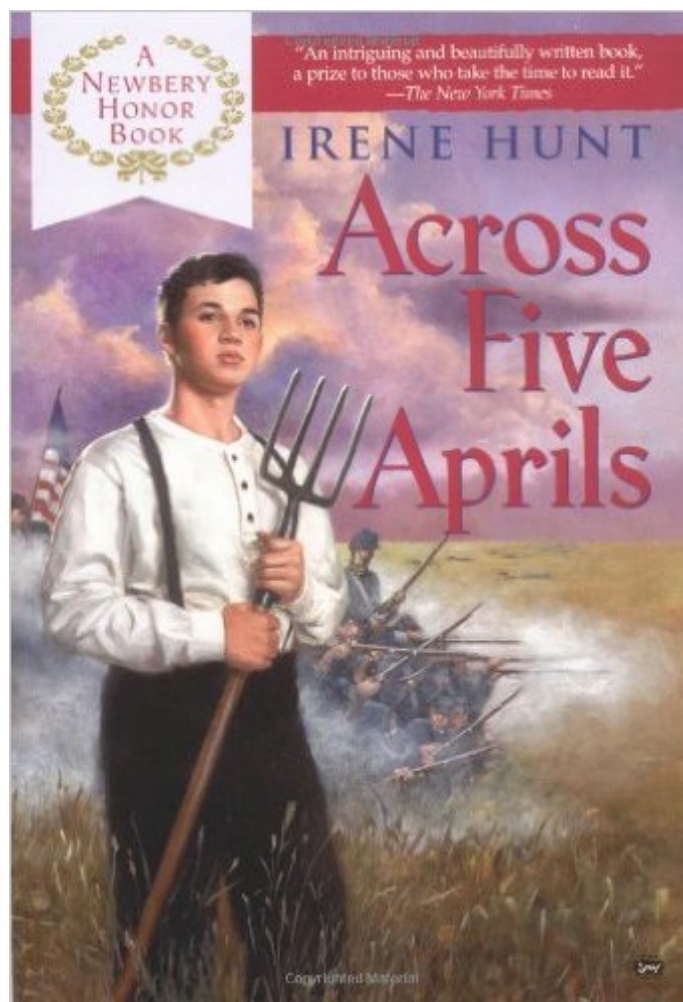


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# Across Five Aprils



## Synopsis

The Newbery Award winning author of *Up a Road Slowly* presents the unforgettable story of Jethro Creighton—a brave boy who comes of age during the turbulent years of the Civil War.

## Book Information

Paperback: 224 pages

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Average Customer Review: 3.4 out of 5 stars— See all reviews— (331 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #11,501 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #1 in Books > Teens > Historical Fiction > United States > Civil War Period #353 in Books > Literature & Fiction > Genre Fiction > Coming of Age #435 in Books > Literature & Fiction > Classics

## Customer Reviews

If you asked me about this book before May of '08, I simply would have answered I read it for school 10 years ago in 8th grade, and don't remember a thing about it. This all changed last year. I had a flight overseas to catch. Before I left my home for the airport, I randomly grabbed this book off the bottom of the shelf, not really thinking, just needing something to read on the plane. What a treasure I discovered! This book is beautifully written with undertones on how Jethro's thought process changes and develops as the war goes on. It's an incredible read, and really paints vivid pictures for the imaginative. During the course of my trip, I read and re-read this book several times, and learned something new every time. I wish I knew what happened to Bill and the rest of the family after the war. This 3/5 rating is a bit skewed. Most of the 1 scores are from students who do not want to read it and are being forced to, so they're being spiteful. I challenge all of you younger guys and girls to either genuinely give it a chance, or put it away for 5-10 years, and discover it again. It's an amazing read if given a chance.

This book I had to do for summer reading. My story is actually very ironic. In the beginning I didn't want to read the book because people who have previously read it were saying that this was the worst book ever. So I blew the book off and totally forgot about it. And when it was two days before

the first day of school I realized that I still have yet to read the book. So I found out how many chapters were in the book and made a reading schedule. So I read six chapters a day. But when I got to chapter three I realized how good this book really is. It was so heartfelt and real. I literally felt as if I was sitting right next to Jethro and Bill in the field. It was a really strong story and plot line. I could feel the anger, the sadness, and the fear in this book. And when I finally came to the end of the book I didn't want the story to end. I wanted more. I wanted to know what happened to Bill and Eb. I wanted to know if Shadrach and Jenny had any children. I wanted the story to last forever. That is the best book that I have ever read in my entire life. And I would read a thousand times over if I could. I recommend this book for anyone who is from the age 13 up and to anyone who is interested in how the people lived in the Civil War when they weren't the ones fighting in it. So that is why I give *Across Five Aprils* five out of five stars.

If you are looking for a war adventure story with lots of explosions, forget it. If you are interested in what war does to a loving family's everyday life, this is your book. Jethro Creighton, the central character, grows from the carefree "baby of the family" to a hardworking, thoughtful adolescent who has seen his brothers go off to fight and in one case, die in the Civil War. Two of the family's sons fight for the Union, one for the Confederacy, and Irene Hunt explores in some detail the ways in which everyday farming folks dealt with these divided loyalties. Hunt is not the sort of writer to condescend to young readers. She creates situations that make you think and reflect. So maybe a junior-high reader who is "made" to read *Across Five Aprils* would find it tough going. I first read this book when I was in high school, so I was a little older than some of the readers who seem to be having major problems with it. Twenty years later, it's still a book I re-read from time to time. Hunt's characters lose none of their vividness -- when you're an adult, you find a whole new interest in her portraits of Jethro's parents and their anguish over their children in wartime. My advice is, if you're being told to read this for a report and you don't like it, grit your teeth and get through it -- but don't throw the book away. I guarantee that in a few more years you will love it -- unless you've given up on reading altogether.

Firstly, I am an Australian who is interested in the Civil War. I have had no formal education about American history and have only started to become a serious student of the Civil War through my husband's interest in the event. I am greatly fascinated by the effects that Civil War (as with the Holocaust) had on the people of the country. I found *Across Five Aprils* a perfect introduction to Civil War fiction. It was well researched and written with great compassion. As a "foreigner", I found the

apparent "Lincon" worshipping a bit much, but now, after a lot more research and many hours of watching documentaries and reading non-fiction works, I can understand the writer's adulation, especially from Jethro's adolescent point of view. Indeed, I was deeply moved by the last few pages, even to the point of tears as I could imagine Jethro's pain at the loss of his (for want of a better term) last great hope. I am greatly amused by other reader's opinions of the book being "boring". Well, what can you expect? describes it as a fictional work. It doesn't say "Read the exiting adventures of a farmer boy as he single handedly wins the Civil War" does it? This is an excellent read, as the author is so damned good at descriptive prose that you can feel the heat of the fields, take pleasure in the simple pleasures of these people's lives (who could've imagined that salads would have been such a treat!), rejoice in their small triumphs and feel for them in their loss. I would whole-heartedly recommend this book for "foreigners" with an interest in the Civil War and its effects on an everyday rural family. I also liked this book as I was an avid fan of the Laura Ingalls Wilder (spelling?) Little House series as a child, and I sort of found this book in much the same style.

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