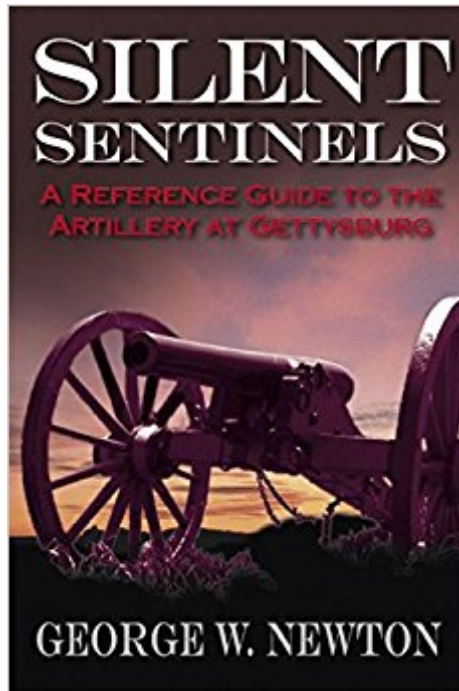




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Silent Sentinels: A Reference Guide To The Artillery Of Gettysburg



Synopsis

Artillery played an important and perhaps decisive role in the July 1863 battle of Gettysburg.

Although many hundreds of books have been published on the battle, very few have focused more than a few paragraphs or a sprinkling of entries on the “long arm” and its role in the battle. This gap is finally filled by George Newton’s *Silent Sentinels: A Reference Guide to the Artillery of Gettysburg*. Now in paperback, Newton’s well-written and illustrated study was designed to be of use to both the casual battlefield visitor and the serious Civil War scholar.

The former will use *Silent Sentinels* to learn more about the campaign in general, the role of artillery in Civil War battles, and how it was used on the battlefield at Gettysburg. They will also use it to learn how to identify different types of artillery, and tour a wide variety of artillery-related sites from Oak Hill in the north to a solitary gun well south of the Peach Orchard. More experienced Civil War students will find *Silent Sentinels*’ extensive primary sources, diagrams, appendices of numbers and losses, and informative discussion of artillery organization and tactics an indispensable reference resource. *Silent Sentinels* opens with a general overview of the campaign and a wide-ranging discussion of 19th century artillery, the gun types used at Gettysburg, the equipment needed to operate the guns, how they were organized in each army, and the tactics employed by both Union and Confederate artillerymen. The chapter-long and wide-ranging tour included in this book guides readers to a variety of fascinating sites with enough detail to interest even the most jaded Gettysburg historian. This outstanding and useful historical guide includes detailed endnotes, a bibliography, and an index. Readers can peruse and enjoy this versatile study from the comfort of an easy chair or while walking the magnificent Pennsylvania field.

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Customer Reviews

George W. Newton is a native of Baltimore and a 1973 graduate of McMurry University in Abilene, Texas. A veteran of the United States Air Force, Newton served in Vietnam War and is a retired executive from the insurance industry. He lives with his wife of 33 years near Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, and is a Licensed Battlefield Guide at the Gettysburg National Military Park.

Great reference for Gettysburg, and Civil War artillery in general. Additionally, the book is produced with quality, both in printing and binding, and was packaged and shipped very securely.

While at Gettysburg I wondered about all the cannons, whose were they, how were they employed, how effective were they? This book answers those questions and guides you through the fields with easy to follow references. There is just enough back-story to put the battle in historical perspective but the artillery is the focus. Well written and researched it is an excellent companion for touring the battlefield.

A very detailed guide to the artillery at Gettysburg, during the battle and later in the placement of monuments

Silent Sentinels details the significance of artillery at the Battle of Gettysburg. This title is a reference guide, tour book and trivia book that will enhance all students understanding of happened at this small town in Pennsylvania and why. While there have been many volumes on this turning point of the Civil war, there have been very few complete works on just artillery and its role during July 1-3, 1863. George Newton explains several reasons why Northern artillery enjoyed a distinct advantage on the battlefield at Gettysburg. The main answer is quantity and quality. Additionally, it is argued that organization and leadership played an important role as well. Federal armament, organization and utilization contributed to the ultimate victory in this battle. Interesting how both Federal's and Confederate's are compared and shown to have played significant roles in the fighting and ultimate victory for the Army of the Potomac. The author allows the battlefield tramper to explore the field at Gettysburg both with a licensed Battlefield Guide as well as on your own using this book as a reference together with the National Military Parks own tour guide. This manuscript allows both the

Civil War buff and novice to better comprehend how all cannon were employed; how effective they were; how they were used by both armies; how to identify the different type of cannons and the essential role it played during the three day battle. Additionally, Newton provides an order of fighting (with losses), a helpful glossary of artillery terms; information on the park's collection on guns and pieces on display on the field today. The writer does not attempt to detail the troop movements and action of every piece of artillery, infantry unit, or cavalry units. There is sufficient background information to place the engagement in historical perspective but the artillery remains the focus of the narrative. This work starts with an overview of the campaign. Subsequent chapters include a brief history of Civil War artillery and how it worked, select photographs, quotations from participants from both sides to permit a better understanding of what it was like to be in the battle and the tour itself. Diagrams of guns and carriages are provided to enhance understanding for serious students. The last chapters include Gettysburg artillery, trivia that will increase interest and knowledge. The five appendices that conclude the book offers a great deal of information on the organization and losses of the artillery arms of both armies and include descriptions for each battery. Additional data is set up with a listing by state that will help anyone trying to locate a specific battery including tables that provide the number of guns by type and casualties by brigade battalion. Newton attempts to allow readers to better realize what officers experienced during the battles by reproducing several official reports taken straight from the Official Records of the War of the rebellion. The author felt that reading these reports and accompanying biographies of several officers, while touring the battlefield will better allow visitors to learn and kindle their interest to return over and over to this national treasure. George W. Newton graduated from McMurray University in Albany, Texas. He served in the United States Air Force during the Vietnam War and is a retired executive from the insurance industry. Additionally, the final manuscript was reviewed and helped by historians and Licensed Battlefield Guides, Susan Boardman, Terri Latscher, Wayne Motts, Bob Martin, Kathy Pieszak and George Gargus. After reading this much needed title published by Savas-Beatie in 2005, an individual can almost visualize the soldiers running in the double quick across the fields and smelling the smoke of cannons. Very informative reference guide and if you are an enthusiast, academic or just love artillery, you have the opportunity to add this recommended book to your overcrowded knapsack. While readable and concise, *Silent Sentinels* fills a void on Artillery at Gettysburg.

This is a reference work. Its title indicates it is aimed at students of the battle of Gettysburg. If you skip the first twenty-five pages, "an overview of the Gettysburg Campaign," this book is so much

more than it is billed. It is first and foremost a great introduction to the field artillery of the Civil War. It contains an excellent, concise guide to how the big guns were operated and used. You can find everything in that short chapter from the location of the lunette to the invention of the three-inch ordinance rifle. Next, the author tells how the artillery arm was organized in both the federal armies and the Confederacy. This is not an organization table. Rather he starts with the manpower requirements of an individual battery, then he goes on to the organization of the artillery arms of the Armies of the Potomac and of Northern Virginia. Before giving us a tour of Gettysburg today, the author gives us a lesson on loading and firing these old muzzle loaders, complete with tables showing ranges of fire for the principal types of guns used in July 1863. Where Mr. Newton does us the greatest favor is in Chapter 6, where he gives an excellent guide for a driving tour of the artillery still on display on the Gettysburg Battlefield. (Many of the guns shipped there were, according to the author, melted down to make many of the bronze equestrian statues visitors have admired for decades). He adds to his narrative numerous useful appendices that detail with which larger units each battery was assigned, which states provided which batteries, and setting out the official reports of the principal artillery commanders involved at the battle. If you don't know how Civil War field artillery worked, and you want to, this would be the first book I would recommend.

I was fortunate to meet the author by accident at Pickett's Charge, Gettysburg, and I purchased my autographed book for emotional reasons. I was glad to have given in to them. The book is a gem on many accounts. For the Civil War enthusiast, who doesn't need the background, the non artillery information is placed in appendices in the back. The artillery information is concisely placed in seven chapters, and it is quite easy and interesting to read. It would make an excellent handbook for any teacher of the Civil War, who would love a hands-on approach to how the battles were fought and won/lost; and of course, a must-read for any Gettysburg enthusiast of whom I am one. An absolute delightful read. Colleen Bognet - Foreign Language Teacher/History Day Advisor - Hazleton Area School District

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