



Hardtack & Coffee or The Unwritten Story of Army Life

John D. Billings

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Most histories of the Civil War focus on battles and top brass. *Hardtack and Coffee* is one of the few to give a vivid, detailed picture of what ordinary soldiers endured every day—in camp, on the march, at the edge of a booming, smoking hell. John D. Billings of Massachusetts enlisted in the Army of the Potomac and curvived the conditions he recorded. The authenticity of his book is heightened by the many drawings that a comrade, Charles W. Reed, made in the field.

This is the story of how the Civil War soldier was recruited, provisioned, and disciplined. Described here are the types of men found in any outfit; their not very uniform uniforms; crowded tents and makeshift shelters; difficulties in keeping clean, warm, and dry; their pleasure in a cup of coffee; food rations, dominated by salt pork and the versatile cracker or hardtack; their brave pastimes in the face of death; punishments for various offenses; treatment in sick bay; firearms and signals and modes of transportation. Comprehensive and anecdotal, *Hardtack and Coffee* is striking for the pulse of life that runs through it.

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Ella McCoy:

Reading can called mind hangout, why? Because if you find yourself reading a book particularly book entitled Hardtack & Coffee or The Unwritten Story of Army Life your mind will drift away trough every dimension, wandering in every aspect that maybe mysterious for but surely can become your mind friends. Imaging each word written in a reserve then become one contact form conclusion and explanation that will maybe you never get prior to. The Hardtack & Coffee or The Unwritten Story of Army Life giving you one more experience more than blown away the mind but also giving you useful data for your better life within this era. So now let us explain to you the relaxing pattern is your body and mind is going to be pleased when you are finished reading through it, like winning a casino game. Do you want to try this extraordinary investing spare time activity?

Jonathan Thurman:

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