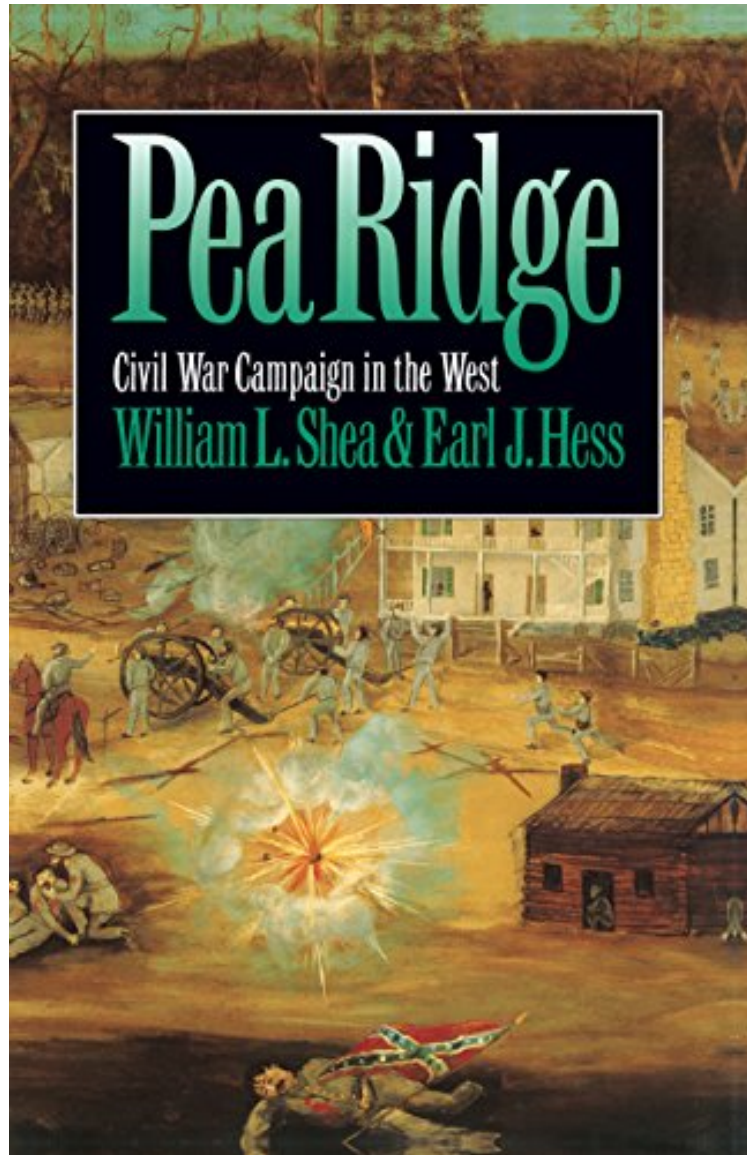


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Pea Ridge: Civil War Campaign in the West (Civil War America)

William L. Shea, Earl J. Hess

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William L. Shea, Earl J. Hess : Pea Ridge: Civil War Campaign in the West (Civil War America) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Pea Ridge: Civil War Campaign in the West (Civil War America):

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Front and center with the bestBy Mr. JoeIn June of 2006, I reviewed Champion Hill: Decisive Battle for Vicksburg, which I stated was "unequivocally, the best non-fiction narrative of a Civil War engagement that I've ever read." PEA RIDGE steps forward front and center to join that most excellent

volume at the head of the rest. The Battle of Pea Ridge, fought on March 7-8, 1862 in the northwest corner of Arkansas, was the decisive Union victory in the Trans-Mississippi theater of operations. It assured Federal control of Missouri and, for all practical purposes, eliminated the Trans-Mississippi as a significant factor in Confederate war strategy. The confrontation between the Union army, commanded by Brig. Gen. Samuel Curtis, and the rebel force, commanded by Maj. Gen. Earl Van Dorn, is lucidly described by authors William Shea and Earl Hess. Most importantly, in my opinion, the narrative is supported by a series of superlative battlefield maps that remain completely congruent with the text throughout. At no point should the reader become confused or otherwise lack a clear understanding of the maneuvers on the field by the units involved, generally defined down to regimental level. PEA RIDGE is further elevated by the personality portraits drawn of the principal commanders, chiefly Curtis, Van Dorn, and the erratic U.S. Brig. Gen. Franz Sigel. It's the effort the authors take in this regard that transforms the book from a dry read to one that's to be savored. The volume is liberally sprinkled with black and white photographs of the various unit commanders and views of the present-day terrain as can be seen by visitors to the Pea Ridge National Military Park. An Appendix also incorporates a complete Order of Battle that includes known losses, i.e. killed, wounded, and missing. Sherman's March to the Sea is famously notable for the fact that he severed his army group from its supply base as it cut a swathe through Georgia to the Atlantic. What PEA RIDGE emphasizes, and which I didn't know and popular Civil War history has pretty much ignored, is the fact that Curtis successfully took that same daring risk with his Army of the Southwest - the first Federal army to do so - in the summer of 1862 on a march of several hundred miles from Batesville, AK to the Mississippi River. PEA RIDGE is a book eminently worth the attention of any serious or casual student of the War Between the States. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Outstanding campaign history of Pea Ridge By Brian Halma One of the best campaign histories I've read. Shea does a nice job of presenting the strategic background, introducing key leaders, providing a clear narrative of the battle, and explaining the battle's impact. Shea has a nice clean, writing style - a joy to read and very well researched. There is also a nice mix of first hand experiences to give a sense of the battle. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A Good Campaign Studay By Aaron Shipman I bought this book to read on my Kindle. I had little knowledge of the battle before reading this book. I knew that the Confederates lost, but outside of that there was nothing else. I enjoyed reading about the different strategies that motivated the Union and Confederate commanders. I did not realize how important Missouri was in the strategic scheme of the war. If Van Dorn could have made significant inroads into the state, Vicksburg would have been delayed and Grant could have possibly been dispatched to that theater, my own personal observation. The book as a whole a valuable resource to someone wanting an in depth look at the campaign. The authors take the reader step by step from when Van Dorn takes command to the end of the enterprise. I enjoyed learning how Curtis wanted to make a quick winter attack to throw the Confederates off guard, but then began to over reach his supply lines and had to stop. Then reading about how Van Dorn drove his army mercilessly to get around the Curtis and try and cut his supply. The battle is well covered in this book. The authors follow each side of the conflict chronologically, which I found a little irritating but understand their reasoning. So the reader learns all about what happened at Leetown from beginning to end, before the fighting at Elk Horn Tavern begins. I also like how the authors followed the commanders through the end of the campaign instead of ending the book with Van Dorn's retreat. I also believe that the authors give a fair review of all the commanders of both sides and that this is an unbiased book. I would recommend this book to someone interested in the battle. Kindle Review: For the most part, this book was easily read on the Kindle. There are few instances of the wrong letter(s) being inserted. The most troublesome example of this for me was Rufus demon's farm, which was supposed to be Rufus Clemon's Farm. Also the work is riddled with missing punctuation. There are several instances of missing periods and commas. Nothing major, but for the cost of the work I find this discouraging. I just wanted to inform other people about these errors before they made their purchase.

The 1862 battle of Pea Ridge in northwestern Arkansas was one of the largest Civil War engagements fought on the western frontier, and it dramatically altered the balance of power in the Trans-Mississippi. This study of the battle is based on research in archives from Connecticut to California and includes a pioneering study of the terrain of the sprawling battlefield, as well as an examination of soldiers' personal experiences, the use of Native American troops, and the role of Pea Ridge in regional folklore. "A model campaign history that merits recognition as a major contribution to the literature on Civil War military operations.--Journal of Military History "Shines welcome light on the war's largest battle west of the Mississippi.--USA Today "With its exhaustive research and lively prose style, this military study is virtually a model work of its kind.--Publishers Weekly "A thoroughly researched and well-told account of an important but often neglected Civil War encounter.--Kirkus Reviews "Offers the rich tactical detail, maps, and order of battle that military scholars love but retains a very readable style combined with liberal use of recollections of the troops and leaders involved.--Library Journal "This book is assured of a place among the best of all studies that have been published on Civil War campaigns.--American Historical Review "Destined to become a Civil War classic and a model for writing military history.--Civil War History "A campaign study of a caliber that all should strive for and few will equal.--Journal of American History "An excellent and detailed book in all accounts, scholarly

and readable, with both clear writing and excellent analysis. . . . Utterly essential . . . for any serious student of the Civil War.--Civil War News

From Publishers Weekly With its exhaustive research and lively prose style, this military study is virtually a model work of its kind. Shea and Hess, who teach history at the University of Arkansas at Monticello and Lincoln Memorial University (Tenn.), respectively, convincingly argue that the 1862 campaign for Pea Ridge (Ark.) decisively changed the balance of power in the West, with the Union gaining effective control of Missouri. Samuel Curtis, commander of the Federal Army of the Southwest, understood the strategic requirements of his theater, according to the authors, and elicited the best performance from his troops, even though they were beset by internal tensions. The Southern commander, Earl van Dorn, the authors maintain, was a swashbuckler out of his depth--particularly in light of the administrative weaknesses of the trans-Mississippi Confederacy. Their detailed analysis of the climactic battle impressively conveys the difficulties of the improvised armies that groped for and grappled with each other in the Civil War West. Illustrations not seen by PW. BOMC and History Book Club selections. Copyright 1992 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal The battle of Pea Ridge, fought in northwestern Arkansas in March 1862, was probably the most important trans-Mississippi battle of the Civil War. It was unusual in the use of Indian troops and in the Confederates' numerical superiority, better supplies, and inferior leadership. The battle ended any serious Confederate threat to Missouri and opened the Union's path into Arkansas. The book offers the rich tactical detail, maps, and order of battle that military scholars love but retains a very readable style combined with liberal use of recollections of the troops and leaders involved. Shea (history, Univ. of Arkansas) and Hess (history, Lincoln Memorial Univ.) do, however, suffer from a touch of logorrhea; the narrative rumbles along for nearly 100 pages after the battle ends. Nonetheless, this is an important book for academic libraries and for public libraries in the region. BOMC and History Book Club selections.- Fritz Buckallew, Univ. of Central Oklahoma Lib., Edmond Copyright 1992 Reed Business Information, Inc. Shines welcome light on the war's largest battle west of the Mississippi. "USA Today" "Pea Ridge" is destined to become a Civil War classic and a model for writing military history. "Civil War History" A thoroughly researched and well-told account of an important but often neglected Civil War encounter. "Kirkus s" [A]ssured of a place among the best of all studies that have been published on Civil War campaigns. "American Historical "A model campaign history that merits recognition as a major contribution to the literature on Civil War military operations." "Journal of Military History" "A"ssured of a place among the best of all studies that have been published on Civil War campaigns. "American Historical "