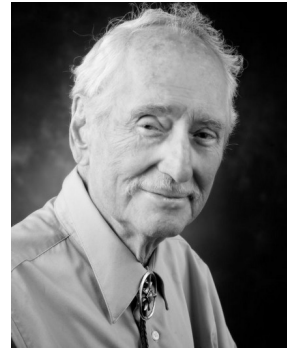


Soldier Boys

Philosophical Fiction about the Civil War

by Jack Matthews



Personville Press just published a new short story collection by Jack Matthews as an ebook. For the first month, this ebook will be available at a considerable discount. See below for details.

Jack Matthews (1925-2013) published 20+ books and taught literature at Ohio University over four decades. His story collections were praised by authors such as Tim O'Brien and W.P. Kinsella and received positive reviews in places like *New York Times Book Review* and the *Los Angeles Times Book Review*. He is the author of *Hanger Stout, Awake*, a modern coming-of-age novel about a teenage boy's obsession with cars (which was praised by *Time Magazine* and called by National Book Award winner William Stafford "one of the most neglected works of the 20th century.") He has published multiple essays and several works of fiction about life in 19th century America.

This 8th story collection (published posthumously) is the first Jack Matthews story collection to be published in 23 years.

Over the decades, Matthews collected memoirs and personal correspondence by actual U.S. Civil War soldiers. Eventually this interest led him to write a group of stories from the vantage point of teenage soldiers. The stories are less about specific Civil War battles or the horrors of war than about ordinary adventures and heartbreaks of young soldiers.

One soldier constantly composes new epitaphs for himself (much to the irritation of his comrades). A wounded soldier finds himself abandoned by his regiment and accidentally strikes up a friendship with a soldier from the other side. One soldier starts seeing ghostly visions of his dead brother and wants to know why. In the opening story, a courier is sent by headquarters to deliver an urgent (and tragic) message only to learn that the local commander has forbidden him to deliver it. In the final story, two soldiers have to hunt down and stop a hidden sharpshooter nicknamed "Old Mortality" and in so doing have to face (and understand) their fears. Told in an accessible, humorous and even old-fashioned way, these stories have a philosophical bent and give readers a sense of how 19th century young Americans must have pondered their world.

This special ebook edition is illustrated by Barbiel Matthews-Sanders (the author's daughter) and includes two introductory essays by Personville editor Robert Nagle. The author's website (www.ghostlypopulations.com) also contains a study guide for teachers and an annotated bibliography of Civil War fiction prepared especially for this ebook.

TITLE: Soldier Boys: Tales of the Civil War

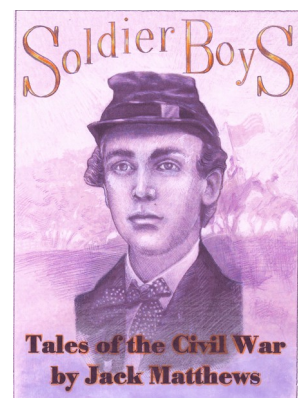
AUTHOR: Jack Matthews

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Praise for Previous Story Collections
by Jack Matthews

"Mr. Matthews is a master of prose conversation and deadpan charm. He is ironic, cool, and shrewd, and he writes a lucid prose."

Tim O'Brien, (Author of *The Things They Carried*), *New York Times Book Review*

"Jack Matthews proves once again that he is in the top one percent of American fiction writers. Witty, polished, wise, ironic, with deep insight into the dark recesses of the human heart, Matthews' stories are often intense and humorous at the same time."

W.P. Kinsella (Author of *Shoeless Joe*)

"Few contemporary writers can – or want to – compose stories in the narrow tunnel of the interior, the rutted trail of memory between mind and heart, sometimes shutting out other people as well as time and place and usual props. Matthews takes us there, carrying a bright light."

Art Seidenbaum, *Los Angeles Times*

Personville Press is a small Houston ebook publisher dedicated to publishing high quality literary titles at an affordable price. *Soldier Boys* is the first of 4 new story collections by Jack Matthews which Personville Press will be publishing. Earlier in 2012, Personville Press published a FREE ebook sampler of previously published stories by Jack Matthews. This FREE ebook ("Three Times Time") can be downloaded from all the online bookstores.

Smashwords Affiliate Marketing: Personville actively supports websites which participate in Smashwords affiliate marketing campaigns. Contact idiotprogrammer@gmail.com for details.

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