

# Author pens novel about Randolph Spalding

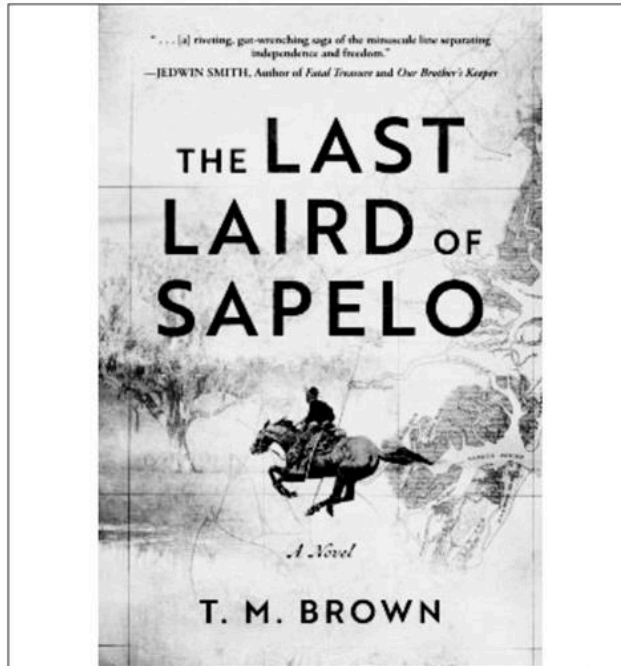
T.M. "Mike" Brown of Grantville has written a new historical novel, which was inspired by the life of Thomas Spalding's son, Randolph Spalding, of Sapelo Island. *The Last Laird of Sapelo* launches on Aug. 15.

Brown said, "I hope the book will draw more attention to Darien and McIntosh County--its history is rich and its stories are worth the visit. Buddy Sullivan and his books were instrumental in the research behind the story."

The Chanticleer Book Review gave the book a five star rating and the following are portions of the book review.

"The novel is a story of one man's tragic death in pursuit of justice, as his way of life, too, dies in the flames of a war that he had tried his damndest to avert.

"As the story opens, the War Between the States has just begun, and the Confederacy plans to use those islands as a bulwark against the Union gunboats that assuredly will extend their blockade of Savannah all the way down the coast. If the blockade succeeds, then the South's cotton, the fuel of its economic engine, will anguish in Southern



Author Mike Brown's book *The Last Laird of Sapelo*, about Sapelo Island's Randolph Spalding, launches Aug. 15.

warehouses instead of sailing to buyers and allies across the sea.

"Colonel Randolph Spalding, the last laird of the title, committed to the war despite arguing vehemently against it. Now an officer in charge of building a garrison on his on land, he's caught between military duty and personal responsibility.

"As the laird of Sapelo, he is duty-bound to protect his family and his property, including more than 300 enslaved people.

"The Spaldings considered themselves 'enlightened' slaveholders, giving

their slaves more time and 'freedom' to work for themselves and have leisure, as well as sturdy houses and decent food. Their neighbors call them fools. The Confederate soldiers see the slaves as their rightful prey.

"His military duty is to keep these soldiers in line. His personal duty is to keep his people safe. When those lines get crossed, he moves Heaven and Earth to make it right. Even it those lengths will cost him his own life.

"This fictionalized biography illuminates a little-know, but pivotal,

part of the U.S. Civil War: the defense of the Confederate coastline as it happened on the ground, in tiny communities.

"The Last Laird of Sapelo will fascinate readers interested in the unsung facets of the U.S. Civil War, those looking for a nuanced approach to the origins of the conflict, and anyone interested in the details of military organization--or lack thereof--in 19th-century warfare."

## Book Launch and Book Signings in the Community

Tuesday, Aug. 15, 5-7 p.m.

- Open Gates B&B on Vernon Square in Darien will be hosting the book launch. Brown will give a talk and sign books.

Wednesday, Aug. 17

- Noon--Book signing will be held at The Local Exchange in downtown Darien.

- 2 p.m.--Brown will give a talk about his book at the Ida Hilton Public Library.

- 7-8 p.m.--Brown will give a talk and sign books at Fort King George Historic site, hosted by the fort, Ashantilly Center and the Lower Altamaha Historical Society.

Books will be available at The Local Exchange and the Sapelo Island Visitor Center in Meridian.