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Annie, Between The States



Synopsis

The civil war has broken out, and Annie Sinclair's Virginia home, Hickory Heights, is right in the line of battle. Caught up in the rising conflict, Annie and her mother tend to wounded soldiers while Annie's older brother, Laurence, enlists in the Confederate cavalry under Jeb Stuart. Even Annie's rambunctious baby brother, Jamie, joins John Mosby, the notorious "Gray Ghost." Faced with invading armies, Annie is compelled into a riskier role to protect her family and farm. She conceals Confederate soldiers and warns Southern commanders of Union traps, and the flamboyant Jeb Stuart dubs her "Lady Liberty." Annie's loyalty is clear until a wounded Union officer is dragged onto her porch. Saved from a bullet by a volume of Keats' poetry he keeps in his pocket, Thomas Walker startles Annie with his love of verse. After several chance encounters, Annie is surprised by her growing interest in the dark-eyed Northerner as they connect through a shared passion for poetry. As the war rages on, Annie begins to question some of the values driving Virginia's involvement. Then tragedy befalls Hickory Heights, and Annie becomes the subject of a shocking accusation. She must confront the largest quandary of all: choosing her own course. L. M. Elliott crafts a stirring novel that carries readers from the Manassas battlefield to fancy-dress balls to the burning of the Shenandoah Valley while capturing the tenacious spirit of a young heroine facing an extraordinary, complex time in American history.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

While Ann Rinaldi has done surprisingly well with her historical novels, I found each of them to be dull and rather unbelievable. In "Annie Between the States," L.M. Elliott does a MUCH better job of conveying an interesting story along with good morals to the reader, combining history, action, poetry, and romance to form an intoxicating mix of emotion and excitement. In L.M. Elliott's delightful tale, we find ourselves walking through the events of the Civil War with Annie Sinclair, a spirited, highly moral heroine with red hair. (Why include this fact about her red hair? you ask. And I say: READ THE BOOK!) Annie at first comes off as weak and potentially spoiled, but that disappears quickly, and her unspoken quest for strength was interesting to follow. Her love of poetry gives her character unimaginable depth--if you are an author you will understand that if you can give your character a deep passion for something, then they will come alive and become very believable. Ms. Elliot does this job very well. All right. Perhaps the history comes across as too much of a narrative in parts. Perhaps the writing is a bit plain sometimes. Perhaps the author even has some trouble using the active voice. But I could quickly overlook these things while I was reading because Ms. Elliott could make me care about the characters, could make me see things through Annie's eyes and see them rather well. And so I give it a 5 star rating--because I enjoyed it and think that the author has mastered things more important than active voice and elaborate writing. Highly recommended.

For Annie Sinclair, the Civil War is more than simple conflict between North and South. Since she lives in Virginia, she is straddled between the two sides, surrounded by family and friends whose views about the war are usually conflicting. Annie's older brother Laurence is a soldier in the Confederate army who is increasingly dismayed by the viciousness, confusion, and senselessness of the war. Her younger brother Jamie, however, seems to embrace the very aspects of the war that Annie and Laurence hate. Annie is coming to realize the immorality of slavery, but she is still willing to take daring measures to help defend her homeland from Federal troops. Yet perhaps the hardest part of the war for Annie is that she begins to fall in love with Thomas Walker, an honorable man who shares her love of poetry, but is a Yankee. "Annie, Between the States" is an excellent novel largely because it forces readers to realize how strikingly heart wrenching the Civil War was, especially to those who lived in border states. More than glamorized novels like "Gone With the Wind," this book shows how war often offers no solutions and no black-and-white courses of action. L.M. Elliott developed her main character superbly as well. In the opening chapter of the novel, Annie seems overly "ladylike" and a bit spoiled, frightened to the point of inaction when war is near her. Annie soon overcomes these tendencies, however, and before the war is too far along, she is

displaying the kind of intelligence, strength, bravery, and maturity that will have readers lost in 1860s Virginia. Her two relationships-with Thomas Walker and the Confederate soldier William Farley-are incredibly moving as well. Initially, the historical facts woven into the storyline seemed too much like something in a text book. Yet quickly, Elliott seemed to become much more adept at keeping the battle details from being too cumbersome. The intriguing Southern general Jeb Stuart and the one-of-kind Confederate soldier John Mosby were perfect additions to this story. This is about as well-done a historical fiction novel as you are going to find. With its ordinary yet compelling main character, suspenseful action, and emotionally-charged romance, it will stay with you much longer than any history book chapter on the Civil War.

Good book for teens learning about the civil war, though I agree with other reviewers a bit too heavy on details/facts in the beginning of the book and I could see a few locations throughout the book where edits could have been made, such as no need to describe in great detail how a dance is danced, just tell us they danced and what went on with the two characters. The story does pick up the pace mid-way through and that is when it starts to get interesting, plus the writing tightens up. It is essentially the tale of a Virginia girl trying to keep her family intact and torn between her loyal to the confederacy and her growing love of a union soldier. I think I would have liked this book more when I was 14, clean romance intertwined with historical fiction

What an amazing book! I don't typically like historical fiction. I actively dislike stories about the Civil War. However, someone raved so about this book that I figured I'd give it a shot. It blew me away. The story is not of the Civil War, but of Annie, a farm girl who strives to remain true to herself in the midst of family turmoil, confusing relationships, and a war that's happening in her own front yard. The characters are so real you feel like you've known them your whole life. The setting is described in such detail that it's like you're there. Anyone who reads this book will love it. My only concern is its size. It might be a bit intimidating to kids who don't like to read, but if they give it a shot, they won't regret it.

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