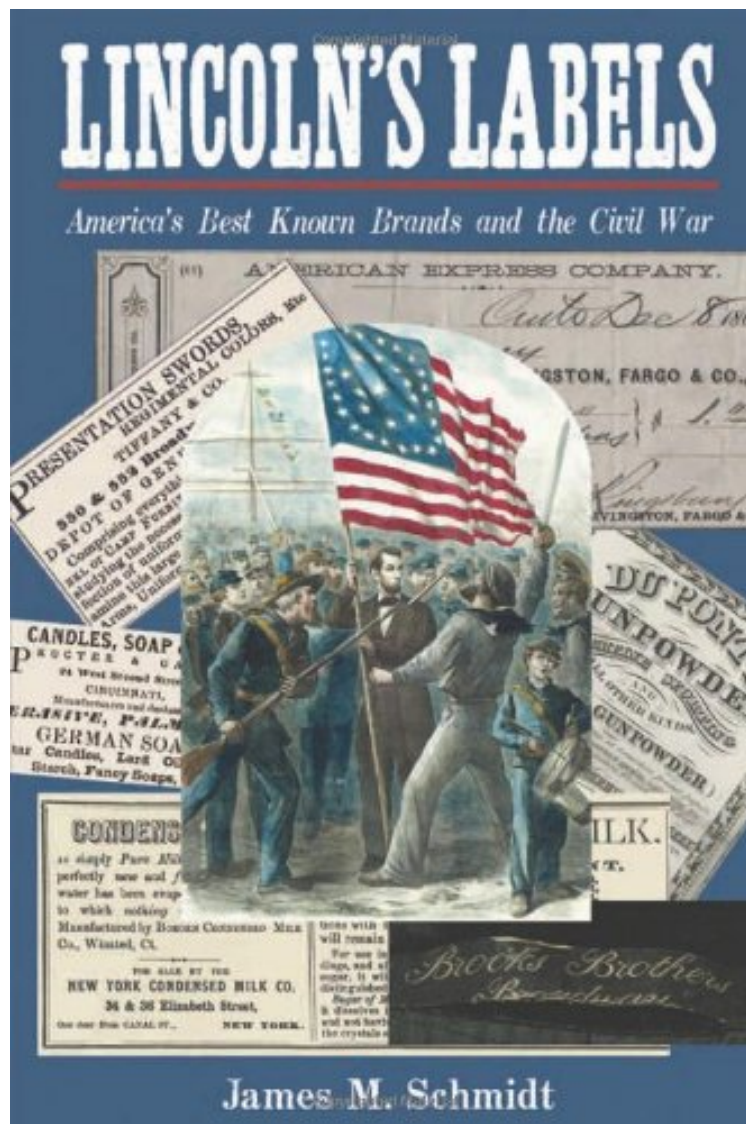


Lincoln's Labels: America's Best Known Brands and the Civil War

James M. Schmidt

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James M. Schmidt : Lincoln's Labels: America's Best Known Brands and the Civil War before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Lincoln's Labels: America's Best Known Brands and the Civil War:

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. The Business of warBy James W. DurneyBooks on logistics tend to be about as much fun to read as watching the grass grow. The norm is a very very thick scholarly book with footnotes on every other sentence. Small print, multiple graphs and a large number of pages are required. This type of book

cures insomnia. Outside of a small audience, readers are taking an advanced college course or desperate to improve their grade. The problem is the response of companies to the demands of a major war is important. This is a complex and compelling story of companies balancing government contracts with their normal customers. Worries over building excessive production capacity or unwanted inventory vie with real immediate requirements. All this occurs while losing skilled workers to enlistments or the draft. Until reading "Lincoln's Labels", I did not think it possible for a book about war production to be informative and fun. Each chapter covers a company that supplies the Union armies during the Civil War and is still in business. This forms an instant connection with the war and the reader. Borden, Brooks Brothers, Tiffany, Scientific America, Procter Gamble are standard brand names we all know. The author links each of these companies to the American Civil War, how they responded and profited. In place of a lengthy dry tome, we have a lively history of the company during the war. Each company has a chapter. This allows the author to concentrate our attention in one industry with almost no distractions. Sufficient background information is provided for the reader to grasp the industry specific issues caused by the war. The balance of the chapter is an easy to read, informative history. The core of each story is people. These people are producers or users of the product and we see business in very human terms. A father shipping his son's body home from Gettysburg introduces the express business. The Du Pont family's struggles to produce gunpowder, deal with sabotage, inexperienced workers, increased demand while wishing to serve on "active duty" anchors a very strong chapter. The war between Scientific America and the War Department, is very well done while showing how important reading material was. At the end of the book, I am sitting on a Procter Gamble soapbox, the soap used to wash myself and my Brooks Brother uniform, reading Scientific America, with Borden's condensed milk in my coffee, Tiffany sword by my side, American Express is sending my pay home and handled today's package from home, treated with drugs from Squibb and have good Du Pont gunpowder in my cartages. After reading this book, I understand how these things came about and what that meant to the men in Blue.

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Lincoln's Labels---Best Known Brands of the Civil War is Essential for Reenactors and Living Historians By Civil War LibrarianCWL---New: Lincoln's Labels---Best Known Brands of the Civil War Is Essential for Reenactors and Living Historians Lincoln's Labels: America's Best Know Brands During the Civil War, James M. Schmidt, Edinborough Press, 208 pp., 19 illustrations, index, sources, notes, 2009, [...]

In this bicentennial year of Lincoln's birth readers are deluged with Lincoln books. James Schimdt has written one for the subscribers of Civil War Historian and Citizens' Companion magazines, who will enjoy and keep handy Lincoln's Labels as a ready reference. Members of Authenitic Campaigner will sit back and relax with this overview which explores the brand names that during the Civil War supplied food, medicine, clothing, and weapons. Civil War era soldiers and civilians used Du Pont's gunpowder, Brooks Brothers' uniforms, Procter Gamble's soap and Borden's condensed milk. James M. Schmidt relates a variety of rarely told stories of inventions, marketing and quartermaster purchasing. Linoln's Labels touches upon how each firm mirrors the war and how family and friendships were torn asunder, as well as how politicians and merchants conspired and crossed paths with Abraham Lincoln. Soldiers and civilians are also the focus of this book. In Chapter Five, Fire and Brimstone, the author begins the chapter on July 3 1863 on Culp's Hill with Henry J. Hunt, chief of artillery, inspecting federal artillery ammunition supplies. In Chapter Six, Medicine Man, Schmidt has uncovered and presents a truely harrowing first person account of an 11th Illinois soldier wounded in February 1862 in Tennessee. CWL will keep his copy close by and also assign the library's copy to business majors who are CWL's U.S. history survey class. Schmidt's narrative is also accessible to an avanced placement high school audience also. James M. Schmidt is the Civil War Medicine columnist for Civil War News and has a web log at [...] is the author of more than 50 articles on American history. He has been featured in Chemical Heritage, Learning through History, North South and World War II magazines . He lives near Houston, Texas.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Famous now and then By Robert Redd As we go about our daily lives we seldom think about the origins or past of the companies that we do business with on a daily basis or whose products we regularly use. Jim Schmidt has written a book that provides an introduction to some of the major companies that proudly served their country and continue to be household names today. If you own a Brooks Brothers suit you might find it interesting to know that this clothier supplies uniforms to many New York soldiers and also played a large part in the New York City draft riots of 1863 suffering approximately \$70,000 in losses. In fact Brooks Brothers made the coat Abraham Lincoln was wearing on the night he was assassinated. Prior to the start of the war Gail Borden created something he called the "meat biscuit". This failed product which was a concentrated food made of dehydrated meat and flour however led to his advances in in the dairy industry and the patent he received for advances in the concentration of milk. Despite costing soldiers up to a full days pay Borden's milk was considered a "great blessing" and was asked for in letters home. Other companies Schmidt discusses include Tiffany and Co. who were known at the time for presentation swords, regimental flags and other symbolic items. Scientific American was a leading magazine for inventors and machinists rather than it's more general content of today. DuPont, who today may be best known for sponsoring Jeff Gordon in NASCAR, was the largest supplier of gunpowder to Union forces during the Civil War. Edward Squibb began his large pharmaceutical company and was a leader in providing standardized and effective anesthetics. Ether was the mainstay of his company at the time. While best known today as financial services companies American Express, Adams Express, and Wells Fargo all began in the express shipping business.

During the war all made their name shipping war supplies. Each also was involved in the task of shipping the bodies of slain soldiers to their home towns for proper burial. Schmidt has written an easily readable book. Each chapter is short enough to be read at a brief sitting but is thorough enough to satisfy all but the most particular readers. In his preface Mr. Schmidt sets out four goals in his book all of which I believe he has accomplished. First, he wants to tell the stories of companies who directly impacted the fighting. Secondly, he wants to relate how the war affected those companies. Third, and maybe most importantly, he is hoping this book will be a springboard to further research and scholarship on the business end of the Civil War. He even lays out areas that he feels are lacking in scholarship. Fourth, he hopes the book will show a new way of combining business and military history writing. By combining the traditional research methods of both writing styles Schmidt has written what should be considered a ground floor work that others will build upon. For me the only area I would point out is the lack of southern view point. While several of the particulars in the book, the Borden family and DuPont Company for instance, were torn in their allegiances the book is really told from the Union side. In my opinion however I did not notice any bias and all this does is leave the door open for further research for modern companies that did business with the Confederacy. Highly recommended for anybody with an interest in business writing or American Civil War history. For the general reader you don't need to have any background knowledge to read this important work.

From du Pont's gunpowder and Borden's condensed milk to Procter Gamble's soap and Brooks Brothers' uniforms, this history investigates how today's familiar brand names served a vital role for the Union during the Civil War. Rarely told stories from the companies who supplied soldiers and sailors with food, clothing, weapons, and medicine recount tales of political intrigue, family and friends torn apart, and paths crossed with Abraham Lincoln. Not only do these accounts mirror the war itself, they also show that life during conflict can often be as intriguing and dangerous for a company of employees as it is a company of soldiers.

This well-written, thoroughly researched study should be of interest to readers who wish to expand their knowledge of the Civil War and American business history. --Mark R. Wilson, author, *The Business of Civil War* The author's well-written, highly original, and well-researched study fills a void in Civil War knowledge. --Thomas P. Lowry, author, *The Story the Soldiers Wouldn't Tell* Readers will gain new insight. --Pittsburg Sunday Tribune- About the Author James M. Schmidt is the author of more than 50 articles on American history. He has been featured in *Chemical Heritage*, *Civil War News*, *Learning through History*, *North South*, and *World War II*.