

In the Trenches at Petersburg: Field Fortifications and Confederate Defeat By Earl J. Hess Hess Joined with "Field Armies and Fortifications in the Civil War: The Eastern Campaigns" and "Trench Warfare under Grant and Lee: Field Fortifications in the Overland Campaign" this book completes an extensive discussion of fortifications in the East. Hess A thorough and carefully researched study of the Petersburg campaign with a detailed emphasis on the field fortifications employed by the armies this book was exactly what I was looking for and very helpful. Hess covers all aspects of the Petersburg campaign from important engagements that punctuated the long months of siege to mining and countermining operations the fashioning of wire entanglements and the laying of torpedo fields to impede attacks and the construction of underground shelters to protect the men manning the works. In the Trenches at Petersburg humanizes the experience of the soldiers working in the fortifications and reveals the human cost of trench warfare in the waning days of the struggle, McClelland Chair in History at Lincoln Memorial University and the author of numerous books on the Civil War: A must for anyone interested in the Petersburg Campaign or in the development of fortifications during the war: Hess



A detailed analysis of the field fortifications at Petersburg one of the roughest battles of the Civil War lasting from June 1864 to the first of April 1865: Both Union and Confederate forces developed sophisticated entrenchments and other fortifications to defend their lines. Appendices provide great depth of information on key forts and other defensive positions. For those interested in this rather specialized subject a nice resource: The series traces both the development and acceptance of "digging in" during the war, While these books are specific to the East all armies shared many of the techniques and attitudes, The Petersburg Campaign has very few general studies and only this book concentrates on fortifications: The author has created a first rate history of the campaign with the fortifications central to the story. In doing so he has added a valuable and much needed book to our library: This book works on several levels: it completes the study of fortifications it is a comprehensive history of the Petersburg Campaign and it is an excellent read: Hess is one of our best authors writing with a sure ability and full knowledge of the subject, He can make complex technical issues understandable without having to "dumb down" the discussion, His books are a joy to read as well as a source of information. We start by covering the engineering abilities of the two armies and their approach to fortifications cross the James River encounter the Confederates and stalemate. These fifty pages are a solid foundation for the balance of the book: Each decision comes after a decision of the events leading up to it allowing the reader to fully understand the issues options and reasons for this course of action: This approach makes the campaign both understandable and logical: Interspersed between these chapters are chapters on the fortifications. These chapters cover the building and maintaining of earthen forts, The strongest part is living conditions and how the armies tried to cope. This is some of the strongest writing on the Petersburg Campaign I have seen. The author is not inserting a couple of required chapters but making this part of the story: The result is a very strong dual history of military operations and fortifications: As we get deeper into the military operations the maps are closer together: I never had problems finding a map nor finding what I need on a map. For the most part they are Nineteenth Century photographs of the fortifications taken shortly after the war: The well-placed illustrations have text telling us

what we are looking at and what to look for, The footnotes are helpful use excellent sources and correctly formatted. Appendix 1 is a look at how the fortifications fared after the war a short history of preservation or exploitation that resulted in the present parks, This is an excellent readable history of the Petersburg Campaign and a technical discussion of the fortifications. You should consider this when building or maintaining your Civil War library. Hess Very detailed examination of the construction and use of field fortifications during the Petersburg Campaign, For me the book rated only three stars because I'm more interested in military operations/battles of the war not the engineering aspects. Also the book got off-topic at a few points (for example the author spends several pages discussing Confederate desertions): Hess If you only want one book on the Petersburg campaign this has to be it! Earl J: For a serious student of the campaign this book is essential: A reader without a basic knowledge of the campaign should start with a more general history, Hess In the Trenches at Petersburg the final volume of Earl J: Hess's trilogy of works on the fortifications of the Civil War recounts the strategic and tactical operations around Petersburg during the last ten months of the Civil War. In the Trenches at Petersburg: Field Fortifications and Confederate Defeat. [1]

Earl J. Hess is Stewart W. Earl J. The book's analysis of these fortifications is well detailed. . Earl J. Earl J. Maps are very good plentiful and illustrative of the text. The illustrations are excellent. Appendix 2 is a technical discussion on the fortifications. Earl J. Earl J. Earl J