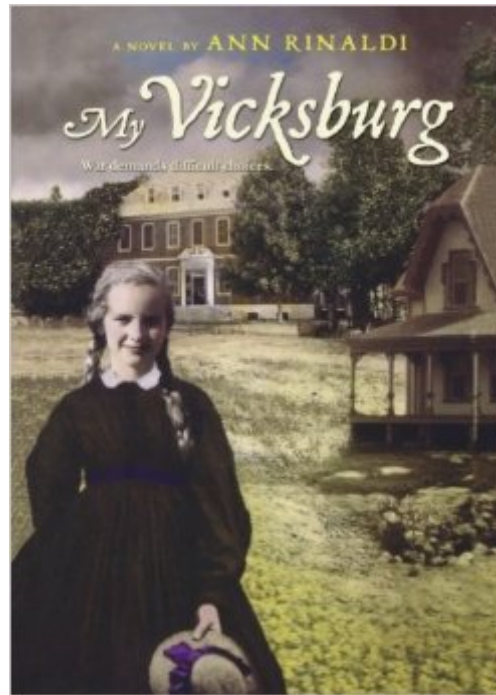


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# My Vicksburg



## Synopsis

Claire Louise Corbett and her Confederate family flee their home as Union soldiers shell their town of Vicksburg, Mississippi. They venture out from the safety of a cave only three times a day, when the Union army takes their meals at eight in the morning, noon, and eight at night. Although many of the townspeople suffer from a lack of food, the Corbetts receive extra rations from Claire Louise's brother, Landon, a doctor with the Union army. When Claire Louise discovers her brother tending to a Confederate soldier who is responsible for Robert E. Lee's "lost order" (causing the South to lose the Battle of Antietam), she is forced to make a difficult choice between family and friends. Award-winning historical novelist Ann Rinaldi paints a story of family, courage, and secrets during the forty-seven-day siege of Vicksburg, a battle that has sometimes been ignored in history because it ended the same day as the Battle of Gettysburg.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 630 (What's this?)

Paperback: 160 pages

Publisher: HMH Books for Young Readers; Reprint edition (August 29, 2011)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0547550006

ISBN-13: 978-0547550008

Product Dimensions: 4.2 x 0.4 x 6.9 inches

Shipping Weight: 7.5 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.1 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (7 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #572,814 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #42 in [Books > Teens > Historical Fiction > United States > Civil War Period](#) #242 in [Books > Teens > Historical Fiction > United States > 20th Century](#) #399 in [Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Family > Siblings](#)

Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

## Customer Reviews

Thirteen-year-old Claire Louise Corbet, living in Vicksburg, Mississippi in the spring of 1863, struggles with the many changes the Civil War has brought to her family and her life. Her beloved older brother Landon, has joined the Union Army as a doctor, leaving the Corbet family with divided loyalties - they still love him, but support the Confederate cause. Her father, also a doctor, has

joined the Confederate Army. And when Vicksburg comes under siege by the Union Army, Claire Louise, her little brother James, their mother, and their household servants must leave their comfortable house to live in a cave. Soon after, Claire Louise finds her loyalties further divided. Her brother, whom she hasn't seen in many months, has returned to Vicksburg to care for wounded soldiers. He brings with him Robert, a wounded Confederate soldier. Landon confides in Claire Louise that Robert is a Confederate officer that was responsible for an order from General Lee that fell into Union hands, leading to a terrible Confederate defeat. Though Robert insists the order was lost accidentally, Landon feels compelled to turn him in. Now Claire Louise is forced to choose between her brother and helping Robert, which she feels is right in her heart. I have loved most of the books I've read by Ann Rinaldi, so I really wanted to like this one as well. But in the end, I thought it was just okay, and nothing more. For starters, it was really at least a bit too short, and was missing a lot of backstory and explanation - why did Landon join the Union Army? Why was he so readily accepted back in Vicksburg after betraying his Confederate neighbors to help the enemy? The character of Claire Louise herself was inconsistent at times as well, sometimes acting very immature for her age and other times making adult decisions. My Vicksburg isn't a terrible book - it's a quick, pleasant enough read. Readers who already love Ann Rinaldi's books will likely find it an enjoyable enough way to spend a couple of hours. But for those readers looking for a really good novel about the Civil War, or who are new to this author's books, there are much better books out there, including several others about the Civil War by Ann Rinaldi herself that I thought were much better than this book.

This is a very touching book, especially to me. I was raised in this area of the Mississippi Delta. I cried quite a few tears reading about the hardships suffered there during the Civil War. They encompassed all the people involved at that time. The history detailed here is pretty much the closest to the truth that I've heard. The fictional characters become so real and it is an amazing story. People really did live in caves. There is a picture of these caves. If you ever tour the Vicksburg, Mississippi National Military Park, there is a house that is still standing from the war. It's the Shirley House. When facing this house, the area on the hill on the right side of this house is where the caves were located. This book is worth reading.

During the Battle of Vicksburg, Mississippi, which lasts for 47 days, the Union Army with General Ulysses S. Grant lays siege to the town, while residents live in caves. Thirteen-year-old Claire Louise Corbett is the daughter of a strict doctor and Confederate officer, but is also the sister of a

doctor and Union officer. Life is confusing at best, as Claire Louise, her mother, her five-year-old brother and some servants begin living in a cave near her house. But it seems very far from her elegant Southern home with wallpaper sent from England. Understandably, there are moments when she cannot stand life in the cave. The shelling of the cannons stops for only three hours each day, and Claire Louise uses these opportunities to escape for walks and collect blackberries. During one of these trips, she comes across her Union brother Landon, along with his Confederate friend Robert. Robert is ill, and Landon has been taking care of him. But Robert is wanted by both sides for his involvement in a previous battle. Claire Louise knows that Landon's honor will make him choose to turn Robert in, but is also aware that she is likely the only person who can help the young man escape with his life. Claire Louise has always been close to Landon, helping him with patients and going to him when her father was too strict with her. She knows this will put her at odds with him, maybe forever. But in her eyes, Robert deserves a chance, and she determines to help him. For her and for Robert, it is a life and death decision. She does what she feels she must do and faces harsh consequences as a result. The situation forces her to grow up, but it also helps her better understand her father and her older brother. Award-winning author Ann Rinaldi brings readers right into the Civil War with her well-crafted historical setting and offers flawed but lovable characters. Claire Louise and Landon both make some mistakes in the midst of a terrible situation. Does she do the right thing? What happens after the war? Rinaldi invites readers to decide and predict for themselves in this compelling, dramatic tale from United States history. --- Reviewed by Amy Alessio

**My Vicksburg** by Ann Rinaldi  
Realistic story of how a family struggled and survived the siege of Vicksburg during the Civil War. Having toured the battlefield at Vicksburg and the city itself, it was very meaningful to me. Coming from the area in Wisconsin, where "Old Abe" was an eaglet struck a nerve too. Well written and well researched stories like *My Vicksburg*, help us to know and preserve our history.

This book bordered on boring. I never related to the characters or their situation. A disappointment after reading the author's excellent book about Mary Todd Lincoln.

The book arrived in excellent condition. Both my daughter and I have enjoyed reading it, and, like all other Ann Rinaldi books, it was excellent.

I have enjoyed all of Ann Rinaldi's books and encourage my 5-6 graders to pick one up and give it a try.

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