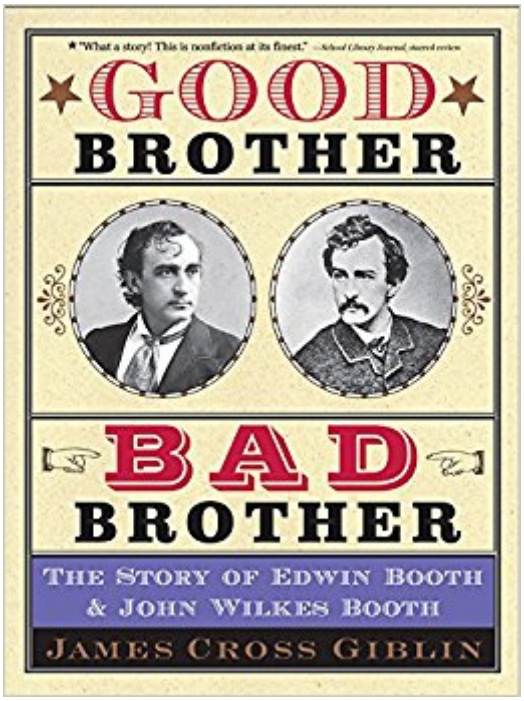
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Good Brother, Bad Brother: The Story Of Edwin Booth And John Wilkes Booth



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Synopsis

Edwin Booth and his younger brother John Wilkes Booth were, in many ways, two of a kind. They were among AmericaÃ¢â ¬â„¢s finest actors, having inherited their fatherÃ¢â ¬â„¢s commanding stage presence along with his penchant for alcohol and impulsive behavior. In other respects, the two brothers were very different. Edwin was more introspective, while John was known for his passionate intensity. They stood at opposite poles politically, as well: Edwin voted for Abraham Lincoln; John was an ardent advocate of the Confederacy.Award-winning author James Cross Giblin draws on first-hand accounts of family members, friends, and colleagues to create vivid images of Edwin Booth and his brother John Wilkes, best known today as the man who shot Abraham Lincoln. He traces the events leading up to the assassination and describes the effects of John WilkesÃ¢â ¬â„¢s infamous deed on himself, his family, and his country. Comprehensive and compelling, this dual portrait illuminates a dark and tragic moment in the nationÃ¢â ¬â„¢s history and explores the complex legacy of two leading menÃ¢â ¬â •one revered, the other abhorred. Notes, bibliography, index.

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Customer Reviews

Starred Review. Grade 6-9Ã¢â ¬â œActors Edwin and John Wilkes Booth each had a compelling stage presence and a fondness for alcohol, just like their famous father, Junius. Edwin spent his life perfecting his craft and building a reputation as the finest classical actor of his time. John was impulsive, popular with the ladies, and best known today as the man who assassinated Abraham

Lincoln. The text is carefully researched, drawing heavily on firsthand accounts from family members and liberally illustrated with photographs, most from the Harvard Theatre Collection, Houghton Library. The writing is engaging and eminently readable, and presents history in a manner that is, in essence, consummate storytelling. Giblin traces the events leading up to the assassination, discussing the Civil War, John Wilkes Booth's love for the Confederacy, and the plots he and his colleagues hatched to kidnap Lincoln. The effects that the assassination had on the country, and his family, are clearly presented. The search for Booth and his coconspirators rivals the excitement of police procedurals as Giblin chronicles efforts by law enforcement to bring the group to justice. Edwin's later life and his contributions to American theater are discussed. Behind all his successes, however, stood the ghost of his brother John, and the act that would forever link the Booth name with disgrace. What a story! This is nonfiction at its finest.Ã¢â ¬â œJennifer Ralston, Harford County Public Library, Belcamp, MD Copyright Ã Â© Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Starred Review Gr. 5-8. Giblin never forgets the "story" part of history. In this absorbing narrative, he frames the intertwined tale of two brothers with accounts of their families, friends, the Civil War, and ninteenth-century theater. Edwin and John Wilkes were sons of Junius Booth, also a famed actor, and Edwin learned his craft in part as a young teen, traveling with his touring father to keep him from drinking too much. Alcoholism and depression afflicted the family, but Giblin is brilliant at showing that darkness was only one part of a life. Edwin's support of the North and John Wilkes' passion for the Southern cause drove a wedge in the family, and John Wilkes' assassination of Lincoln--plotted out for readers from historical documents with breathtaking clarity--haunted Edwin and his family. With settings that range from Australia to Germany, from New York to San Francisco, each vividly reconstructed, Giblin's book will engross readers until the very last footnote. GraceAnne DeCandidoCopyright Ã Â© American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I picked this book up in my local library, preparing to be bored by it's being a Young Adult book, but after reading the first chapter, I was so impressed that I went over to one of the library's computers and ordered it from . That was in 2005, and I read it at least twice a year. It is G O O D ! VERY good! It is intensly informative without the superfluous adjectives and repetative words that seem to permeate so many adult books, leading to to have formed the opinion LONG ago that authors get

paid more the longer a book is.This book is one of the BEST I have ever read on the lincoln assassination; it is informative and interesting and extremely well written. It would make a great FIRST book on the assassination, or the last. If you'd like a book that gets right to the point, doesn't preach; yet tells the story without unneccessary fluff, this one is it for you! IT'S GREAT!!!!

We all know the story of John Wilkes Booth and the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln. GOOD BROTHER BAD BROTHER takes to a different part of the story. What was it like to be a close relative of John Wilkes Booth? The book concentrates on the amazing life of Edwin Booth. John and Edwin were the sons of a famous stage actor and the two men and another brother also became stage actors. John Wilkes was a favorite because of his extreme good looks but Edwin had the stage presence needed to maintain a career.Here is a tragic story that affected so many people on so many levels. Just being a "Booth" family member was dangerous after the assassination. What was to become of the family?GOOD BROTHER BAD BROTHER gives us insight into Edwin's life and how his world changed forver.Although the book is informative, it seems we could have had more information on Edwin and the Booth Family. The exceptional part of the book is the mountain of historical pictures contained. The pictures are a fascinating step back in time.GOOD BROTHER BAD BROTHER is informative, if somewhat uninspired in prose, and is worth a read for anything fascinated with this amazing period in history.

Was required reading for my son's 8th grade history class, but I found it fascinating as well. Great writing and a story anyone interested in the politics of the civil war and even current political divisions among families might find fascinating.

This book is a fascinating history book that can help you understand the political climate of its time and the back stage theatrics of its time. The contrast between two brothers whom were actors but had two very different political views make us revisit a horrible historical event, Lincoln's killing. This book is not about Lincoln but the brothers. Very good book. The pictures are gorgeous. Politics and Theatre are woven together to tell the story "Good Brother, Bad Brother.

It's an interesting book. Didn't realize it when I bought it, but it's more along the lines of Jr.High/High School book. In spite of that, it's well written and very informative. I'd recommend this book for Jr/Sr high students. Hope a few teachers will assign this as reading for their classes.

A notation in Good Brother, Bad Brother suggests that it is for readers aged 10-14, but I found it to be interesting and informative for even well-read adults and, although the writing style may be more geared towards a younger audience, it includes some nice analysis and even a little intrigue. James Cross Giblin covers Edwin more thoroughly--he lived longer, of course-from his youthful days accompanying his famous father actor Junius Brutus Booth on his theatrical tours to the beginnings of Edwin's stage career, his sometimes heated relationship with younger brother John Wilkes, fears about his future after the assassination and how the assassination continued to affect him throughout his life, his post-assassination career including the Booth Theatre and The Players club, his troubling second marriage, to his death. The chapters on John Wilkes Booth include information and reviews on his brief acting career but, of course, focus on his fanaticism with the southern cause and his conspiracy plans to kidnap (which later escalated to killing) President Lincoln.Giblin uses many sources (including the fairly recent publication of JWB's writings) to draw a very thorough overview of the lives of the brothers. A comparison of the different acting styles of the brothers are described (pg. 73), the impact John Brown's hanging had on JWB is shown with a nice brief description of the event (pp. 55-7), the efforts on the part of the Booth family (including Edwin) to obtain the remains of JWB for burial is demonstrated through passages of family letters to the government (pp. 166, 173-7), etc. The author also explains the political-military situation at the time to provide background to JWB's infamous act. The fate of the conspirators (including how they suffered in prison) is detailed but does not deviate the book too far from the subject of the brothers. Mary Surratt (often over-covered in other books on the subject) is barely touched on. Little details like why Lincoln was not taken to the hospital are nice touches as many young readers would ask such questions and, adults as well, may be puzzled by it (pg. 128).Giblin does not overly sanitize his book for his younger audience. Junius Brutus Booth's alcohol problems (and the fact that Edwin had to accompany him to keep him from imbibing too recklessly) are fully explained as are Edwin's own struggles with alcoholism. Junius Brutus' second family in England is revealed (something I don't remember reading about before). Some of JWB's angry writings (including using the n-word) are included and it is revealed he smuggled quinine to the South (pg. 86). Oddly, Giblin does not include any passages from or even mentions an undelivered speech JWB wrote in Philadelphia about his political stands after South Carolina seceded from the Union; a speech Edwin saved from the furnace. This revealing speech is published in its entirety in `Right or Wrong, God Judge Me: The Writings of John Wilkes Booth.' The observations of a witness who helped Edwin destroy JWB's theatrical costumes is included, however. Edwin's bouts with depression are considered and his strained relationship with his mentally-disturbed second wife Mary McVicker and her family are

demonstrated. Edwin minced no words in this eye-opening quote from one of his letters: "I'd prosecute the she-devil [Mary's mother] for defamation of character and apply for a divorce from her lunatic daughter" (p. 197). That the former Ford's Theatre collapsed as Edwin's body was being transported for burial is an intriguing side note (p. 221)As interesting as the text is, the many photographs are amazing. Photos of the brothers in theatrical garb (including one of elder brother Junius, Edwin, and John on stage together for the only time in a rendition of Julius Caesar on page 100), posed photos of John, family photos of Edwin, revealing shots of the conspirators in unusual bar handcuffs, photos of the hangings; it is an excellent illustrative record. I definitely recommend this book to anyone-young or old-interested in the Booths.

It is hard to believe that there could be a better written, more compelling study of the Booth siblings than in Good Brother, Bad Brother. James Cross Giblin skillfully details the history of the Booth family and chronicles the events that helped shaped the family dynamics. Although it is considered a children's book, I would not hesitate to recommend it to adults. Good Brother, Bad Brother is a family tragedy, but more importantly, a testament to the power of love and kindness. It will haunt you long after you have closed it's pages.

This book tells of the lives of the two brothers. One tried for assassination involvement and the other an actor. It is interesting to see the different roads these two men took with their lives...

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