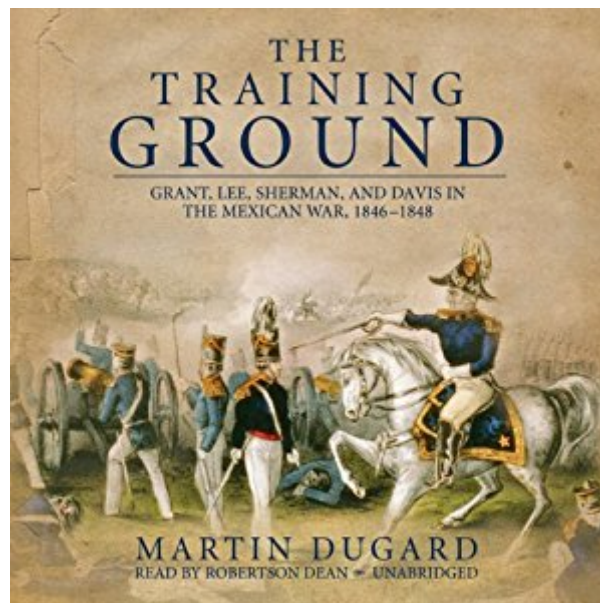




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The Training Ground: Grant, Lee, Sherman, And Davis In The Mexican War 1846-1848



Synopsis

Few historical figures are as inextricably linked as Ulysses S. Grant and Robert E. Lee. But less than two decades before they faced each other as enemies at Appomattox, they had been brothers--both West Point graduates, both wearing blue, and both fighting in the same cadre in the Mexican War. They were not alone: Sherman, Davis, Jackson--nearly all of the Civil War's greatest soldiers had been forged in the heat of Vera Cruz and Monterrey. The Mexican War has faded from our national memory, but it was a struggle of enormous significance: the first U.S. war waged on foreign soil; and it nearly doubled our nation. At this fascinating juncture of American history, a group of young men came together to fight as friends, only years later to fight as enemies. This is their story. Full of dramatic battles, daring rescues, secret missions, soaring triumphs and tragic losses, *THE TRAINING GROUND* is history at its finest. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

While a most enjoyable read, I must agree with other reviewers that this book fails, but for yet more reasons. It fails because it is not true to its own stated purpose. Early in the book, Mr. Dugard states that he is fascinated with the potential young people have and how that potential manifests through the course of their lives. He also says that the book is not meant to be a history of the Mexican War, but rather an analysis of the young graduates of West Point who went on to prosecute that war and later face each other on opposite sides in the War Between the States. The book accomplishes neither of these goals. Mr. Dugard starts by telling of the early lives of the great figures of mid-19th

century America who graduated from West Point, particularly Lee, Grant, Meade and Davis. Notice I did not say Sherman, a big name given short shrift despite the subtitle. Much of the material seems to come from the memoirs of these men, and the long quotes are the book's highlights. The book then moves to the conflict over Texas, Polk's agenda and the outbreak of the Mexican War. As usual, there are subtle politically correct condemnations of the motivations and prejudices associated with these events that ring from the words chosen; this demonstrates a lack of historical perspective. Nineteenth century Americans were motivated by completely different assumptions and world views from ours today; current moral yardsticks are useless. The author also injects needless schmaltz such as descriptions of gentle breezes blowing across this and that or emotions felt by anonymous soldiers. Popular histories are often filled with these unsubstantiated musings and they never add to the narrative. Then the book turns into just what Mr. Dugard said it was not - a history of the Mexican War.

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