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The War In Paraguay: With A Historical Sketch Of The Country And Its People And Notes Upon The Military Engineering Of The War



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Synopsis

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Customer Reviews

This is an invaluable book for anyone with more than a passing interest in the War of the Triple Alliance (Paraguayan War). Thompson was one of the few people on the Paraguayan side who was both a key player and a survivor. His descriptions of the war and of Paraguay are surprisingly dispassionate given the circumstances. Since the reprint is a scanned copy of the original, there are some flaws such as spots, blanks and slightly skewed pages. Nothing that makes a big difference.

36 years ago I lived in Paraguay and I read parts of this book while there, and never could quite find it anywhere else. As some of the previous reviewers have said, this book is **MUST READ** for anyone-be it a historian or just someone who is interested in understanding that particular bit of South American history. There is hardly any knowledge about what was perhaps the most devastating war ever fought in this continent, one that surpasses in cost-both human and

material-our own Civil War that occurred at around that same era. To me, the main point of this book is that it illustrates quite well the man who is without a doubt the leading personality of that conflict: Marshal Francisco Solano Lopez, the absolute leader of Paraguay. This book goes a long way in presenting a human being who had admirable qualities-valor, fortitude, faith, and sense of purpose, but one who was also rash, cruel and ultimately utterly incompetent, and too full of himself to understand fully the consequences of the terrible damage that he was inflicting by his leadership on his nation, his army and even his own family. Other books can and have taken a more or less favorable view of this very complex personality and the decisions that ultimately shaped the greatest man-made disaster that most likely any nation of this continent has ever endured, but this is a seminal work and one that despite its flaws, it is quite invaluable. More can not be added.

From a Historical point of view, this book is one of the most important documents to come out of the 'War of the Triple Alliance'. Thompson, an English Civil Engineer, was originally contracted to build the railways in Paraguay, however, after the outbreak of war he became a Colonel in the Paraguayan army. It contains a detailed account of the war from a technical point of view and provides extremely valuable information on how the battles were fought and the conditions under which many suffered. The book is a facsimile of the original 1869 publication and, while readable, it unfortunately contains many blotches/marks and also a number of pages appear to have been poorly scanned. The maps, which form an important part of the text, have not been properly reproduced and you will need to get your hands on an original (or better copy) and photocopy them for your own use. While this facsimile is disappointing, the information presented is very important and anyone interested or researching this war or Paraguayan history in general should buy this book.

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