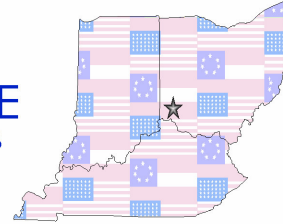




CINCINNATI  
CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE  
SERVING OHIO, KENTUCKY AND INDIANA SINCE 1956



Book Review by Thomas L. Breiner

*Plenty of Blame to Go Around: Jeb Stuart's Controversial Ride to Gettysburg* by Eric J. Wittenberg and J. David Petruzzi. Savas Beatie, New York, NY, 2006. 428 pages, Hard cover \$32.95.

*Plenty of Blame to Go Around: Jeb Stuart's Controversial Ride to Gettysburg* by Eric J. Wittenberg and J. David Petruzzi is one of the most interesting and informative works that I have had the pleasure of reading. This was a book that I found that I just could not put down. The authors have created an extremely readable and well-research version of the Confederate Cavalry's involvement in the Gettysburg Campaign. While the events surrounding Jeb Stuart and his ride around the Army of the Potomac have been addressed in many other manuscripts, this work has added new information that has previously been overlooked in discussions of Stuart's actions. This new information provides evidence that Stuart attempted to follow the guidance in Lee's orders concerning the movements of the Army of the Potomac.

The book starts with the best coverage of the Confederate Cavalry's ride to Gettysburg. During this portion of the manuscript, the authors provide all the necessary details relating to the trial and tribulations experienced by the cavalry. The new information that the authors provide sheds new light on Stuart's actions and how he tried to meet the requirements of his orders. He sent vital information that did reach the War Department in Richmond, but unfortunately never got to General Lee, either directly from Stuart's couriers or indirectly through the War Department. This coverage of the ride to Gettysburg is the most detailed account of the ride that I have ever read. The authors have done a fantastic job of gathering data and written an extremely well-written and readable account.

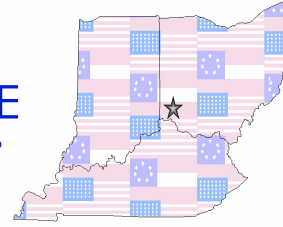
The book then moves on to the controversy that began almost immediately after the end of the campaign. Here our authors start by reviewing the early detractors of Stuart and his command. They then address the early supporters of Stuart, mainly John S. Mosby's defense of his beloved commander. Next the controversy moves to how modern day historians have taken sides on the issue. The authors finish up with their own assessment of the events. As the title says, there was plenty of blame to go around, and our authors are direct and to the point in identifying all the parties involved.

As I stated before, this work is probably the best account of the events and issues surrounding the Confederate Cavalry's involvement in the 1863 Pennsylvania Campaign. I found it to be exciting and literally could not put the book down. I read the work in a little over a day, reading at every opportunity. I can not give these authors enough praise for their efforts. This book is a definite must addition to the collection of anyone interested in the Gettysburg Campaign, Jeb Stuart, the cavalry in the Civil War, or the Civil War in general. If you don't have a personal collection of Civil War books, then at least get a copy of this book and read it. Even if you have no interest in the controversy that has grown up around Jeb Stuart and his command choices



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during the Gettysburg Campaign, the rich details and the first hand accounts of the cavalry actions are worth the time to read this book. It is the best account of the cavalry movements and actions that has ever been compiled. It is the most complete collection of the past and current views relating the controversy. So whether you are interested in the details of the campaign or in the views of Jeb Stuart's supporters and critics, this book is for you.