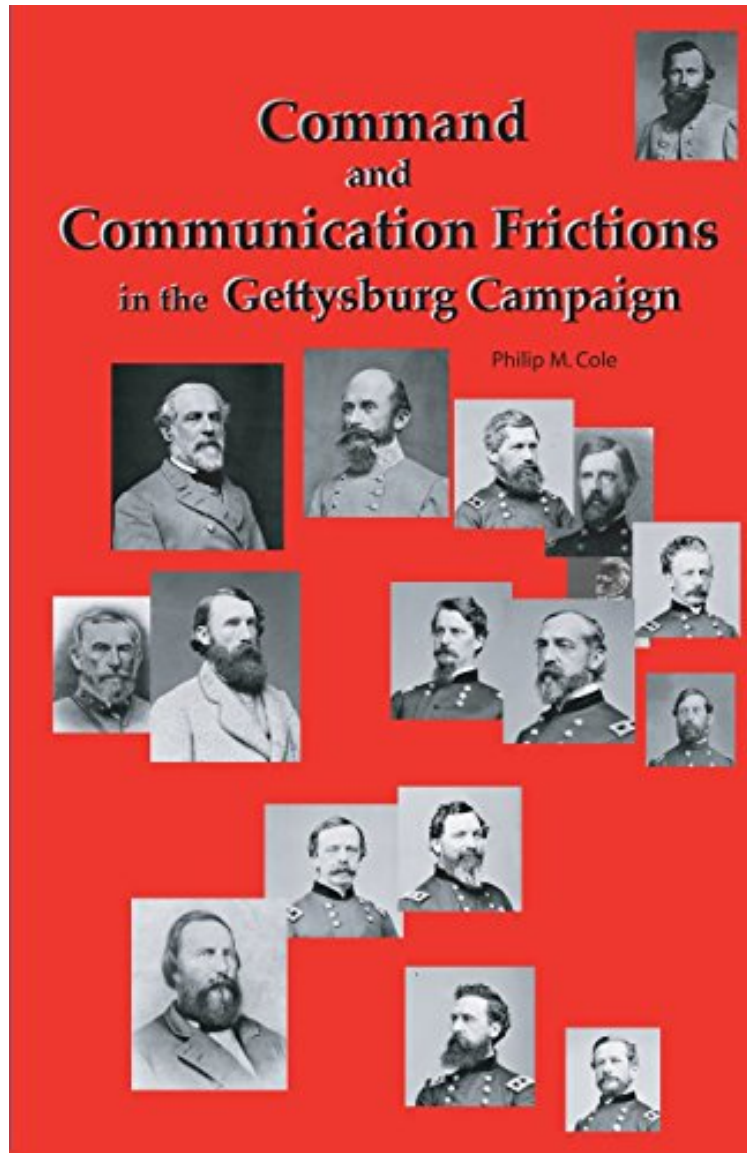


# Command and Communication Frictions in the Gettysburg Campaign

*Philip M. Cole*

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**Philip M. Cole : Command and Communication Frictions in the Gettysburg Campaign** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Command and Communication Frictions in the Gettysburg Campaign:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. CommandBy David MurphyThis is a brief work, but one that fills a

void about command and control during the mid 19th Century. Armies could only move as fast as the men could walk or a horse runs, the same with the movement of orders. The Civil War battlefield was also a very smoke filled environment due to the blackpowder weapons used. Thus a commander could only see the movement of his regiments by the movements of the flags. The term "Rally around the flag" was more than a phrase, it was a military axiom. The book does a very creditable job explaining the difficulties of command on a battlefield and also the logistical problems imposed by the technology of the time. I recommend this book for any serious student of the Gettysburg Campaign or those looking for a fuller understanding of Civil War combat. 4 of 7 people found the following review helpful. Not Exactly Fair and Balanced By Patrick L. Boyle This is an excellent book but you must be prepared for the Southern Cause perspective. For example Lawrence Chamberlain on Little Round Top - the hero of Yankee Gettysburg accounts - is scarcely given a mention. In some ways this is good. There was a lot more going on on the second day than just the assault on the Union left flank. It is also hagiographic of Lee. The authors clearly come down on Lee's side in every dispute. For example the failure of the Rebels to take Cemetery Hill is explained as a failure of Ewell to follow Lee's clear order. Others, of course, don't think the order was all that clear. The traditional bogey man of Southern tilted accounts - Longstreet - gets off rather lightly here. The authors advance the proposition that Pickett's Charge succeeded in the sense that they did reach the Union lines and only failed because the support in Lee's plan was sabotaged by the failure of another Southern commander. Indeed in the three day battle this book claims Lee was denied victory three times - once each day - by failures of his subordinate commanders. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Should be in any Gettysburg Library By Matthew Bartlett Philip M. Cole's book *Command and Communication Frictions in the Gettysburg Campaign* brings about an interesting scholarship to the battle and campaign which has been so written about over and over again. But with grace, he has brought a new look into that which has been studied so prominently with fresh air. Cole is a licensed battlefield guide at Gettysburg and has military tradition in his family. He has traced his lineage to the 76th Pennsylvania Infantry otherwise known as the Keystone Zouaves and has written other works on the battle most prominently the study of artillery on the field for those three days. Though published in 2006, Cole's study on the command and communication frictions is more than just another Gettysburg study; it is a look into the structure and reason for some of the major problems in the battle when it comes to command. The book is split in half between Command Friction and Communication Friction and then subdivided among the many different things which could have interfered with their plans. One of the most interesting new points which Cole brings out is that Hooker did not just "make time" as Coddington states in his work; he had many communication frictions between himself and the high command in Washington. Another problem with communication he brings about is the use of time on the battlefield and just how much time it takes to send orders around on the field. Part of the command friction which was most interesting was the friction with senior commanders and wing commanders. Sometimes with complete disregard for orders, there were great issues among the men in the army. One thing which should have been obvious, but seems new in this work, is the personal relationships which are created through experience and can be a problem when the command changes. These studies are some of the reasons that this book should be among the library of any Gettysburg enthusiast. One of the most interesting things Cole does in his work is not pay too much attention to Stuart's downfall during the campaign. He recognizes the previous work done of the subject and leaves well enough alone and makes room for new scholarship. Cole's work is one of the best studies presented on command in quite some time and though it has been in print for about eight years, should be part of any study of Gettysburg by Civil War historians. This book is highly recommended for any interested in command structure or issues during the Gettysburg Campaign. Matthew Bartlett - Author of "The Gettysburg Chronicle"

Frictions are the mechanisms which complicated warfare. They are the constant streams of obstacles thrown in the way of planning and the governor of progress. Armies encountered any number of unpredictable obstacles in any number of situations. Each friction requires a different solution. Each challenge is a diversion from the planned objective. Each unplanned task saps an army's resources needed elsewhere. Frictions steered the armies into making major decisions and altering or reversing plans. They drew commanders' attention to less important details in operations at the expense of maintaining balance over the big picture. This work focuses on the frictions of two important functions - command and communication. Command frictions in the Army of the Potomac, for example, caused a great deal of confusion in recognizing who was in charge at any one time or place. Communication frictions altered Lee's original plan to move towards Harrisburg, Pennsylvania and diverted the Army of Northern Virginia to Gettysburg; they caused forward elements of the Confederate army to provoke a general engagement against Lee's instructions; they misdirected thousands of troops away from the battle and caused unnecessary casualties. "Command and Communication Frictions in the Gettysburg Campaign" illustrates the effect these two functions had in determining the outcome of the campaign. This work uses a variety of incidents, some familiar, to illustrate their serious impact on the battle - at least as much as troops in combat affected the result. The examples presented deal mainly with the high commands of the armies, especially the Army of the Potomac. The high command level was where the most important decisions were made to influence the progress of the army and the destiny its troops. Even though this study concentrates on frictions in the Gettysburg campaign, the revelations from this one operation,

nevertheless, can be applied to any battle of any war. Philip M. Cole's book *Command and Communication Frictions in the Gettysburg Campaign* brings about an interesting scholarship to the battle and campaign which has been so written about over and over again. But with grace, he has brought a new look into that which has been studied so prominently with fresh air...Cole's study on the command and communication frictions is more than just another Gettysburg study; it is a look into the structure and reason for some of the major problems in the battle when it comes to command... One of the most interesting new points which Cole brings out is that Hooker did not just "make time" as Coddington states in his work; he had many communication frictions between himself and the high command in Washington. Another problem with communication he brings about is the use of time on the battlefield and just how much time it takes to send orders around on the field. Part of the command friction which was most interesting was the friction with senior commanders and wing commanders. Sometimes with complete disregard for orders, there were great issues among the men in the army. One thing which should have been obvious, but seems new in this work, is the personal relationships which are created through experience and can be a problem when the command changes. These studies are some of the reasons that this book should be among the library of any Gettysburg enthusiast...Cole's work is one of the best studies presented on command in quite some time and though it has been in print for about eight years, should be part of any study of Gettysburg by Civil War historians. This book is highly recommended for any interested in command structure or issues during the Gettysburg Campaign. 5 Star Review by Matthew Bartlett posted on [goodreads.com](http://goodreads.com) December, 2013