



To Battle for God and the Right: The Civil War Letterbooks of Emerson Opdycke

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To Battle for God and the Right: The Civil War Letterbooks of Emerson Opdycke Emerson Opdycke Emerson Opdycke, a lieutenant with the 41st Ohio Infantry and later a commander of the 125th Ohio Volunteer Infantry, played pivotal roles in some of major battles of the western theater, including Chickamauga, Chattanooga, and Missionary Ridge. He won fame at the Battle of Franklin when his brigade saved the Union Army from defeat. Opdycke's wartime letters to his wife, Lucy, offer the immediacy of the action as it unfolded and provide a glimpse into the day--to--day life of a soldier. Opdycke viewed the conflict with the South as a battle between the rights of states and loyalty to the Union. An opponent of the Peculiar Institution, he considered slavery an inherent evil and believed slaveowners had been corrupted by the very institution they sought to protect. His letters reveal his opinions of combat strategies and high-ranking officers, his devotion to the Union, and his disdain for military ineptitude. Behind the fiery temper and arrogance revealed in these letters shine concern for his family's welfare at home and a loving and intellectual relationship with Lucy. A thorough introduction by editors Glenn V. Longacre and John E. Haas and a preface by Peter Cozzens provide additional historical context and biographical information.

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