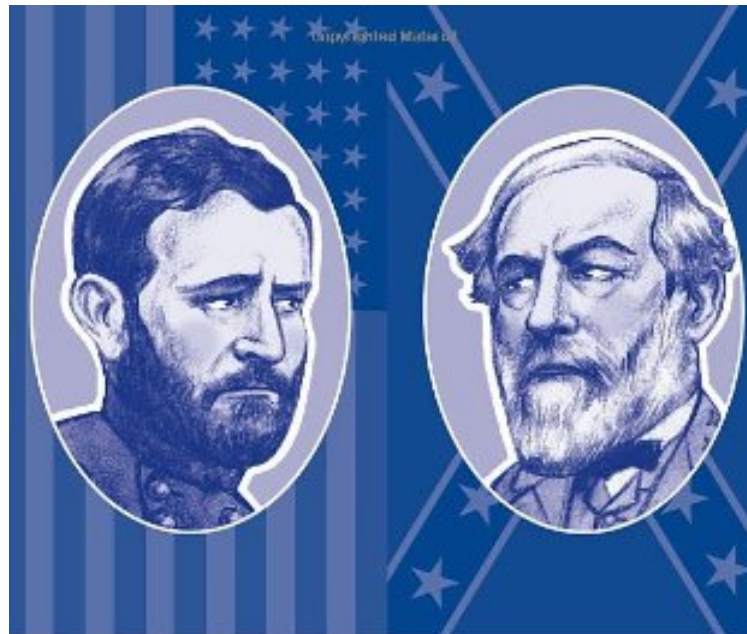


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Secret Lives of the Civil War: What Your Teachers Never Told You about the War Between the States

Cormac O'Brien

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SECRET LIVES
OF THE **CIVIL WAR**

WHAT YOUR TEACHERS NEVER TOLD YOU
ABOUT THE WAR BETWEEN THE STATES

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Cormac O'Brien : Secret Lives of the Civil War: What Your Teachers Never Told You about the War Between the States before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Secret

Lives of the Civil War: What Your Teachers Never Told You about the War Between the States:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. If I'd gotten my hands on this in high school...By sharon d...I might have come to love history as a subject a lot sooner. This book is just a series of biographical sketches of the main players on both sides of the American Civil War, but truly, it's one of the best history books I've read on the topic. O'Brien's prose has such a very light touch that it sometimes reads like something out of stand-up comedy act, but even though some passages are very funny, O'Brien seems to get his facts straight, and it would take someone better versed than I to find fault with his scholarship (and I've read a fair bit in the last ten years). Get it and enjoy!1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. It's less "secret lives" and more hardcore historyBy LyndseyI enjoyed this author's Secret Lives of the First Ladies book and bought this for a friend who already knew a lot about the civil war. I expected he would enjoy all the little behind the scenes types of things that the first ladies book had included. Instead, this was more of a chronology of the war, just done person by person. The little anecdotes on the cover that inspired me to buy the book were some of the only interesting tidbits in the book. The person I bought it for already knew all about the battles and commanders and this was just all review to him with very few interesting new facts. I can't imagine who the audience for this book is because it's so little of what was promised by the title and cover and goes more to a historian's interest although surely they have already read other books on the subject. My friend was nice about it but I felt bad that the book didn't deliver what I'd thought it would and I feel like he wasted his time reading this just to make me happy.1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Secrets uncoveredBy avidreaderYou thought you knew everything about the Civil War? Think again. Included are some offbeat material but most are fascinating things that leave you wondering why you never learned that before and Gee doesn't that make history more interesting?I highly recommend buying this book.

Legendary Heroes of U.S. History—As You've Never Seen Them Before! Secret Lives of the Civil War features irreverent and uncensored profiles of men and women from the Union and the Confederacy—complete with hundreds of little-known and downright bizarre facts. You'll discover that:

- Mary Todd Lincoln claimed to receive valuable military strategies from ghosts in the spirit world.
- Jefferson Davis once imported camels for soldiers stationed in the American southwest.
- Ulysses S. Grant spent much of the Vicksburg campaign on a horse named "Kangaroo."
- James Longstreet fought the Battle of Antietam wearing carpet slippers.
- William T. Sherman was the victim of two shipwrecks on the same day.
- Harriet Tubman experienced frequent and bizarre hallucinations.
- Stonewall Jackson was a notorious hypochondriac (he always sat up straight, fearing that slouching would compress his vital organs).

With chapters on everyone from William Quantrill (a guerilla leader whose skull later ended up in the basement of a fraternity house) to Rose O'Neal Greenhow (perhaps the South's most glamorous spy), Secret Lives of the Civil War features a mix of famous faces and unsung heroes. American history was never this much fun in school!

From Publishers WeeklyO'Brien's slight but entertaining follow-up to Secret Lives of the U.S. Presidents and Secret Lives of the First Ladies is best for those who like their history light. O'Brien profiles 26 figures-13 from each side-who consist mostly of military figures, plus the two Presidents and their first ladies, a few spies and the black leaders Harriet Tubman and Frederick Douglass; he proves most fascinating in the attendant anecdotes (James Longstreet fighting the Battle of Antietam in his slippers, William T. Sherman's two shipwrecks in a single day). Trivia abounds, including all the nicknames of each subject, astrological signs and characteristic quotes ("The moment a grain of black pepper touches my tongue, I lose all strength in my right leg," said Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson, a "notorious hypochondriac"). Unfortunately, the Civil War does not easily lend itself to irreverence or overview; O'Brien has no choice but to slog through battle after battle in order to put the details in context, forsaking in large part such topics as slavery, international relations, munitions and life on the home front. If, in fact, your teachers never told you about these secrets, it's probably because they had bigger fish to fry. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.About the AuthorCormac O'Brien is the author of Secret Lives of the U.S. Presidents and Secret Lives of the First Ladies. He lives in New Jersey.