



The Battle of Petersburg, June 15-18, 1864

Sean Michael Chick

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The Battle of Petersburg was the culmination of the Virginia Overland campaign, which pitted the Army of the Potomac, led by Ulysses S. Grant and George Gordon Meade, against Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia. In spite of having outmaneuvered Lee, after three days of battle in which the Confederates at Petersburg were severely outnumbered, Union forces failed to take the city, and their final, futile attack on the fourth day only added to already staggering casualties. By holding Petersburg against great odds, the Confederacy arguably won its last great strategic victory of the Civil War.

In *The Battle of Petersburg, June 15–18, 1864*, Sean Michael Chick takes an in-depth look at an important battle often overlooked by historians and offers a new perspective on why the Army of the Potomac's leadership, from Grant down to his corps commanders, could not win a battle in which they held colossal advantages. He also discusses the battle's wider context, including politics, memory, and battlefield preservation. Highlights include the role played by African American soldiers on the first day and a detailed retelling of the famed attack of the First Maine Heavy Artillery, which lost more men than any other Civil War regiment in a single battle. In addition, the book has a fresh and nuanced interpretation of the generalships of Grant, Meade, Lee, P. G. T. Beauregard, and William Farrar Smith during this critical battle.

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