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Thomas G. Dyer. *Secret Yankees: The Union Circle in Confederate Atlanta.* Baltimore, Md. and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999. xiii + 383 pp. $29.95 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-8018-6116-1.

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In *Secret Yankees*, Thomas G. Dyer provides an intriguing and insightful study of the experiences of a circle of Atlanta residents who remained loyal to the Union during the Civil War, and thus were, he wryly notes, conspicuously absent from Margaret Mitchell's *Gone With the Wind*. Dyer's interest in this subject was sparked twenty years ago when he first read the fascinating diary of a Unionist woman who identified herself only as "Miss Abby" and who chronicled her experiences during the first seven months of 1864. After an exhaustive search, Dyer managed to track down the identity of the diarist, who turned out to be Cyrena Bailey Stone, a transplanted Vermonter and the wife of Amherst Stone, a prosperous and prominent member of Atlanta society before the war. Rather than simply publish the diary, Dyer was inspired to attempt a larger study of Stone and her fellow Unionists in Atlanta. The end result of Dyer's efforts is a gem of a book that will appeal to anyone with an interest in Unionism in the Confederate South.

By April 1861, Dyer estimates that no more than a hundred families in Atlanta (out of approximately ten thousand residents) could be classified as strict and unconditional Unionists. After Fort Sumter, he notes, a "patriotic orthodoxy ... formed locally and maintained locally through ritual, the press, the churches, and, if necessary, by coercion" emerged in Atlanta (p. 56). From that point forward, fears that the presence of Unionists could prove a corrupting force in their society and that Atlanta had become a hotbed of treason and enemy espionage produced an atmosphere in the city that made life exceedingly difficult for Stone and her fellow Unionists. In 1862, their situation took a decided turn for the worse with the appointment of George W. Lee as provost marshal. Determined to stamp out disloyalty to the Confederacy and impose order on a city that was plagued with crime, Lee instigated a wave of arrests and trials of suspected Unionists that one described with some exaggeration as "a perfect reign of terror" (p. 101).

Skillfully mixing anecdotes with thoughtful analysis based on extensive research, Dyer describes how Stone and her fellow Unionists coped with their situation, both as individuals and as a community. Many left Atlanta and attempted to resettle in the North, mainly men such as Amherst who sought to evade conscription and sequestration of their property. Those who remained behind, Dyer demonstrates, learned to maintain a low profile, forged tight bonds amongst themselves, and constantly tested the boundaries of loyalty. William Markham and Lewis Schofield, for example, operators of one of the few rolling mills in the South capable of producing steel plates for naval vessels, conspired to operate the mill in such a way that they would only produce enough plates to keep the Confederate government from seizing it, but no more. Others, mainly women, served the Union cause by organizing and participating in often risky missions of mercy to hospitals and prisons in order to provide food and solace to Northern prisoners.

In 1864 the approach of William T. Sherman's army revived Unionist hopes that they would soon be liberated. (Cyrena Stone's diary, which Dyer provides in an appendix, is a superb source of information on how Atlantans of all political stripes, but especially Unionists, responded to the approach of Sherman's army.) After Sherman finally captured Atlanta in September, Unionists enjoyed a brief period in the sun. But when they learned of Sherman's intent to leave the city ungarrisoned during his March to the Sea, which brought the prospect of retribution from returning Confederate officials, most of the Unionists who remained, including Cyrena Stone, left Atlanta. After Appomattox and Durham Station, many returned hoping to fill a leadership vacuum left by the collapse of the Confederacy. By the end of 1865, however, Andrew Johnson's generosity in granting pardons to ex-Confederates had dashed the political ambitions of the Unionists. The Unionist circle's cohesion quickly crumbled thereafter as its members turned to the task of seek-

ing compensation from the federal government for property lost during the war.

Exhaustively and meticulously researched, superbly written, and persuasive in its arguments, *Secret Yankees* uncovers and brings to life this important and fascinating story. In the process, it also offers valuable insights into the southern home front, how individuals and communities coped with the stresses of war, and the impact of the Civil War on gender roles and political identity in the wartime South.

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