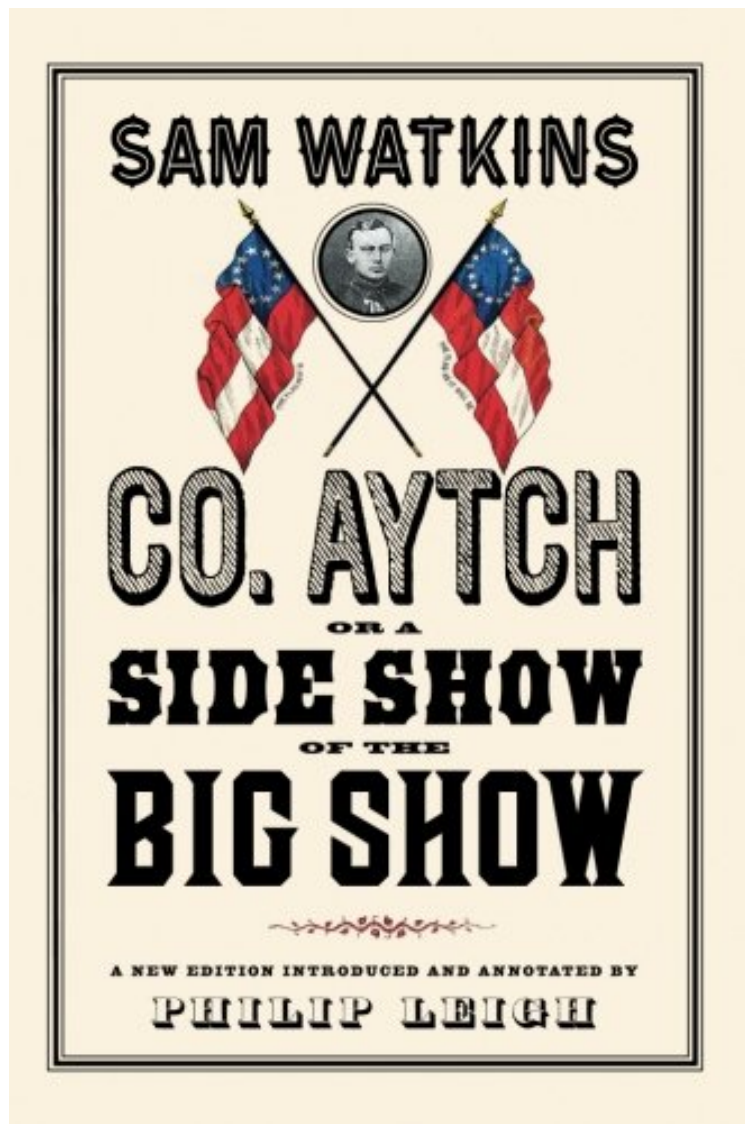


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## Co. Aytch, or a Side Show of the Big Show: A New Edition Introduced and Annotated by Philip Leigh

*Sam Watkins*

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**Sam Watkins : Co. Aytch, or a Side Show of the Big Show: A New Edition Introduced and Annotated by Philip Leigh** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Co. Aytch, or a Side Show of the Big Show: A New Edition Introduced and Annotated by Philip Leigh:

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a bit tedious. His first person story seems authentic, and he is careful to remind his reader he relying of his memory and perspective. After all he has a long narrative originally published over an extended period of time. Leigh's annotations are particularly appreciated.1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. This memoir is a treasure trove of first hand experiences ...By Thomas M. FlemingThis memoir is a treasure trove of first hand experiences by a Confederate soldier in the ranks. It is a valuable reference book for all who want to learn more about a "common" soldier's views and observations during The War Against The South. Sam Watkin's accounts are entertaining, humorous, honest and poignant.1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Love this bookBy jlcGreat book... I love the updated version that includes the details that Mr. Watkins could not have known or was mistaken in his interpretation of the details from his memory.An awesome look into the life and struggles of a rank and file soldier... although a very humorous and well spoken one.

“Company H,” the Classic Civil War Memoir in a New Edition, Completely Annotated for the First Time and Illustrated with Twenty-Four MapsCo. Aytch, or a Side Show of the Big Show is perhaps the finest memoir of an ordinary Confederate soldier. According to Margaret Mitchell, “a better book there never was.” Sam Watkins served in Company H of the First Tennessee Infantry for the duration of the Civil War. Remarkably, he survived some of the most intense battles of the war, including Shiloh, Chickamauga, Kennesaw Mountain, Atlanta, and Franklin. He was one of only seven of the original members of Company H when it surrendered in April 1865. Watkins’s memoir was written in the winter of 1882–83. The humor and depth of writing at times rises to a level resembling Mark Twain; thus, twenty-first-century readers can still discover the everlasting treasures of Private Sam Watkins’s story just as it was. It is this reason that excerpts were featured frequently in Ken Burns’s documentary on the Civil War. However, since most of Sam’s original readers—or some of their family members—actually lived through the Civil War, much of the context for the narrative was common knowledge. But what was once received history has gradually disappeared, and presently only specialists can fully understand and appreciate Sam’s tale.The chief aim for this new annotated edition of Co. Aytch—the first of its kind—is to amplify the experience for today’s readers by providing the missing context. Over 240 annotations clarify the situational backgrounds, personalities, and terminology that might not be familiar to most readers. The annotations also identify and explain errors mostly resulting from Sam’s occasionally faulty memory or limited perspective. Similarly, twentyfour battlefield and war theater maps enable readers to track Sam’s combat participation as well as his journeys while marching with the army. Finally fifteen photographs and prints illustrate some of the battles, people, towns, buildings, tools of war, and ruins that Sam witnessed. As someone once cleverly observed, “It’s not an adventure until something goes wrong.” If nothing else, Sam’s memoir is a foot soldier’s view of the resulting horrors, heroics, and healing humor when war planning routinely goes awry.

About the AuthorSAM WATKINS (1839–1901) fought in Company H, First Tennessee Infantry for the entire duration of the Civil War before returning to his home near Mt. Pleasant, Tennessee, where he penned his memoir.PHILIP LEIGH is a regular contributor to the New York Times Disunion Civil War series and CEO of Inside Digital Media. He holds an engineering degree from the Florida Institute of Tehcnology and an MBA from the Kellogg School at Northwestern University.