



Bring the Jubilee

By Ward Moore

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Bring the Jubilee by Ward Moore is a 1953 novel of alternate history. The point of divergence occurs when the Confederate States of America wins the Battle of Gettysburg and subsequently declares victory in the "War of Southron Independence" on July 4, 1864 after the surrender of the United States of America. The novel takes place in the impoverished United States in the mid-20th century as war looms between the Confederacy and its rival, the German Union. History takes an unexpected turn when the protagonist Hodge Backmaker, a historian, decides to travel back in time and witness the moment when the South won the war.

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Editorial Review

From the Inside Flap

"[WARD MOORE IS] ONE OF THE BEST AMERICAN WRITERS."

--Ray Bradbury

The United States never recovered from The War for Southern Independence. While the neighboring Confederacy enjoyed the prosperity of the victor, the U.S. struggled through poverty, violence, and a nationwide depression.

The Industrial Revolution never occurred here, and so, well into the 1950s, the nation remained one of horse-drawn wagons, gaslight, highwaymen, and secret armies. This was home for Hodgins McCormick Backmaker, whose sole desire was the pursuit of knowledge. This, he felt, would spirit him away from the squalor and violence.

Disastrously, Hodgins became embroiled in the clandestine schemes of the outlaw Grand Army, from which he fled in search of a haven. But he was to discover that no place could fully protect him from the world and its dangerous realities. . . .

"The Civil War has been often rethought, most effectively in Ward Moore's **Bring the Jubilee**."

--Donald E. Westlake

The New York Times

About the Author

* #42 in the Millennium SF Masterworks series, a library of the finest science fiction ever written. * 'Seminal ... concise and elegiac' Encyclopedia of Science Fiction * 'A classic alternative world story' Brian Aldiss * 'One of the best American writers' Ray Bradbury

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EXCERPT: I. LIFE IN THE TWENTY-SIX STATES

Although I am writing this in the year 1877, I was not born until 1921. Neither the dates nor the tenses are error--let me explain:

I was born, as I say, in 1921, but it was not until the early 1930s, when I was about ten, that I began to understand what a peculiarly frustrated and disinherited world was about me. Perhaps my approach to realization was through the crayon portrait of Granpa Hodgins which hung, very solemnly, over the mantel.

Granpa Hodgins, after whom I was named, perhaps a little grandiloquently, Hodgins McCormick Backmaker, had been a veteran of the War of Southron Independence. Like so many young men he had put on a shapeless blue uniform in response to the call of the ill-advised and headstrong--or martyred--Mr. Lincoln. Depending on which of my lives' viewpoints you take.

Granpa lost an arm on the Great Retreat to Philadelphia after the fall of Washington to General Lee's victorious Army of Northern Virginia, so his war ended some six months before the capitulation at Reading and the acknowledgment of the independence of the Confederate States on July 4, 1864. One-armed and embittered, Granpa came home to Wappinger Falls and, like his fellow veterans, tried to remake his life in a

different and increasingly hopeless world.

On its face the Peace of Richmond was a just and even generous disposition of a defeated foe by the victor. (Both sides--for different reasons--remembered the mutiny of the Unreconstructed Federals in the Armies of the Cumberland and the Tennessee who, despite defeat at Chattanooga, could not forget Vicksburg or Port Hudson and fought bloodily against the order to surrender.) The South could easily have carved the country up to suit its most fiery patriots, even to the point of detaching the West and making a protectorate of it. Instead, the chivalrous Southrons contented themselves with drawing the new boundary along traditional lines. The Mason-Dixon gave them Delaware and Maryland, but they generously returned the panhandle of western Virginia jutting above it. Missouri was naturally included in the Confederacy, but of the disputed territory Colorado and Deseret were conceded to the old Union; only Kansas and California as well as--for obvious defensive reasons--Nevada's tip went to the South.

But the Peace of Richmond had also laid the cost of the war on the beaten North, and this was what crippled Granpa Hodgins more than the loss of his arm. The postwar inflation entered the galloping stage during the Vallandigham Administration, became dizzying in the time of President Seymour, and precipitated the food riots of 1873 and '74. It was only after the election of President Butler by the Whigs in 1876 and the reorganization and drastic deflation following that money and property became stable, but by this time all normal values were destroyed. Meanwhile the indemnities had to be paid regularly in gold. Granpa and hundreds of thousands like him just never seemed to get back on their feet.

How well I remember, as a small boy in the 1920s and '30s, my mother and father talking bitterly of how the war had ruined everything. They were not speaking of the then fairly recent Emperors' War of 1914-16, but of the War of Southron Independence which still, nearly seventy years later, blighted what was left of the United States.

Nor were they unique or peculiar in this. Men who slouched in the smithy while Father shod their horses, or gathered every month around the post office waiting for the notice of the winning lottery numbers to be put up, as often cursed the Confederates or discussed what might have been if Meade had been a better general or Lee a worse one, as they did the new-type bicycles with clockwork auxiliaries to make pedaling uphill easier, or the latest scandal about the French emperor Napoleon VI.

I tried to imagine what it must have been like in Granpa Hodgins's day, to visualize the lost past--that strange bright era when, if it could be believed, folk like ourselves and our neighbors had owned their farms outright and didn't pay rent to the bank or give half the crop to a landlord. I searched the wiggling crayon lines that composed Granpa Hodgins's face for some sign that set him apart from his descendants.

"But what did he do to lose the farm?" I used to ask my mother.

"Do? Didn't do anything. Couldn't help himself. Go along now and do your chores; I've a terrible batch of work to get out."

How could Granpa's not doing anything result so disastrously? I could not understand this any more than I could the bygone time when a man could nearly always get a job for wages which would support himself and a family, before the system of indenture became so common that practically the only alternative to pauperism was to sell oneself to a company.

Indenting I understood all right, for there was a mill in Wappinger Falls which wove a shoddy cloth very different from the goods my mother produced on her hand loom. Mother, even in her late forties, could have

indented there for a good price, and she admitted that the work would be easier than weaving homespun to compete with their product. But, as she used to say with an obstinate shake of her head, "Free I was born and free I'll die."

In Granpa Hodgins's day, if one could believe the folktales or family legends, men and women married young and had large families; there might have been five generations between him and me instead of two. And many uncles, aunts, cousins, brothers, and sisters. Now late marriages and only children were the rule.

If it hadn't been for the war ... This was the basic theme stated with variations suited to the particular circumstance. If it hadn't been for the war the most energetic young men and women would not turn to emigration; visiting foreigners would not come as to a slum; and the great powers would think twice before sending troops to restore order every time one of their citizens was molested. If it hadn't been for the war the detestable buyer from Boston--detestable to my mother, but rather fascinating to me with his brightly colored vest and smell of soap and hair tonic--would not have come regularly to offer her a miserable price for her weaving.

"Foreigner!" she would always exclaim after he left; "Sending good cloth out of the country."

Once my father ventured, "He's only doing what he's paid for."

"Trust a Backmaker to stand up for foreigners. Like father, like son; suppose you'd let the whole thieving crew in if you had your way."

So was first hinted the scandal of Grandfather Backmaker. No enlarged portrait of him hung anywhere, much less over the mantel. I got the impression my father's father had been not only a foreigner by birth, but a shady character in his own right, a man who kept on believing in the things for which Granpa Hodgins fought after they were proved wrong. I don't know how I learned that Grandfather Backmaker had made speeches advocating equal rights for Negroes or protesting the mass lynchings so popular in the North, in contrast to the humane treatment accorded these noncitizens in the Confederacy. Nor do I remember where I heard he had been run out of several places before finally settling in Wappinger Falls or that all his life people had muttered darkly at his back, "Dirty Abolitionist!"--a very deep imprecation indeed. I only know that as a consequence of this taint my father, a meek, hardworking, worried little man, was completely dominated by my mother who never let him forget that a Hodgins or a McCormick was worth dozens of Backmakers.

I must have been a sore trial to her for I showed no sign of proper Hodgins gumption, such as she displayed herself and which surely kept us all--though precariously--free. For one thing I was remarkably unhandy and awkward, of little use in the hundred necessary chores around our dilapidated house. I could not pick up a hammer at her command to do something about fixing the loose weatherboards on the east side without mashing my thumb or splitting the aged, unpainted wood. I could not hoe the kitchen garden without damaging precious vegetables and leaving weeds intact. I could shovel snow in the winter at a tremendous rate for I was strong and had endurance, but work requiring manual dexterity baffled me. I fumbled in harnessing Bessie, our mare, or hitching her to the cart for my father's trips to Poughkeepsie, and as for helping him on the farm or in his smithy, I'm afraid my efforts drove that mild man nearest to a temper he ever came. He would lay the reins on the plowhorse's back or his hammer down on the anvil and say mournfully:

"Better see if you can help your mother, Hodge. You're only in my way here."

On only one score did I come near pleasing Mother: I learned to read and write early, and exhibited some proficiency. But even here there was a flaw; she looked upon literacy as something which distinguished Hodginses and McCormicks from the ruck who had to make their mark, as an accomplishment which might somehow and unspecifically lead away from poverty. I found reading an end in itself, which probably reminded her of my father's laxity or Grandfather Backmaker's subversion.

"Make something of yourself, Hodge," she admonished me often. "You can't change the world"--an obvious allusion to Grandfather Backmaker--"but you can do something with it as it is if you try hard enough. There's always some way out."

Yet she did not approve of the post-office lottery, on which so many pinned their hopes of escape from poverty or indenture. In this she and my father were agreed; both believed in hard work rather than chance.

Still, chance could help even the steadiest toiler. I remember the time a minibile--one of the small, trackless locomotives--broke down not a quarter of a mile from Father's smithy. This was a golden, unparalleled, unbelievable opportunity. Minibiles, like any other luxury...

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Donald Calderon:

What do you consider book? It is just for students since they are still students or it for all people in the world, exactly what the best subject for that? Merely you can be answered for that query above. Every person has several personality and hobby per other. Don't to be obligated someone or something that they don't desire do that. You must know how great and important the book Bring the Jubilee. All type of book is it possible to see on many solutions. You can look for the internet sources or other social media.

Dixie Love:

Nowadays reading books are more than want or need but also turn into a life style. This reading routine give you lot of advantages. The advantages you got of course the knowledge the particular information inside the book in which improve your knowledge and information. The information you get based on what kind of publication you read, if you want get more knowledge just go with education books but if you want sense happy read one having theme for entertaining including comic or novel. Often the Bring the Jubilee is kind of guide which is giving the reader capricious experience.

Joel Jones:

People live in this new moment of lifestyle always try and and must have the extra time or they will get wide range of stress from both daily life and work. So , once we ask do people have time, we will say absolutely of course. People is human not a robot. Then we question again, what kind of activity have you got when the spare time coming to a person of course your answer will certainly unlimited right. Then ever try this one, reading publications. It can be your alternative inside spending your spare time, the book you have read is actually Bring the Jubilee.

Julie Tice:

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