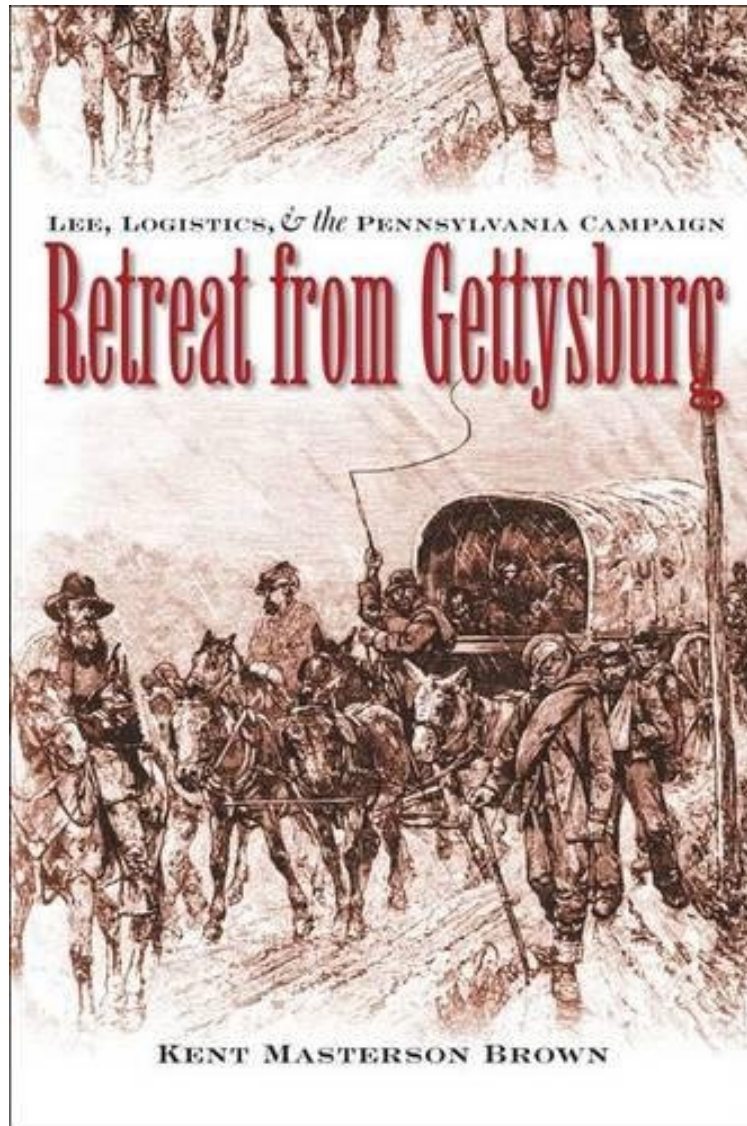


(Free) Retreat from Gettysburg: Lee, Logistics, and the Pennsylvania Campaign (Civil War America)

Retreat from Gettysburg: Lee, Logistics, and the Pennsylvania Campaign (Civil War America)

Kent Masterson Brown

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Kent Masterson Brown : Retreat from Gettysburg: Lee, Logistics, and the Pennsylvania Campaign (Civil War America) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Retreat from Gettysburg: Lee, Logistics, and the Pennsylvania Campaign (Civil War America):

9 of 11 people found the following review helpful. Retreat from Gettysburg is an advance in Civil War Scholarship By C. M Mills Retreat from Gettysburg is an excellent account of the retreat of Robert E Lee's beaten but not despairing

Army of Northern Virginia from Pennsylvania to Virginia in July 1863. This gallant army lost 28,000 casualties and was bested on the field by Meade's Army of the Potomac in the Civil War's most famous battle: Gettysburg (July 1863). As Brown elucidates a fighting retreat is a difficult achievement for an army calling on the best of soldiers and commanders. Lee and the ANVA retreated with thousands of wounded men being tortured in wagons; thousands of slaves, captured livestock and Union prisoners all made the journey from the field of bloody hell to relative safety on the southern shore of the Potomac reached on July 14th. Lee's campaign enabled the starving Confederate army to be fed and have their animals fed enabling them to fight again another day. But what a cost! Lee was never able to replace his fallen warriors. The Southern cause would not receive foreign money and support (the British had banned slavery and would never support a southern slavocracy). Of all the dozens of books I own on Gettysburg this book is the only one dealing with the retreat. Brown quotes extensively from diaries and memoirs penned by participants in the campaign. His book includes pictures and is well written in a popular style easy to read. Without a thorough understanding of the retreat the student of the Civil War will never understand the Gettysburg campaign. Kudos to Brown. One hopes this book will win him a deserved wide readership appealing to Civil War buff as well as the general reader. Excellent work!

2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. A great narrative of an ignored episode and a masterful study of army logistics

By A. Fonteyne K.M. Brown has spent 20 years collecting and exploiting historical material for this groundbreaking study of Lee's retreat from Gettysburg. His bibliography fills 30 pages, as opposed to 390 pages of text. The result of his efforts is an excellent day by day narrative with an immense wealth of detail that keeps the reader hooked from beginning to end. He is extremely good in his description of the whole logistical operation to move Lee's endless wagon trains back from Pennsylvania, with the thousands of wounded soldiers and the huge amount of supplies and farm animals collected in enemy territory. And that with the Union army a few miles behind, an army with its own logistical nightmare to solve. He masterfully shows how the movement of the fighting troops is conditioned by that of the trains and by the capacity and condition of the road network, bridges, and the weather. He also shows how Lee executed his retreat flawlessly and managed to restore the balance of power that had been broken by the defeat in Gettysburg. Meade was unable to exploit his victory and let Lee's army escape, also because to catch up with Lee at Gettysburg on July 2, he had to leave the army's wagons far behind. The Army of the Potomac, after 3 days of fighting, was therefore famished and undersupplied, its men and animals exhausted. Brown shows that waging war is far more than just confronting the enemy on the battlefield, it is about planning movement of troops, keeping open an adequate supply of ammunition, food for men and animals, and "spare parts" of all kinds for the whole army. The usability of roads for the movement of troops in a pre-automobile time is also a critical aspect of the story, as the Romans very well understood. The main conclusion that K.M. Brown draws from his study is that Lee's Gettysburg campaign contained a tactical defeat, i.e. he lost the main battle, but also a strategic victory, in that he escaped to fight another day and that his foraging operations allowed him to replenish his army's depleted food reserves and to replace its worn out horses and mules with fresh ones taken from the enemy. Central Virginia, where his army had been based since the beginning of the war, could no longer sustain it and by carrying the war into enemy territory and impressing local resources, Lee managed to keep his army in fighting condition until the lower Southern states' crop could be harvested. Brown is probably right, but it remains also true that Lee's army lost many of its best soldiers at Gettysburg, and that the South could not afford it, in the long run. Lee also failed to bring about the decisive victory that might have convinced the Northern people to stop the war. Brown evacuates a bit quickly the quantification of the army's losses and the failure to deliver that much needed victory, and one feels that he minimizes those aspects in order to make his own argument stronger. But this slight "problem" does not otherwise affect the outstanding quality of his work and the disproportionate contribution it makes to the study of the Gettysburg campaign. Another strength of his book are the supporting maps that actually allow the reader to follow the story. That is not often the case with military history books.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Lee's escape from defeat at Gettysburg and Meade's army

By JOHN BENNETT This book is for those who are deeply into the Civil War. Lots of maps on the helpful detailed routes of Lee's retreat. Way too many names of the cast the South's famous and less so. But nowhere else do you get a sense of Lee's army and the skill with which it was done under very difficult circumstances--hunger, thirst, many wounded, and the constant Yankee threat. The one lack is an explanation for the failure of Meade to locate the retreating Reb forces and take effective measures to attack them. Until a Yankee rewrites this story, however, Brown's work will be the main reference.

In a groundbreaking, comprehensive history of the Army of Northern Virginia's retreat from Gettysburg in July 1863, Kent Masterson Brown draws on previously untapped sources to chronicle the massive effort of General Robert E. Lee and his command as they sought to move people, equipment, and scavenged supplies through hostile territory and plan the army's next moves. Brown reveals that even though the battle of Gettysburg was a defeat for the Army of Northern Virginia, Lee's successful retreat maintained the balance of power in the eastern theater and left his army with enough forage, stores, and fresh meat to ensure its continued existence as an effective force.

Brown has broken new ground here in spectacular fashion.--James I. Robertson Jr., Roanoke Times A who's who of

Civil War historiography.--West Virginia History Kent Brown offers a compelling story that heretofore has received only limited attention. . . . Everyone interested in the Civil War in general and the Gettysburg Campaign in particular will want to obtain a copy of *Retreat from Gettysburg*, and those in search of consequential military history will find this book to their liking.--Washington Times Beyond being a great read, *Retreat from Gettysburg* is exceptionally well researched. . . . Such skillful use of these primary sources provides the reader with probably the best account to date of a Civil War army's retreat after a major battle.--North South The result of these years of research and contemplation is an original book that for the first time provides an overview of Lee's masterful retreat from his worst battlefield defeat. . . . [For] Gettysburg buffs, as well as those interested in military logistics, retreat theory, the Army of Northern Virginia, and the Civil War in general.--Civil War News Captures the reader from beginning to end. . . . Should be in the library of every serious student and scholar of Civil War history.--Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography Kent Masterson Brown's more than 20 years of research have come to fruition in *Retreat from Gettysburg*. . . . Through his extensive use of primary documents, including many previously unpublished diaries, letters, and reports, the reader is provided with some of the most detailed accounts of the numerous military actions that occurred during the retreat. . . . To further enhance this study, excellent maps aid the reader in tracing the movements of both armies. In addition, more than 40 illustrations, many of them rare, grace the pages of the book. . . . Brown's *Retreat from Gettysburg* is a tour de force in Civil War writing. . . . With Brown you get the real deal. He does history the old-fashioned way-years of research with careful and thoughtful writing. --America's Civil War There is everything to praise in this book, for the concept and execution are very good. Brown's arguments are on the mark, and he is to be congratulated for focusing on topics that have been overlooked far too long in the historiography.--Journal of American History There is nothing in a title which promises to be more deadening than the word logistics. And if that is the conclusion you draw about *Retreat from Gettysburg*, you could not have made a more egregious mistake. . . . Not only does Brown give a bravura survey of the internal mechanisms of the Confederate forces in the Gettysburg campaign, he also provides a moving entrance into the mind of [a] defeated army, trying to hold itself together, and find some way to escape and fight another day.--Allen C. Guelzo, *The Barnes Noble Retreat from Gettysburg* tells us new things and gives us new ways of seeing familiar events.--Chronicles An immensely important read for anyone with a serious interest in the war.--The NYMAS Through his extensive use of primary documents, including many previously unpublished diaries, letters and reports, the reader is provided with some of the most detailed accounts of the numerous military actions that occurred during the retreat. . . . A tour-de-force in Civil War writing. . . . With Kent Brown you get the real deal. He does history the old-fashioned way-years of research with careful and thoughtful writing.--America's Civil War Kent Masterson Brown has given us a vivid account of the Confederate return to Virginia after Gettysburg. He writes of the suffering of the wounded, the vast wagon trains, foraging, slaves, and attacks by Union cavalry. It is a must read for students of battle and a testimony to the hellishness of war.--Harry W. Pfanz, author of *Gettysburg--The Second Day* Using an impressive array of untapped source material, Kent Brown has written the first detailed narrative on the Confederate retreat from Gettysburg. This phase of the campaign has often been misunderstood and Brown brings understanding to how and why the Army of Northern Virginia escaped across the Potomac without another full-scale battle against the Army of the Potomac.--D. Scott Hartwig, *Gettysburg, Pennsylvania From the Inside Flap* Brown details the retreat of the Army of Northern Virginia from Gettysburg in July 1863, focusing on the complex logistics of moving a 57-mile wagon and ambulance train and tens of thousands of livestock through hostile territory while scavenging for provisions and planning the army's next moves.