

Dear David,

I read your book on your kinsman Breathed a few weeks after I wrote you last which must have been in August. Sorry for the tardiness in correspondence. In my younger days I used to read the military history about the war to suppress secession. But I long since given myself over to political and legal philosophy and political history. So I can't remember when I last read a book on the history of a military event. I read your book slowly a little every night or so, and gradually got into it, the logistics of horse artillery and all.

As I progressed your writing carried me along, and I became genuinely interested in the character. You said at the beginning that little had been written about him and not much was known. I was surprised to find how much is known through the references made by military men who witnessed his actions and thought enough about them to record something. This in itself made him for me a remarkable man especially since he was of lower rank. If one is a general, no matter how competent, much will be written about him, but not of the lower ranks unless they stand out. You left an image of a man totally dedicated to the cause for which he fought. Who had a grasp of the whole the situation he was in, and so did not have to be commanded but could decide what needed to be done and would do it with alacrity, speed, good judgment and innovation. The sort of person who can land on his feet, adjust, and quickly move to the purpose. What in my baseball days, when I had ambitions to be a pro, we used to call "heads up" ball. I could see myself in his role, hoping that I could do what he did.

I understand also his anger and that of Stuart. The secession of States authorized by conventions called by legal authority and voted on by the people in convention was the most *American* thing imaginable. To be confronted by an invasion of those who would usurp American political tradition should make one's blood boil. Not to mention the outrage of Yankee troops on your home turf, and literally your home. But then the sad ending. All that valor, initiative, alacrity, courage, suffering--to have given all and to find that it was not enough. He is changed, loses his love, and dies a few years later--I imagine from physical deterioration and mental depression. Today there are clinic names for this.

Your book, without saying so, calls to attention the principles and goodness for which he and other Confederates fought, and leaves us with the question of what these mean for us. I talked to the great grandson of Jeb Stuart who had read your book and praised it. What is your next project? Keep in touch.

Don