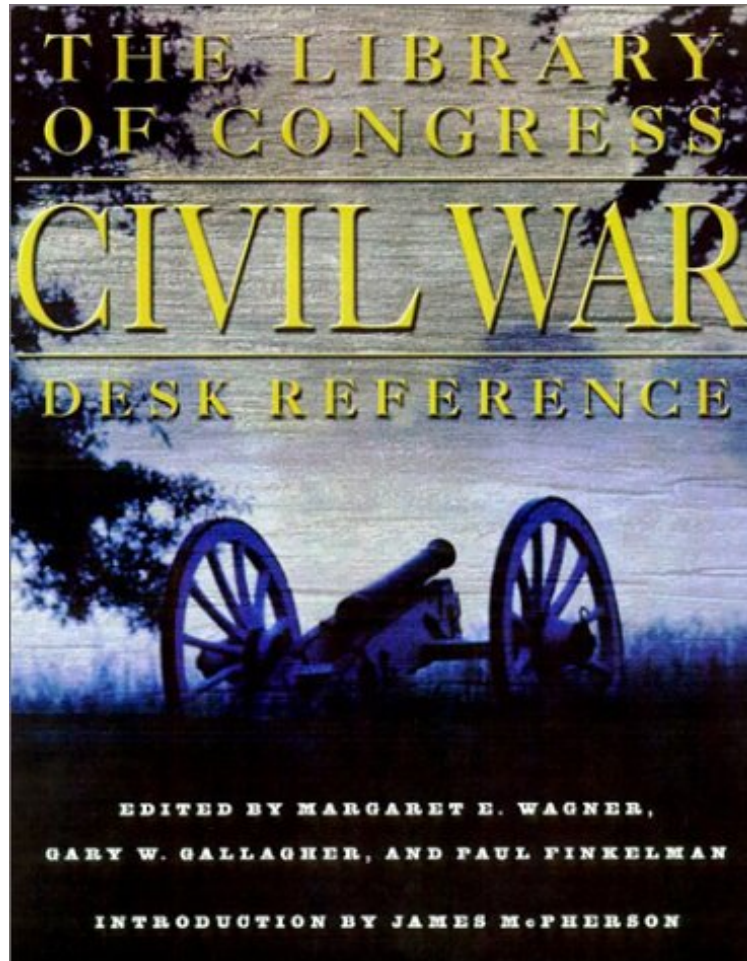


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The Library of Congress Civil War Desk Reference

From Simon Schuster

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The bloody conflict that sundered the United States from 1861 to 1865 took 620,000 lives, laid waste to large sections

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From Publishers Weekly For a broader crash course in Civil War history, the Library of Congress Civil War Desk Reference offers a lucid summary of political rifts that led up to the war, extensive chapters on battlefields and the home front, state-by-state details about the armies and much more. Edited by LOC writer/editor Margaret E. Wagner, University of Virginia history professor Gary W. Gallagher (Lee and His Army in Confederate History) and University of Tulsa College of Law professor Paul Finkelman (An Imperfect Union), the book also has a chapters on "Civil War in Literature and the Arts" and "Studying the War: Research and Preservation," as well as bibliographies, filmographies and lists of other resources and organizations. (Sept. 13) Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal This work's highly credentialed editors and contributors were able to draw on the vast and rich Civil War resources of the Library of Congress, which include unpublished letters from soldiers and nurses, Union and Confederate maps, speeches by Frederick Douglass, photographs by Matthew Brady, and well over 50,000 published books and pamphlets. The resulting work is not arranged alphabetically; instead, the 13 chapters cover broad topics or themes, including military intelligence, medicine, prisoners of war, wartime politics, the home front, war on the water, battles and battlefields, and weaponry. Additionally, topics appear here that are not usually detailed in overviews of the Civil War, such as antebellum America, the Civil War in literature and the arts, researching the war, preservation, and Reconstruction, giving the actual years of conflict a broader context. Selected sources end each chapter. Although the book can be read as a narrative, the identification and location of specific information can be easily found through the index, the detailed subheadings in the table of contents, or the extensive cross references within the articles. Time lines in the opening chapter and elsewhere guide readers through the era's defining events. The eminently browsable text is profusely illustrated with charts, photographs, maps, drawings, and portraits. As a bonus, leading historian James M. McPherson provides the foreword. This resource is certain to be the definitive one-volume Civil War encyclopedia. Highly recommended for public, high school, and academic libraries. Kathleen M. Conley, Illinois State Univ. Lib., Normal Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Booklist The Civil War remains a fascinating and controversial event in American history. The fate of the nation and of slavery hung in the balance, and the resolution affects America today. Following the popular desk reference format, this work provides a thematic approach to the war. Beginning with the antebellum period, the 13 chapters cover topics such as "Wartime Politics," "Battles and Battlefields," "Medical Care and Medicine," "The Home Front," and "The Civil War in Literature and the Arts." Most chapters include a chronology, and these, although somewhat repetitive, help place events in proper order. Although the maps are sometimes a bit hard to read (such as "Seven Days Battles," which is jammed with information), they do help in understanding troop location, topography, and movements. A section on mapmaking illustrates the importance to both armies. The chapters end with bibliographies of sources, and a massive bibliography provides even more resources. The final chapter, "Studying the War: Research and Preservation," is especially noteworthy in its comprehensive approach. Anyone wanting to find information on books, people, monuments, battlefields, organizations, or reenactments will find a starting point here. Both print and electronic

resources are included. Encyclopedia of the American Civil War: A Political, Social, and Military History (ABC-CLIO, 2000) is more comprehensive. But Civil War Desk Reference, with its solid scholarship, informative approach, and broad sweep, is an excellent source for school, academic, and public libraries that cannot afford the five-volume set or need a one-volume supplemental source. Highly recommended for all Civil War collections. RBBCopyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved