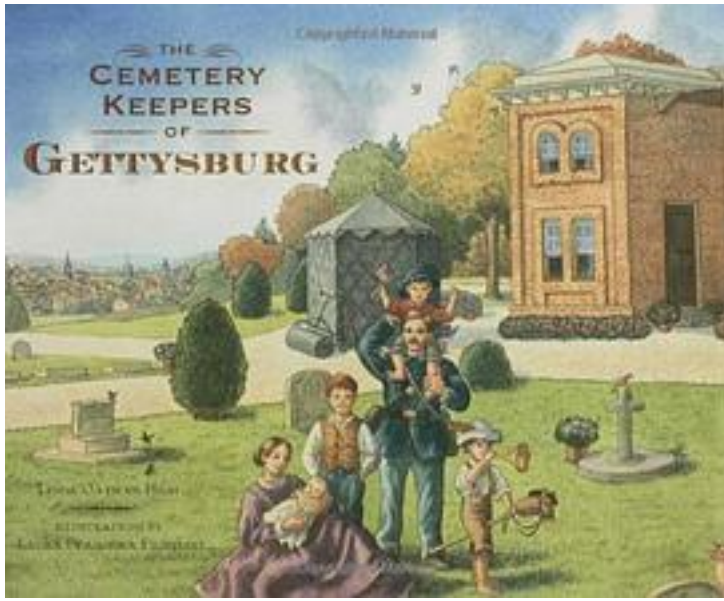


The Cemetery Keepers of Gettysburg



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It was a hot and buggy afternoon in the summer of 1862, when Peter Thorn, the cemetery tender of Gettysburg, left his pregnant wife and three small sons to join the Union army. In his absence, his family would bear witness to the most ferocious and bloody battle of the Civil War. On July 1, 1863, a shell exploded in the Thorn's kitchen when the brutal Battle of Gettysburg began. The cannons sounded on Cemetery Hill, as more than 51,000 soldiers were killed, wounded, or captured during the three day battle. For days after the battle, seven-year-old Fred, his pregnant mother, Elizabeth, and his grandfather worked to honor the dead by digging graves and burying Union and Confederate soldiers. Neither the Thorn family nor the rest of America would be the same again after witnessing the terrible toll the battle took. Though the Gettysburg Address paid tribute to the soldiers who lost their lives, this is a tribute to the family that so dutifully tended to the soldiers after they had fallen.

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