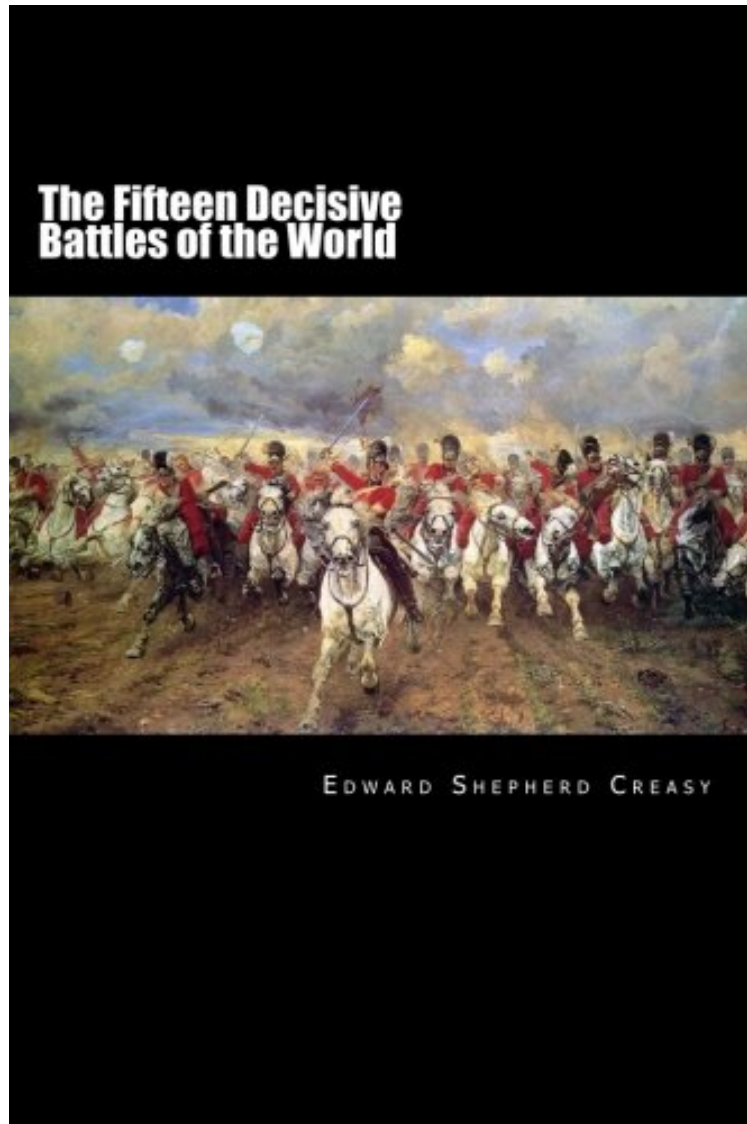


[Ebook pdf] The Fifteen Decisive Battles of the World: From Marathon to Waterloo

The Fifteen Decisive Battles of the World: From Marathon to Waterloo

Edward Shepherd Creasy

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Edward Shepherd Creasy : The Fifteen Decisive Battles of the World: From Marathon to Waterloo before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Fifteen Decisive Battles of the World: From Marathon to Waterloo:

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. One of the great booksBy Charles van BurenThis is one of the great books of the world. Educated people should at least be familiar with it, even if just in summary. Anyone interested in

military history and the history of the west should read it. I found a copy in our high school library and was fascinated with it. Creasy is a great writer, explaining the battles clearly. His description of the defeat and death of Hasdrubal (Hannibal's brother) at Metaurus is still clear in my mind. As is his explanation of the importance of the outcome to Western Civilization. This Digital Services edition released August 8, 2015 contains no maps but has the illustrations at the end of the book.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. It is a deplorable necessity

By Anne Phillips

Creasy's book was first published in 1841 when the author had retired as Chief Justice of Ceylon. In his introduction, Creasy describes why he chose battles as topic for his book and why he decided on just these fifteen battles. He says that "it cannot be denied that a fearful and wonderful interest is attached to these scenes of carnage. There is undeniable greatness in the disciplined courage, and in the love of honor, which make combatants confront agony and destruction." When the book was written, Waterloo and Napoleonic wars were still in fresh in people's memories and Creasy devoted a large portion of his book to this conflict - quoting contemporary poetry at length. There long excerpts of letters, reports or memoirs convey a sense of impending pandemonium more than all other descriptions. Several ancient battles were compared to the struggle against Napoleon - "for seventeen years Hannibal strove against Rome; for sixteen years Napoleon Bonaparte strove against England." Creasy begins his book with the Battle of Marathon and stirring descriptions of the participants (the Greeks) as well as their respective outlook and environment. Next he discusses the defeat of the Athenians at Syracuse using contemporary (Victorian) analyses by Niebuhr and Arnold. Every chapter includes several reactions of leaders that were not involved - for example, Napoleon on Alexander's victory over the Persians at Arbela - and I found that my astonishment and horror was quite often shared by "experts." We read about the defeat of Roman legions, the Battle of Tours, the decisive victory of Joan of Arc at Orleans, the surprising fiasco of the Spanish Armada; Marlborough's command at Blenheim; the Swedish actions at Pultowa; the American win over British forces at Saratoga; the unexpected win of revolutionary France at Valmy. It is a survey of fifteen battles - not a definitive work on each of them. Creasy's breadth of knowledge and sources is astonishing. His language is that of a scholar of the 19th century. It is a great book.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A Classic, But Definitely A Product Of Its Age

By Nathan Albright

In choosing a list of decisive battles or noteworthy battles, there are some serious difficulties that one faces. This fact, a critical problem today, was even more a case in the 19th century, where national history was such an overwhelming concern that it is little surprise that so many of the battles chosen appear to be decisive not necessarily from a global perspective but from an English perspective. Indeed, someone like Victor Davis Hanson could very easily write the same sort of work today with the same general approach, many of the same battles, and many of the same textual sources in his research. What was acceptable in the 19th century is not always so, and there are some parts of this book, like the author's obvious Anglo-Saxon ethnic pride, or his racialism insofar as it relates to other European nations, to say nothing of his mortifying and broad social judgments on other peoples, like the Syrians, for example. That said, if you can accept this book as a product of its time, there is much to appreciate here. The book is well-written, has chosen its source material and battles well (again, given its context), and often has a sense of poetry as well as humanity and decency. The author writes about battles and war, but recognizes the horrors that provoke conflict and also mark its conduct. No one reading this book will think that the author glorifies bloodshed, but neither does the author shirk the unpleasant truth that sometimes conflict is necessary because we live in a fallen world that is bent by evil. The battles chosen are generally of two kinds--either they are battles of a national nature (Orleans, Syracuse, Waterloo, Blenheim, Saratoga) or of a conflict between different civilizations (Marathon, Tours, Chalons). Some of the explanations are lengthy, and some are very short. In all cases, where the author can find a source that humanizes the conflict, though, this instinct is chosen, and it is a good instinct to have as it makes this a more excellent book even with its flaws. The largest flaw in this book, though, is the book's focus on Western battles to the exclusion of the decisive conflicts of other civilizations. For example, the battles that preserved Japanese independence from Mongol invasion were truly decisive in world history, as was the battle of the Talas River that spread papermaking to the Middle East and that gave the Chinese empire a permanent Muslim problem in Central Asia. To be sure, many other battles could be chosen that had a dramatic effect on some part of the world. An exercise in writing about great generals or decisive battles is likely to be immensely arbitrary, especially because what is truly decisive cannot always be known until long after the fact, and that which seems to be of enduring importance can sometimes end up being ephemeral, while that which seems minor and insignificant can end up being of pivotal importance. Read today, this book provokes a question of what important battles were neglected, which in turn should provoke the writing and release of even better books which serve to balance the flaws of this august volume, hopefully without losing its virtues.

Each chapter of Creasy's strategy book dissects a different battle. The fifteen chapters are: I - THE BATTLE OF MARATHON II - DEFEAT OF THE ATHENIANS AT SYRACUSE, B.C. 413 III - THE BATTLE OF ARBELA, B.C. 331 IV - THE BATTLE OF THE METAURUS, B.C. 207 V - VICTORY OF ARMINIUS OVER THE ROMAN LEGIONS UNDER VARUS, A.D. 9 VI - THE BATTLE OF CHALONS, A.D. 451 VII - THE BATTLE OF TOURS, A.D. 732 VIII - THE BATTLE OF HASTINGS, 1066 IX - JOAN OF ARC'S VICTORY OVER THE ENGLISH AT ORLEANS, A.D. 1429 X - THE DEFEAT OF THE SPANISH ARMADA, A.D. 1588 XI - THE BATTLE OF

BLLENHEIM, 1704 XII - THE BATTLE OF PULTOWA, 1709 XIII - VICTORY OF THE AMERICANS OVER BURGOYNE AT SARATOGA, A.D. 1777 XIV - THE BATTLE OF VALMY XV – THE BATTLE OF WATERLOO, 1815

About the Author Sir Edward Shepherd Creasy (1812-1878) was an English historian and jurist. His best known contribution to literature is his *Fifteen Decisive Battles of the World* (1851).