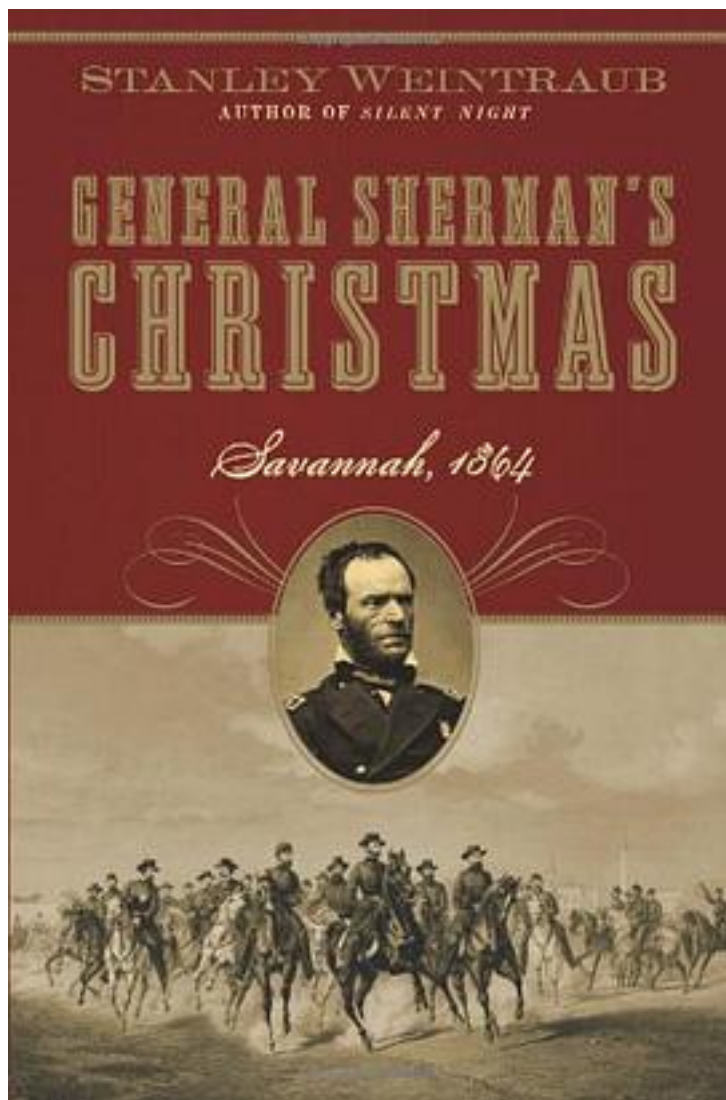


# General Sherman's Christmas



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From the author of the bestselling *Silent Night* comes a close look at the embattled holiday season of 1864, when Major General W. T. Sherman gave President Lincoln the city of Savannah and paved the way for the end of the Civil War. General Sherman's Christmas opens on Thanksgiving Day 1864. Sherman was relentlessly pushing his troops nearly three hundred miles across Georgia in his "March to the Sea," to reach Savannah just days before Christmas. His methodical encroachment of the city from all sides eventually convinced Confederate general W. J. Hardee, who had refused a demand for surrender of his troops, to slip away in darkness across an improvised causeway and escape to South Carolina. In freezing rain and through terrifying fog, equipment-burdened soldiers crossed a hastily built pontoon bridge spanning the mile-wide Savannah River. Three days before Christmas, the mayor, Richard Arnold, surrendered the city, now populated mostly by women, children, and the slaves who had not fled. General Sherman then telegraphed to Abraham Lincoln, "I beg to present you as a Christmas gift the city of Savannah with 150 heavy guns & plenty of ammunition & also about 25,000 bales of cotton." The fight for Savannah took place as its inhabitants were anxiously preparing for Christmas. Weintraub explores how Christmas was traditionally fêted in the South and what remained of the holiday to celebrate during the waning last full year of the war. Illustrated with striking period prints, *General Sherman's Christmas* captures the voices of soldiers and civilians on both sides of the conflict, as they neared the end of a long war.

作者介绍:

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