Junius and Albert's Adventures in the Confederacy

SUMMARY KEYWORDS
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SPEAKERS
Mark Wetherington, Question, Peter Carlson

Mark Wetherington 00:00
Good evening and welcome to the Filson Historical Society. I'm Mark Wetherington. Director and I'm delighted to see that you've chosen to join us tonight and that you've made it here through the rain, and I understand there's some little bit of traffic issues out there, as often happens here in Louisville, when it rains, I know you're gonna enjoy tonight's program, Peter Carlson's genius and Albert's adventures in the Confederacy and some of this territory that he will cover, at least in his book we covered about three weeks ago, those of you that went with us on the civil war field Institute. So looking forward to that is our mission is to collect, preserve and tell the significant stories of Kentucky in the Ohio Valley region's history and culture. Civil War is certainly one of those significant stories. So it's appropriate tonight that we have a speaker addressing the The Adventures of two journalists in the Civil War era during the Civil War. And it's also appropriate because one of our other collecting strings is journalism. And we have some outstanding journalism collections here, going all the way back to the frontier and antebellum periods and Henry Watterson and Olomouc well into the 20th century. So without further delay, let me introduce Peter Carlson. For 22 years he was a reporter and columnist for the Washington Post. Now he writes a column for American history magazine. He has also written for life, people, Newsweek, the nation and the Huffington Post. He's an author of roughneck, the life and times of Big Bill Haywood, and the co author with Hunter S. Thompson and George Plimpton, The Gospel According to ESPN, a coffee table book about American sports heroes. Peter grew up in Long Island and he now lives in Rockville, Maryland. So please join me in welcoming Peter Carlson to the Filson Historical Society.

Peter Carlson 02:14
Hello, everybody, thanks for coming. Is that Michael Dirda? No, you look exactly like a guy I work for the post who writes about books. Hello again. I am thrilled to be in Louisville and here at the Filson This is not my first trip to Louisville, but it is the first time I've been here sober. I guess I should explain that. The other time I was here I was on a press junket sponsored by the distilled spirits Council of America. And I was on a bus full of reporters. Four or five of us were
American and the rest were Chinese. The reporters from Chinese Playboy, Chinese Good Housekeeping, who even knew they existed. And they were all interested in learning about bourbon. So we were driven around and we stopped at numerous distilleries all over Kentucky and Tennessee, where they would give us a tour and then pour out their whiskey and none of them made just one kind of bourbon, they all made three or four kinds of bourbon and they would pour them out for us and you didn't want to be rude. So when I was last here, I remember I was walking down the street, semi inebriated. And I looked over and I saw what appeared to be a giant baseball bat, standing on the sidewalk. And I thought, this bourbon is more powerful than I thought. But I am, for the record, I am completely sober. Now, so far, and this is water. But anyway, this book Junius and Albert's adventures in the Confederacy exists today because I gave into one of those deep dark desires that lurk in the depths of the human soul. I refer to the desire to prove that your boss is full of baloney. This happened in 2010, fall of 2010. And I was hired as an editor at American history magazine. And as soon as I was hired, I said to the high honcho hired me. I have an idea, the 150th anniversary of the Civil Wars coming. Why don't we take a couple pages in each issue and run a newspaper story about something that happened in the Civil War 150 years earlier? I thought that was a pretty good idea. He did not. He said Well, that would be A good idea, but Civil War journalism was really lousy. Well, I worked as a newspaper reporter for 25 years. And I thought to myself, really, is it really possible that all the reporters of the era managed to somehow miss the biggest story in American history? And that didn't seem possible to me. And I thought to myself, This guy is full of baloney. But I didn't know. So I checked it out as reporters do. I went to the library, and I got a couple books on Civil War journalism. And I read them. And I learned that a lot of civil war journalism was really lousy. But some was really great. And most was mediocre, sort of like, contemporary journalism. But more importantly, each of these books had a few pages devoted to this what seemed to me like a really great story about these two guys who were reporters for Horace Greeley in New York Tribune, who covered the Civil War. Their names were Junius Brown and Albert Richardson. And they were in May of 1863. They were trying to catch up with General Grant's army, which was getting ready to attack Vicksburg. So they hitched a ride on a union barge that was towing, there was bringing hay to Grant's forces. While the Confederates saw the barge as it moved down the Mississippi and started shelling it with cannon, and hit the barge, blew up the tugboat that was telling it, set the hay on fire and killed about a dozen Union soldiers, and Junius and Albert, and the remaining soldiers leaped into the Mississippi, and the Confederate sent out boats and captured them. And Junius and Albert were taken to various prisons, through the Confederacy for 20 months. And finally, they escaped from a prison in Salisbury, North Carolina, and tried to make their way to the Union lines in Knoxville, across two mountain ranges in the middle of the winter. So I read this and thought, Wow, this sounds like it would make a great movie. Unfortunately, I don't make movies. But occasionally I do write books. So I thought, well, maybe I can write a book about these guys. Now, if I was a novelist, I guess those few pages would have been enough. And I could have just made up the rest. But I write nonfiction. I write history, not fiction. So I had to do what nonfiction writers do, which is do a little research and find out whether there was enough information available to write to flesh out this story and what clanks unfortunately, there was there were memoirs and letters and diaries and newspaper stories, some of them by Junius, and Albert and some by other people who shared parts of their adventure. So all I had to do was go to a half a dozen archives or so and dig this stuff out. Which was, of course, fun. Those of you who are familiar with the Filson know the thrills of finding a letter from somebody you're interested in, it was written, you know, you're holding it in your hand, it was written 150 years ago. And of course, it's even more thrilling if it tells a really good story, or gives you some details that you didn't know to fill in the story. So I did all that. And I wrote this book. It's called Junius and Albert's adventures in the Confederacy. Because it's an adventure story. It's kind of a straightforward, old fashioned adventure story that can keep you up at night, as you read along trying to find
over an hour the ships and the fort pounded each other with shells until the air was so full of
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Brown accompanying the soldiers on their march while Richardson climbed a tall oak tree on the riverbank for a better view of the artillery battle. For over an hour the ships and the fort pounded each other with shells until the air was so full of

out whether these guys made it home safely, or were captured and shot or hung. So, I think I hope that it works on that the level of a pure adventure story. But of course, it's also a work of history. And I think it illuminates some aspects of the civil war that most people don't know about the culture of civil war reporters, life in Confederate prisons, and most importantly, the guerrilla war that was waged in the mountains of North Carolina and Tennessee by pro union guerrillas. So there are many interesting characters in the story. Of course, the two most important ones are Julius and Albert Junius Brown and Albert Richardson. They were both 27 years old when the war began, and they were best friends they had met as newspaper men in Cincinnati. Before the war. They were as I say, they were best friends, but they were very different. Albert Richardson was a stocky, handsome strong farm boy from man Massachusetts. He had grown up as the seventh generation on a farm in Massachusetts. But he had no interest in farming. He wanted to be an explorer of the West. So he left his ancestral home sometime in the 1850s at the age of 18. And headed west. When he got to Cincinnati, he became a newspaper reporter. And he found that he was really good at Albert was natural reporter. He was somebody people wanted to talk to. And they would tell him things, which is always good for a reporter. And so he, during the war, he was great at mingling with regular soldiers, captured prisoners, escaped slaves who joined the army. He also had a great affinity for getting generals to talk to him. And he even had an audience with Abraham Lincoln at a key stage of the story. He was also did well with the women. And before the war in Cincinnati, he began dating a bookstore clerk named Mary Lou Pease. She got pregnant, they got married. And so when he was captured in May of 1863, he had a wife and three children and his wife was pregnant with a fourth child. Junius Brown was different. Junius was kind of a skinny, scrappy prematurely bald guy with jog ears. He was a rich kid from Cincinnati. His father was a banker there. His father sent him to St. Xavier College. Now, Xavier University, which was a very rigorous Jesuit school, where he learned to speak Latin, Greek and French. And he did really well there he was kind of an intellectual. He thought of himself as a philosopher. He liked to read philosophy in the original Latin, Greek and French. And his friend Albert with TSM, on mercifully about that. He, after St. Xavier, he went into his father's Bank, which he detested, and so escaped by going into journalism, which always seems you know, then and now like a more interesting field of endeavor than the one your father wants you to go into. He was not a natural reporter, unlike his buddy Albert, he was really too shy. He was not good at mingling with people, he was not good at getting people to tell him things. He would kind of stand back and watch the action, and then write a sort of learned flowery literary essay about it. Which sometimes people laugh when I say that, but that was the standard operating procedure during that time. There wasn't a lot of quotations in those days, there wasn't a lot of interviewing Junius wrote more typical stories than Albert did. Julius did not also he was not as catnip to the ladies as Albert was. So he was unmarried during the war. And if you read what he wrote, during the war, you get the impression that the chief hardship of battle was that there were no women around. He's like, Oh, he's always like, where are the beautiful women there? They're not here. They apparently avoided the battlefield. So between the two of them, they sometimes travelled together, they more frequently traveled apart. Between the two of them. They covered the battles of Fort Henry and Fort Donelson, Shiloh, Antietam, Fredericksburg, and many of the bad naval battles along the Mississippi. Poor Junius was in a was cooped up in Union gunboats on the Mississippi for a really long time. The first battle they covered was the Battle of Fort Henry. They were in Cairo, Illinois, and hitched a ride with General Grant as he hitched a ride with the Union navy down the Tennessee River to attack forts Henry and Donelson. I'd like to read a little chunk of the book about that. This would be the first actual battle they've managed to cover. Brown and Richardson went ashore with grants troops, slogging through swampy flooded woods. Brown accompany the soldiers on their march while Richardson climbed a tall oak tree on the riverbank for a better view of the artillery battle. For over an hour the ships and the fort pounded each other with shells until the air was so full of
smoke that Richardson could no longer see the gunships. When the Confederates ran up a white flag of surrender, Albert shinny down the tree and joined the Union soldiers as they swarmed into Fort Henry, quote, our shots had made great Havoc he reported in the Tribune. In the form the magazine was torn open. The guns completely shattered, and the ground stained with blood, brains and fragments of flesh. Under gray blankets were six corpses, one with the head torn off and the trunk completely blackened with powder, others with legs severed and breasts opened in ghastly wounds. On quote, Richardson watched as Union soldiers delivered their highest ranking captives, their highest ranking captive General Lloyd Tillman, to the Conquerors of the Ford, General Grant and Commodore Andrew Foote, commander of the federal gunboats. How could you fight against the old flag for das Tillman? It was hard, Tillman replied but I had to go with my people. A Chicago reporter interrupted to ask every journalists most prosaic but necessary question. How do you spell your name General? Sir, if General grant wishes to use my name in his official dispatches, I have no objection, Tillman replied, But sir, I do not wish to appear in this manner in any newspaper report. I merely asked it, the reporter said for the list of prisoners captured. You will oblige me sir Tillman replied, by not giving my name in any newspaper connections whatsoever. Of course, Richardson included Solomon's name and his story, as well as that absurd dialogue. He wrote his article while aboard a union ship heading back to Cairo, where he dispatched it to the Tribune. So Albert, jumps on a boat goes to Cairo sends off his story. Junius, who's still with the Army goes with them as they marched across 12 miles of swampy territory to Fort Donelson. And they Besiege an attack Fort Donelson for four days during a snowstorm. And finally, the Confederate surrender Fort Donelson, and about 10 or 12,000, prisoners Junius, who had no coat, no tent, no food, no nothing, hung in there and wrote a great feature story about it. There's already been a new story. And so the people knew that this great Union victory had occurred. But he wrote this great feature story, including as good feature stories do all kinds of interesting details. One of them was that the he was amazed, as I was amazed to read that a lot of the Southern officers who were captured, had brought along a slave to take care of them. When they went off to war, I had no idea. And he describes this captain from Nashville, who is captured, who takes his muddy legs and puts them over the lap of his slave who then brushes the mud off his pants. And later on while they're feeding the prisoners, the this officer gets a little peeved that his slave who doesn't serve him fast enough, probably because his master is now captured by these Yankees. And I guess he doesn't have to, you know, step and fetch it quite so fast anymore. Junius was amused by this. And so as I when I read it, so Junius after the battle, he goes back to St. Louis, they were always trying to find an army that was about to attack, because in the beginning of the war, there was a lot of armies sitting around thinking about attacking or training or planning to attack or avoiding attack. So they were always kind of looking for an army that was about to do something. So he went to St. Louis, and he's hanging around St. Louis, with his buddy Richard Colburn of the New York World. And they hear that a union army in southern Missouri has attacked a Confederate in Arkansas. So they hop on a train heading south, and they get as far as Rolla, Missouri. And they learn in Rolla that the battle has been fought and the union has had this victory. What we now know is the battle of P rich, so they're stuck in Rolla, which is 200 miles away. And they know that their buddy, Thomas Knox, of the rival New York Herald is with the army and is about to scoop them. So read a little, a little bit about that. Brown and Colburn realize that Thomas Knox of the New York Herald would scoop them in a rival New York newspaper. Frustrated, they devised a simple solution. They would wing it simply concoct accounts of the battle, based on the brief reports and wispy rumors that had reached Rolla. It was unethical, of course, but hardly unprecedented. Journalists in the 19th century, were not finicky about facts, and did not permit them to ruin a good story, newspapers routinely enlivened their meager supply of facts by garnishing them with rumors, exaggerations, political rants, vicious invective, and the kind of pseudo poetic prose that escaped the gravitational pull of truth and sword into fantasy. During the Civil War,
Hound Dog, Nero, who was said to weigh 180 pounds. Captain Alexander sort of outfit with a bright red sash. And he would walk around the prison with this black Russian boar pants, a black belt with two guns hanging from it and a black jack. And he set off this austere character. He had long black hair and a long black beard. And he wore a black shirt, black pants, a black belt with two guns hanging from it and a black jack. And he would walk around the prison with his black Russian boar Hound Dog, Nero, who weighs it was said to weigh 180 pounds. Captain Alexander sort of

Even now, he began while I attempt to collect my blurred and disconnected thoughts, the sound of booming cannon and the crack of rifle rings in my ear, while visions of carnage and the flame of battle hover before my sight. Three days of constant watching without food or sleep, and the excitement of the struggle have quite unstrung my nerves. That was hard to top. But brown topped it with a heart pounding you are there a style of prose that reads like fiction, which of course it was. Brown had learned that the union wants victory with a dramatic charge led by General frog Seagull, so he cast Seagull as the hero of his yarn. Never was better fighting done. Never ground more closely contested. bayonet, muskets, sword and cannon all did their bloody work, and the earth was stained and slippery with human gore. Every loyal soldier kept his eye fixed on his fearless leader. Wherever he saw his streaming hair and flashing sword, they knew all was safe, that there was hope of victory while he survived. Strange that Seagull was not killed. He was well known to the rebels, and 100 rifles sought in vain to end his career. The balls wheeled about his head, but none touched him. Though one carried away his spectacles, and a second pierced his cat. Wow. On and on, and on to fill the whole page in the New York Tribune and Horace Greeley, the publisher wrote an editorial suggesting that the story be reprinted and given to every union soldier. Nowadays, of course, any reporter would be immediately fired for making up the story. But times were different than the word got around. And so all the reporters knew about this, and they thought it was hilarious. And they thought it was even more hilarious when the Times of London, the Augusta Times of London reported that geniuses work of purple fiction was the best story written about a battle in the Civil War. So about a year after that, in on May 4 of 1863, Junius and Albert are captured by the Confederates in the Mississippi, literally in the Mississippi, hauled out of the river, and captured and put into jail in Vicksburg. And they really weren't that worried about it, because a lot of reporters were captured during the war by both sides. And they were usually quickly released. In fact, in Vicksburg, the Confederates, you know, filled out their parole papers, and said, well, we'll send you to Richmond and you'll be paroled there. So they weren't too worried. But the problem was that the Confederates detested the New York Tribune, which was a abolitionists paper that early in the war had run banners across the headline, saying on to Richmond. And so Robert Gould, the Confederate in charge of prisoner exchange, who was in Richmond at the time, did not look fondly upon the New York Tribune, and he refused all attempts to trade, Richardson and brown for prisoners that the Yankees had held. So they spent the next 20 months in various Confederate prisons. They were sent from one to another for 20 months. So before I did my research, I thought, Ah, I don't know 20 months in prison. This could get kind of dull. I figured it would be just one grim thing after another. But fortunately, it did. didn't turn out that way. First of all, they were in a lot of different prisons and they were all different. And also they met a lot of they saw a lot of weird, strange, sometimes funny things happen in prison. And they met a lot of interesting characters. For instance, one of the prisons they were in in Richmond was called Castle thunder. And the warden was a guy named Captain George Washington, Alexander. Captain Alexander was a wonderfully colorful character. He had long black hair and a long black beard. And he wore a black shirt, black pants, a black belt with two guns hanging from it and a black jack. And he set off this austere outfit with a bright red sash. And he would walk around the prison with his black Russian boar

reporters routinely made soldiers dying words sound as lofty and eloquent as a Shakespearean soliloquy. The dead soldiers never complained, nor did their kin. All these habits contributed to a slang insult that became popular during the war. He lies like a newspaper. But even by the lack standards of the day, what Brown and Colburn did was outrageous. They wrote long, vivid eyewitness accounts of a battle that occurred 200 miles beyond their eyesight. The pieces were so ludicrously overblown, that perhaps the two men were competing to outdo each other in the art of fiction. It seems quite possible that alcohol was involved. Colburn story reads like a parody of the style of First Person journalism that stars the reporter as the main character.
looked like a pirate. And actually he had been a pirate. He had been a Confederate pirate on the Chesapeake stealing boats from the Yankees and selling them to Richmond. And he early in this was early in the war, and he was caught and imprisoned in Fort McHenry in Baltimore. And he had escaped, he jumped from a parapet into the bay, swam to shore and made his way back to Richmond. And when he got there, they must have thought, well, if this guy knows how to escape from prisons, maybe we should put him in charge of a prison. So they put them in charge of Castle thunder, which had well over 1000 prisoners. It was an old tobacco warehouse. Well, in addition to being a warden, and a pirate, Captain Alexander was also a playwright, a poet and a songwriter. And he wrote a play a really awful musical comedy called the Virginia Cavalier, which was actually being performed in Richmond while he was warden at Castle thunder. So he would leave the prison after his day job, and go to the print to the theater, where he had written himself a scene in a play, he would ride across the stage on his big black horse with his black outfit with his black dog, and the audience would rise and cheer for him. All this really happened, I could never make this up. So in addition to being a pirate playwright, a warden, Captain Alexander was also luckily for Junius and Albert, crooked as a pretzel. He had this prison, he had over 1000 inmates, and they were in hideous conditions. They were living in this warehouse lying on floors, eating horrible food, they used to joke that this mystery meat that would be in their soup, which was supposedly beef, they used to joke that, you know, they always had more meat after big cavalry battles. Anyway, the food was awful, the conditions were awful. And in fact, he was actually tried and acquitted for brutality to the inmates. But he also had a little country club prison he had set up inside Castle thunder, and it was a room where they had actual beds, and Windows, you could open and close and a wood burning stove, you can heat the place in the winter. And he led about 50 prisoners stay there. And these were prisoners who could get money from the north money or packages of food. And if you could get money in food, and we're willing to share it with Captain Alexander, he would let you stay in what he called the citizens room. Junius and Albert were fortunate enough to be he put them in the citizens room. And they got boxes from their friends up in New York, with books and tinned sardines and jams and jellies and smoked meats and money hidden away. So they shared the food with the captain and his cronies, and there would be money in there and they would share that and they could, they could use the money to buy food in Richmond. So they lived much better than the average prisoner while they were at Castle thunder. In February of 1864, they were sent from Castle thunder to prison in Salisbury, North Carolina. And that they that wasn't too bad. They kind of liked that at first. They were living in a in an old factory building. There were a few 100 prisoners and the place was walled in but there was a yard of something like four acres where they could play baseball during the day on nice days. And so it wasn't too bad. They were they were kind of glad to be there after being cooped up in Richmond. Most of the prisoners in Salisbury were political prisoners. They were southerners who were deemed unpatriotic to the Confederacy. Some of them were deserters from the Confederate army. Some were people who had refused to go into the Confederate army when drafted. And some were just people who made it known that they were loyal to the Union. And most of them were from the mountains of Virginia or North Carolina or Tennessee. Most of them, like most people in the mountain counties were small farmers. They lived on subsistence farms, they did not own slaves. And we're not particularly excited about fighting for the rich lowland plantation owners who had founded the Confederacy for their own benefit. So there they were in Salisbury. And well, actually, I don't know how much you know about it. But when there were referendums on secession, before the war, the mountain counties of Virginia, Tennessee, and North Carolina voted overwhelmingly against secession. So there was a lot of union sentiment in those counties. Of course, the mountain counties of Virginia seceded from Virginia when Virginia seceded from the Union, and founded West Virginia. So that's the most of the people in the prison at Salisbury were these pro union mountaineers, and they initiated Albert and Junius into a secret or pro union organization called the heroes of America, which
reporter. The that was humble, tan ancient shapeless, sweat soaked woollen sock. But the long cold journey. So he pulled this town that.

He pulled off this town that and handed it to the woman said with tears in her eyes. Her husband noticed that Brown had no hat to wear on the long cold journey. So he pulled his own hat. He pulled off his own hat and handed it to the reporter. The hat was humble, an ancient shapeless, sweat soaked woollen sock. But the

The Yankees thank their hosts and hostesses and got up to leave. May God bless you, the old woman said with tears in her eyes. Her husband noticed that Brown had no hat to wear on the long cold journey. So he pulled his own hat. He pulled off his own hat and handed it to the reporter. The hat was humble, an ancient shapeless, sweat soaked woollen sock. But the

The women had never seen tea before. So he showed them how to brew it. And then the slaves and the escaped prisoners sat down to an odd little tea party. revived by the food and the tea. The Yankees thank their hosts and hostesses and got up to leave. May God bless you, the old man realized that he'd lost his hat somewhere among the husks, but there was no time to look for it. They needed to set out in search of someone who might feed them. 10 minutes later, they came upon another slave cabin. When the old man who lived there heard they were Yankees. He said he'd be happy to feed them. He invited them into the cabin and introduce them to his wife and daughter. Then he went outside and killed two chickens. He stayed outside on guard, while the women cooked the birds and the Yankees huddled near the fire their wet clothes steaming. Looking around the little cabin, Richardson realized that it was the first private house he'd entered in 20 months. It was crude and cramped, but it had a dinner table with plates and utensils and beds with sheets, civilised amenities that made him long for his own home and family. When the Yankees had devoured the chicken and hot cornbread, Richardson took out the bag of tea he'd smuggled out of prison. The women had never seen tea before. So he showed them how to brew it. And then the slaves and the escaped prisoners sat down to an odd little tea party. revived by the food and the tea. The Yankees thank their hosts and hostesses and got up to leave. May God bless you, the old woman said with tears in her eyes. Her husband noticed that Brown had no hat to wear on the long cold journey. So he pulled his own hat. He pulled off his own hat and handed it to the reporter. The hat was humble, an ancient shapeless, sweat soaked woollen sock. But the
animals so hard that several horses died or came so close to death that they were simply their fetlocks worried that the rebels would catch up. The bitter cold. The frost covered mud on the trails was so deep that the horses sank down to the ground across country so rugged, that they regularly had to dismount and walk their horses.

Ellis splits the group up, and the guys who are on horseback go in one direction with Ellis. Hopefully the Confederate cavalry will follow them. And the guys on foot go off with one of Alice's lieutenants whose name is Treadaway. On a totally different path. So Ellis, his modus operandi in these in these instances, is to go as fast as possible through the most remote and roughest trails possible. And he calls the people he takes to the mountain Stampeders because he goes so fast with them. So let me read this part. Albert has gone Albert’s on mule, and he's gone with the with LS and the people who are on mule or horse and Junius has gone with the pedestrians. On this other trail. It's the first time they've been separated since they were captured 21 months earlier. And the writing was rough. Ellis led the group across country so rugged, that they regularly had to dismount and walk their horses. In the bitter cold. The frost covered mud on the trails was so deep that the horses sank down to their fetlocks worried that the rebels would catch up LS push the tired men in their exhausted animals so hard that several horses died or came so close to death that they were simply
abandoned. Their riders proceeded on foot or doubled up on healthier animals. During the ride, Ellis's men encountered an old man perched on a fine horse, one of the Stampededers now without a horse, saw an opportunity. What are you Southerner or union? He asked, holding his rifle menacingly? Well, so the old man looking very nervous. I have kept out of the war from the beginning. I have not helped either side. Calm calm that will never do set the stamp, Peter. You don't take me for a fool, do you? You never could have lived in this country without being either one thing or the other. Are you union or secession? The poor man had to guess immediately who these strangers might be. He could see that they were scragglly and dirty. wearing ragged, muddy slept in clothes that included pieces from the uniforms of both armies. They looked like rebels. I voted for secession, he said, tell the entire truth. His interrogator insisted. Well, sir, I do. I have two sons in Johnston's Army. I was an original secessionist and I am as good as Southern man as you can find in the state of Tennessee. That statement delighted the horseless stamp heater holding the rifle. All right, my old friend, just slide down off that horse. What do you mean? I mean that you are just the man I've been looking for and walking 100 miles, a good Southerner with a good horse. I am a Yankee. We are all Yankees. So slide down and be quick about it. The old man had no choice but to obey. He dismounted and watched as the man with the rifle, climbed into his saddle and rode off on his horse. So there they are. They're being chased by Confederate cavalry. They're heading toward Knoxville still 100 miles away or so? Do they make it safely? Or do they get captured and shot or hung or sent back to prison? Well, I'm not going to tell you. You're just gonna have to read the book and find out. So before I open this up to questions, I have two more words that Wisdom Christmas present. All right. Does anyone have any questions? Yes, ma'am. Did you get from independent sources? Well, good question, if you didn't hear is how much of the information for the book came from sources other than Junius and Albert, who we have seen or capable of making things up? Well, the chief sources for the book, I don't want to ruin the story here. But they made it back. They each wrote a book about their adventures, and both were best sellers in the summer of 1865. They publish books a lot faster than they do now. They also wrote letters back home and to their Managing Editor, Sidney gay of the Tribune. And the all the letters that Sidney gay had were found in his stable in Staten Island in 1950, something and I went to Columbia University, and there they were, and you get to pick them out. And most of them are still legible. Only a few had faded away. So there was a lot from Julius and Albert. And as far as I know, the story I read about the Pea Ridge thing was, I think that was a one shot deal. But there were plenty of other sources about the parts in which they were captured. They were captured with another reporter, Richard Colburn of the New York World, and he wrote about he was quickly released because he didn't work for the Tribune, but he wrote about the parts that he experienced. This other reporter, William Davis of the Cincinnati Gazette, wrote about he was captured late in the war and sent to Salisbury and he escaped with them. So he wrote about it. And then there were many, many accounts of the prisons that they were in, particularly Libby Prison, and Saulsbury. Where, wherever you had, I hate to say this, it sounds kind of snobbish, but wherever you had officers who tended to be educated in prisons, you had guys who either kept diaries or wrote Memoirs of it because they were educated men, and they could write and they did, right. Not so many from Castle thunder, or from the early days of Salisbury. But after they started getting Union soldiers, there's a lot of stuff. And a lot of these people mentioned Albritton Junius. So there's a lot of reports, I didn't have to rely on them. And generally speaking, they didn't make things up as far as I can tell. I think that I think the pOH thing was was a joke. I think they were drinking in a hotel room and Rolla and said, you know, we're gonna get beat by the Herald when the tribune hated the Herald. And so, you know, we, we've seen the initial Telegraph reports, and we hear some rumors, so let's go to town. But other than that, the reports are really pretty good. Anybody else? Yes, sir. Letters established in the 1950s, from the editor, or from it was letters to the editor, from his various reporters during the war. They were very legible. There was one letter of geniuses that I couldn't read almost anything off, but the rest of
them were fine. And they were mostly written in pencil on, you know, flimsy paper and sent either from you know, warzones or from prison. And you could read them fine. It was amazing. And there they are. They just you go to Columbia University. And you ask for it and bingo. I mean, you people who work in archives and others, but bingo, there it is this letter that this guy wrote on this piece of paper. It's it's an amazing feeling. And yeah, the Yeah, they were very legible. Yes, ma'am. Do journalism. Well, um, there is a, there is a surprise ending to this book. And that relates somewhat to that. They did return to journalism. Both of them went back to the tribune for a while, and I don't want to spoil that surprise ending. But yes, they did return to journalism, and they both wrote these books and others. So yeah, they became pretty famous actually, after the war. PTSD. Not that I can tell now. Yes.

Q 49:46
The letters get from prison to the editors.

Peter Carlson 49:51
Well, they some didn't. They many more letters were written than made it an app. I have none of Junius His letters from prison to his family. There are some to the editor, some of Albert's letters to his family survive. Not all of them did. And in fact, one of the best letters that Albert wrote, never made it home to his family. And I found it in a issue of stamps magazine from the 1950s. And it was a story about the stamps used on letters from Confederate prisons. And they just happen to somebody get a hold of this letter, and they printed excerpts from it. And it was about I shouldn't ruin the story, but it's about a very sad thing that happened to Albert's family while he was in prison. And he was writing back to his brother about it, and it never reached them, but somehow reached somebody who wrote about it in stamps magazine, so strange where you find these things.

Q 50:59
Going back to the president, why would they have wanted to take these two reporters and send them from Richmond to Solsbury? I mean, this was before the bath sending way on but what what would cause them to waste time sending prisoners from one place to another?

Peter Carlson 51:19
Well, I'm not sure they did not explain that. But the guys who they sent with Albert and Junius, none of them were union soldiers. They were all civilians, which sets them off a bit and the rest of them, except for these two reporters were the southern dissidents. So maybe they wanted to cluster the southern dissidents in one place, not near the capital of the Confederacy. I don't know they they didn't explain it. They move them around. They were in like five or six different prisons. So they never when you're in prison, I guess they don't explain to you why they're leaving, why they're sending you but as you as you say, yeah, that was not part of this great exodus, which made perfect sense when Richmond was being besieged. This was long before that. They were in Libya from the middle of May to early September of 1863. Social Life and would be the social life and liberty. Well, yes, there was quite a social life and liberty actually
some of the funniest scenes in the book. Come and Libby when they're after Gettysburg. Before Gettysburg, the prisoners in Liberty were rather glum. But a bunch came from Gettysburg and I had just won at Gettysburg in the same day. They had wanted Vicksburg, so they were a little happier. There's a funny scene in the book where I talked about the, the they're all reading Confederate newspapers, Richmond newspapers, and the Richmond newspapers are hilarious. I guess that guy told me Civil War journalism was lousy. was onto something because for two weeks after the Battle of Gettysburg, the Richmond newspapers, we're still calling it a great Confederate victory. It reminds me of that guy in Baghdad, remember him who would come on TV when we were bombing? And, you know, the Americans are entering Baghdad, and he said, You know, we've driven them into the sea. They kept saying it was a victory. But anyway, they had when there was a prisoner captured at Gettysburg, named Beaudry, Louis Napoleon Beaudry, who was a Methodist chaplain. And he was a real go getter, and he set up a they called it the Libby lyceum. And the prisoners, as Joe called it, the Libby lice. I see him because they all had lice. And it was they would give lectures on the topics that they knew they were the all union officers that Libby and many of them were educated and they gave, there were classes in French and Spanish. There were classes in military tactics in biology and psychology and all kinds of things. Albert had a debate with a guy who was into mesmerism the science pseudoscience of hypnotism. Albert taking the negative side as to whether this was a actual science. And actually, that debate sparked a craze in a prison for hypnotism. So it was really hot, and in this warehouse, and so you would there be these? There's union officers in their underwear, sitting around trying to hypnotize each other. So, the prison scenes were less, you know, there were some really grim horrific prison scenes in here, but there are also some funny ones and many of the funny ones were Libby. Yes, sir. wrote home and tried to console brother about something that had happened to the family. They wrote to him and told them yeah, he, for a long time, he got no letters. But early on, he got they got there in late February, I think of 64 and they got mail for a while and then all through the summer. and into the fall, they got no mail at all. Before the mail stopped Albert learned, I guess there's no reason for me not to say this, Albert learned that his wife died. So he gets a letter from his brother saying, you know, your wife died. So she's got four kids living with his brother, his brother is a little freaked out because he now is four more mouths to feed. And Albert, of course, is devastated. So he writes this letter to his brother about it. And that's the one I saw on stamps magazine. But then he gets no letters for like six months, and he keeps writing and those letters are excellent. So he'll tell his brother, you know, nothing. The North is like the grave to us. No word ever comes back from it. You know, I'll keep writing but I doubt that anything is getting to you. But some percentage of letters weren't getting through. They had, you know, exchanges, they had boats, exchanging things and at all these prisons, and some things would get through.
Thank you very much. Thank you.