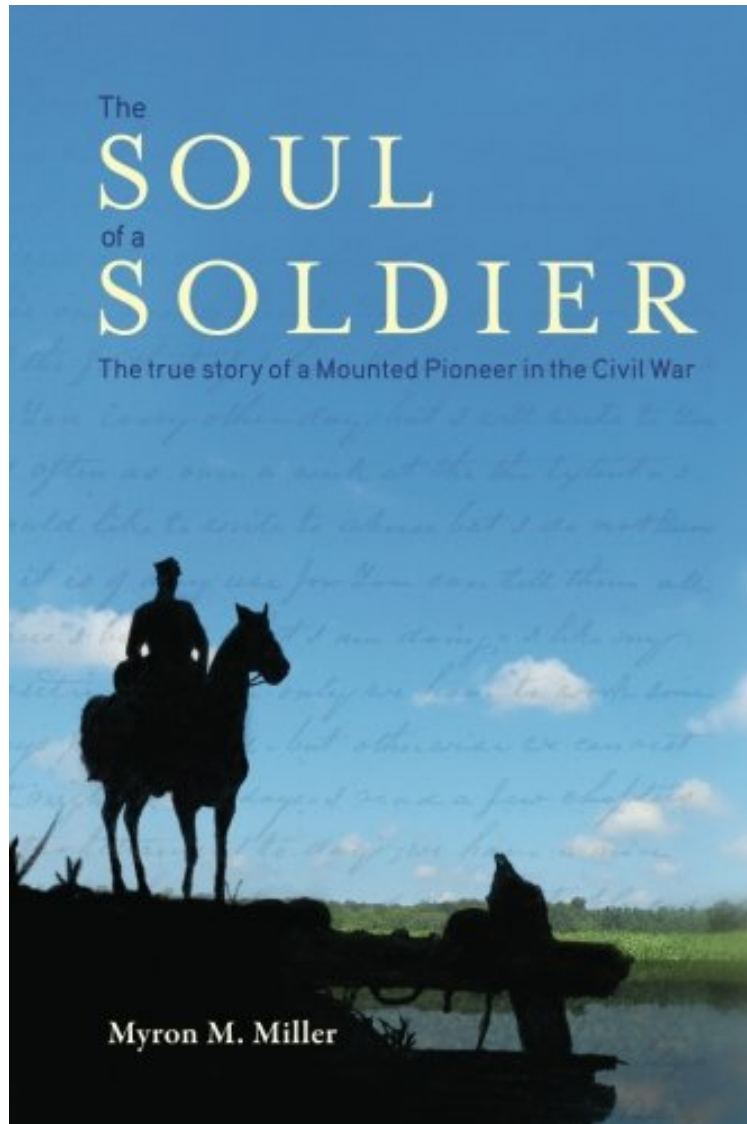


(Free) The Soul of a Soldier:The True Story of a Mounted Pioneer in the Civil War

The Soul of a Soldier:The True Story of a Mounted Pioneer in the Civil War

Myron M Miller

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Myron M Miller : The Soul of a Soldier:The True Story of a Mounted Pioneer in the Civil War before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Soul of a Soldier:The True Story of a Mounted Pioneer in the Civil War:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. a common man's perspective By A. Wieland "The Soul of a Soldier" is a short, enjoyable book that gives the reader a common man's perspective of the Civil War. The book is built around

46 letters from Samuel Miller to his wife, Silence, and a few other individuals while he served with the 211th Pennsylvania Regiment during 1864-65. There are two ways to read the letters: (1) chronologically--the text of each letter is reproduced in Appendix B; or (2) topically--where excerpts from the letters are framed by explanatory material. This constitutes the 116 pages of the main body of the book. For those (like me) who are less familiar with the Civil War, the latter method is best. Samuel served in the Petersburg campaign before he was tapped to join the Mounted Pioneers. Think of the Mounted Pioneers as a predecessor to the Army Corps of Engineers. In Samuel's words, "wherever there is a bridge to build or repair, we have to do it." Samuel gives us a "boots on the ground" view of the war: what the soldiers ate, how they slept, the diseases that afflicted the troops, the status of their horses, and the price of supplies. We learn what was on Samuel's mind: the well-being of his family; news from back home; hostility from "Copperheads" (northerners opposed to the war); and how to vote while deployed. We also see Samuel's Christian faith develop during his time in the military. Prior to the war, Samuel attended church but generally left matters of faith to his wife. While in the Union Army, he began reading a [New]Testament. The horrors of war prompted deeper thoughts about suffering, eternity, and commitment to God and family. Needless to say, Samuel returned home a different man than when he left. New to me were the number of confederate soldiers deserting to the North in the final months of the war (several hundred per day!) and "picket duty." Picket duty involved forward observation of enemy troops. Samuel describes how the pickets from each side held face-to-face conversations and traded goods and newspapers. Truly, this was a war between brothers. The author, Myron Miller, great-grandson of Samuel, has done much to enrich the reading experience. Appendix A contains helpful background material on Samuel's family, a list of individuals mentioned in the letters, and factual tidbits such as what newspapers Samuel read. Appendix C contains photos of some of the original letters in manuscript form so we can see what Silence would have received. This book will appeal to Civil War buffs, as well as to educators who want to give students a brief, accessible look at everyday life for a Union soldier. It will even appeal to those interested in spiritual formation. Last summer I listened to a cassette tape my husband sent to his parents in 1970 from the jungles of Vietnam. Different century, different war, yet strikingly similar content: hunger for news from home, descriptions of food and weather conditions, speculation as to when the war will end--all accompanied by reassurance that the soldier is managing fine. Do you know someone who is currently deployed? Why not write to them today.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Soul Soldier is a Super Read!By Doug LaufferYears ago I read The Soul of a Soldier, I did not know it was on . So it is only now that I am saying that this is an extraordinary read. I am a student of history but, I am not a Civil War expert; therefore the experiences of this soldier and his love for his wife, Silence and God, were really fascinating and engaging. This is a true story and I could NOT PUT THIS BOOK DOWN until I finished it!0 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Have Silence's pictureBy RobertI have not read this most valuable book yet; however, I believe I furnished some of the letters in the book. Silence was a sister to my great grandfather John Duncan.

What happened to a soldier's soul during the Civil War as he faced the horrors of war?Why did a man leave behind a wife and two very young children to serve in the army? Who was Samuel K. Miller before, during and after the Civil War? What was the Mounted Pioneer Corps, and what was their critical role in keeping an army moving? Why was he chosen to be in that unit? When a woman was left with children while her husband went off to the Civil War, what pressures did she face because he was away? How did the women manage their homes while their husbands were away?What were the feelings of a Union soldier as he faced his "brothers" across the picket lines, the Confederates whom he came to know personally? What did they eat? Where did they live and sleep? What did they wear, and where did they get what they needed? What volunteer organizations sprung up to help the soldiers as they fought in the battlefields, either by providing physical help, or in aiding them to be in contact with their loved ones? From his vantage point, somewhat unique because of the positioning of the Mounted Pioneer Corps during battles, what did he see of the battles? What were the forces for and against the war in his community back in Pennsylvania? Who were the Copperheads? What happened to his four Ellis family brothers-in-law who also served in the Union Army?All these questions are answered in this book, "The Soul of a Soldier: the True Story of a Mounted Pioneer in the Civil War." At age 42, Samuel K. Miller volunteered for the 211th Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry in September 1864 and served until June 1865. During his nine months in the service, he wrote 46 letters to his wife and, through her, to their one and five year old sons at their home in the little town of Hartstown, Crawford County, Pennsylvania, population less than 200.This book contains the 46 letters that Samuel wrote during his time in the service of the Union Army, first as an infantryman, then in the Mounted Pioneer Corps attached to the Headquarters of the Union Ninth Corps. Portions of those letters are organized into 17 thematic chapters, which provide the answers to the questions raised above.Samuel's letters provide a penetrating look into his soul, because of the highly personal nature of his letters. His letters reveal his character, values, his aspirations. Demetrius, an ancient Greek orator, literary critic, rhetorician and governor of Athens for ten years, once wrote: "Everyone reveals his own soul in his letters. In every other form of composition it is possible to determine the writer's character, but in none so clearly as the epistolary [the letters]." Demetrius' words apply to Samuel Miller, for Samuel revealed his soul in his letters.

About the Author Myron Miller is delighted to share the letters and experiences of his great-grandfather, Samuel K. Miller. He received his BS from Northwestern University and his MS from Cornell University, followed by U.S. Army service. As an international business executive, he worked with companies such as Westinghouse Electric, The Singer Company and Sunbeam Corporation; he later founded and managed Global Trade Services, Ltd. He has taught at Syracuse University and Elon University, and was a faculty member at Michigan State University. Mr. Miller lives in Raleigh, North Carolina, where he pursues his interests in international projects, genealogy and American history.