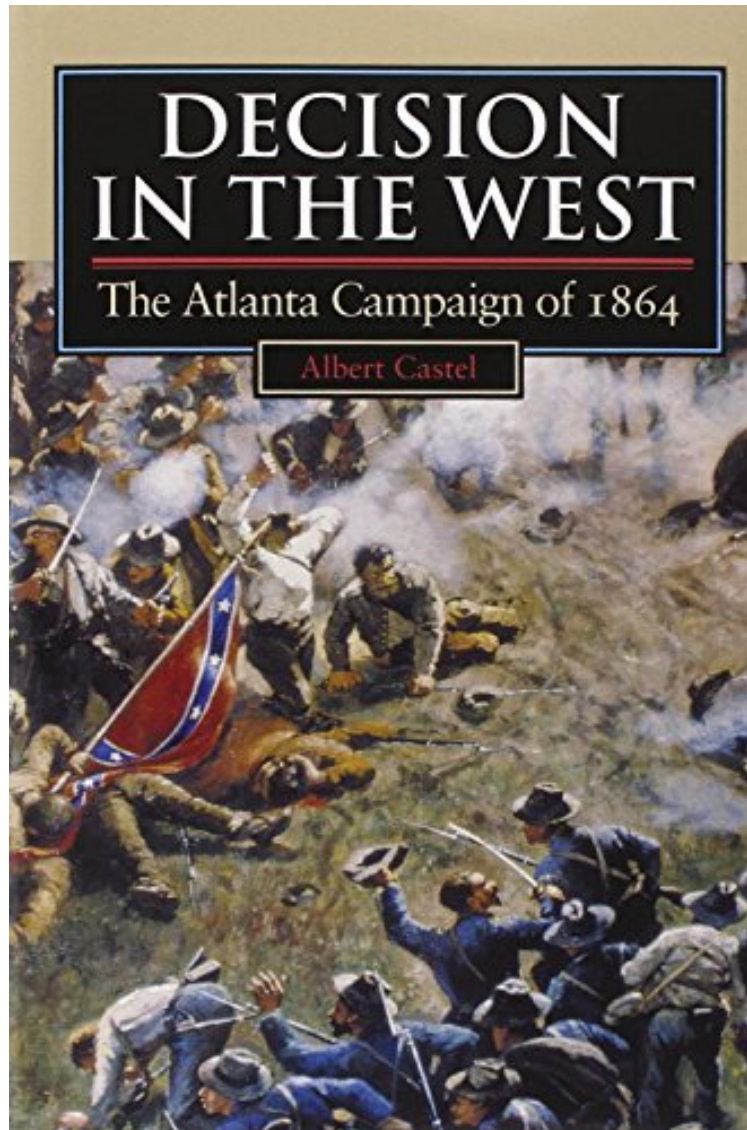


[FREE] Decision in the West: The Atlanta Campaign of 1864 (Modern War Studies (Paperback))

## Decision in the West: The Atlanta Campaign of 1864 (Modern War Studies (Paperback))

*Albert Castel*

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**Albert Castel : Decision in the West: The Atlanta Campaign of 1864 (Modern War Studies (Paperback))** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Decision in the West: The Atlanta Campaign of 1864 (Modern War Studies (Paperback)):

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Decision in the West: The Atlanta Campaign of 1864By John M. FosterAlbert Castel, through tremendously thorough research of war records, letters, diaries, newspapers, and

government documents has written what I would call the definitive work on the events leading up to the the fall of Atlanta in September, 1864. The subject has been addressed dozens of times by amateur and professional historians and if they had access to the resources Castel used, they did not use them. Although this work is almost 20 years old, no one has come close to its quality. A recent book by Ron Buell, *War Like a Thunderbolt* (2009), is very well done, but it is at best an outline of the battles leading up to the fall of Atlanta - Buell's focus is mainly on he actual burning of Atlanta, but he does an excellent job with the Battle of Jonesboro and the Union flanking movement that ended the conflict. His book is easy reading and quite entertaining, along with bringing out some facts not covered by Castel. Some will take exception to many of the conclusions of *Decision in the West*, depending on how they wish to see the actions of various persons, particularly the main players - Sherman, McPherson, Thomas, Johnston, Davis, Bragg, and Hood. Castel plays fairly with all these persons but he does not fail to point our their shortcomings, particularly those of Sherman. Readers who don't accept the notion of Sherman as a strategic genius will find Castel's conclusions comforting. As a balanced and professional historian, Castel provides counter-point essays at the end of the book on the issues of Sherman's generalship, because second guessing in war is a tricky business. As for the battle analysis, the book provides details of the movememts of brigades and divisions as well as the larger groups such as corps and army groups. Resources from the Confederate point of view were more limited than for the Union side, but Castel does a masterful job of getting into the head of Joe Johnston and his Confederate soldiers in the trenches. Johnston is treated more than fairly, and while history and southerners have often given him a bad rap for his strategy in the Atlantic Campaign, Castel points out the realities of his situation and provides a more favorable review of this intelligent but cautious Confederte general. The book is not generally available anymore, but it may be found in some libraries and is available in used form through . If you are a student of the Civil War in Georgia, and have not read this book, I highly recommend it, it will alter you view of that conflict and elevate the bravery of all involved, north and south, to the standards we Americans expect from our armed forces.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Classic read on the Atlanta campaignBy David MarshallGreat book.1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Excellent read on the campaign.By Mark SymmsI am not finished yet but the detail that goes into Castel's book is incredible. Anecdotes from Generals down to Privates. Examines the flaws of each commander in the opening rounds. Plus Davis and Johnstons animosity for each other is included. I am enjoying it and was planning on reading it in sections that went along with the historic timeline of 150 years ago. I could not help myself, I kept reading past the current time period and am now into May.

Following a skirmish on June 28, 1864, a truce is called so the North can remove their dead and wounded. For two hours, Yankees and Rebels mingle, with some of the latter even assisting the former in their grisly work. Newspapers are exchanged. Northern coffee is swapped for Southern tobacco. Yanks crowd around two Rebel generals, soliciting and obtaining autographs.As they part, a Confederate calls to a Yankee, "I hope to miss you, Yank, if I happen to shoot in your direction." "May I, never hit you Johnny if we fight again," comes the reply.The reprieve is short. A couple of months, dozens of battles, and more than 30,000 casualties later, the North takes Atlanta.One of the most dramatic and decisive episodes of the Civil War, the Atlanta Campaign was a military operation carried out on a grand scale across a spectacular landscape that pitted some of the war's best (and worst) general against each other.In *Decision in the West*, Albert Castel provides the first detailed history of the Campaign published since Jacob D. Cox's version appeared in 1882. Unlike Cox, who was a general in Sherman's army, Castel provides an objective perspective and a comprehensive account based on primary and secondary sources that have become available in the past 110 years.Castel gives a full and balanced treatment to the operations of both the Union and Confederate armies from the perspective of the common soldiers as well as the top generals. He offers new accounts and analyses of many of the major events of the campaign, and, in the process, corrects many long-standing myths, misconceptions, and mistakes. In particular, he challenges the standard view of Sherman's performance.Written in present tense to give a sense of immediacy and greater realism, *Decision in the West* demonstrates more definitively than any previous book how the capture of Atlanta by Sherman's army occurred and why it assured Northern victory in the Civil War.

From Library JournalOf the many Civil War titles published each year, very few stand heads taller than the rest. This is such a book. Exhaustively researched, richly detailed, and told in the present tense, it has brought to life all the participants, from private to general. Incorporating both primary and secondary sources, Castel ( *The Presidency of Andrew Johnson* , LJ 9/1/79) provides an objective perspective seldom equaled, giving full and balanced treatment to both Union and Confederate armies through the use of new accounts and analyses of major events. Along the way, he corrects many mistakes and dispels longstanding myths. In particular, he challenges the standard view of Sherman's performance. This is an important, original book that will immediately become the standard study of the campaign. Highly recommended for most libraries. History Book Club selection.- David Lee Poremba, Detroit P.L.Copyright 1992 Reed Business Information, Inc. "One of the most important and original books on the Civil War published in the past decade. This book is richly detailed and massively researched. Its sharply revisionist interpretation of William T. Sherman is bound to arouse much controversy. All serious students of the Civil War will want to read it."?David

Herbert Donald, author of *Charles Sumner and the Coming of the Civil War* "Almost everything in this book is new or in some way ground breaking. It will immediately become the standard study of the campaign. The research is impeccable. A magnificent effort."?William C. Davis, author of *Jefferson Davis: The Man and His Hour* and former editor of *Civil War Times Illustrated* "This is the fullest and most intelligible study of the Atlanta campaign that we have or are likely ever to have. The writing is lively, the research exhaustive, the interpretations sometimes provocative but always perceptive. This is how military history should be written."?James M. McPherson, author of *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Era of the Civil War* "Military history at its best by one of America's leading historians of the Civil War. With dramatic flair and authentic detail in a fast-paced and suspenseful narrative, Castel brings the Atlanta campaign to life, penetrating the minds of the commanders as well as the thoughts of the common soldiers."?Robert W. Johannsen, author of *Lincoln, the South, and Slavery: The Political Dimension*From the Back Cover'A remarkable book. Castel's superb descriptions of massive armies on the move as well as the stunning viciousness of combat [and] his deft weavings of biographical sketches and simple stories of bravery...combine to form a work that is consistently compelling and ultimately convincing.' -Civil War History