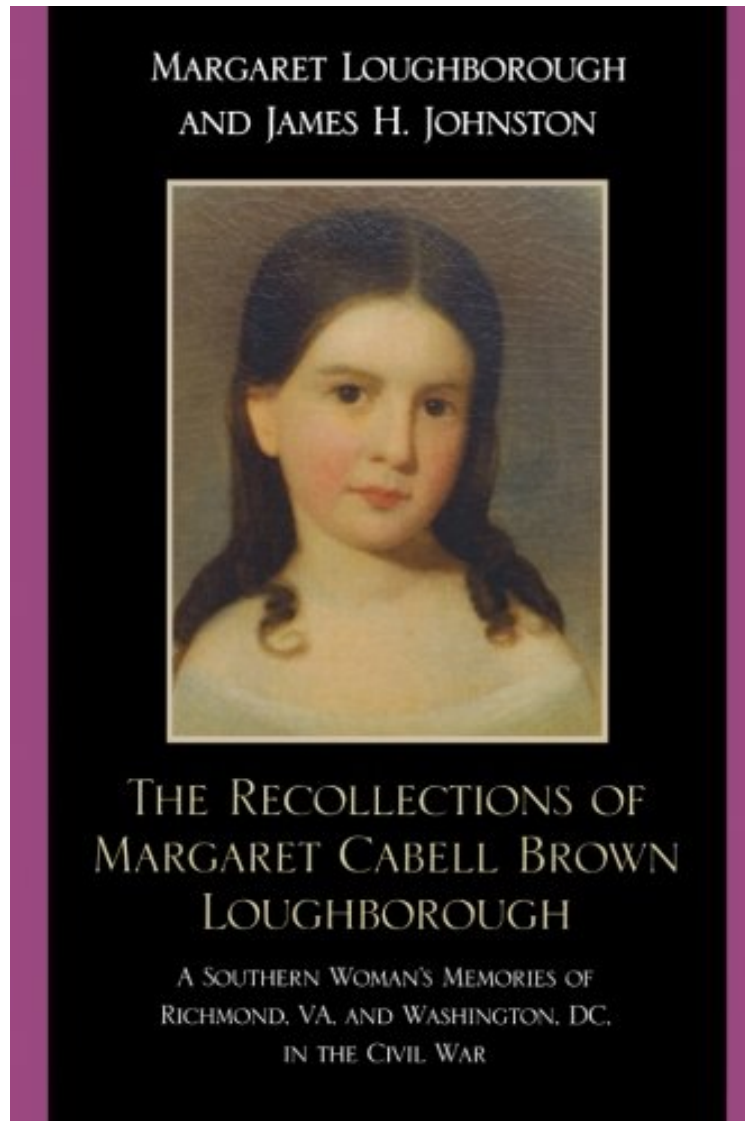


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## The Recollections of Margaret Cabell Brown Loughborough: A Southern Woman's Memories of Richmond, VA and Washington, DC in the Civil War

*Margaret Loughborough, James H. Johnston*  
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**Margaret Loughborough, James H. Johnston : The Recollections of Margaret Cabell Brown Loughborough: A Southern Woman's Memories of Richmond, VA and Washington, DC in the Civil War** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Recollections of Margaret Cabell Brown

## Loughborough: A Southern Woman's Memories of Richmond, VA and Washington, DC in the Civil War:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Family Member Comes to LifeBy Stuart R. LoughboroughMargaret Loughborough was a cousin of mine. Her father in law (Hamilton) was brother of Nathan Loughborough who was my great grandfather. I read this book with great personal interest as I had heard many of these stories at family gatherings when I was a child. I also read it as I was very intrigued to read of a woman who had lived through the war as a working woman. This was highly unusual in that day as James Johnston pointed out in his commentary. Most of the women in the South did remain at home protecting the family homes and taking care of the children. My great grandmother lived at Rokeby in Virginia during the war and was taking care of a number of children including my Grandfather who was nine years old at the beginning of the war. So I read this with a personal interest but I also read it as one who had heard stories of the struggles that occurred within families. War is never pleasant or polite as many of us were led to believe. Brothers were fighting on both sides of this conflict and feared to go home to see parents as their sibling from the enemy might be there. Sisters could not speak to each other as their husbands were on opposite sides of this conflict. The simple act of sending socks to a family member was enough to land one in prison for months. I hope that many will read this book and learn of the reality of war and the great upheaval that happens in the midst of war. It was interesting that many years after the war was over Margaret wrote her recollections and was very careful about what she said fearing that even after many years there might be reprisals against family members who lived in Washington DC and were sympathetic to the South. I also wish as does Mr. Johnston that Margaret's diary had not been lost. In this day and time many have lost the gift of sharing what is happening in the midst of a historical event such as the conflict that Margaret was a part of. If any have memoirs written by family members cherish them and if you are thinking of cleaning out that antique desk or trunk do not throw them away but gift them to a historic society or university archives so that future generations will read and learn from the past. I have on many occasions walked around the Loughborough Family Lots at Oak Hill Cemetery, seeing the many names on gravestones. After reading this book they are no longer just names but are once again alive and though separated by many years are part of my living heritage. and the heritage that I will pass along to family that come after me. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. If you know the DC/Richmond Area this is especially rewardingBy Mary CollinsHaving grown up in the Washington DC/Montgomery County area and now working in downtown Richmond, this book was especially poignant to me....I could visualize so many of the areas being discussed as I remembered them, and was in awe at how they were described 150 years ago...how much had changed....what was there before those paved and heavily travelled roads. Even working now in downtown Richmond, I am only minutes away from the building that was the Dept of Treasury for the Confederacy....So I readily recommended this book especially for folks to know the areas discussed well....history comes alive in a three-dimensional sense, permeating the fog to time...actually seeing then and now simultaneously. 4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Tale of Two CitiesBy Jan HermanEdited by James Johnston, an experienced journalist and Washington historian, this fascinating volume offers another window into the life and times of two warring capitals--Washington and Richmond. Johnston's skillful editing and thoughtful commentary will whet the appetite of anyone craving more of what many of us history lovers can never recover from--our addiction to the Civil War and its endless cast of romantically colorful characters. The book is based on Margaret Loughborough's article written for the Montgomery County, Maryland chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy when she was 80. It is social history seen through the eyes of a Virginia-born lady married to a Washingtonian who throws in his lot with the Confederacy. Those familiar with today's Washington northwest neighborhoods will also be fascinated by images of rolling fields, prosperous farms, and even slave-based plantations not unlike what could then be found just beyond the Potomac River. Those familiar with the famed Civil War diarist, Mary Chesnut, will recognize uncanny similarities. Margaret Loughborough recalls events from the perspective of a newlywed separated from her soldier husband by the exigencies of war and forced to survive by toiling away at jobs not then open to women, some not exactly suited to a woman born into Virginia's landed aristocracy. Mary Chesnut, the wife of a high ranking Confederate official, eventually leads a life not dissimilar to Margaret's, one tempered by wartime inflation, worthless currency, privation, and food shortages. Both witness and chronicle the ebb and flow, and finally the slow, strangulating death of the Confederate experiment gone awry. The two women emphasize the bread riot of 1863, a breakdown in civil order that portends worse to come for Richmond and the Confederacy. Throughout my reading, I could not help but feel Mr. Johnston's frustration in his long quest to locate Margaret's original diary which disappeared in 1961, not that long ago in the scheme of things. Never mind what she revealed in her article written many years after the events. Just think what those handwritten pages penned at the time and on the scene might have revealed. Nevertheless, what Mr. Johnston has given us is a worthy sample of Civil War literature that shines more light on an era that forever fascinates.

Margaret Cabell Brown's *Recollections*, written in 1911, provide a woman's perspective on the Civil War. While her husband enlisted in the Confederate Army, Margaret worked for the Confederate government in Richmond. This diary is not about battle and glory, but rather details the realities of life during the Civil War.

About the Author James H. Johnston is a lawyer, writer, and lecturer in Washington, D.C. His articles on the Loughborough family, which is the subject of this book, have appeared in The Washington Post.