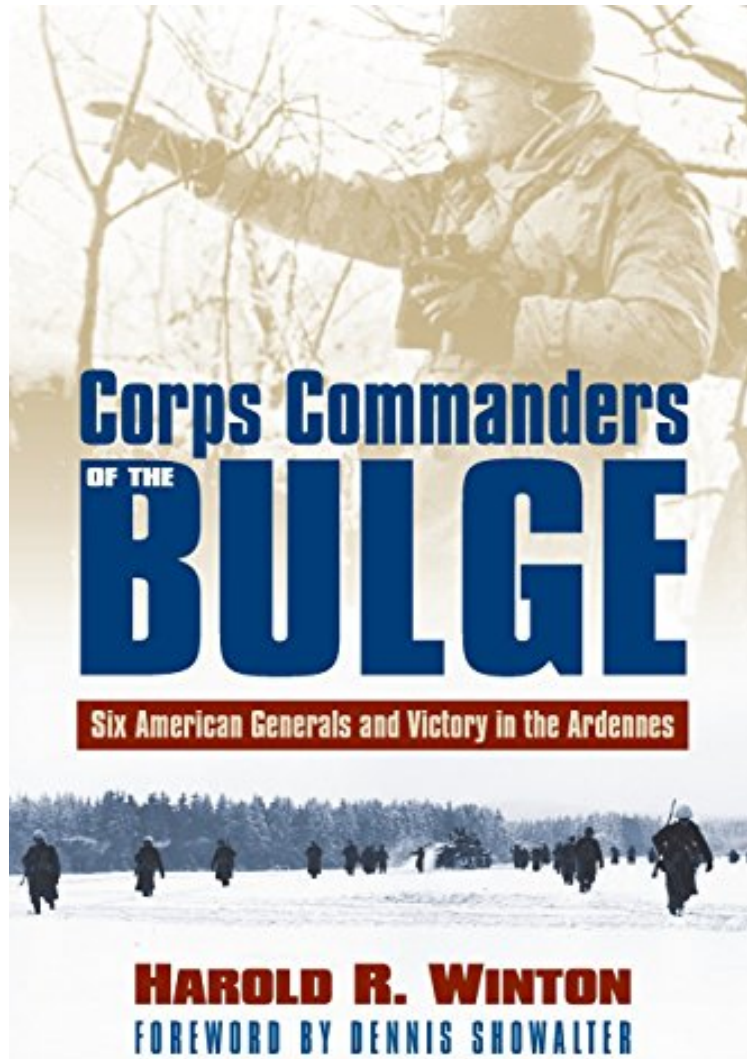


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(Modern War Studies (Paperback))

Corps Commanders of the Bulge: Six American Generals and Victory in the Ardennes (Modern War Studies (Paperback))

Harold R. Winton

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Harold R. Winton : Corps Commanders of the Bulge: Six American Generals and Victory in the Ardennes (Modern War Studies (Paperback)) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Corps Commanders of the Bulge: Six American Generals and Victory in the Ardennes (Modern War Studies (Paperback)):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A useful light shone on an under appreciated group of US Army leaders. By NJBA An overlooked aspect of the Battle of the Bulge was the critical roles of the corps commanders in bringing about an epic American victory. Harold Winton has done a great service by highlighting how fortunate the American side was to have had such competent leaders at the corps level as Troy Middleton of VIII Corps, Leonard Gerow of V Corps, Matthew Ridgeway of XVIII Airborne Corps, John Millikin of III Corps, Manton Eddy of XII Corps and Lawton Collins of VII Corps. Their leadership was crucial in what was a monumental challenge posed by a desperate, tough and resilient foe. Their steadiness and skill was all the more important in light of yet another dismal performance from Courtney Hodges at First Army who should, surely, have been sacked following the Hurtgen Forest debacle (tainted in this abysmal failure were Gerow and Collins, albeit to a somewhat lesser extent). The book traces the careers of each officer prior to taking command of their corps and examines their decision making during the Ardennes offensive. All emerge well albeit not without blemishes. Middleton who arguably had the most difficult job did particularly well given the challenge he faced on 16 December from a massive attack that threatened to destroy his corps. His recognition of Bastogne as a critical road centre to defend was instrumental in hampering the Germans' forward movement to the Meuse. His failure to clearly and unequivocally order the early and immediate withdrawal of the two regiments of the 106th Infantry Division from the Schnee Eifel knowing as he did their vulnerability to encirclement was a black mark. Ridgeway was similarly slow to recognize the peril in which the defenders of St Vith rested as the Germans pressed in on three sides. Leadership at the senior levels was not all that it should have been in the European Theatre of Operation. Eisenhower, Bradley and Montgomery all suffered from an over abundance of caution yet saw no sign of a possible German counteroffensive. Hodges was hopelessly out of his depth yet commanded arguably the most important US army. Patton was occasionally brilliant but also erratic. America was fortunate indeed that in its corps commanders, as shown by Winton, they had steady, competent, first rate leadership.

22 of 22 people found the following review helpful. The American victory in the Ardennes from a different perspective By Jonathan Baum Just when you thought that there couldn't be another useful book on the Battle of the Bulge, Professor Harold Winton proves us wrong with this fine portrait of the battle that focuses on the way it was commanded by the six American corps commanders who were involved: Gerow, Middleton, Ridgeway, Milikin, Eddy and Collins. This emphasis on what Winton calls "the middle level of command" allows us to see the battle as it developed operationally and provides the reader with perhaps the clearest and most understandable narrative of the Battle of the Bulge ever written. Winton helpfully divides the history of the battle into three phases and covers the activities and decisions of the officers in each phase: their relationships with their superiors and subordinates, what tactical demands the battle placed on them, and even how they held up physically and psychologically. Since the book also includes brief biographies of those officers, Winton is able to evaluate the effectiveness of how the US Army educated its officers for higher command between the World Wars - all six were CGSS and five of them were War College grads. Winton also takes the time to show the true role of allied air power in the battle. All in all, this book is a must-read for those who study the Battle of the Ardennes and the US Army in the Second World War. One small sour note: either Dr. Winton or his editors at University Press of Kansas - a military history publisher of note - should have been aware that Marlborough was not at Waterloo (see p.160).

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Has it all By repiii Exceptional work. Winton links the cultures of the services, the preparation of the interwar years and the generals knowledge of each other with their roles in WW II. Further he leads up to The Bulge so that we understand the extant strategies and situations. Then he drops down to the corps level to give the details of the fight. The corps is the perfect level to tie together strategic, operational and tactical operation. Winton brings characters alive having interviewed or studied their papers and living subordinates. Without making a case for Eisenhower, he demonstrates again and again how fortunate we were to have Ike in charge. He points at major events like how his instincts and reactions on 16 Dec cost the Germans the delay (through our response) that was critical to delaying their time table and chances for success and little things like Ike creating a pool of qualified division commanders to take over for any number of possible reasons. That is so Ike! One can get more tactical detail in books about companies and the broad sweep as in *Crusade in Europe*, but I know of no other work that links it all so brilliantly and enhances our understanding of how and why we fought the war the way we did... and who our heroes were!

Army Historical Foundation Distinguished Book Award If the Battle of the Bulge was Germany's last gasp, it was also America's proving ground—the largest single action fought by the U.S. Army in World War II. Taking a new approach to an old story, Harold Winton widens our field of vision by showing how victory in this legendary campaign was built upon the remarkable resurrection of our truncated interwar army, an overhaul that produced the effective commanders crucial to GI success in beating back the Ardennes counteroffensive launched by Hitler's forces. Winton's is the first study of the Bulge to examine leadership at the largely neglected level of corps command. Focusing on the decisions and actions of six Army corps commanders—Leonard Gerow, Troy Middleton, Matthew Ridgeway, John Millikin, Manton Eddy, and J. Lawton Collins—he recreates their role in this epic struggle through a mosaic of narratives that take the commanders from the pre-war training grounds of America to the crucible of war in the icy-cold killing fields of Belgium and Luxembourg. Winton introduces the story of each phase of the Bulge with a theater-

level overview of the major decisions and events that shaped the corps battles and, for the first time, fully integrates the crucial role of airpower into our understanding of how events unfolded on the ground. Unlike most accounts of the Ardennes that chronicle only the periods of German and American initiative, Winton's study describes an intervening middle phase in which the initiative was fiercely contested by both sides and the outcome uncertain. His inclusion of the principal American and German commanders adds yet another valuable layer to this rich tapestry of narrative and analysis. Ultimately, Winton argues that the flexibility of the corps structure and the competence of the men who commanded the six American corps that fought in the Bulge contributed significantly to the ultimate victory. Chronicling the human drama of commanding large numbers of soldiers in battle, he has produced an artful blend of combat narrative, collective biography, and institutional history that contributes significantly to the broader understanding of World War II as a whole. With the recent modularization of the U.S. Army division, which makes this command echelon a re-creation of the corps of World War II, *Corps Commanders of the Bulge* also has distinct relevance to current issues of Army transformation.

"World War II history is not lacking in case studies in leadership, and the Battle of the Bulge is certainly well documented. Despite this, Winton has managed to create a compelling account of both that breaks from the normal mold of battle analysis or leadership primer in a little studied area at the corps level of command. Instead, he weaves the two together through the lens of six of the Army's finest operational leaders, and does so in a manner that engages the reader, irrespective of their knowledge of World War II history."—*The Strategy Bridge* "Excellent both as campaign narrative and as a study of command. . . . Winton has written an excellent study of command in battle. It can profitably be read by students of the American Army in World War II, those interested in the problem of assessing military performance, and anyone who appreciates excellent historical prose."—*Parameters* "Winton's book is a study of leadership at the level of Corps commander. It is a biographical, institutional, organizational, analytical study. Winton has done his homework. . . . This is an excellent study and a valuable contribution."—*Journal of Military History* "Winton concludes his analysis of command with an important truth: Although personal connections and the accidents of timing can indeed affect an officer's career, the underlying ingredient of successful command is a harmonious blend of intelligence, character, and energy. It is in this assessment and its relevance to today's fighting force that Winton makes his greatest contribution."—*Army* "An exceptional work that deftly blends biography, military history, and story-telling to illuminate the largest battle fought by the U.S. Army in World War II. Winton never loses sight of the men in the maelstrom, and his group portrait of six American corps commanders enhances our understanding of this epic fight."—Rick Atkinson, Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *An Army at Dawn* "Imaginatively conceived, brilliantly researched and documented, incredibly detailed, and evenhanded in its judgments, Winton's study is superb."—Lewis Sorley, author of *Honorable Warrior* "An outstanding study that should be read by every professional soldier."—Robert A. Doughty, author of *Pyrrhic Victory* From the Back Cover "An exceptional work that deftly blends biography, military history, and story-telling to illuminate the largest battle fought by the U.S. Army in World War II. Winton never loses sight of the men in the maelstrom, and his group portrait of six American corps commanders enhances our understanding of this epic fight."—Rick Atkinson, Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *An Army at Dawn* "Imaginatively conceived, brilliantly researched and documented, incredibly detailed, and evenhanded in its judgments, Winton's study is superb."—Lewis Sorley, author of *Honorable Warrior* "An outstanding study that should be read by every professional soldier."—Robert A. Doughty, author of *Pyrrhic Victory* About the Author Harold R. Winton is professor of military history and theory at the School of Advanced Air and Space Studies, Air University. He is author of *To Change an Army: General Sir John Burnett-Stuart and British Armored Doctrine, 1927-1938* and co-editor of *The Challenge of Change: Military Institutions and New Realities, 1918-1941*.