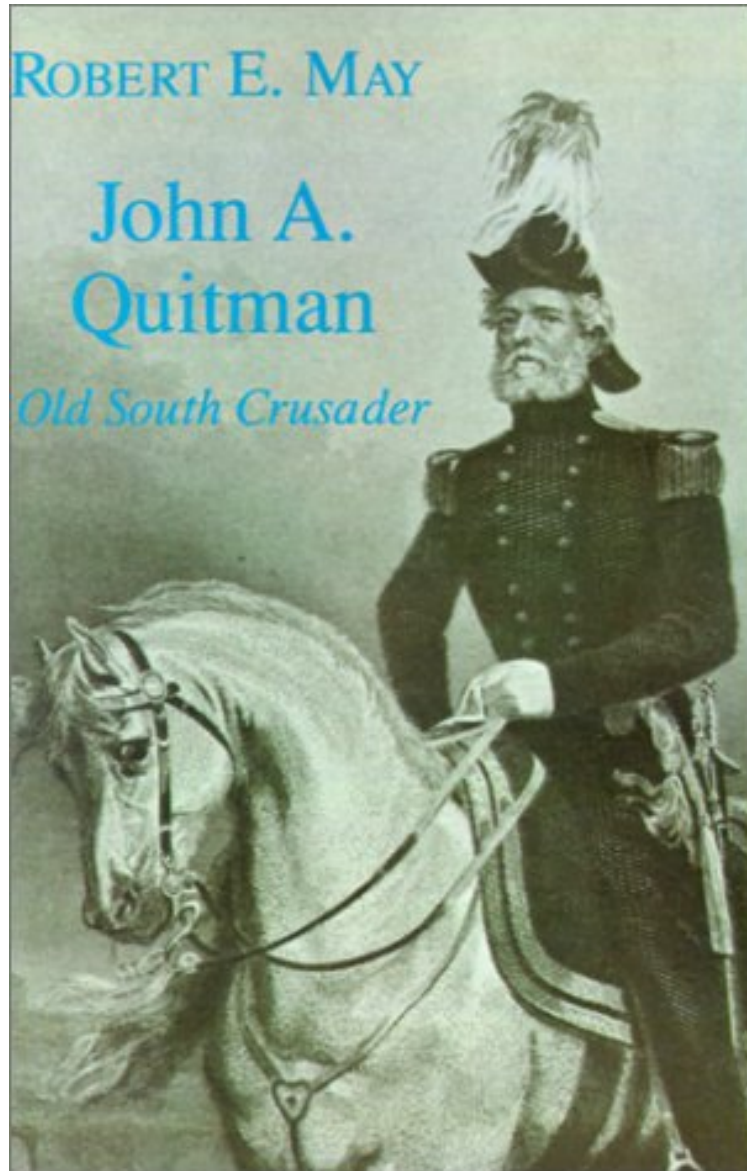


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John A. Quitman: Old South Crusader (Southern Biography Series)

Robert E. May

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Robert E. May : John A. Quitman: Old South Crusader (Southern Biography Series) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised John A. Quitman: Old South Crusader (Southern Biography Series):

0 of 2 people found the following review helpful. John A. Quitman: Old South Crusader By Gingerscott I will keep this book for life. I did find some misleading information but moreover, the truth overrode the mistakes. However, I wish it

was possible to make the corrections providing the book more validly as a nonfiction book.³ of 4 people found the following review helpful. A Superb Biography of a Southern Nationalist By Roger D. Launius A superb biography, "John A. Quitman: Old South Crusader" tells the story of one of the most significant of the southern "fire eaters" in the era prior to the Civil War. Born in Rhinebeck, New York, in 1798, in 1821 Quitman arrived in Natchez, Mississippi, seeking fame and fortune. He found both, for Quitman occupied the highest office in all branches of his state's government. He became an ardent Southern rights and pro-slavery advocate, and would have applauded the creation of the Confederacy had he lived to see it. As it was, he died in 1858. During the 1836 Texas Revolution Quitman organized a military force, but saw no action. In 1846 he became a brigadier general of Mississippi militia, and won glory at the battle of Monterrey, September 20-24, 1846, and at Vera Cruz. In 1847 his division captured the fortress of Chapultepec, leading to the fall of Mexico City and the conclusion of the Mexican-American war. Afterwards, Quitman continued his political career, serving as Mississippi governor and in Congress. He also supported filibustering in the Caribbean. His death from food poisoning ensured that he did not fight for the South in the Civil War. This book was well-received when first published in 1985, and fully deserving of accolades more than twenty years after its publication. Robert E. May, professor of history at Purdue University and a longtime friend, probes in this biography the mind of pro-slavery, pro-southern nationalism by focusing on Quitman and his career. Quitman, along with Edmund Ruffin and a few others pressed the South to secede from the Union in 1860-1861 and fight the most destructive war ever undertaken on the North American continent. It also makes clear, as May's biography of Quitman states with conviction, that the Civil War was fundamentally about the place of slavery and race relations in the United States. Well-done in terms of research and presentation, "John A. Quitman: Old South Crusader" is a significant book that anyone interested in the history of Old South must read.

The first critical biography of Quitman, May's study sheds light on such current historical controversies as whether antebellum southerners were particularly militaristic or "antibourgeois" and helps illuminate the slave-master relations, mobility, intraregional class and geographic friction, partisan politics, and family customs of the Old South.

From the Back Cover The premier secessionist of antebellum Mississippi, John A. Quitman was one of the half-dozen or so most prominent radicals in the entire South. In this full-length biography, Robert E. May takes issue with the recent tendency to portray secessionists as rabble-rousing, maladjusted outsiders bent on the glories of separate nationhood. May reveals Quitman to have been an ambitious but relatively stable insider who reluctantly advocated secession because of a despondency over slavery's long-range future in the Union and a related conviction that northerners no longer respected southern claims to equality as American citizens. A fervent disciple of South Carolina "radical" John C. Calhoun's nullification theories, Quitman also gained notoriety as his region's most strident slavery imperialist. He articulated the case for new slave territory, participated in the Texas Revolution, won national acclaim as a volunteer general in the Mexican war, and organized a private military or "filibustering" expedition with the intent of liberating Cuba from Spanish rule and making the island a new slave state. In 1850, while governor of Mississippi during the California crisis, Quitman wielded his influence in a vain attempt to induce Mississippi secession. Later, in Congress, he marked out an extreme southern position on Kansas. Mississippi's most vehement "fire-eater", Quitman played a significant role in the North-South estrangement that led to the American Civil War. The first critical biography of this important figure, May's study sheds light on such current historical controversies as whether antebellum southerners were peculiarly militaristic or "antibourgeois" and helps illuminate the slave-master relations, mobility, intraregional class and geographic friction, partisan politics, and family customs of the Old South. About the Author Robert E. May is associate professor of history at Purdue University and the author of *The Southern Dream of a Caribbean Empire, 1854--1861*.