



The Reckoning: Saga of a Civil War Blockade Runner

Bob Larranaga

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War Weighs Heavily on Ed Canfield's Heart, But With His Loved Ones In Danger, He Runs the Blockade Only to Discover His Deadliest Foes Lurk On Land

Part war story, part love story, and rich in historical details, this character-driven novel views the Civil War through the eyes of a man battling Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

Ed Canfield is a character who will resonate with today's readers, especially anyone familiar with the heartache of PTSD. Canfield cannot forget the blood he shed as a young soldier in the Mexican-American War. He embodies the conflicted feelings of many southerners, who opposed the war, slavery and the draft.

Fearing his son will be drafted, Ed fends off the Home Guard. But a Yankee gunboat forces Ed to fight and Jesse to grow up fast. They run the Union blockade in a daring attempt to rescue Ed's lover, Maureen, held captive in the Everglades. The Canfields plunge ahead into the fight of their lives—one that will test Ed Canfield's "soldier's heart" to the core.

The Reckoning captures the grim reality of daily life during the war, the horror of a conflict that turned neighbors into foes and the invincible power of love.

The informative narrative exposes the toll taken by deadly diseases and the perils posed by renegade soldiers. Fast-paced and based on an actual battle, it will appeal to fans of historical romance, Civil War buffs, young adults, and those touched by PTSD. It has an upbeat ending and a thought-provoking discussion guide.

The Reckoning: Saga of a Civil War Blockade Runner Details

Date : Published November 1st 2012 by Beacon-House Communications (first published March 9th 2012)

ISBN : 9781478177296

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Format : Paperback 292 pages

Genre : Historical, Fiction, Westerns, Military History, Civil War



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From Reader Review The Reckoning: Saga of a Civil War Blockade Runner for online ebook

Jeff Dawson says

Excellent Civil War Novel

This is a well crafted story surrounding a one Ed Canfield and his family. The time frame is the early years of the Civil War. Despite the local youth running to the “Call to Arms,” Ed, a veteran of the Mexican-American war is all too familiar with what the call entails and it isn’t the line the politicians and preachers are strumming into the young men. They never mention the blood, gore and psychological toll veterans endure.

The story is set in Florida and the outlying keys. Ed is a simple man trying to make a dollar while not taking a side. He does his best to convince his estranged son, “signing up is not an option.” Despite his best efforts to maintain an arm’s length from the conflict, it seeks him out when the Union forces appear at Cedar Keys and destroy the port facilities. He, his son and many of the town folk flee to the safety of a known refugee camp deep in the Keys. What awaits them isn’t the peace and tranquility Ed so searches for, rather, he is forced to face the demon that haunts and taunts his dreams from a battle twenty years prior.

I couldn’t help but feel, this was almost written in the style of a Greek Tragedy. It is a quick, enticing and excellent story. If you have never read a good novel covering the life of one family during this tumultuous time, then place this at the top of the list. The crisp, concise descriptions will immerse you into a battle field, intrigue and espionage few have delved into.

Well done Mr. Larranaga

Five stars!

KarenLana says

I am fairly new to historical fiction and have never read anything related to the Civil War era before and I thoroughly enjoyed this book. The story itself drew me in from the start and the action-packed plot kept me engrossed to the end. The protagonist, Ed Canfield, is a wonderfully drawn character, brave, hard-working, a quick thinker and, although he's fighting some demons of his own, someone you'd want on your side if you were in a tough situation. It was also very refreshing that the woman he is in love with is portrayed as a strong, level-headed person and not a flighty Southern Belle.

As an added bonus, I appreciated learning about some of my state's history that I was previously unaware of. It was fun to search maps to find some locations mentioned in the book that were new to me (Punta Rassa and the Caloosahatchee River for instance).

I look forward to reading future works by this author!

Linda says

This took me a while to read since it is on Kindle PC and it is a desk top computer that I cannot take anywhere with me. This was worth reading. Kept my interest and could hardly wait to get time to read more of the story. It was a different story than others I have read with a Civil War theme. I really do recommend this to all you Civil War fans or anyone else for that matter. A very good read filled with lots of adventure.

Lenora Rogers says

I really love this book. If you love stories about the civil war , then this is the book to read. The character of Ed Canfield shows us what war does to the mind and spirit even after the war is over. This book helps you understand what war does to someone. This character shows courage through hard times. He never gives up on the love for a woman and his relationship with an estranged son. This story has plenty to keep you interested, love, action and maybe a few tears. I recommend this book to any one who loves history.

Angie Lisle says

Action-packed plot that is reminiscent of Wild West tales, set on Florida's Gulf Coast still haunted by pirates during the American Civil War. The main character, Ed Canfield, is a veteran of the Mexican-American War who suffers from "soldier's heart" (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) when the Civil War breaks out and Ed's home is attacked, forcing him to fight once again for the people he loves.

A historical-romance about the South without the stereotypical characters like the "Southern Belle" found among bodice-rippers. The emphasis is on how Ed's PTSD has, and continues to, affect his family (you will not find erotica here).

The narrative mode changes occasionally, especially in the beginning of the book, when second-person narrative is used to move quickly through the war details occurring in the background. It's a little disjointed but it reminded me strongly of *Treasure Island* by Robert Louis Stevenson and added an air of piracy without ever using the word, pirate.

Some of the background characters seem to fall flat. I suffer from post-trauma too (not the "soldier's heart" kind) and know that the biggest obstacles are usually in my own mind. This use of background characters read as intentional character development showing how Ed's past continues to interfere with present relationships.

There is also a reoccurring religious theme regarding Christianity and, even though I'm an eclectic pagan, I loved the use of this theme. Mr. Larranaga accurately depicts how religion - in this case, Christianity - can be used to justify the means in both good and bad ways. It also helped to illustrate how everyone is, to some extent, stuck in their own heads.

I received a free copy of this book in exchange for a review.

Stovar says

A perspective of the civil war that was different from the norm...well written, educational and entertaining.

Anna Erishkigal says

Civil war history ... all packaged up in a delightfully readable novel

If you are looking for a romance or a pretty story, this book will please you well enough. The storytelling is realistic and all of the characters come to life, especially the protagonist Ed Canfield. But if you are looking for a realistic, gritty tale about what it's like to be a veteran returning from one war, only to watch his country fracture in a second, even -more- stupid war. This book brought the post-civil-war period to life in a way no other book I have ever read has.

Unlike the usual quasi-romantic civil war fare told through the eyes of an aristocrat or farmer-boy called to action, this story is told in a voice typical of the gritty protagonist of the old western tales, Zane Grey and Louis L'Amour ... only this tale has a strong, female protagonists (though Zane Grey had a few as well). I could picture John Wayne, Gary Kooper, or James Arness playing the part of Ed Canfield.

I think perhaps it is best if I let the protagonist Ed Canfield give you the geist of this story in his own words:

"After warring, most soldiers lay down their weapons, hang up their uniforms and go on about their lives as civilians. Not me. After I came home from the Mexican-American War, I burned my uniform. But nothing rid me of the nightmares that stuck with me like a burr on the hind end of a mangy dog. Night after night I fought an endless series of bloody skirmishes with demons that had no need of sleep. Always on edge and ready for a fight, I drifted from one dead-end job to the next like a man on the dodge. I didn't fit in."

This story brings that time period to life for a NEW generation who didn't have the benefit of old western movies to get an idea what the history was that created the gritty ex-veterans who then moved west to conquer a new frontier. The verdict ... buy!
