November 2013

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Recommended Citation
DOI: https://doi.org/10.7771/2380-176X.3337

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of libraries that have one or more up on their walls. So I guess that they have been reasonably successful. On the other hand, we have had just a few libraries that have called to say that they were happy to continue ordering from us but could not send any more signs. Of course, we took them off of the marketing mailing list.

**ATG:** Tell us about yourself and what your training and background is? Do you have family? Hobbies? What do you like to read for fun and pleasure? Other interests?

**KD:** I have a bachelor's degree in Physics from MIT. I did graduate work in Physics at the University of Minnesota, and left with an ABD, (all but dissertation). I later went back to the University of Minnesota and got my MBA. I've worked in both government and the private sector. I was involved in the planning and development of St. Paul Energy Park, a $250,000,000 commercial, residential and industrial energy-efficient development. I've been the Chief Financial Officer of a real estate development firm and did financial systems consulting.

My wife and I have taken a number of unusual vacations, in which we have volunteered to help with various research programs. We have been on archaeological digs in Italy, Peru, and Wales. We have been involved in a dolphin language project in Hawaii and a wild dolphin monitoring program in Florida.

Naturally I love to read. I believe that reading is any person’s most important skill, and that learning from books is the world’s most important form of learning. For that reason I have also supported literacy programs. Currently my serious reading is Thucydides’ “The History of the Peloponnesian War,” and my lighter reading is Holbrook Jackson’s “The Anatomy of Bibliomania,” Italo Calvino’s “If on a winter’s night a traveler,” and Mark Twain’s “The Diaries of Adam and Eve.”

**ATG:** If a library has existing relationships with OP dealers can they use 21 North Main?

**KD:** Yes. This question came up when we were in the testing phase of our development. Several institutions suggested this and we developed our “Preferred Dealer Program.” A library can give us a list of their preferred dealers. Then when a library is searching for books we have books held by their preferred dealers show first in the search results. The dealer holding the book is identified in every search result.

**ATG:** What would you tell libraries who are considering trying 21 North Main?

**KD:** 21 North Main is an Internet door to used, rare, and out-of-print books. Clearly we recognize that the libraries we seek as customers have been acquiring books for a very long time and have established paths that they follow. 21 North Main, on the other hand is only seven months old. We have no right to ask for all of their book orders. We must earn their confidence and trust. All we really ask of any institution is that they give us an order for five or ten books and see how we perform. If we fail to serve them well, then we don’t deserve their business. We obviously have great confidence in our system and we will serve them very well.

**ATG:** Does 21 North Main take purchase orders?

**KD:** Yes, we do!!

**ATG:** Are any libraries using your services in ways you didn’t expect?

**KD:** Yes, a number of libraries have discovered the rich variety of material we have that is still available new. These libraries have found that they can frequently buy used books at a significant cost saving compared to new. We have some institutions that come to 21 North Main first to search without regard as to whether the material is still available new.

**ATG:** Booksellers generally have open shops. How often do they sell the books in the shop and then not have the book to fulfill an online order?

**KD:** Our dealers are able to supply 90% of the requested volumes. In those cases where the individual copy selected is not available, we generally have additional copies available to select from. Our customer service staff watches orders and when a selected volume is not available we can notify the customer of other available copies.

There are times when the desired book is not available. In those instances the library can leave the book as a want. We then match the wants against new books entered into the system each day and automatically notify the library when a match is made.

**ATG:** What are the advantages of using 21 North Main?

**KD:** If you’re a librarian building a collection...
From the Reference Desk

by Tom Gilson (College of Charleston) <gilsont@cofc.edu>

The much anticipated 5-volume *Encyclopedia of the American Civil War: A Political, Social, and Military History* (2000, 1576070662, $425) has just been released by ABC-CLIO. In terms of content and scope, this encyclopedia generally lives up to the pre-publication hype. It offers the reader a comprehensive and informed view of the complicated events, issues and people that make the Civil War such a seminal part of American History.

There is a lot of information within the covers of these 5 volumes. Naturally the military side is given full treatment. There are entries on the great armies, the major and minor battles, the weapons and ordnances used to create the carnage, the successful strategies and costly blunders of both sides and the competent and inept generals. The political part is also given thorough coverage. There are individual articles on each presidential election leading to and, during the war, as well as coverage of the leading politicians. In addition, there are articles on the political parties and movements, laws and policies, as well as formative issues like abolition and secession. The *Encyclopedia* also lives up to the “social” part if its subtitle. There are articles on the role of women, peace movements, class conflict within the armies, the influence of religion, and protest riots, both north and south. Specific entries also attest to the influence of popular songs like the *Battle Hymn of the Republic* and *Dixie*, books like *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* and newspapers like the *Richmond Examiner* and the *New York Tribune*. In addition, each state, and its unique role, has a separate article. However, there is at least one surprising lack of clarity. Finding information on the issue of States’ Rights is more difficult than it needs to be. There is no specific article about the topic and the index makes no cross-reference to the article on Secession that discussed the concept. But even there, one senses a reluctance to emphasize the term States’ Rights.

Production quality is a definite plus. The print is clear and easy to read, and the set is strikingly illustrated with black and white drawings and photos, as well as numerous battle maps. There are also some added features that increase the value of this encyclopedia. Volume V includes 273 pages of original documents arranged by broad category, lists of officers and government officials, maps of battlefield sites by state, a chronology, bibliography and a fairly thorough index. However, the index can be a bit cumbersome. The set is continuously paged throughout the volumes and while the index refers to specific page numbers, it contains no key telling which pages are in each volume.

Despite these criticisms the *Encyclopedia of the American Civil War: A Political, Social, and Military History* is a quality production. It will delight scholars and civil war buffs alike. Comprehensive but accessible, this encyclopedia gives the reader a thorough and inclusive source of information that will answer specific questions, as well as serve as a foundation for further research. With this multi-volume set, the American Civil War has a worthy subject encyclopedia, and that is no small accomplishment. Academic, public and some high school libraries will want it in their collections.

Academic Press has just published another timely and important set. The *Encyclopedia of Biodiversity* (2001, 012268652, $695) is evidence of the growing concern for conservation and the enhanced appreciation of ecological diversity. This is one of those areas of study where science has mixed with social science to the betterment of both, and the *Encyclopedia of Biodiversity* reflects, and benefits from the mix.

The articles offer in-depth treatment of the topics covered. Each is introduced by an outline and includes its own glossary of terms and a useful bibliography. Graphics in the form of tables, charts, maps continued on page 49

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