



A Million Tears

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America at the turn of the century. For the enterprising immigrant - a land of optimism and hope. From the hardship and poverty of Wales in 1890, this is the story of the Griffiths family and their journey to succeed in the new country. Henke describes the excitement of the pioneers in the early twentieth century. A tale of intrigue and adventure - the characters come to life against the backdrop of the time. You will not want to put this book down.

A Million Tears is a mighty epic, a tale of love and hate, murder and suicide, poverty and wealth – this is a story of a family whose devotion for each other helps them to succeed where others fail.

A Million Tears Details

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Kathleen F says

My Dad suggested I read this book--I think he liked it because it is one of those sweeping epics about immigrants coming to America and doing amazing things.

In this case, it's a small Welsh mining family who leave their village because of a terrible sludge accident (quite reminiscent of Aberfan in the 60s.) What starts as a sweet, "How Green Was My Valley" tale then takes on the almost unbelievable proportions of the epic expansion of America in the late 19th/early 20th century. I was left scratching my head--how could the author possibly believe so many things would happen to one family? (Think of the plot line in Cruise/Kidman's "Far and Away," times twenty--and throw in some murderous "half-breed" American Indians, a stranding on a deserted island somewhere in the Caribbean, and the father being elected to Congress.)

Don't get me wrong--the book, although it was 500+ pages, was entertaining and moved along quickly. But I got derailed with inconsistencies in the characters, etc. The author is obviously not American because he located Harvard in New Haven, CT. Perhaps the biggest error of all was a rather amateurish framing of the story--a man looking back, telling a reporter about his life. The story then proceeds to be told from the perspective of 3 different characters besides his own (hardly possible given the reporter scenario); and by the end, we haven't gotten the full overview of his life, only a part of it (up to somewhere in his twenties.) The rest, we are told in a few italicized lines at the end of the book, will be coming out in a soon-to-be-published sequel.

I don't think I'll be reading the sequel; but maybe I'll track it down for my Dad. :)

Maurice Price says

Don't be put off by the title

Ordinarily I would have got no further than the title but spotted a review, read and thought I would try the book. WOW! The book follows the fortunes of the Griffiths family from disaster in the Welsh valley's to each of their adventures in America. This is a brilliant story extremely well told. Recommended for readers of all genres who love a good read.

Patricia Ibarra says

A public saga of three generations of the Griffiths family, starting with the grandfather who works in the mines in Wales. His son, Evan, followed his steps. He married Meg and had three children. Evan is devoted

to his family and we learn of the dire conditions miners lived at the end of the nineteenth century and how difficult it is for them to survive. They have to endure poverty, hunger, unfairness and a bleak future. When things could not be worse, a terrible accident occurs, and Evan finally decides to flee to America. They take with them an old man, Uncle James, who had become very attached to the children. In America, things are by no means easy for the family. The story continues with the development of the children, David and Sion, and with the many years of adventures, struggles and fights until they reach adult life. In this book, David tells the story of the family, but there are still many things to be learnt, which unfortunately, will appear in another book. Can't wait to read it. It was interesting to learn about the social fabric in Europe and America in those difficult times.

Barbara West says

The promise and possibilities of immigrating to America

Anticipating the wonderful possibilities of the "American Dream", this Welsh family works hard and comes to the successful realization of all America had to offer. Exciting adventures, hardships and heartache keep the reader riveted to this work.

Judi says

What a gripping book about a family in Europe in a tiny coal mining town where a good portion of the children are killed when the mine releases slag after a hard rain. It completely covered the school. The hardships they suffer are so realistic, Paul Henke is going to be one of my favorite authors.

Steve says

Sometimes historical novels are so deeply rooted in past events that they don't have deep plots of their own. This is a fine story that shines on its own.

Sheryl says

This book started out very interesting. It is about a Welsh family and the struggles they had working in the mines and escaping to America.

It also gives you a more realistic view of what it was like to live here as immigrants. That said it became a Saga and was too long for me.

When I finally finished I found out there are several more books in this series.

Toni says

This book was so beautiful and also so sad with lots of family relationship issues. The start is heart rending

and not predicted. Also into the book, some of the scenes described almost smack you in the face - they are so realistic and terrifying! But it is also inspiring and the family links are so very strong. It was especially a good book too having met the author - what talent! very well done.

Lessil Richards says

Great book. Spans a very important time period starting in Wales and an incredible look into the hard life of the miners. It follows one family that emigrates to the US and through good luck and intellect do very well. Their two sons have grand adventures, one in the West with renegade Indians and the other South on a sailing adventure. The author has a great ability to tie in a wide girth of knowledge from industrialization at the turn of the century to nautical information and engineering. It is a series and leaves the family after about 20 years, but it certainly left me wanting to read the next installment.

Lance Greenfield says

This is an epic story and is well worth reading.

What was very exciting for me was that I was browsing the book at Edinburgh airport, and he told me about how he had written the story to while away his off duty hours whilst working on Nigerian oil rigs many years before.

He kindly signed the copy that I bought. I have just given it away to a charity auction.

Bob Caroti says

Reading more on my Kindle Fire these days ... picked this up on Amazon and was immediately hooked with the story of Welsh miners, their struggles to survive by strength of family and the events that prompted them to emigrate to the United States. It's a long read but well worth every moment as the family strives to make their fortune in the U.S. and the story is told from the viewpoints of the different family members at different periods of time. This gets a 4+ rating from me and I'll be moving on to the next volume continuing the story soon! Enjoy!

Kelly Tennant says

The beginning of this book is just brilliant. I became so emotionally invested in the characters I think I really did shed a million tears. I enjoyed the story being told from different family members' perspectives. However for me it was just a little too long - I found my mind wandering from the story. Not so much a criticism of the book per se just it wasn't really matched to me.

Chris Bullock says

An interesting saga seen through the eyes of different members of the family, starting in Wales and resulting in a move to America. Full of drama, pathos and adventure. Written with considerable skill and detail and keeps you guessing right up to the end. I feel the return to the reporter at the end was a bit abrupt and perhaps could have been extended, but nonetheless a complete and enjoyable read.

Martha says

I like multi-generational family sagas, but this one could have been edited shorter. It starts out with an old, wealthy man who's ready to "tell his story" before he dies and he appoints a journalist to the job. The beginning drags on a bit, but when they get to America after only three months all of a sudden they're wealthy? That's a bit much. However, the characters are strong and persevering, of good morale fiber. What made this country great: emigrants who bettered themselves thru hard work and good ethics.

Molly Mcelroy says

"A Million Tears" is the first in a series of four. It chronicles multiple generations of a family whose roots are set in Wales, in the late 1800's. Volume 1 alone, brought adventure, tragedy and hope. Henke takes you from a Welsh mining town to America, and on to Barbados. He brings you through suicide, love and the high seas. I found myself torn between not wanting to finish it and wanting to hurry on to volume 2, "The Tears of War and Peace," which I will begin today.

The range of events is mind boggling and I cannot wait to begin their story of WW1.
