

CINCINNATUS by Rusty McClure and David Stern

A few months ago, I was contacted by the Leads in the Book category and asked if I would agree to review a book that had not yet been published. I jumped at the chance and soon received a copy of "Cincinnatus" by Rusty McClure and David Stern.

The same two authors plus Michael Banks had previously written a biographical work entitled "Crosley". That book was about two brothers, Lewis and Powell Crosley who were very different individuals who nevertheless founded a huge industrial empire based in Cincinnati encompassing transportation, radio manufacturing, broadcasts and baseball.

The Crosley brothers "appear" briefly in "Cincinnatus" but this book is a work of fiction--primarily.

THE PLOT

The book opens with a very short chapter entitled "1938". In this chapter we meet a Latvian immigrant named Edward Leedskalain who has built a remarkable home which is now called "Coral Castle." Leedskalain was a real person and he really built "Coral Castle" although no one has figured out how he did it. The chapter serves as a precursor to the rest of the book's mysterious situations and characters.

Books I, II, and III feature a "washed up golfer" Matt Thurman who unwittingly becomes involved in an unbelievable series of events which could lead to major changes in the world. His involvement starts when he is framed for a brutal murder on the golf course where he is now a lowly caddy.

I don't want to spoil the plot because, as always, it is much more fun to read a book when you don't have a clue about what is going to happen next. I'll just say that Matt is befriended by a strange man who helps him out of a predicament and then disappears. Matt is then helped by a young Department of Justice worker named Espy Harper who risks both her job and her life to help him.

What Matt and Espy discover is a major plot that evidently has its roots in the "Cincinnatus Society." Once again, this is a real organization although their involvement in the story here is purely fictional. Both Matt and Espy are threatened, actually seriously injured and placed into a situation that can literally change the political history of the world.

WHY I REALLY LIKED THIS BOOK

From the opening words to the very end of this 507 page book, the action is virtually nonstop. McClure and Stern have written a novel that is full of intrigue that is made all the more realistic by the inclusion of a real organization, an actual scientific mystery and people who actually lived.

Perhaps the strongest element of the book, however, is the strong character development of not only the major characters but many of the minor characters as well. I really could identify with Matt and Espy in all of their travails but I could also feel the evilness of the villains of the piece who I will allow to remain nameless. That's another of the beauties of this novel. For much of the book, characters that we grow to trust turn out to be the "bad guys".

Even in the midst of all of the political intrigue, the killings and the general scientific mysteries involved, the authors have managed to include humorous portions. Most of the humor concerns dialogue between several of the major characters and this humor provides a nice change of pace from the action which, at times, is pretty gruesome.

Finally, without giving away anything, what McClure and Stern have written here is all too believable given the political atmosphere in the United States and much of the world.

The book is scheduled for release in November and I think that it should be quite successful. I certainly enjoyed it. Also, I believe that it could easily be made into a very exciting film.

This has been a real pleasure for me. I've never read a book that has not been published. If you get the chance to "pre-review" a book, I hope that you will do so.

*I thoroughly recommend this book when it comes out.
FIVE STARS*

— Mike Holmes