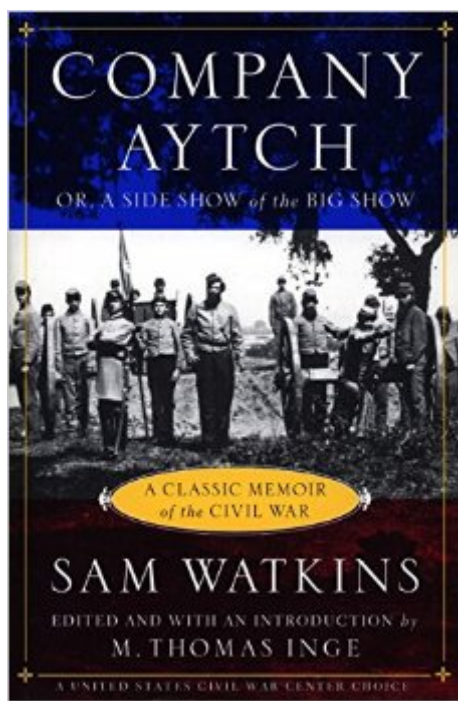


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Company Aytch



Synopsis

Among the plethora of books about the Civil War *Company Aytch* stands out for its uniquely personal view of the events as related by a most engaging writer--a man with Twain-like talents who served as a foot soldier for four long years in the Confederate army. Originally published in 1881 as a series of articles in the *Columbia, Tennessee, Herald*, Sam Watkins's account has long been recognized by historians as one of the most lively and witty accounts of the war. Parallels between this text and *The Red Badge of Courage* suggest that Stephen Crane was also among Private Watkins's readers. This edition of *Company Aytch* also contains six previously uncollected articles by Sam Watkins, plus other valuable supplementary materials, including a map and period illustrations, a glossary of technical and military terms, a chronology of events, a concise history of Watkins's regiment, a biographical directory of individuals mentioned in the narrative, and geographic and topical indexes. This new edition of a Civil War classic is bound to become the edition of choice for students, military buffs, and general readers alike.

Book Information

Paperback: 304 pages

Publisher: Plume; Subsequent edition (November 1, 1999)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0452281245

ISBN-13: 978-0452281240

Product Dimensions: 5.3 x 0.7 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 9.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (80 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #81,279 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #2 in [Books > History > Americas > United States > Civil War > Regimental Histories](#) #6 in [Books > History > Military > Life & Institutions](#) #7 in [Books > History > Military > Regiments](#)

Customer Reviews

I would not really recommend *Company Aytch* to those who are totally unfamiliar with the history of the Civil War. Watkins does not describe in detail the events of the various battles he took part in. Major battles like Shiloh and Chickamauga are covered in a few pages. Thus a reader unfamiliar with what took place might be somewhat confused regarding the overall picture, for these memoirs are not really history, or if they are history, they are history in miniature. But it is this fact which makes them so vital and so interesting. Watkins is a fine writer and he vividly describes what it was

like to be a Confederate soldier. His account is frequently very funny, often moving and at times horrific. Thus he fleshes out the events which standard history books describe in general terms. Most history books would tell of which regiment attacked which at the 'Dead Angle' on Kennesaw Mountain, describe how many died on each side and fit it into the account of the Rebel retreat to Atlanta, but Watkins places the reader alongside him actually fighting this vicious battle. Watkins is also very good on the topic of the daily life of the Confederate soldier, his struggle to find adequate food and clothing and the tough discipline which could see a soldier shot by his own side for a relatively minor indiscretion. Watkins describes numerous executions through the course of the book and they are harrowing. The quality of the writing in Company Aytch varies somewhat. At times Watkins can be repetitive, especially with his overly frequent statements that he is not writing history. His often-expressed, and fully understandable, hope to meet his fallen comrades in the hereafter tends towards a clichéd vision of heaven.

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