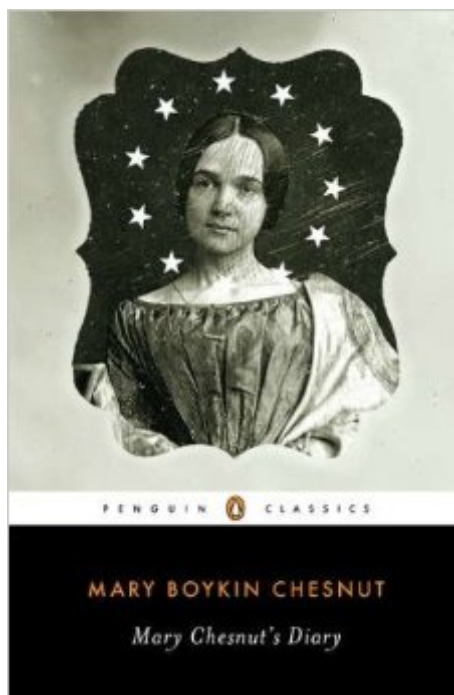


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Mary Chesnut's Diary (Penguin Classics)



Synopsis

An unrivalled account of the American Civil War from the Confederate perspective. One of the most compelling personal narratives of the Civil War, Mary Chesnut's Diary was written between 1861 and 1865. As the daughter of a wealthy plantation owner and the wife of an aide to the Confederate President, Jefferson Davis, Chesnut was well acquainted with the Confederacy's prominent players and-from the very first shots in Charleston, South Carolina-diligently recorded her impressions of the conflict's most significant moments. One of the most frequently cited memoirs of the war, Mary Chesnut's Diary captures the urgency and nuance of the period in an epic rich with commentary on race, status, and power within a nation divided. For more than seventy years, Penguin has been the leading publisher of classic literature in the English-speaking world. With more than 1,700 titles, Penguin Classics represents a global bookshelf of the best works throughout history and across genres and disciplines. Readers trust the series to provide authoritative texts enhanced by introductions and notes by distinguished scholars and contemporary authors, as well as up-to-date translations by award-winning translators.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Mary Boykin Chesnut was born into a wealthy South Carolina family. She grew up on a plantation receiving a good education in Charleston. Mary married James Chesnut when she was seventeen years old. Her husband served as a brigadier general in the Confederate Army. The Chesnuts were

childless. The American Civil War destroyed their fortune. Mary's words will live forever in the hearts and minds of all who read her diary. Mrs. Chesnut was a friend of Confederate President Jefferson Davis and his charming wife Varina. Chesnut comments on her relationships with the Davis family and a panoply of famous Southerners whose homes she often visited. Mary was a bookish woman who enjoyed the novels of Dickens, Trollope, Thackeray and George Eliot among others. She enjoyed parties, eating out and dancing. She was a sociable woman who loved good food and gossip. She did not care for Harriet Beecher Stowe's "Uncle Tom's Cabin" and was a strong Southern patriot. Mary had a good relationship with her slaves but considered them inferior to whites. In this attitude she mirrors the prejudices of her time. Her diary is a treasure trove of memorable quotes and observations about the Southern war effort and the people of the Confederacy. I include a smattering of her sage and witty remarks to give you the flavor of her diary entries: "...Jackson whose regiment stood so stock still under fire that they were called a stone wall."-p. 78 "...Beauregard writes that his army is upon the verge of starvation..."-p. 85 "People avoid great talkers, men given to monologue, as they would avoid fire, famine or pestilence."-p. 105 "I like Disraeli because I find so many clever things in him. I like the sparkle and glitter."-p. 119 "Mr. Yancey says we have not one jot of hope.

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