

of African Americans to gain appointments as officers. Another chapter describes the process of initiating thousands of former slaves and free blacks into the military. Including details such as what black soldiers carried in their mess kits and how they were taught to fire rifles as well as the fundraising efforts of black women on the homefront, Luke and Smith provide a vivid description of army life. The book concludes with the USCT's combat history, including the Battle of Milliken's Bend, where black troops fought alongside the 23rd Iowa Volunteer Regiment. Hindered by the desire of many white officers to use them simply as laborers, by a lack of proper training and weaponry, and by Confederate policy of murdering those who tried to surrender, the troops had a mixed record under fire but nonetheless fought bravely.

As the subtitle suggests, *Soldiering for Freedom* focuses on the actions of white government and military officials. Successful efforts by recruiters, for instance, are explained by their respectful engagement with blacks and government cooperation, while black agency is not an important factor. The murder of a white USCT recruiter by Confederate sympathizers is highlighted; the dangers faced by African Americans who fled from slavery to enlist and by the family members they left behind are not. There is thus a discrepancy between the book's stated goal and what it actually does. Otherwise, the monograph is a concise and informative overview, best suited for middle and high school courses and perhaps introductory college courses. There is also an exhaustive and useful list of suggested readings for those interested in learning more about this pivotal time in American history.

*Lincoln and the Military*, by John F. Marszalek. The Concise Lincoln Library. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2014. xiv, 139 pp. Illustrations, notes, index. \$24.95 hardcover.

*Lincoln and the War's End*, by John C. Waugh. The Concise Lincoln Library. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2014. ix, 136 pp. Map, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$24.95 hardcover.

*Lincoln's Assassination*, by Edward Steers Jr. The Concise Lincoln Library. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2014. 155 pp. Maps, illustrations, notes, index. \$24.95 hardcover.

Reviewer Patricia Ann Owens, now retired, lives in Lawrenceville, Illinois. She has written extensively about Abraham Lincoln and the Lincoln Administration.

For decades "Get right with Lincoln" has been the mantra for many historians, writers, and politicians. A slew of new books hit the already sagging shelf of Lincoln books during the bicentennial of his birth; now,

with the sesquicentennial of the Civil War, even more volumes have been written about the sixteenth president and his handling of the war. One might ask, do we need more books about Lincoln? The answer: of course we do. Books that offer new interpretations and new scholarship are welcomed by professional historians and laypersons alike. The three books reviewed here are examples. Southern Illinois University Press has undertaken to publish a Concise Lincoln Library: short, focused books about Lincoln's life, his times, and his legacy. Written for all audiences, this collection is a tour de force.

John Marszalek traces the evolution of Lincoln's military knowledge and his application of it during the Civil War. As a young man living in New Salem, Illinois, Lincoln served in the Black Hawk War. He never saw any action, but he did gain rudimentary military skills and, most importantly, learned what it was like to be a common soldier, something that served him well as commander-in-chief.

In nine chapters, each titled with a Lincoln quote, Marszalek presents a brief history of the Civil War, focusing mainly on Lincoln and the qualities that made him a great leader and president. Lincoln was a man of courage and a man with a capacity to learn. During the early years of his presidency, Lincoln relied on the advice of his top military commanders, including Winfield Scott, who had served in the army since the War of 1812. A succession of generals would lead the Union Army before Lincoln appointed Ulysses S. Grant as supreme commander. He, along with Sherman and Sheridan, engaged in total war—what some have called a scorched-earth policy. Lincoln's evolution as a military tactician and strategist led him to conclude that this was the way to achieve victory.

The tenets of the Declaration of Independence and the powers granted by the Constitution shepherded Lincoln through the Civil War. Not only did Lincoln's military knowledge increase as the war progressed; so, too, did his understanding that a Union victory was tied to the abolition of slavery. As Marszalek writes, "The winner in war is the individual who approaches the inevitable chaos of the battlefield and the politics of the nation's capital with determination and an open mind" (113). That is why Lincoln remains America's greatest military president.

In *Lincoln and the War's End*, John C. Waugh writes about Lincoln's role in the final five months of the Civil War. Waugh reminds readers that Lincoln's reelection in 1864 was a "watershed in American history" (1). No president had been reelected to a second term since Andrew Jackson in 1832. Most importantly, Lincoln's election came in the midst of a civil war: the Constitution worked. The battle and military information in the book's 12 chapters is concise and succinctly presented.

The focus is on the working relationship between Lincoln and Grant, Sherman's march through the Carolinas, the defeat of the Army of Northern Virginia, and the Union capture of Petersburg and Richmond. Also included are key political events such as Lincoln's Second Inaugural, passage of the Thirteenth Amendment, and Lincoln's visit to Richmond.

Preeminent Lincoln assassination scholar Edward Steers Jr. tenders a fast-paced overview of the assassination, including John Wilkes Booth's original plan to capture President Lincoln and deliver him to the Confederacy, the decision to kill Lincoln, information concerning the background of the conspirators (especially Mary Surratt and Dr. Samuel Mudd), the pursuit of Booth after his escape from Washington, and Booth's death. In 13 chapters Steers cuts through the myths surrounding the assassination, focusing on the people involved and explaining the event that so captivates students of history.

Many books have been written about Lincoln's assassination. Most focus on the "what" — facts and details. Steers writes about the "why." Why did Booth assassinate President Lincoln? Key to answering this question, and to understanding the assassination, is slavery. Lincoln was dedicated to emancipation. As the war progressed, he realized that a Union victory was tied to the abolition of slavery. Booth was a dedicated white supremacist and totally supported the institution of slavery. Steers writes, "Booth believed that, like Julius Caesar, Lincoln was a tyrant usurping civil liberties while at the same time destroying Southern culture, requiring his removal by any means possible" (3).

A highlight of all three books is the authors' use of primary sources, especially the words of Lincoln. Each book is well documented. Waugh's volume includes a valuable bibliography of cited sources.

Lincoln was a product of the western frontier, what is now the Midwest. He possessed qualities of honesty and friendliness. As current residents of that region, we are proud to say that we, too, retain those same qualities. Lincoln spent three days in Iowa; like people everywhere across this nation, we want to know this man and claim him as one of our own. These volumes help us do that and help us "get right with Lincoln."

*Lincoln's Bishop: A President, A Priest, and the Fate of 300 Dakota Sioux Warriors*, by Gustav Niebuhr. New York: HarperOne, 2014. xi, 210 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$26.99 hardcover.

Reviewer Linda Clemmons is associate professor of history at Illinois State University. She is the author of *Conflicted Mission: Faith, Disputes, and Deception on the Dakota Frontier* (2014).

Gustav Niebuhr, an associate professor of newspaper and online journalism, argues that Episcopal Bishop Henry Whipple was "a one-man