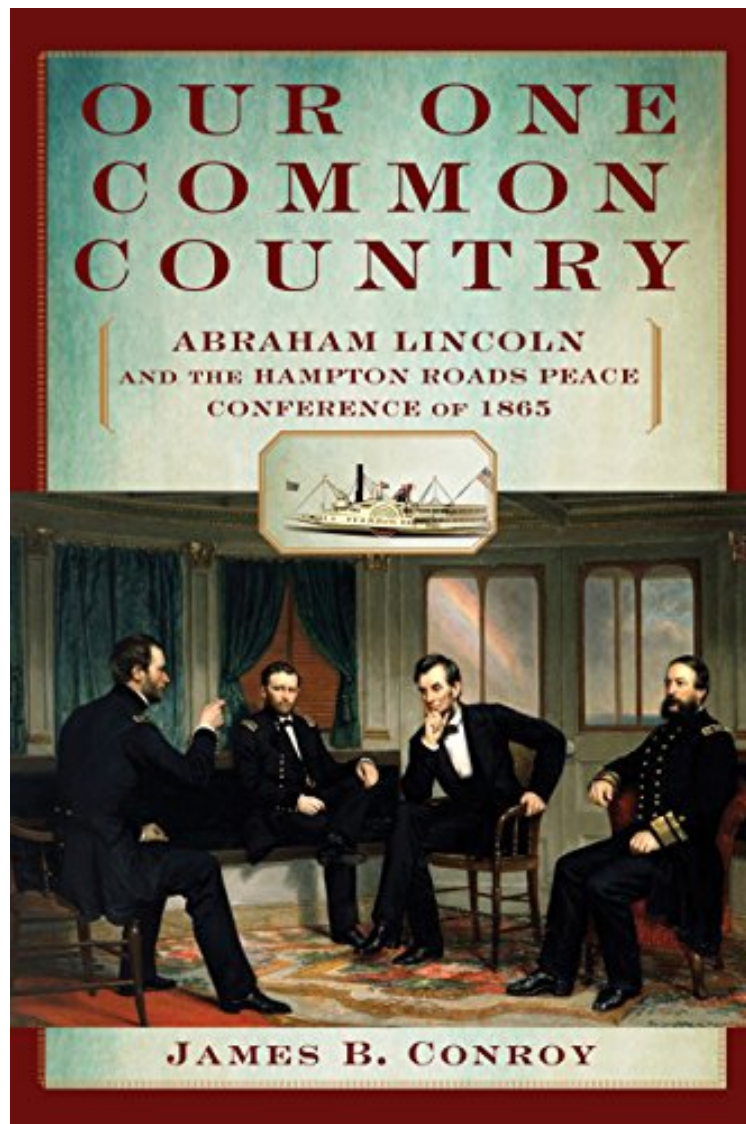


(Free read ebook) Our One Common Country: Abraham Lincoln And The Hampton Roads Peace Conference Of 1865

## Our One Common Country: Abraham Lincoln And The Hampton Roads Peace Conference Of 1865

*James Conroy*

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**James Conroy : Our One Common Country: Abraham Lincoln And The Hampton Roads Peace Conference Of 1865** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Our One Common Country: Abraham Lincoln And The Hampton Roads Peace Conference Of 1865:

43 of 43 people found the following review helpful. A book for all who are interested in the Civil War --By Alan D.

RoseThis book is notable for several reasons. First, it relates the backgrounds, personalities, and personal agendas of the participants, both North and South, to the historical events central to the book. Second, the book is exceedingly well written: characters are vivid, settings are explained, context is clear, and the events that are intertwined, or occurring simultaneously -- such as the voting on the Thirteenth Amendment and the planning for peace conferences -- are always explained. Third, the irony of soldiers battling in the trenches -- while politicians pontificate and editorial writers preach -- is superb. Fourth, even the footnotes and endnotes are of interest. A page turner history book -- now that's unusual!25 of 26 people found the following review helpful. Wonderfully done.By Henri J BourneufWithin this compelling narrative of events leading to the Hampton Roads encounter, James Conroy brilliantly conjures its participants to life. Doris Kearns Goodwin's far lengthier biographical sketches of many of these same people at the outset of her Team of Rivals tended to blend rather than define their persons and characters in my mind's eye. I very much appreciated Conroy's linking his work firmly and clearly to the voluminous source documents without impeding his intriguing story.3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Fleshing Out a Small Bit of HistoryBy Janet K. SchwartzkopfJames B. Conroy has taken a rather obscure bit of Civil War history and made quite a good book of it. The actual meeting between the U.S. delegation headed by Pres. Lincoln and the Confederate one lead by Vice Pres. Alexander Stephens was too brief to carry an entire book, so Conroy goes back and focuses on the political fast-dealings by Francis Blair that brought the two sides together and then follows the peace delegates through to the end of the war and beyond.Certainly as the calendar moved to 1865, just about everyone could read the writing on the wall -- except possibly Jefferson Davis, Both sides were tired of war, men continued dying needlessly, and the delegates moved out on a limb to try to finish it up as quickly as possible. The only problem was Lincoln's insistence that the two sides unite. Blair, a political operative if there ever was one, had floated the idea of a military operation by the two armies to drive the French out of Mexico as a way of bringing everyone back together, but when it became plain that wasn't in the cards, the peace conference failed to move ahead and both sides went home dissatisfied.Having spent years reading about the Civil War, I was also impressed by things Conroy brought out that I didn't know. In many ways, the meeting hinged on the personal friendship between Lincoln and Stephens, who had both opposed the war with Mexico while Whig members of congress. However, I didn't know that as a personal favor, Lincoln arranged for one of Stephens' nephews to be released from a northern POW camp. After the meeting, Lincoln floated the idea of buying the South's slaves to his cabinet, but they were so unanimously opposed he put the plan away. Most distressing, however, is Davis' efforts to discredit those who attended the conference while stirring the pot for continued warfare. Aside from his inability to recognize the truth, for him, the war was very personal, and years after its end, he refused to talk with one of the attendees when meeting him on a public street.My only problem with this book was the end-noting system the author used. Although his research is extensively backed up, it wasn't always clear to me the proper attributes to certain things (I was reading on my Kindle) and I regret that. However, it's certainly a book I'm glad I read, and I hope Conroy writes more.

Our One Common Country explores the most critical meeting of the Civil War. Given short shrift or overlooked by many historians, the Hampton Roads Conference of 1865 was a crucial turning point in the War between the States. In this well written and highly documented book, James B. Conroy describes in fascinating detail what happened when leaders from both sides came together to try to end the hostilities. The meeting was meant to end the fighting on peaceful terms. It failed, however, and the war dragged on for two more bloody, destructive months. Through meticulous research of both primary and secondary sources, Conroy tells the story of the doomed peace negotiations through the characters who lived it. With a fresh and immediate perspective, Our One Common Country offers a thrilling and eye-opening look into the inability of our nation's leaders to find a peaceful solution. The failure of the Hamptons Roads Conference shaped the course of American history and the future of America's wars to come.

A richly detailed, carefully analyzed, and well-written account of the Hampton Roads meeting...An excellent and long-needed addition to Civil War historiography. (Michael B. Ballard, Author)In this massively researched, exceptionally well-written book, James Conroy has illuminated and set in its historical context an episode familiar and yet hitherto not closely examined. By carefully inserting vignettes of the actual fighters into the Big Picture, he gives his account an immediacy and human dimension rarely found in serious historical works. This is, moreover, a page-turner to be read for sheer pleasure. (Hiller B. Zobel, Author)Conroy's impressively thorough and engaging document details...the Hampton Roads Peace Conference, which has never before been the sole subject of a book...[It] illuminates the conflicting, passionate views on the Civil War...while giving fascinating insight into the war's major players. (Publishers Weekly)A brilliant account of the doomed effort to end the Civil War through diplomacy. In this excellent debut, Boston-based attorney Conroy vividly captures the hope, weariness, despair and anger of the moment and the complexity of feelings on both sides. The author lays out this tragic and fascinating story in a style that is witty, acerbic and ironic. A splendid addition to any Civil War library. (Kirkus s)Exhaustively researched and engagingly written, James Conroy's account of the Hampton Roads Conference makes an important contribution to the field of Civil War studies. General readers will enjoy the memorable portraits of individuals and the convincing re-creation of

popular emotions as the war ground toward its close. Scholars will have to take more seriously the abundant evidence of the priority that Lincoln gave to conciliating Southern whites, in order to gain their cooperation in Reconstruction. (Paul D. Escott, Wake Forest University, Professor of History)[A] sparkling account ... An appealing cast of bullies and eccentrics populates every chapter ... Conroy shows that it is possible to write exciting prose with scholarly integrity intact. (Harold Holzer, co-chairman U.S. Lincoln Bicentennial Commission Civil War History)Conroy is a terrific writer who tells the story of one of the war's least known episodes, the Hampton Roads Peace Conference. But it is the way he describes the people around Lincoln, their interaction with him and each other that makes this such a good read. Great anecdotes—if you're like me you'll find yourself pausing every few pages and saying, 'I never knew that'—my favorite kind of book! (CBS News)From the Back CoverShortly after breakfast on a springlike day in the winter of 1865, Abraham Lincoln slipped out of the White House unnoticed with an Irish valet and a carpetbag and into a waiting carriage. A locomotive hitched to a railway car had been summoned to take him to Annapolis, where the fastest steamboat on Chesapeake Bay was ready to run him south. In a moment unique in history, the Commander in Chief had agreed to sit down and reason with the enemy in the midst of a shooting war. Having gone on ahead of him to Fort Monroe, the massive Union stronghold at Hampton Roads, Virginia, his Secretary of State, William Seward, a keen politician and a world-class charmer, was preparing to receive him and his guests on the paddle-wheeler River Queen, the Air Force One of its day. Their old friend Alec Stephens, the eccentric Vice President of the Confederate States of America, was on his way to meet them with two other Rebel peace envoys in Ulysses S. Grant's dispatch boat. On the edge of his authority, Grant had passed them through his siege line to the cheers of the combatants on both sides, wined and dined them at his headquarters with Julia Dent Grant, evaded Lincoln's orders to turn them away unheard, and convinced the embattled President to give peace a chance. With much of the South in Northern hands, its crippled armies cornered, and the means to resist nearly gone, the Rebellion was all but broken. The issue was how it would end. Over 600,000 young Americans were dead. A Federal push to victory would cost thousands of more lives, humiliate the South, and complicate the healing of a reconstructed Union. Reasonable men on both sides were coming to Hampton Roads in search of a way out. On the other side of Grant's siege line, Robert E. Lee was praying for their success and Jefferson Davis was plotting their failure. Under pressure from his left to accept Lincoln's invitation to send "any agent" to negotiate a reunion of "our one common country," the defiant Confederate President had chosen as his spokesmen three leaders of Richmond's growing antiwar movement and given them a mandate to bring peace to "two countries." Expecting them to fail, he was poised to proclaim their rejection as a Yankee insult, discredit his internal political opposition, and incite the Southern people to a war of desperation in a single stroke. To avert a pointless death struggle, the President of the United States and the men in Grant's dispatch boat would have to square that circle. About the AuthorJames B. Conroy practices law in Boston. He previously served as a Senate and House press secretary and speechwriter in Washington, D.C., as well as an administrative assistant (chief of staff) for a New York City congressman. His legal writing has been published in the Massachusetts Law and the Massachusetts Lawyers' Weekly.