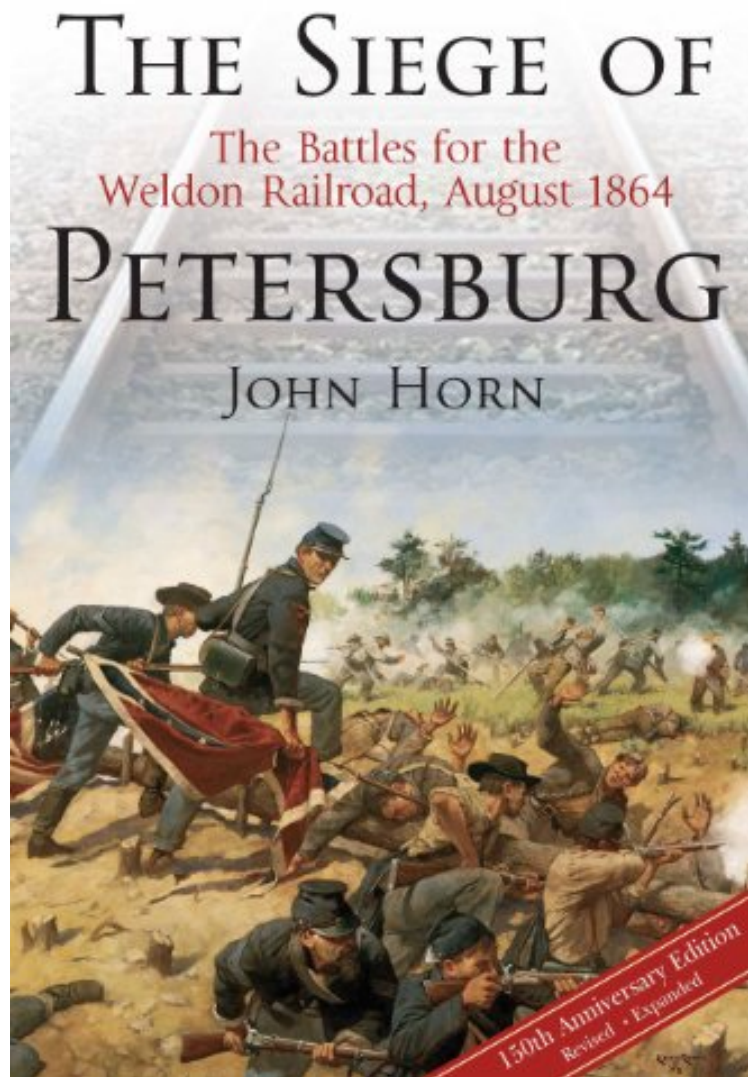


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The Siege of Petersburg: The Battles for the Weldon Railroad, August 1864

John Horn

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John Horn : The Siege of Petersburg: The Battles for the Weldon Railroad, August 1864 before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Siege of Petersburg: The Battles for the Weldon Railroad, August 1864:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Bloody fights that gained not so muchBy Steven PetersonThis is a useful examination of one of General Ulysses Grant's efforts to move ahead the results of his siege of Petersburg and,

ultimately, Richmond. He had a number of motives for the Weldon Railroad caper. At one level, to take the Weldon Railroad and end the supplies moving along its battered tracks to support the Confederate forces and others. At another level, a major attack might prevent Lee from reinforcing General Jubal Early's forces in the Shenandoah Valley. The attack had two components--first, an attack at the northern end of the Confederate trenches around Richmond and Petersburg; second, an attack at the other end of the Confederate lines on the Weldon Railroad. It was a complex operation (more so than my rendering of events). First, the Second Corps under General Winfield Scott Hancock, would be the primary voice attacking the Confederate lines outside Richmond. A part of the motivation here was to draw Confederate forces from other trenches to defend against this attack. Then, led by General Gouverneur Warren's Fifth Corps, there would be an attack on the Weldon Railroad at the other end of Confederate defenses, now hopefully denuded of some of its defenders. The fight at both ends was sanguinary. Union losses were heavy, but Confederate forces bled as well, as they could afford casualties less than Union forces. There were poor tactical movements throughout--especially by Union forces. Hancock "the Superb" was not at the top of his game (he actually ended up involved in both attacks!). This is a detailed analysis of the "one-two" punch launched by Grant. End results were rather meager, but in the end the Confederate lines were spread further, stretching the limited manpower that much more. And troops intended for Early's mission did not join him.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Get this book
By Customer
John Horn has significantly expanded and broadened his analysis of the Fourth Offensive in this new edition of his original 1991 book, *The Petersburg Campaign*. With useful maps and a plethora of photographs Horn guides the readers through the complicated maneuvers of the battles of Deep Bottom, Globe Tavern, and Reams Station. Based on a deep reading of the sources, Horn provides a balanced interpretation of the Fourth Offensive, capped by an astute final chapter that measures the successes and failures of everyone involved, from the commanders to the privates who fought the battles. This book should be on the shelf of every student interested in the war in the East.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Horn tells the story in a clear and lucid manner that is easy and enjoyable to read
By Henry W. Persons, Jr.
My original review was in error. Mr. Horn's book is full of valuable footnotes that support his narrative. Mr. Horn tells the story in a clear and lucid manner that is easy and enjoyable to read. Additionally he makes use of maps that help to graphically depict the events taking place. The book is well written and documented and will add greatly to the knowledge of this important portion of the war. I heartily recommend this book as a must have for one's library on this campaign.

The nine-month siege of Petersburg was the longest continuous operation of the American Civil War. A series of large-scale Union "offensives," grand maneuvers that triggered some of the fiercest battles of the war, broke the monotony of static trench warfare. Grant's Fourth Offensive, August 14-25, the longest and bloodiest operation of the campaign, is the subject of John Horn's revised and updated Sesquicentennial edition of *The Siege of Petersburg: The Battles for the Weldon Railroad, August 1864*. Frustrated by his inability to break through the Southern front, General Grant devised a two punch combination strategy in an effort to sever the crucial Weldon Railroad and stretch General Lee's lines. The plan called for General Hancock's II Corps (with the X Corps) to move against Deep Bottom north of the James River to occupy Confederate attention while General Warren's V Corps, supported by elements of the IX Corps, marched south and west below Petersburg toward Globe Tavern on the Weldon Railroad. The plan triggered the battles of Second Deep Bottom, Globe Tavern, and Second Reams Station, bitter fighting that witnessed fierce Confederate counterattacks and additional Union operations against the railroad before Grant's troops dug in and secured their hold on Globe Tavern. The end result was nearly 15,000 killed, wounded, and missing, the severing of the railroad, and the jump-off point for what would be Grant's Fifth Offensive in late September. Revised and updated for this special edition, Horn's outstanding tactical battle study, which emphasizes the context and consequences of every action, is supported by numerous maps and grounded in hundreds of primary sources. Horn puts Grant's Fourth Offensive into its proper perspective not only in the context of the Petersburg Campaign and the war, but in the context of the history of warfare.

"A superior piece of Civil War scholarship." (Edwin C. Bearss, former Chief Historian of the National Park Service and award-winning author of *The Petersburg Campaign: Volume 1, The Eastern Front Battles* and *Volume 2, The Western Front Battles*) "Grant's Fourth Offensive at Petersburg proved one of his two most successful offensives of the entire siege, prior to finally capturing that city and Richmond in April, 1865. That operation is excellently covered in John Horn's *The Siege of Petersburg: The Battles for the Weldon Railroad, August 1864*. This revised, expanded edition of his original 1991 book ranks as the foremost study of the Fourth Offensive. It belongs in every Civil War library." (Richard J. Sommers, author of *Richmond Redeemed: The Siege at Petersburg: The Battles of Chaffin's Bluff and Poplar Spring Church*) "It's great to have John Horn's fine study of August 1864 combat actions (Richmond-Petersburg style) back in print; covering actions on both sides of the James River, with sections on Deep Bottom, Globe Tavern, and Reams Station. Utilizing manuscript and published sources, Horn untangles a complicated tale of plans gone awry and soldiers unexpectedly thrust into harm's way. This new edition upgrades the maps and adds some fresh material. Good battle detail, solid analysis, and strong characterizations make this a welcome addition to the

Petersburg book shelf.” (Noah Andre Trudeau, author of *The Last Citadel: Petersburg, June 1864–April 1865*)
About the Author
A native of Illinois, John Horn received a B.A. in English and Latin from New College (Sarasota, Florida) in 1973 and a J.D. from Columbia Law School in 1976. He has practiced law in the Chicago area since graduation, occasionally holding local public office, and living in Oak Forest with his wife and law partner, H. Elizabeth Kelley, a native of Richmond, Virginia. They have three children. He and his wife travel to the Old Dominion each year to visit relatives, battlefields, and various archives. He has published articles in *Civil War Times Illustrated* and *America's Civil War*. His books include *The Destruction of the Weldon Railroad* and *The Petersburg Campaign*. With Hampton Newsome (author of *Richmond Must Fall*) and Dr. John G. Selby (author of *Virginians at War*), Horn co-edited *Civil War Talks: The Further Reminiscences of George S. Bernard His Fellow Veterans*."