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Petersburg Campaign (Great Campaigns)

John Horn

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John Horn : Petersburg Campaign (Great Campaigns) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Petersburg Campaign (Great Campaigns):

7 of 8 people found the following review helpful. The Petersburg Campaign By M. Baker Horn, John. The Petersburg Campaign: June 1864-april 1865. Da Capo Press, 1999. Reviewed by Michael Baker (Worcester State College) When it comes to the Siege of Petersburg Virginia, history books tend to describe the year long battle in two ways, either detailed military tactical data, illustrating the battle with both numeric data, and reports of tactical maneuvers, or as a less detailed narrative, where the battle is told in a less detailed, more easy to read manner. The Petersburg Campaign: June 1864-April 1865 uses both battlefield data and military terminology within a narrative in order to describe the action during the Richmond-Petersburg campaign which lasted from 1864 to 1865. John Horn believes there is a gap in the way military history is written, where "One type is written from a very serious, highly technical, professional perspective and presupposes that the reader is deeply familiar with the background, technology and general situation." (pg 9) Horn also talks about the other style of military history writing, where "the other is less dry, but merely lightly reviews the events with the intention of informing and entertaining the layman." (pg 9) In his book Horn attempts to combine the positive aspects of each style, in order to close the gap "between the two types of military history, and to reach the professional and the serious amateur and concerned citizen alike." (pg 10) Recently published books on the Petersburg campaign have varied in the style in which they tell the story of the last great battle of the Civil War. Such books as Lee Passarella's Swallowed Up in Victory: A Civil War Narrative, Petersburg, 1864-1865, tell the story through a series of primary source documents, consisting mostly of telegrams sent between Union

commanders. Or as a detailed military narrative, as seen in James McPherson's *Battle Cry for Freedom*. John Horn's book is an easy to read narrative of the siege of Petersburg, where his writing style is both very informative yet not too dry, or weighed down by technical vocabulary, making it an easy to follow. He also writes his narratives from both the side of the union army and the confederates, this allows for a balanced point of view, of both side of the siege. Horn also makes use of side bars with detailed information on various topics, in order not to break up the narrative. He also uses battlefield statistics, period photos of the battlefield and soldiers and maps, in order to supplement his narrative. John Horn accomplished his task of bridging the gap between the general, easy to read history and the detailed academic works. The few issues I have with *The Petersburg Campaign: June 1864-April 1865*, is both technical academic. Even though Horn's book does contain a bibliography, he had did all of his research from secondary source material as opposed to primary source documents. This means that his work is considered more of a tertiary source, than a work of original academic research. It feels as though it is more of a redo of previous works and does not bring anything new to the research of the siege of Petersburg. Although though it does not contain original research this book is a great starting point for studying the Petersburg campaign since it is full of a wealth of information, with an easy to follow narrative style. 6 of 8 people found the following review helpful. Well researched, superbly written Civil War battle analysis. By Midwest Book Review The loss in April 1865 of the railroad center at Petersburg, just south of Richmond, sealed the doom of the Confederacy. The campaign for Petersburg was a long siege operation of grueling trench warfare marked by bloody battles, incompetence, political maneuvering and cowardice. It was the type of campaign that both Robert E. Lee and Ulysses S. Grant had originally wanted to avoid. *The Petersburg Campaign: June 1864 - April 1865* is a dramatic narrative supplemented by special charts covering strengths and losses for both sides. Confederate desertion rates, and statistics for other sieges of the Civil War. Sidebars discuss styles of command, the famous Crater explosion, the role of snipers and sharpshooters, and the campaign's no-quarter encounters between Souther whites and Union men of color. *The Petersburg Campaign* is a significant and welcome contribution to the growing body of Civil War literature and will prove much appreciated by students and historians of the great American conflict that threatened to divide and destroy the nation. 3 of 10 people found the following review helpful. Death by ennui By J. Carruthers I am guessing the original manuscript for this book was about twice as long as the published version. As I read through the awkward, primer style text, I got the impression that all of the analysis and style had been brutally edited out in order to meet the length guidelines required by the publisher. The account is little better than a raw recitation of chronological events. Many of the "Great Campaigns" series are enjoyable and informative reads. This is not one of those. Try "The Boston Campaign" instead.

The Petersburg campaign was a long siege operation of grueling trench warfare marked by bloody battles, incompetence, political maneuvering and cowardice. It was the type of campaign neither the Union nor the Confederacy wanted. The conflict around the Virginia town led to the decline of Lee's Army of Northern Virginia and the surrender of the Confederate capital at Richmond. After the fall of Petersburg, the end of the Civil War was only a matter of days. Special charts cover strengths and losses for both sides, Confederate desertion rates, and statistics for the Civil War's other sieges. Sidebars discuss styles of command, the Crater explosion, the role of snipers and sharpshooters, and the campaign's no-quarter encounters between Southern whites and Union men of color.

About the Author John Horn is an attorney who has written several books on Civil War subjects, including *Destruction of the Weldon Railroad*, which was called "a superior piece of Civil War scholarship" by Edwin C. Bearss, Chief Historian of the U.S. Park Service.