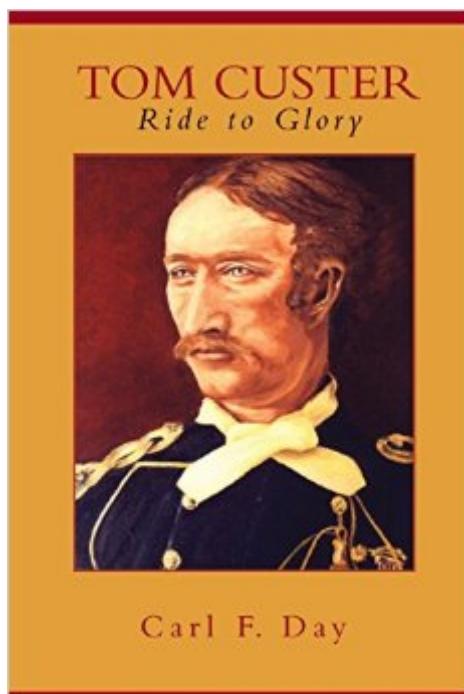


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Tom Custer: Ride To Glory (Frontier Military Series)



Synopsis

In this biography—the first to document the life of Tom Custer—Carl F. Day reveals the public and private life of a distinguished American soldier. Although his life has been overshadowed by his more famous, or infamous, older brother, George Armstrong Custer, Tom Custer was a notable figure in his own right. At the end of his service in the Civil War, Tom Custer received the Medal of Honor twice—the first man in American history and the only Federal soldier in the Civil War to do so. He went on to participate in the Battle of the Washita, Stanley's Yellowstone Expedition, the Black Hills expedition, and the final march to the Little Bighorn, where along with his brother George he met his death in 1876.

Book Information

Series: Frontier Military Series (Book 22)

Paperback: 304 pages

Publisher: University of Oklahoma Press (February 1, 2005)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0806136871

ISBN-13: 978-0806136875

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.5 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 4.8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars—See all reviews (8 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #747,777 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #62 in Books > History > Americas > United States > Civil War > Regimental Histories #842 in Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Historical > United States > Civil War #918 in Books > History > Americas > United States > Civil War > Campaigns & Battlefields

Customer Reviews

More than 200 men died in the coulees along the Little Big Horn River on June 25, 1876. One was George Armstrong Custer. Another was the only man at that time who had won two Congressional Medals of Honor, both for service in the American Civil War. That soldier was Thomas Ward Custer, the general's younger brother. Much has been written about the general, about his youth and flamboyance during the Civil War, as well as about his controversial career in the West as an Indian fighter. In most of those stories, we learn that George wasn't the only Custer riding with the Seventh Cavalry. He had two brothers with him, both Tom and Boston, as well as some cousins and in-laws, some along more or less as tourists. Tom himself has never been written about in a book length

treatment until now. The reason for that is simple enough. Although he was the first man to win two Medals of Honor, as far as history itself is concerned he was not a history maker. He was, as it were, along for the ride. It was quite a ride, starting with his enlistment in the Army at the age of sixteen in 1861. He served for a while in the west, but was soon transferred to the east at his older brother's request. From then on, their careers were closely linked. Again at the general's request, after the Civil War ended Tom went over to the Seventh Cavalry, and ten years later he rode with it to the great Indian encampment where his life ended. Tom was brave enough to win medals, but he was no saint. Alcohol got the best of him more than once, and he reputedly sired a boy out of wedlock.

Excellent work. Tom Custer was every bit the bada-s his brother was. These boys didn't understand fear and always rode to "the sound of the guns". Elated to see Tom's life recognized for what it was. The man is a true American Hero. We also have two more Custers that deserve recognition. In the morning of the day that was to culminate with the Battle of Little Bighorn there was a fight between some members of the tribal confederation camped on the Little Bighorn and Major Reno's cavalry group. Reno's men barely escaped. It got so bad that morning that it became an "every man for himself" situation. As I understand it, Custer's attack that was to start sometime in the afternoon. It was a fairly standard Calvary attack. Custer's men would charge the center of the tribal camp. Reno and Benteen (Custer's subordinate commanders) were to attack from the side. It must have been a good plan as it worked for Custer many times during the Civil War (and the man knew cavalry tactics). When Custer charged that afternoon neither Reno nor Benteen attacked from the flank, as was the plan. The best theory I have heard is that the battle earlier in the day was so horrifying that Reno and his men had no more will to fight. They were beyond scared. Boston Custer and a few others from the quartermaster corp. (re-supply soldiers in the field) heard the gunfire from George's attack. Boston Custer and his men were further away from Last Stand Hill than Reno's soldiers, maybe about one mile further. Boston's group(some of them, five I believe)headed towards the sound of the gunfire. I don't think they made it all the way to Last Stand Hill, but got very close. So George, Tom and Boston Custer were all killed that day. They left Nevin Custer (brother, who as second oldest tried to join the Union Army in 1861.

Recently I read about George Armstrong Custer and that he had a hero brother who earned two Congressional Medal of Honer medals in the Civil war. Carl F. Day wrote a very good book about George Custer's younger brother Tom Custer. The 301 page book reads well with no boring parts.

some nice B/W pictures and some maps. We see the three brothers (Boston was the youngest) and a sister growing up in a non rich family. George gets to go to West Point with the help of a relative with political connections. Tom the middle brother enlists in the army as a private, makes corporal and with a Colonial with political influence attached to Brevet General big brother George Armstrong Custer gets a commission as second lieutenant. Armstrong gets Tom attached to his command and Tom shows his bravery in the Civil war by attacking the Confederates killing men and capturing a battle flag. A few days later he does it again and captures another battle flag and is gun shot in the mouth/neck area. We are told that in the early days of the US Army, Medal of Honors were given out for lots of non bravery/valor achievements. Later many of these early medal awards after being board searched were disallowed. However, the two Medal of Honors Tom Custer earned were certified as real awards for true heroism and valor. This to me is amazing, Tom being the first person ever to win two Medals of Honor. Tom advances to Brevet Lt. Colonel, is later discharged but comes back with a commission and advances to the rank of Captain. Lt. Colonel Armstrong Custer (earlier Civil War Brevet two star General) was so proud of his younger brother that he said "Tom should be the General and I the Captain". We see that Tom Custer was no saint and battled alcoholism.

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