

The Civil War Memories of Elizabeth Bacon Custer: Reconstructed From Her Diaries and Notes

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In her first year of marriage (1864-1865) to General George Armstrong Custer, Libbie Custer witnessed the Civil War firsthand. Her experiences of danger, hardship, and excitement made ideal material for a book, one that she worked on for years in later life but ultimately never published.

In this volume, Arlene Reynolds has produced a readable narrative of Libbie Custer's life during the war years by chronologically reconstructing Libbie's original, unpublished notes and diaries found in the archives of the Little Big Horn Battlefield National Monument. In these reminiscences, Libbie Custer adds striking, eloquent details to the Civil War story as she describes her life both in camp and in Washington. Her stories of incidents such as fording a swollen river sidesaddle on horseback, dancing at the Inaugural Ball near President Lincoln, and watching the massive review of the Army of the Potomac after the surrender have the engrossing quality of a well-written novel.

For general readers and students of women's history, this book tells a fascinating story of a sheltered girl's maturation into a courageous woman in the crucible of war. And for both devotees and detractors of her husband, it offers an intimate glimpse into his youth, West Point years, and early military service.



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