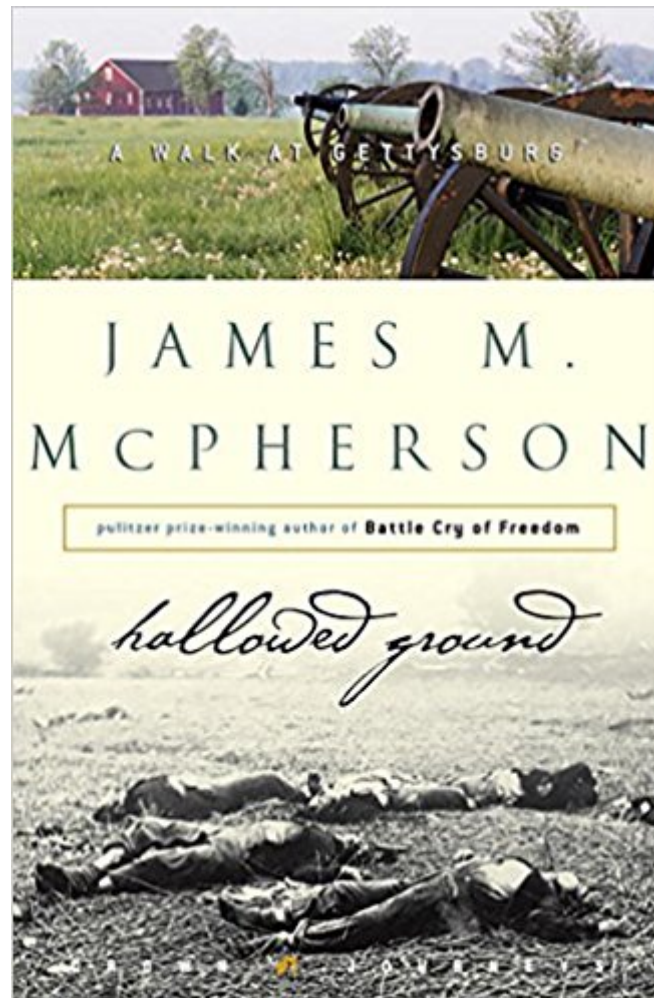




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# Hallowed Ground: A Walk At Gettysburg (Crown Journeys)



## Synopsis

“[I]n a larger sense, we can not dedicate – we can not consecrate – we can not hallow this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far above our power to add or detract.” President Abraham Lincoln

James M. McPherson, the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *Battle Cry of Freedom*, and arguably the finest Civil War historian in the world, walks us through the site of the bloodiest and perhaps most consequential battle ever fought by Americans. The events that occurred at Gettysburg are etched into our collective memory, as they served to change the course of the Civil War and with it the course of history. More than any other place in the United States, Gettysburg is indeed hallowed ground. It’s no surprise that it is one of the nation’s most visited sites (nearly two million annual visitors), attracting tourists, military buffs, and students of American history.

McPherson, who has led countless tours of Gettysburg over the years, makes stops at Seminary Ridge, the Peach Orchard, Cemetery Hill, and Little Round Top, among other key locations. He reflects on the meaning of the battle, describes the events of those terrible three days in July 1863, and places the struggle in the greater context of American and world history. Along the way, he intersperses stories of his own encounters with the place over several decades, as well as debunking several popular myths about the battle itself.

What brought those 165,000 soldiers – 75,000 Confederate, 90,000 Union – to Gettysburg? Why did they lock themselves in such a death grip across these once bucolic fields until 11,000 of them were killed or mortally wounded, another 29,000 were wounded and survived, and about 10,000 were “missing” – mostly captured? What was accomplished by all of this carnage?

Join James M. McPherson on a walk across this hallowed ground as he encompasses the depth of meaning and historical impact of a place that helped define the nation’s character.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The country's most distinguished Civil War historian, a Pulitzer Prize winner (for *Battle Cry of Freedom*) and professor at Princeton, offers this compact and incisive study of the Battle of Gettysburg. In narrating "the largest battle ever fought in the Western Hemisphere," McPherson walks readers over its presently hallowed ground, with monuments numbering into the hundreds, many of which work to structure the narrative. They range from the equestrian monument to Union general John Reynolds to Amos Humiston, a New Yorker identified several months after the battle when family daguerreotypes found on his body were recognized by his widow. Indeed, while McPherson does the expected fine job of narrating the battle, in a manner suitable for the almost complete tyro in military history, he also skillfully hands out kudos and criticism each time he comes to a memorial. He praises Joshua Chamberlain and the 20th Maine, but also the 140th New York and its colonel, who died leading his regiment on the other Union flank in an equally desperate action. The cover is effective and moving: the quiet clean battlefield park above, the strewn bodies below. The author's knack for knocking myths on the head without jargon or insult is on display throughout: he gently points out that North Carolinians think that their General Pettigrew ought to share credit for Pickett's charge; that General Lee's possible illness is no excuse for the butchery that charge led to; that African-Americans were left out of the veterans' reunions; and that the kidnapping of African-Americans by the Confederates has been excised from most history books. This book is a very good thing in a remarkably small package. Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Adult/High School-McPherson focuses on the period July 1-3, 1863, and explains why readers should know about the battle 140 years later. The book is concise, sprightly, and full of personality-both McPherson's and the participants' in the conflict. A prologue and epilogue flank the three chapters on the battle (each covering one day), relating why it happened and what followed. The author walks readers through Gettysburg from beginning to end, telling a story of simple personal decisions that had a global impact. The importance of the battle is elucidated in Lincoln's Gettysburg Address. When readers have finished this book, the only way they can know Gettysburg

better is by going there. Hugh McAloon, formerly at Prince William County Public Library,  
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James does a great job of highlighting the fighting around Gettysburg, over the three day battle. The book allows us to walk the battle field From a distance, and witness some of the feats both from a Union and Confederate prospective. I'm looking forward to the day when I will be able to journey to the battle field for myself. It helps to understand how the battle occurred and provides details not covered in other accounts. The information is based in fact, which dispels the myriad of myth that surrounds this epic struggle.

What a beautiful little book about a very sacred place. It covers all the major elements of the battle, and goes through some interesting anecdotes on the battle and the area. Like the story of Generals Barlow and Gordon, Sallie the dog, John Burns, the oldest combatant at Gettysburg, Amos Humiston, etc.. I like the pages on General Longstreet and his new monument erected in 1998. This is one of the high points of the book. Of course, there are also many pages on Colonel Chamberlain and 20th Maine. But, then, other important regiments are covered like the 1st Minnesota (that lost 82% of their ranks in a doomed charge to save the day) or the 140 New York, and Paddy O'Rourke, who came to save the day on the other side of Little Round Top from the 20th Maine. Paddy O'Rourke was killed in this action. Then there is the beautiful scene of the Irish Brigade and the Father Colby who gave them absolution before the battle. The Irish Brigade played a key role in stopping the Confederates in the Wheatfield. These stories are very readable tied to a trip around the battlefield and connected to markers. This is the best tour guide book that I've ever read on what is the most sacred ground on our soil. I highly recommend it.

I have read about the Gettysburg battle several times, but this tour of the monuments and subsequent narrative of the action helped me to finally understand how it all happened. The map of the town inside the back cover gave me the insight I needed to better understand where the North and South positions were. As I read I constantly referred to the map. Being inside the cover made it so convenient. For the first time I finished Civil War book feeling as if I knew what and how it all went down.

The next time I visit the Gettysburg battlefield, this book will be in my hands. It's more than a primer on the battle, although it is that, it's a step-by-step guide to the events of those three harrowing but

historic days. Amateur historians would be well-advised to use this text as a starting point to study further whatever interests them most about the battle. This is invaluable.

Very well written, concise account with excellent detail.

The author has a renowned reputation as an expert on the Civil War which is deserved. This written tour of Gettysburg is pithy. A welcome relief from the constipated contents of many historical novels

I enjoyed this book very much. I have walked many of the same paths that McPherson describes in this book. I enjoyed his little anecdotes about various monuments and events. This would be an excellent book to read if you plan to visit the park.

Nicely written, but not for serious Gettysburg devotees. This is a good book for a new or intermediate student of the battle.

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