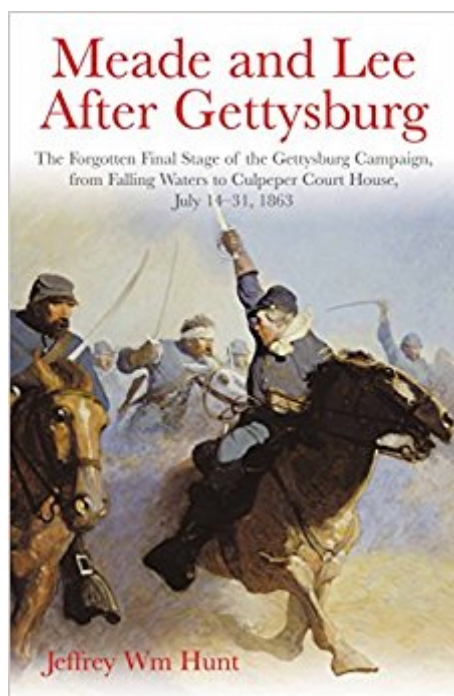




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Meade And Lee After Gettysburg: The Forgotten Final Stage Of The Gettysburg Campaign, From Falling Waters To Culpeper Court House, July 14-31, 1863



Synopsis

Jeffrey Hunt's *Meade and Lee After Gettysburg: The Forgotten Final Stage of the Gettysburg Campaign, from Falling Waters to Culpeper Court House, July 14-31, 1863* exposes for Civil War readers what has been hiding in plain sight for 150 years: The Gettysburg Campaign did not end at the banks of the Potomac on July 14, but deep in central Virginia two weeks later along the line of the Rappahannock. Contrary to popular belief, once Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia slipped across the swollen Potomac back to Virginia the Lincoln administration pressed George Meade to cross quickly in pursuit—and he did. Rather than follow in Lee's wake, however, Meade moved south on the east side of the Blue Ridge Mountains in a cat-and-mouse game to outthink his enemy and capture the strategic gaps penetrating the high wooded terrain. Doing so would trap Lee in the northern reaches of the Shenandoah Valley and potentially bring about the decisive victory that had eluded Union arms north of the Potomac. The two weeks that followed was a grand chess match with everything at stake—a high drama filled with hard marching, cavalry charges, heavy skirmishing, and set-piece fighting that threatened to escalate into a major engagement with the potential to end the war in the Eastern Theater. Throughout, one thing remains clear: Union soldiers from private to general continued to fear the lethality of Lee's army. *Meade and Lee After Gettysburg*, the first of three volumes on the campaigns waged between the two adversaries from July 14 through the end of 1863, relies on the Official Records, regimental histories, letters, newspapers, and other sources to provide a day-by-day account of this fascinating high-stakes affair. The vivid prose, coupled with original maps and outstanding photographs, offers a significant contribution to Civil War literature. Thanks to Hunt these important two weeks—until now overshadowed by the battle of Gettysburg and almost completely ignored by writers of Civil War history—have finally gotten the attention they have long deserved. Readers will never view the Gettysburg Campaign the same way.

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Customer Reviews

“The book provides readers with a very satisfying blow-by-blow account of the final stages of the Gettysburg Campaign. For the Gettysburg literature, publisher Savas Beatie has for some time now performed excellent double duty in improving upon aging standard works and providing fresh perspectives on understudied or underappreciated aspects of the campaign. Meade and Lee After Gettysburg is an excellent example of the latter. In it, the true meaning of the events of the last half of July 1863 in northern Virginia are explored in detail for the first time and their importance (potential or otherwise) convincingly presented. The volume is highly recommended, and certainly whets one’s appetite for the final two books in the trilogy.” (Civil War Books and Authors) What we know about the operations of Robert E. Lee’s and George Gordon Meade’s armies from the time they recrossed the Potomac River after Gettysburg to when they came to rest in and around Orange and Culpeper Counties in Virginia is negligible. Jeffrey Hunt has stepped in to masterfully fill that yawning gap. In his carefully researched and beautifully written Meade and Lee After Gettysburg, Hunt “for the first time” offers a remarkable glimpse, incorporating incredible detail, of the two weeks of maneuver and combat through places like Shepherdstown, Loudoun Valley, Wapping Heights, Culpeper, and many other sites. I absolutely love it and heartily recommend it. (Kent Masterson Brown, author of Retreat From Gettysburg: Lee, Logistics, and the Pennsylvania Campaign) The period between Gettysburg and the Wilderness Campaign in May 1864 is one of the least explored aspects of the Civil War. Jeffrey Hunt’s impressive new study fills this gap in the literature, demonstrating why Union forces failed to follow through on their success at Gettysburg and highlighting the remarkable resiliency of Lee’s Confederate army. Even veteran readers will find much fresh material in this narrative. (Gary W. Gallagher, award-winning author and Nau Professor of History, University of Virginia) Meade and Lee After Gettysburg is a blast of fresh air for Civil War students. Hunt demonstrates conclusively that the Gettysburg Campaign did not end with Lee’s crossing of the Potomac on July 14, but on August 1 along the Rappahannock line deep in Virginia. This interpretation is original and thoroughly convincing. (Bryce A. Suderow, co-author (with Edwin C. Bearss) of The Petersburg Campaign (2 vols.)) Jeffrey Hunt’s Meade and Lee After Gettysburg is the first detailed modern tactical treatment of the two weeks after the

an official™ end of the Gettysburg Campaign, and focuses particularly on the cavalry battle at Harpers Ferry on July 15 and the fighting at Manassas Gap on July 23-24. This book, the first of three on the fall 1863 campaigns between Lee and Meade, sets the stage for the harder campaigning that fall and is essential to understanding those campaigns. For students interested in what happened after the armies crossed the Potomac River, this is a must-read. (Eric J. Wittenberg, award-winning co-author of *One Continuous Fight: The Retreat from Gettysburg and the Pursuit of Lee's Army of Northern Virginia, July 4-14, 1863*) Finally, someone has addressed the gap in the scholarship between July 14 and August 1, 1863! Hunt describes in detail the opportunities for engagement that Lee's retreat into the Shenandoah Valley presented Meade's army, and how some of the "risk averse" Union generals failed to engage the Rebels until it was too late. It is all reminiscent of what had taken place at Williamsport just a few days earlier, and was destined to repeat itself in the coming months. (Thomas J. Ryan, award-winning author of *Spies, Scouts, and Secrets in the Gettysburg Campaign*)

Jeffrey William Hunt is Director of the Texas Military Forces Museum, the official museum of the Texas National Guard, located at Camp Mabry in Austin, Texas, and an Adjunct Professor of History at Austin Community College, where he has taught since 1988. Prior to taking the post at the Texas Military Forces Museum, he was the Curator of Collections and Director of the Living History Program at the Admiral Nimitz National Museum of the Pacific War in Fredericksburg, Texas for 11 years. He holds a Bachelors Degree in Government and a Masters Degree in History, both from the University of Texas at Austin. In 2013, Mr. Hunt was appointed an honorary Admiral in the Texas Navy by Governor Rick Perry, in recognition of his efforts to tell the story of the Texas naval forces at the Texas Military Forces Museum. At both the Texas Military Forces Museum and the Admiral Nimitz Museum he has organized and conducted hundreds of living history programs for the general public. He is a veteran reenactor of the War Between the States as well as the War of 1812, the Texas Revolution, World War I, World War II, and the Vietnam War. He is a frequent speaker for a wide variety of organizations as well as documentaries and news programs. Mr. Hunt's writing credits include his book, *The Last Battle of the Civil War: Palmetto Ranch*, and contributions to *Essential Civil War Curriculum*, the *Revised Handbook of Texas* and the *Gale Library of Daily Life: American Civil War*.

The Gettysburg Campaign is one of the more written about conflicts in the American Civil War yet for all the books and articles written about it, there are still things we have yet to learn. In Meade

and Lee After Gettysburg, Jeffrey Wm Hunt explores the end of the campaign from July 14th to July 31st, 1863, as the campaign was winding down, and some of the small battles which occurred. While most books on Gettysburg do talk about these small battles, Hunt's work strives to give us an in-depth account of what happened in those places instead of trying to sum them up in one chapter. Now there are books about the aftermath of the Battle of Gettysburg, but this one brings a fine analysis to certain battles on the way towards Virginia. Jeffrey William Hunt is the Director of the Texas Military Forces Museum located in Camp Mabry in Austin. He is also an Adjunct Professor of History at Austin Community College. He has a degree in government and a Masters Degree in History from the University of Texas. In 2013, he was named an honorary Admiral in the Texas Navy by Governor Rick Perry. He is the author of The Last Battle of the Civil War: Palmetto Ranch, and has also contributed to Essential Civil War Curriculum, the Revised Handbook of Texas, and the Gale Library of Daily Life: American Civil War. As I stated in the introduction, most books on the Gettysburg Campaign cover the end of the conflict with a simple chapter chronicling Lee's escape into Virginia while only mentioning a few battles on the way. Hunt's work looks to fix that. Throughout the work, Hunt starts to describe these final moves from Gettysburg to Culpeper Court House as a grand game of chess, which I thought was quite provoking on thinking of these weeks. The mindset of George Meade presented here was fascinating. There are some authors who just give the impression that once Meade won the Battle of Gettysburg, he was finished with the task at hand, but Hunt says otherwise. Meade attempted to outthink his enemy, push towards certain points of the map which would not seem usual. He wanted to trap Lee and bring that victory which the high ranking officials in Washington so wanted to see. The narrative in the work shows that strategy playing out in the mind of Meade with great fascination. I also enjoyed the narrative when it came to General Lee and his men, defeated, yet still trying to make their way across the Potomac, back into Virginia. From the Battle of Falling Waters in 1863, to the Culpeper Court House, these conflicts are analyzed to a solid point, using the Official Records, regimental histories, and other primary sources to such a finite point, that the research within this book is amazing. I highly recommend this book to anyone interested in the Battle of Gettysburg. This is the book which should be read after reading any work about that seminal battle. The narrative is striking, the maps are well drawn and beautiful, and the research is top notch. Jeffrey Wm Hunt should be praised for his work here and I cannot wait to see what else he is working on. Matthew Bartlett

Jeffrey Wm Hunt succeeds in explaining in detail how Lee and Meade's armies fought

against each following the Battle of Gettysburg during "The Forgotten Final Stage of the Gettysburg Campaign, From Falling Waters to Culpepper Court House, July 14-31, 1863." His prose in this first of three volumes flows in a way that allows readers to understand what soldiers feel and are capable of after a march and fight in battle. These three monographs will study what the Army of Northern Virginia and the Army of the Potomac accomplished from mid-July through the winter encampments in December 1863. This first title touches on the battle briefly, follows Lee's men as they cross the Rappahannock River and the days that followed. This excellent scholarly work may be the first detailed examination of Lee's army west of the Blue Ridge Mountains and Meade's army generally in Loudoun Valley. The author has done justice to the remarkable men who fought in the post battle of the Gettysburg Campaign. Savas-Beatie has published a text that studies the generalship of George Meade as an independent commander. Hunt shows the interested individuals that Meade reluctantly pushed his men across the Potomac and into Virginia in pursuit of Lee's army. The author makes several points throughout the tapestry whenever Meade makes errors which are helpful in understanding the scope and sequence of this important pursuit of the Northern enemy's forces. We learn that Meade became cautious like many earlier Union commanders. In Meade's case, he found it difficult to learn much about Lee's position west of the Blue Ridge and became fearful of the offensive audacity of the opposing enemy and commander. A strength of this story is the author's analysis and explanation of the strengths and failures of Meade and Lee during the days chronicled. The book is well researched and examines the Virginia campaign from both a strategic and tactical perspective. Superb military history, analytic, comprehensive, discursive, controversial in the best sense, and always stimulating. Sixteen detailed maps clearly illustrate the positions of both armies and are helpful as well as placed in locations that will assist interested parties with troop movements. There are detailed captions on the thirty five images contained in this three hundred and twelve page important study. It is nice to see the faces of that we are reading about. Contemporary sources were used throughout the narrative. Anyone already well versed in Civil War history will find immensely stimulating the authors' interpretations of Union and Confederate approaches plus his excellent elucidations that will have to be grappled with by all subsequent historians of the subject. This outstanding historian has written a magnum Opus that scholars and students of the Eastern Theater will benefit from reading. This treatise is balanced and a fascinating day by day account of the fighting by the combatants in blue and grey. I found Meade and Lee After Gettysburg to be an engrossing treatment and hard to put down. This reviewer highly recommends this study and looks forward to the next two titles.

I will not appear as a verified buyer of this book because I picked the volume up in person from the author at a public book signing. I can assure you however I read every page and highly recommend it. Before I read about a new campaign, I usually like to read what Shelby Foote says about it. Foote covers the same ground Jeff Hunt does in Volume Three of his wonderful, *THE CIVIL WAR, A Narrative* with the following, "...the Confederates, low on ammunition and bled down to not much more than half their strength, had withdrawn unmolested across the rain-swollen Potomac to take up a new defensive position behind the Rapidan...". Those 30 plus words actually cover more actual time than Hunt does in his 271 pages describing the events from July 14 to July 31, 1863. To be accurate, Foote spends 6 pages in his *VOL. Two* on the time period, but that is really par for the course for most historians. This is all new ground being plowed on a field that most thought would yield nothing new to be harvested. Hunt's work proves that Lee still has a chance to be caught after he crosses the Potomac and nearly is. While the soldiers might be worn out this is a fast paced read and important study to the end of the Gettysburg Campaign. Hunt does a masterful job of describing the moves of each army operationally and what few historians do in detail, tactically. Hunt's work is lavishly footnoted at the bottom of the page where the reader can instantly see what the original source is. I really look forward to the next two volumes in the series to finish out the war in the East in 1863.

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