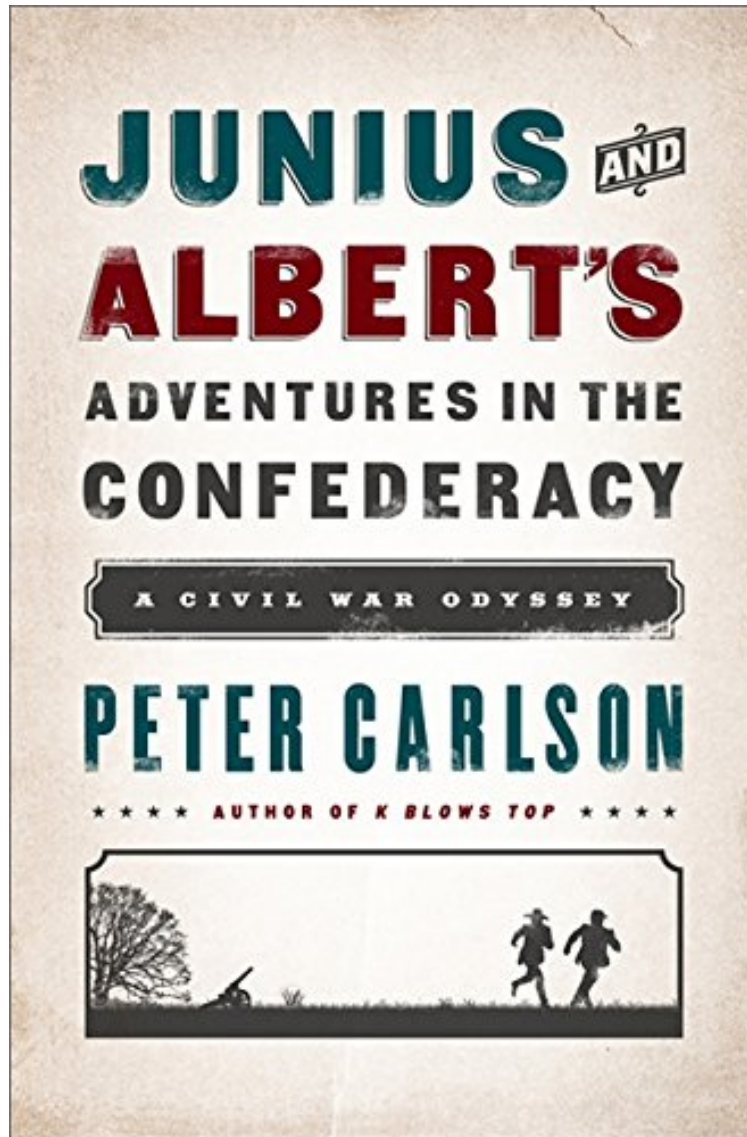


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# Junius and Albert's Adventures in the Confederacy: A Civil War Odyssey

*Peter Carlson*

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**Peter Carlson : Junius and Albert's Adventures in the Confederacy: A Civil War Odyssey** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Junius and Albert's Adventures in the Confederacy: A Civil War Odyssey:

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. For people who don't read "war books" ...By K.MarkeyI will confess

upfront that I do not read "war books", but like a vineyard book that I read for a book club, I presumed I'd learn something. I was right: I learned that in 1862 the Confederates started the first war draft in the US, with exceptions granted to men owning 20 slaves and to men who could afford to hire substitutes -- often drunken Irish were recruited. The first draft inspired the phrase, "A rich man's war but a poor man's fight." So some things never change. False bravado doesn't seem to change either, evidenced by, "We will die in the last ditch!" I sympathized wholeheartedly with Junius Browne when he said he'd rather run guns in Vicksburg than listen to persistent idiots. Having grown up in the East as a Yankee, we were given the impression that the South were all pro-slavery, but this is not the case. Pro-Slavery was a rich man's concern. The poor were forced to take sides and absorbed great risk to help Yankees get back North. Some men signed up then went AWOL, some went rogue and helped the underground transit. In general, slave owners were despised as "hateful aristocracy" and 'arrogating themselves to decency, talent and respectability'. I was very disturbed by Richardson's separation from his wife and children and I am glad the book addressed the matter. I was saddened that he made the choice to be a better journalist and good buddy to his friend, rather than a father to his kids and husband to his wife; the untold part of this story is their lives and how they must have suffered as well. This is a very sad part of Richardson's life, although he made the best of it in prison, tending to the sick and dying. Upon return home, Richardson showed remorse and was haunted over his choices which belied his proclamation of his wife being "dearer to me than all the world beside". I appreciated the focused, straight-forward manner of details, feeling as if I too were walking quietly along creeks and rivers, or carefully, single-file in snow, as weather, pain and fear ripped into our well-being and souls. I felt grateful with them when they found respite in only a barn loft with hay, for a small slice of temporary safety. For me this book has the familiar tone of "Call of the Wild" and "White Fang", and although I previously mentioned this is not my preferred genre, I greatly enjoyed the trip. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Well written, very interesting story By C. Ricucci I am drawn to books about the Civil War, but this one wasn't just a re-hash of history, it was an immensely readable story about the experiences of two young journalists. The one thing I find regrettable is the title -- I think it has a light-hearted ring, whereas the story is anything but that. Yes, there are a few smile-worthy moments, a few places where we might shake our head at the wit and antics of these two young men; but the majority of the story is pretty grim. This was wartime; men were being killed by the thousands on battlefields in more than a dozen states. What these two men and several other of their "Bohemian" friends endured in rebel prisons is beyond my imagination. I can't imagine the feel of the bitter, icy cold, the gnawing hunger, weary with fatigue and having to sleep on a stone floor with no blankets, fighting to survive typhus and pneumonia, enduring brutality by sadistic prison guards, dead bodies stacked up all around me, knowing that rebel journalists in Union prisons were being returned to their homes while the same treatment was denied to me, then escaping after almost two years and walking hundreds of miles, sick/filthy/hungry/cold, to safety and freedom in Union-occupied territory. This is not a textbook, it's not an academic work of history, but it's a very good story and I found it hard to put down. For an interesting and different take on the Civil War, I recommend this book. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A new piece of Civil War history By Andy Glass Not quite a rollicking odyssey, but one, as you would expect for prisoners of war during the Civil War, that was filled with misery. That said, and without giving any spoilers, Junius Albert we imprisoned as non-combatants, but as journalists who incidentally worked for one of the North's most anti-Confederate newspapers. So you can imagine how they were singled out from others. In all my reading on the Civil War I'd never come across any threads of this story or it's two main players, so it was nice to pick up new history. Carlson does a great job of bringing the characters to life and pulling in all the relevant details, with a narrative that keeps you engaged in their story. One of the thoughts that kept playing in my mind as I read this was how today's journalist are treated when captured by the enemy - in most cases that's a story whose end is mostly not a good one. Anyway, this was a nice find and a good addition to my Civil War library.

Junius Browne and Albert Richardson covered the Civil War for the New York Tribune until Confederates captured them as they tried to sneak past Vicksburg on a hay barge. Shuffled from one Rebel prison to another, they escaped and trekked across the snow-covered Appalachians with the help of slaves and pro-Union bushwhackers. Their amazing, long-forgotten odyssey is one of the great escape stories in American history, packed with drama, courage, horrors and heroics, plus moments of antic comedy. On their long, strange adventure, Junius and Albert encountered an astonishing variety of American characters—Abraham Lincoln and Ulysses S. Grant, Rebel con men and Union spies, a Confederate pirate-turned-playwright, a sadistic hangman nicknamed "the Anti-Christ," a secret society called the Heroes of America, a Union guerrilla convinced that God protected him from Confederate bullets, and a mysterious teenage girl who rode to their rescue at just the right moment. Peter Carlson, author of the critically acclaimed *K Blows Top*, has, in *Junius and Albert's Adventures in the Confederacy*, written a gripping story about the lifesaving power of friendship and a surreal voyage through the bloody battlefields, dark prisons, and cold mountains of the Civil War.

Kirkus "A rollicking story of imprisonment and escape during the Civil War seems a stretch, but journalist Carlson accomplished a similar feat with a Soviet premier in *K Blows Top: A Cold War Comic Interlude Starring Nikita Khrushchev, America's Most Unlikely Tourist* (2009), and this is another entertaining, occasionally gruesome

account.... Carlson has taken full advantage of abundant material to deliver a vivid chronicle of two working Civil War reporters and their spectacular odyssey."Paul Hendrickson, author of *Hemingway's Boat: Everything He loved in Life, And Lost, 1934-1961*"'Captivity dries up the heart,' as Peter Carlson tell us in his grave, propulsive, heroic, and, not least, slyly comic tale of two old New York newspaper scribes who went deep into the Civil War--and lived to tell about it. This is a lost tale resurrected by a fine old newspaperman himself--and our hearts are better for it."Christopher Buckley, author of *God is My Broker and Thank You for Smoking*"Another irresistible story, engagingly told, from the pen of irresistible and engaging storyteller Peter Carlson, about two jaunty Union reporters who undergo a harrowing 21 month-long ordeal as prisoners of the Confederacy and then escape. As with the best of non-fiction, it reads like a far-fetched novel." One of the Best Titles of 2013 by *BookpageWall Street Journal*"Engaging.... It's hard to believe that anything compelling about the Civil War remains unexplored, but the picaresque odyssey of these two plucky journalists turns out to be an intimate and absorbing social history of the rarely glimpsed backwoods of the great conflict....One of the great adventures of the Civil War."Boston Globe"Peter Carlson weaves these and other research into a compelling, truly exciting tale. He finds humor in it, too, especially stories of grave journalistic crimes (entire battle scenes made up by reporters too drunk to witness the scene, for instance). The levity is more than balanced by the genuine menace the Yankees faced down South (in Atlanta, newspaper editorials urged they be lynched) and the deep humanity of those Union sympathizers, black and white, who helped them on their long, cold escape route. Plenty of nonfiction narratives claim to read like novels; this one actually does."