



Herman Melville's Battle-Pieces Annotated by Lisa Shea

Lisa Shea, Herman Melville

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While Herman Melville is best known for his epic novel Moby-Dick, in 1861 the American Civil War began. Melville had years of experience sailing on whaling ships and immediately went to enlist in the Navy. He was chagrined when he was turned down for health reasons. He would be forced to sit out this important war. So, instead, he turned to recording his thoughts on it in poetry.

Battle-Pieces and Aspects of the War was the result, and the volume of poetry was published in 1866, a year after the war ended. From the Battle of Port Royal to to the Battle of Hampton Roads, from Stonewall Jackson to Gettysburg, Melville captures the action with a poet's eye. Sadly, Melville's nearly 200 pages of poetry were not appreciated by the contemporary audience. Undaunted, he went on to publish three more volumes of poetry before he passed away in 1891.

Modern readers are far more appreciative of Melville's insights and descriptions of a critical moment in US history. Enjoy this classic treasure! The full book including annotations is over 300 pages long. The annotations explain what battles Melville is writing about and clarify Melville's many historic references. All proceeds benefit charity.

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