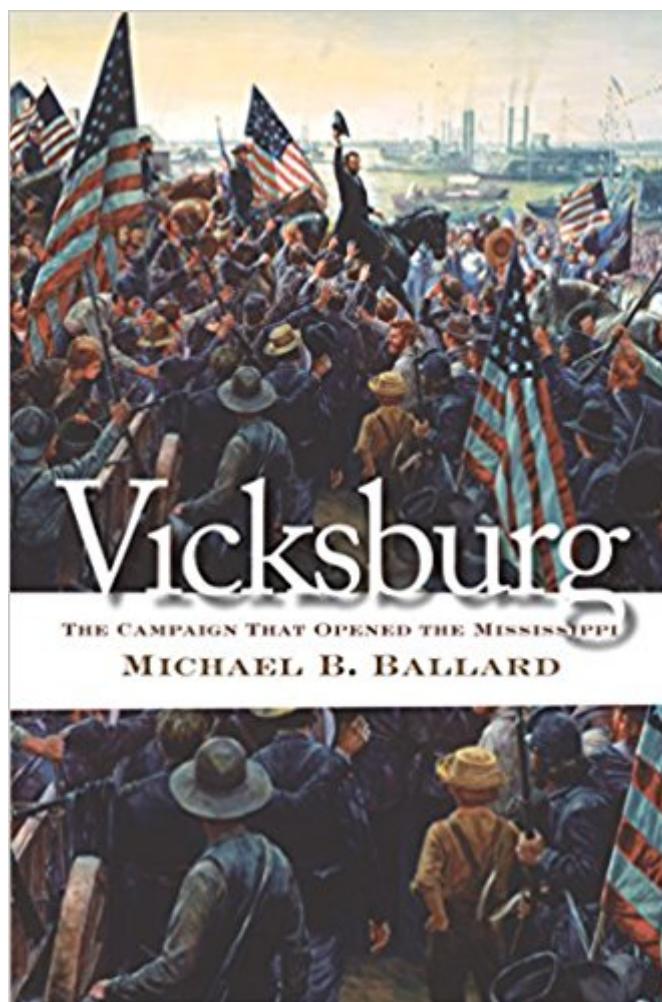


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Vicksburg: The Campaign That Opened The Mississippi (Civil War America)



Synopsis

Michael Ballard provides a concise yet thorough study of the 1863 battle that cut off a crucial river port and rail depot for the South and split the Confederate nation, providing a turning point in the Civil War. The Union victory at Vicksburg was hailed with as much celebration in the North as the Gettysburg victory and Ballard makes a convincing case that it was equally important to the ultimate resolution of the conflict.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Thanks to the depth of Ballard's research . . . even those closely acquainted with the campaign will find many small epiphanies, while those new to it will be in the hands of a trustworthy guide. . . . The best account of the Vicksburg campaign we have.--American Historical ReviewA complete picture of the campaign, spanning the full range of civilian-military interaction as well as the more traditional aspects of military history. . . . An extremely detailed and useful synthesis on the strategic, military and social aspects of the Vicksburg campaign in a single well-bound volume.--Journal of Military HistoryA vivid narrative, an understanding of human nature, and an appreciation of the geography and weather make this a smooth and balanced narrative. . . . To say that Michael Ballard's Vicksburg is the finest one-volume study of the campaign is insufficient praise. It stands among the elite of Civil War military history.--The Civil War News[A] significant contribution to Civil War literature.--On Point-Journal of Army HistoryA readable and informative examination of the

operations taken to defend the city of Vicksburg. . . . A welcome addition to the literature of the campaign that sheds further light on the all-important and decisive Western theater in the Civil War.--The HistorianThe author's primary and secondary research is meticulous. . . . Highly recommended for academic libraries and Civil War historians.--Library Journal, starred reviewFresh, powerful, and authoritative. Michael Ballard is at his best and demonstrates why he is one of the few historians who can truly claim mastery of the complexities that make the Vicksburg campaign so daunting a study. . . . A crisp, clear read [that] will intrigue even the most discerning student of the Civil War.--Civil War Book ReviewProvides a great deal of new perspective. . . . Proffers . . . the most positive and in-depth evaluation of Grant's canal and bayou projects ever presented.--Register of Kentucky Historical SocietyA thorough yet concise study . . . brings new depth to our understanding of the campaign.--McCormick MessengerBallard's knowledge of Vicksburg and its history in the Civil War is unsurpassed. His work on Vicksburg is surely to make even the most learned scholar of the war take notice. . . . --Georgia Historical Quarterly[A] superb one volume book on the campaign. . . . Vicksburg is a seminal work that looks at the campaign with a new military approach.--Southern HistorianAn extremely useful summary of the campaign that succeeds in setting it in the wider context of the war itself. Future campaign studies would do well to follow this example.--Journal of Southern HistoryA thorough, well-researched account of the Vicksburg campaign. . . . [Ballard] describes marches and battles with lavish unit-by-unit detail.--America's Civil War

Eminently readable and scrupulously researched, Michael B. Ballard's *Vicksburg: The Campaign That Opened the Mississippi* is not only the best account available of that pivotal event, but also one of the finest Civil War campaign studies ever written. I thoroughly enjoyed this book.--Peter Cozzens, U.S. Foreign Service Officer and author of *The Civil War in the West: From Stones River to Chattanooga*Michael Ballard's *Vicksburg* must be considered essential reading for all Civil War historians interested in the Western Theater of operations. His astute analysis and deft interweaving of military decision making, campaign strategy and battle tactics, political and economic factors, and the many challenges confronting Southern civilians bring together in one volume the complexity of the fight for mastery of the Mississippi River.--Carol Reardon, author of *Pickett's Charge in History and Memory*

Dr. Michael Ballard has written an excellent book on the Vicksburg Campaign. Ballard has had good mentors in his study of the Mississippi River City which fell to US Grant in July, 1863He is has been

guided by Terry Wenschel the National Park Chief Historian; read the massive three volume work by Mr. CivilWar Ed Bearss on the campaign and is a lifelong native of Mississipi who has visited Vicksburg since his youth. Vicksburg was a complex campaign pitting the inept Northern Born Confederate General John Pemberton against the aggressive and brilliant US Grant. Grant's Union Army worked well as a team. Even though Grant did not like McClernand he used him well in launching the blue horde against the city on the bluffs. Grant worked well with Sherman and McPherson, Logan and others as they tried many ideas to conquer Vicksburg. Grant and David Dixon Porter worked well on coordinating army-navy operations. Grant succeeded when his forces crossed the Mississippi to Bruinsburg, Ms. Union victories at Port Gibson, Jackson and most importantly Champion Hill (May 16, 1863) led to a 47 day siege of Vicksburg which fell to Federal forces on July 4, 1863. Vicksburg the key to victory in the Western Theatre was then put into Mr. Lincoln's pocket. The fate of the Western Confederacy was sealed. I am surprised how little many Civil War buffs seem to know little about the Western Theatre of the War. Those whose approach has been "Virginia-centric" will find much to explore as they gaze at the Western Theatre. Grant emerges as a tough, imaginative, never say never commander while the Confederates Pemberton and Joe Johnston were weak and indecisive leaders. Grant's star rose in the West as Lincoln discovered the man who could beat Lee and win the war! Ballard's book is well illustrated; the maps are clear and easy to follow. Ballard has done his homework as the many pages of bibliography attest to his acumen. While dealing with the battles he also quotes the thoughts of civilians of Vicksburg and Mississippi who saw their society rent asunder by the bluehordes from the north. Ed Bearss is still the dean of Vicksburg scholars but Michael Ballard has also contributed greatly to our understanding of this vital, complex, too often overlooked campaign. This book can be read by the buff or the neophyte with equal pleasure. Thank you Dr. Ballard for your work!

I am admittedly a stickler for maps. But especially in the case of this long campaign, the clear mapping of the interconnecting bayous, lakes, creeks, and the levees is essential.

Easy to read, better than the tedious regiment lists and near meaningless strategy books on this epic siege and hard war brutality on our own soil. It actually communicates the effect on the men, the civilians, the women and children, the war and the region. Complete. Well thought-out. Needed. Non-romanticized yet respectful.

The author started out with an introduction then proceeded to outline the battle and how/who fought

where and when. The marine aspect was given very limited recognition and was a major part of the battle. All in all this was a enjoyable book but needed better graphics/maps.

This arrived on time and was a gift which was enjoyed by the receiver.

Ballard has written an informative account of the Vicksburg campaign and believes that the Union won through superior generalship and naval power. According to Ballard Grant and his subordinates acted as a team while the Confederate side was hindered by constant infighting between Johnston and Pemberton. Moreover, Pemberton was unable to react to Grant's moves, but Grant was looking for new innovative moves to distract and outflank the Confederates. Naval power also played a key role in helping Grant transport troops and block reinforcements from entering Vicksburg. The only drawback to this book is that Ballard doesn't mention new research by Terrence Winschel, Timothy Smith, and others in his book. Otherwise this book is destined to be a classic account of the Vicksburg campaign.

Read this book before you visit the Vicksburg battle areas. One cannot comprehend the enormity of the strategy that Grant employed to finally capture Vicksburg ("The Gibraltar of the West") and clear the final obstruction to Union control of the Mississippi unless you have read this book or a couple of others. You will not understand the effort just by visiting the battle park.

I am interested in history and the Civil War but not an expert. This was an interesting read about the events leading up to the campaign, the campaign itself and the aftermath. I had problems keeping the positions of the different units/generals straight on the battlefield; it was somewhat confusing. Otherwise, it gave a good picture of what happened on both sides. I recommend it for anyone interested in Civil War battles and campaigns.

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