



Reluctant Witnesses: Children's Voices From The Civil War

Emmy E Werner

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Between 250,000 and 500,000 boy soldiers fought in the U.S. Civil War. Many more children were exposed to the war's ravages in their home towns—in Atlanta, Baton Rouge, Columbia, Fredericksburg, Gettysburg, Harper's Ferry, Richmond, and Vicksburg—and during Sherman's March to the Sea. Based on eyewitness accounts of 120 children, ages four to sixteen, *Reluctant Witnesses* tells their story of the war: their experience of the hardships they endured and how they managed to cope. Their voices speak of courage and despair, of horror and heroism, and of the bonds of family and community and the powers of faith that helped them survive. Their diaries, letters, and reminiscences are a testimony to the astonishing resiliency in the face of great adversity and their extraordinary capacity to pick up the pieces of their shattered lives. Like children of contemporary wars, these children from the Union and the Confederacy speak to us across centuries without hate but with the stubborn hope that peace might prevail in the end.



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