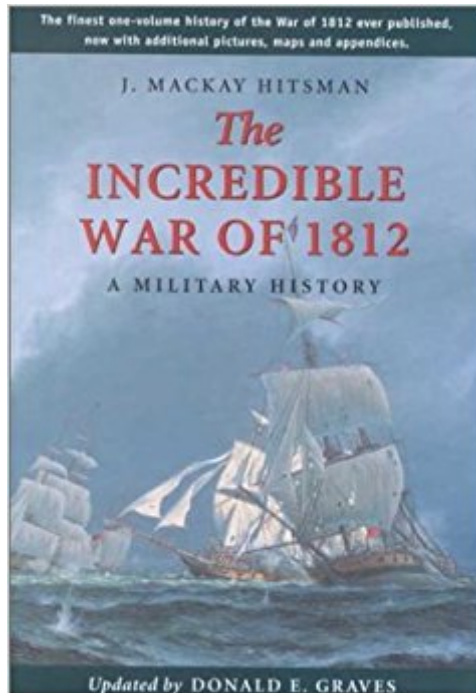




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The Incredible War Of 1812: A Military History



Synopsis

Hitsman's account of the War of 1812 is regarded by many experts as the best one-volume history of that conflict. It is an engrossing story of the causes of the war and of the campaigns and battles that raged on land and water, from the Great Lakes to the Gulf of Mexico. This new paperback edition, edited by Donald E. Graves, contains the entire text of the original edition and much new material.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Donald E. Graves, one of Canada's best known military historians, is the -author or editor of 20 books primarily on the War of 1812 and the Second World War. His studies on the battles of Lundy's Lane (Where Right and Glory Lead!) and Crysler's Farm (Field of Glory) are established classics of musket-period warfare. Renowned military historian.

This book was a good overview of the War of 1812, a critical piece of American history that, in my experience, has been virtually ignored in the curriculum of American education. The war was critical in that it defined the separation of and the border of Canada and the U.S. I picked this book from among the others on this subject because it was written from the Canadian perspective, and even by a descendant of the commander of the British--Canadian forces during the war. I wanted this Canadian perspective to avoid any "glorification" bias that might be found in an American perspective. What I wanted was as much of an objective account as possible, and I do think that the author is fair in his account and (conversely) not unduly anti-American. Sometimes I felt that I got

bogged down with some details, but that may have to do with my purpose in reading the book: namely, to get an overall understanding of the war. I also would have liked to have more maps throughout the text so as to better understand the described events. Overall, I liked the book and learned much from it.

This was an excellent, well balanced historical account of the War of 1812. If you happen to be interested in this period of history, this is a very good account...

Good read

One of if not the best book I have read about the War of 1812. I would recommend this book to anyone.

A review of the book: The Incredible War of 1812..... or maybe it should be renamed The Incredibly One-Sided, Fact-Vacant, Disgust of America - War of 1812. Or A Revised History Of The Incredible War of 1812 That Glosses Over The Atrocities of the British/Canadian Army. History has shown that the War of 1812 was won by the British/Canadians. America lost embarrassing engagements in upstate New York and in Detroit. However, after reading this book, it would seem that the American Army and Navy was void of almost any victories at all. The unbelievable bias of Hitsman and Graves is a supreme embarrassment to everyone who actually knows and understands history...at least from a non-biased perspective. Read this book if you want an exceedingly one-sided and downright incomplete view of history. Read this book if you desire a highly selective, unrepresentative, partial review of the War of 1812. Read this book if you want an in-depth look at battles from a completely British/Canadian perspective only. Read this book if you want a view through distorted rose coloured glasses.....made in Canada. Read this book if you want to understand everything from the war of 1812 except the American HALF of the war. Read this book if you want a history that conceals and disguises the nastier aspects and atrocities of British/Canadians Army and Navy. I have never read a book that, on one side, has so much detail about battles and then glosses over, or, at times, thoroughly neglects important aspects of American victories that had impressive outcomes as a whole. Most American advancement or victories in this book were either whitewashed or completely ignored. It amazes me that American soldiers are referred to as marauders and raiders, by Hitsman and Graves, while the British/Canadians are referred to as troops, soldiers and/or victors even when they "commandeered" supplies of America

farmers, or, who could forget, the horrific destruction by arsons of the U.S. Capital. There are two sides to every conflict, unfortunately Hitsman and Graves fill almost 400 pages by scarcely mentioning only fifty percent of history with regards to The War of 1812.

This is a serviceable account of the war of 1812 from the British-Canadian perspective. Though lacking the color of some other books on this conflict, most notably John Elting's "Amateurs To Arms" the author does not suffer from national bias like many American writers do. The account is straight forward and pretty direct, providing a decent overview of the situation in British North America on the outbreak of war in 1812. This updated version by Donald Graves, a noted Canadian expert on many of the battles of the war, provides many good maps, pictures, and detailed addenda. In particular the addenda concerning the contemporary and current names of the various British and Canadian regiments that fought in the war provides good supporting background. While the author writes pretty much free of national bias, his main point is that the war in Canada was largely fought and won by British regulars. Popular Canadian perceptions have the militia getting all the credit for repelling the various inept US invasions. This is simply not so. To the British 8th, 41st and 49th regiments of foot, who virtually alone stood on the frontier in 1812 against the Americans, must go the lionshare of credit in preventing Canada's conquest. The author points out that most Canadian militia did little or no fighting, the exception being some of the good fencible units that were raised. Since this is an older work we don't have all the eulogies for the plight of the Indians under Tecumseh. When Hitsman was writing political correctness had not crept into works like this yet. Tecumseh and his warriors certainly get their mention, but we are not subjected to the great praise that most current works seem required to give. Yes, the great Shawnee Chief was important in defending Canada as well, but it was the daring of Isaac Brock with a handful of British regulars that humbled inept and grandiose American plans in the pivotal first few weeks of the war. The US was fortunate that Brock was lost to the Anglo-Canadians early in the conflict, had he lived longer no doubt he would have inflicted other great defeats on the Americans. Hitsman provides a good general overview of the war, and while his emphasis is Anglo-Canadian we are not left in the dark as to American plans and operations. Where this book differs from most American accounts is in the importance of mentioning the battles of 1814 around Washington and the British defeat at New Orleans. These get some attention, but not as much as one might be accustomed to in most American books on the war. Overall a decent work, and a good starting point from the Anglo-Canadian perspective. Readers might wish to get more of the American side from the numerous other books in print, but in the end they will still come to appreciate this concise work

from the opposite side.

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