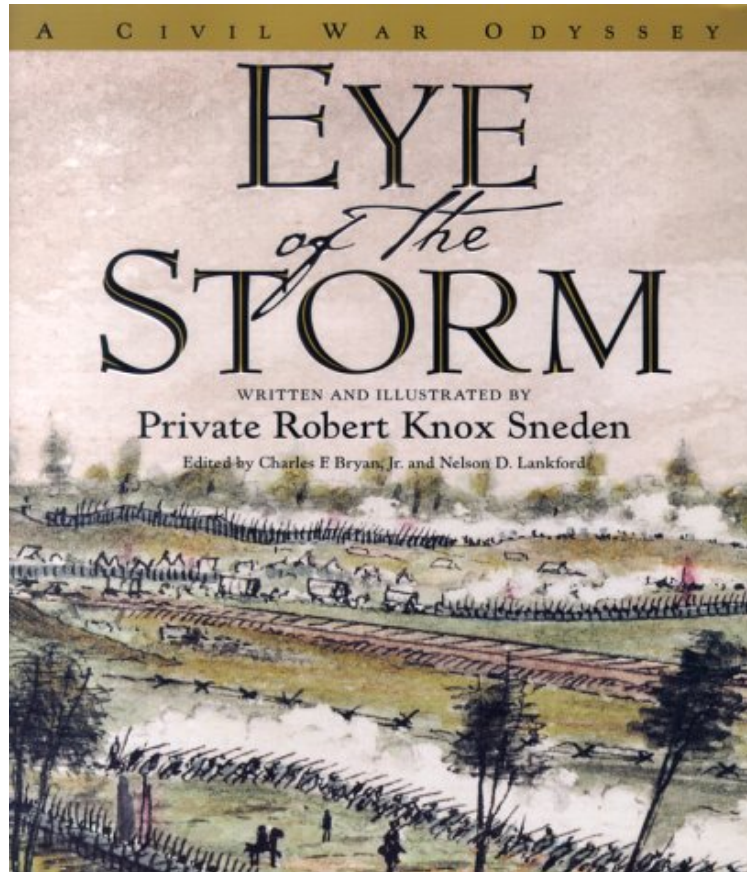


(Download) Eye Of The Storm: A Civil War Odyssey

Eye Of The Storm: A Civil War Odyssey

Robert Knox Sneden

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Robert Knox Sneden : Eye Of The Storm: A Civil War Odyssey before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Eye Of The Storm: A Civil War Odyssey:

12 of 13 people found the following review helpful. Soldier's Account of Civil War and Andersonville a TreasureBy Wayne A. SmithThis book is remarkable and different from almost any other war remembrance I have come across. Not only has Robert Knox Sneden penned a highly descriptive account of his years with the Army of the Potomac and as a prisoner of war, his work is illustrated with scores of his own watercolors depicting what he saw -- many made at the time he was witnessing places and events during the war.Sneden had an unusual vantage point. An engineer and draftsman, Sneden's services were employed as a map maker for several Union Generals during the first two and a half years of the war. Although a private, this posting gave him an easier life than experienced by most privates. Although in the field, Sneden was attached to headquarters. His staff position and duties also gave him considerable free time -- from which we benefit. Sneden used this time to record his observations in both written form and via sketches and watercolor renderings of war scenes.Sneden's posting was not without difficulty or danger. Several times he had to reconnoiter close to the enemy or between the lines in order gather the information needed for accurate local maps. He was also asked to journey over recently fought over battlefields to aid in the construction of after-action reports -- after

the Union army had left and local control had reverted to Confederate partisans. On one such journey away from the main army, Sneden and a few of his companions were captured by Mosby's Rangers. Sneden then began his journey through the Confederate prisoner of war system staying in Richmond, Andersonville and several other locations. His experiences are well written. Sneden has a very matter of fact style of writing that gets to the point and is descriptive without being overwrought. Having read "Company Ayche" by Sam Watkins and "All for the Union" by Elisha Hunt Rhodes, I would rank Sneden's work as highly among Civil War remembrances. His unique position enables him to comment on battlefield and camp experiences in all their gritty detail as well as those portions of the Union high command with whom he came in contact. His prisoner of war writing reveals the brutal realities of life at Andersonville and other locations. The raw and inhumane world of these men is given testimony by Sneden in his gripping account of what he and others bore. The artwork illustrates the text well. Although probably considered somewhat rough strictly as art, it is poignant and captivating. His original maps are also fascinating as historical documents. This is a very good book. The war and prison scenes are engaging and very interesting. The author's style is highly readable and very convincing in terms of giving a front line view of army and prison life. The plentiful contemporary illustrations makes this book stand out among the genre. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Similar in some respects to other accounts of the conditions of union prisoners but also original in his individual efforts to sBy Haltom City Interesting first hand account of one man's experience during the war between the states. Similar in some respects to other accounts of the conditions of union prisoners but also original in his individual efforts to survive terrible conditions. Recommended for the history buff who enjoys a soldier's story without all of the well known battle history based on how the generals fought a battle. This is how a single soldier participated in the war and lived after capture while the war was continued seemingly endlessly until a final conclusion. A perspective beyond the battlefield. Some events are true and some maybe not but it gives you a feeling of how people suffer in war. Civilian and soldier. You feel you are there but glad you were not. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. I think it is a useful book, drawing upon a new By Hopeless I think it is a useful book, drawing upon a new, valuable information source. I think it suffers from not presenting all the information in Sneden's diaries, but I don't know how it would be possible to present all the Sneden material. I did access, by other means, some of the raw Sneden files and am concerned there was too much editing applied. Even so, presenting this book is an invaluable contribution to our knowledge about the War. In the past, I've been turned off by other books that just kept rehashing old material again and again.

One of the most important Civil War documents to be published since Ulysses S. Grant's Personal Memoirs: the fully illustrated, eyewitness account of the war by a long forgotten Union private and mapmaker named Robert K. Sneden.

.com After the attack on Fort Sumter, Robert Knox Sneden decided to do his part to save the Union, signing on with the 40th New York Volunteers. Owing to his skills as an artist, Private Sneden was recruited to become a cartographer within a few months. And owing to his skills as both artist and cartographer, Civil War buffs can enjoy Eye of the Storm. During his time in the army, Sneden kept a detailed diary and made hundreds of sketches in the field. In 1994, four scrapbooks in a Connecticut bank vault were found to contain some 800 drawings, the vast majority of them based on his original sketches. Soon after, a 5,000-page illustrated memoir based on Sneden's diaries was also discovered. Selections from the scrapbooks and memoir make up this marvelous book, which offers firsthand accounts of the action of the Peninsula Campaign and Second Bull Run--as well as the monotony of soldiering between battles. Perhaps the most compelling portion of Eye of the Storm is Sneden's descriptions of Andersonville, the Confederacy's notorious prison camp: September 7, 1864: Fine weather, but very hot, 110 degrees anywhere in the shade. This terrible heat helps to kill us off at the rate of 100 per day inside the stockade. Dead men may be seen by the score lying all along the brook which runs through the filthy swamp, while others are tearing off their soiled clothes to get thread from the seams, or patches to put on their own ragged clothes. Sneden's account lacks the typical Victorian flowery prose, as he writes with an almost analytical detachment about the horrors around him. This detachment lends an immediacy to his memoir, bringing home the brutality of the War Between the States. Dozens of Sneden's detailed drawings illustrate the text, making this a must-have for Civil War buffs. Highly recommended. --Sunny Delaney From Publishers Weekly Shortly after the firing on Fort Sumter in 1861, 29-year-old Robert Sneden joined the 40th New York Volunteer Infantry. Sneden's prewar career as an architect/engineer attracted the attention of higher officers, and the young Canadian was detached as a cartographer for most of his brief military career, seeing action in the Second Manassas and on a few other occasions. On November 27, 1863, Sneden was seized by rebel troops led by the famed John S. Mosby and hustled south to a Richmond prison. In early 1864, he was among the first batch of Union prisoners sent to Andersonville, Ga., where more than 13,000 prisoners died. After transfers to other Southern camps, Sneden was finally exchanged in December 1864. Throughout his army career, Sneden kept a journal and sketched numerous sites of his experiences. Although the journal itself has disappeared, a very journal-like postwar memoir of some 5,000 pages based on his wartime experience and heavily illustrated by him has been found. Editors Bryan and Lankford, of the Virginia Historical Society (which owns the Sneden collection), have excerpted the more important sections of this

compellingly straightforward account and provided more than 70 color illustrations of battle fields, city layouts and other scenes that caught Sneden's precise, cartographic eye. Summaries fill in blanks from the larger work, and brief identifications of period people and terms are helpfully included, but it's really the pictures that tell the best story here. The end result is a pleasing palate of vivid (if not quite reflective) descriptions and terrific watercolors from a patriotic man. History Book Club main selection; BOMC and Military Book Club alternate; first serial to *Civil War Illustrated*. (Oct.) Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc. From *Library Journal* Bryan and Lanford (Virginia Historical Society) have spent considerable time editing the often graphic, at times partisan, yet highly analytical 5000-page illustrated diary/memoir kept by Private Sneden, a Union cartographer who dabbled in art as a member of the 40th New York Volunteers. The Virginia Historical Society initially acquired four scrapbooks several years ago, which contained 500 watercolor illustrations of Sneden's Civil War experiences. When analyzing Sneden's artwork, Bryan Landford noticed references to a diary, which they eventually located and purchased. The narrative depicts the life of the common soldier and is perhaps one of the most complete descriptions of Civil War battlefield experiences (Army of the Potomac) and prison life (Andersonville) ever written. In addition, the many watercolor sketches and maps provide a visual chronicle of every place Sneden visited. Using numerous sources, the editors have also been able to corroborate the accuracy of Sneden's description of events and personalities. Readers will enjoy seeing carefully selected examples of Sneden's primitive yet powerfully evocative art. Skillfully edited, *Eye of the Storm* may one day be considered a classic. Essential for academic and public libraries. Charles C. Hay III, Eastern Kentucky Univ. Lib., Richmond Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc.