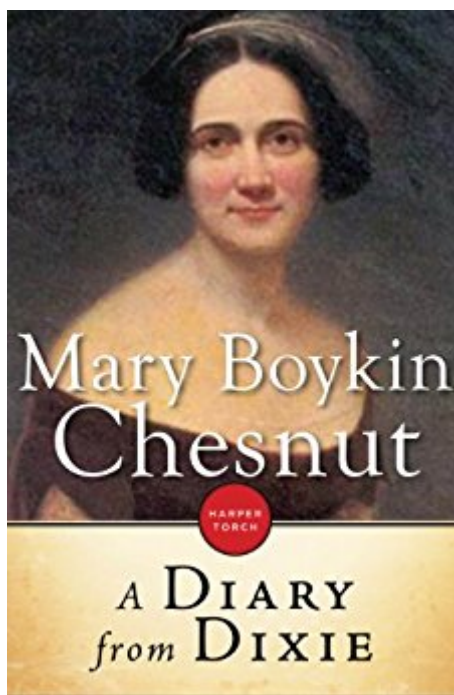


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A Diary From Dixie



Synopsis

A Diary from Dixie is the Civil War diary of Mary Boykin Chesnut, society matron and wife of United States senator and Confederate general, James Chesnut, Jr. As an active participant in her husband's career, accompanying him to postings in Montgomery, Richmond, Charleston, and Columbia, Chesnut became an eyewitness to many important events of the war, and, despite being a member of the privileged class, managed to convey the Confederacy's struggle from different points of view. A Diary from Dixie is considered by many to be the most important work produced by a Confederate author. Filmmaker Ken Burns made extensive use of Chesnut's diary in his documentary series The Civil War, and an annotated version of it, published by the historian C. Vann Woodward as Mary Chesnut's Civil War, won the Pulitzer Prize for History in 1982. HarperTorch brings great works of non-fiction and the dramatic arts to life in digital format, upholding the highest standards in ebook production and celebrating reading in all its forms. Look for more titles in the HarperTorch collection to build your digital library.

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Customer Reviews

To get the full value of this book you probably need to be a historian. I'm only about 1/4 of the way through it, but it is full of footnotes on nearly every page about who she is spending time with, nearly all of which are people of importance at that time; fascinating for anyone living in her area. There are parts that are difficult to understand because of the vernacular used which is unfamiliar to me, yet . . . the basic history, the events, and the attitudes of the time that she imparts is why I'm reading it and I could be more fascinated or curious. I feel like I need to establish a little data base that would list each of the people she mentions, then to look them up and see what else I can find.

I've read a lot from the Northern perspective but this is the first from the Southern. If you have an imagination, it's not hard to picture yourself in her world because her descriptions are so vivid. Some of the best parts are the little, gossipy tidbits (someone was asked to play "Yankee Doodle" without the "Yankee") but it's very suspenseful too as loses her fortune and moves from one city to the next, relying on the kindness of friends and strangers. She's very likable although completely oblivious to her own racism. She and her "servant" stop at a rest stop where she paid for two chairs. She sat on one and put her feet up on the other while her servant sat on the floor. She writes this as if there's nothing wrong with it. But that's part of what makes the book so important and unique. It's a birds-eye view into the mind of a Southerner at the time. They're so convinced that they're in the right but almost certain from the beginning that they can't win the war. American history is best told from the mouths of the people who lived it and this diary is very enlightening. I came away amazed that the country could have come together at all after the Civil War with all its destruction and resentment.

One of my all-time favorite books. A personal diary accounting the events of the Civil War from a first person perspective. I discovered this book years ago in Charleston South Carolina and was delighted to see it quoted heavily in Ken Burns "Civil War". When I met Kim Burns years later, we had a wonderful discussion about the depth of this particular book and the invaluable contribution it's made in putting a personal touch on such a major historical period.

A DIARY FROM DIXIE is absolutely fascinating. As a southern woman, I enjoyed reading of many areas back then that I know in modern times. More interesting, though, are the emotions, observations, and experiences felt by Mrs. Chestnut during such a horrendous time in our history. I highly recommend this book to any history buff, but especially to those who want to know the humanity behind this era's historical data.

The book is great, the hard cover was damaged due to poor packaging, however I will definitely give it 5 stars, for the content of the book.

Almost everyone who studies 19th century life must have read this. I liked it; it's full of politics and war. To get a balanced view of this historical timeframe, I also recommend Sarah Morgan Dawson's diary, "Diary of a Southern Girl."

Along with Co. Aytch the reader is provided with easily accessible views of the war from both the civilian and military perspectives. I try to read both on the days mentioned to get better "vibes". In reading Mrs. C's entry for September 2, she writes "They say General (John Hunt) Morgan has been killed." According to sources, Morgan wasn't killed until September 4. This discrepancy has caused me to wonder if she didn't re-create some of the diary from memory after the war. If so, might her views on other topics such as slavery have undergone revision?

Amazing that this woman was in the midst of so many of the top Confederate movers & shakers of the civil war; incredible that she recorded so much of the happenings as she actually saw them - almost unbelievable that her record survived through all of that and remains today. This dear lady lived these heartbreaking times and relived them again through her pen in a most heroic way. These people almost to the least one had more honor, courage, respect, courtesy, self-sacrifice and loyalty than you can find anywhere today.. Shameful to me how so many of us have infinitely more today than they had but are still not happy and make little attempt to show the least courtesy to others. Anyone that is remotely interested in anything going on in the civil war years should make it their business to get a copy and enjoy it.

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