
Michael Pierson’s book, *Mutiny at Fort Jackson*, is truly the untold story of the fall of New Orleans. Pierson opens the work by describing the aftermath of the fall of the city. In doing so, he provides details regarding the temperament of the New Orleans residents when the Federal troops arrived and began occupying their city. He utilizes diary entries, written by New Orleanians and Union soldiers, to support his argument, which analyzes the events leading up to, during, and after the mutiny of Fort Jackson, in an attempt to explain the mutiny.

Michael Pierson offers compelling evidence to explain the reasons for the mutiny including the living conditions, treatment of soldiers in the Confederate army, and the lack of connection to the Confederate cause among the soldiers at the fort. As the book progresses, the argument presented by Pierson becomes stronger and more unique. Benjamin Butler, traditionally held in low esteem among Southerners for his cruel treatment of New Orleans citizens following the fall of New Orleans, is shown in new light by Pierson. This unique view, supported by diary entries and historical documents shows a leader, who enjoyed the support of many white New Orleanians. Pierson’s view, while interesting, should be taken with a grain of salt as his current professorship is located in Lowell, Massachusetts – General Butler was a strong politician in Lowell.

Throughout the work, Pierson provides detail of New Orleans’s sentiment toward the Northern occupation. It is interesting to note that while reading, it seems as though there is more focus placed on providing details of life in occupied New Orleans and Benjamin Butler’s actions, and less about the mutiny itself. This approach helps to make a compelling, well organized argument, complete with sensory details and real life examples. Furthermore, it makes the work an enjoyable read which one can accomplish in a few evenings of casual reading. I highly recommend this book for anyone who wishes to expand their knowledge of the Civil War and has an open mind to new and somewhat unorthodox ideas about the state of New Orleans after its fall.

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