



# Whispers of War: The War of 1812 Diary of Susanna Merritt

*Kit Pearson*

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## Whispers of War: The War of 1812 Diary of Susanna Merritt Kit Pearson

When war breaks out between the United States and Great Britain in 1812, eleven-year-old Susanna chronicles her experiences when her father and brother go off to fight leaving the women to fend for themselves on the family farm on the Niagara Peninsula of Upper Canada.

## Whispers of War: The War of 1812 Diary of Susanna Merritt Details

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Author : Kit Pearson

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# **From Reader Review Whispers of War: The War of 1812 Diary of Susanna Merritt for online ebook**

## **Jenna Leigh says**

I don't really remember this one's storyline very well, but I think I enjoyed it. Not my favourite, but not the worst.

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## **Ambika says**

Whispers of War is about Susanna Merritt, a girl who is terrified of the war, which is unfortunate for her because it was the War of 1812. Her brother and father have to go fight and it affects Susanna a lot. Throughout the book Susanna goes through wondrous adventures. This book is the diary of Susanna's journey through the war she feared would come.

I picked up this book because before I read this book I read a book from the same series as this book, it was called Not a Nickel to Spare. I enjoyed Not a Nickel to Spare so I decided to take another book from the Dear Canada series. Out of all the Dear Canada series books that were in, I chose this one because I didn't know anything about the War of 1812 other than that it started in 1812 (hi).

I finished this book because not only was it interesting but I was learning at the same time. So once I picked up the book and started reading it, I had to finish it because I had to know what would happen to Susanna. Although I kind of liked Not a Nickel to Spare better than this book because I felt like I could imagine Not a Nickel to Spare and that made the story come alive.

I would recommend this book to Melissa because I think she would enjoy a story like this because it's generally a book for everyone to enjoy. :D

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## **Shreya=Drastically Random. Find the emoticon. says**

Best Dear Canada book. Vivid with the enticing plotline that Kit Pearson always seems to work in. I read this book in fifth grade, then again in eighth grade after I studied the War of 1812 in seventh grade. It was different and much better the second time.

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## **Krystina says**

This is one of my favourite Dear Canada diaries, dealing with a subject that is close to my heart- The War of 1812. It provides a good picture of daily life during that time for a young girl, and would make a good movie, I think. :)

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## **Rebecca says**

This book is one of the Dear Canada series, which are historical novels, written in diary format, about fictional girls during different periods of Canadian history.

Susanna Merritt is a young girl living near Niagara, Canada in 1812, the youngest in a large family. Susanna fears for her family as the war begins, but she is also very worried about her best friend, Abbie Seabrook. Abbie's family are Americans, who are reluctant to go to war against their home country. In her diary, Susanna describes what happens to her family and friends during the first few months of the War of 1812, and during the battle that takes place near her home.

As an American, I really enjoyed getting a different view of the War of 1812 from Susanna's Canadian perspective. I really liked the setting and the characters came alive in Susanna's diary. I'd recommend this book to readers who enjoyed any of the Dear America or Dear Canada books.

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## **Ellen Hamilton says**

What a lovely read. I'm seriously considering keeping a dairy, no matter how boring my life may seem right now.

I really liked this one; there was a lot of love. Also, Susanna was one spirited, courageous girl. She was also very observant and very intelligent. Even though she was the youngest and very "indulged", she wasn't spoiled or bratty. She had a sweet personality, and she adored her brother. I always wished I had an elder brother.

One thing that surprised me terribly was that in 1812, they cleaned their teeth on a weekly basis! And with a piece of flannel dipped in a mixture of charcoal and honey! It was funny because when Hamilton comes home with the first rough prototype of a toothbrush, Susanna thinks he's silly. It was quite interesting to learn about that.

Well, I am really enjoying the Dear Canada series, and so far, I have not found one disappointing book.

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## **Molly says**

This entire series is a wonderful way to learn history or teach it to adolescents. I find today's generations seem to recall more when they learn through other people (pop songs, celebrity gossip, etc.), so what better way to teach history than through someone else's perspective? Yes, "authentic" diaries would be "better", but would the language really hold the modern student's attention? Did the diary writer know what **WOULD** be important in the context of history? Probably not.

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## **Shanelle says**

I greatly enjoyed reading "Whispers of War," as I felt that the characters had a life of their own and I was left

wanting to know more of their story.

Like all of the books in the Dear Canada series, this one taught me more about Canada's history and has shown me a love of reading books in a diary format.

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### **Georgia says**

One month before the War of 1812 begins, eleven year old Susanna Merritt's brother buys her a diary. Susanna begins with great enthusiasm, and writes to her future great-granddaughter, Constance. She admits that she lives a safe, dull life and records about her annoying older sister, Maria and also her fears of a possible war. Then one, ordinary day, they receive news that the United States has declared war on Great Britain. Susanna is shocked. Soon, her father and older brother are heading off to their regiment, leaving Susanna, her mother, sister, and hired girl, Tabitha to tend to the crops and do the chores the men would usually do. The situation does not get better when their hay crop is ruined by a terrible storm. Throughout the summer months, Susanna and her friends, Elias and Abbie spend their time trying not to focus on the war. While Susanna can't stop thinking about General Brock's ward, Ellis. Then comes the horrible day when Abbie's father, Mr. Seabrooke tells Susanna that she can no longer visit Abbie. She is heartbroken and lies to her mother, saying that she and Abbie had just had quarrel. Then, Abbie comes to the Merritt's home, in tears because her father has been accused of desertion of his regiment, and he has to pay a heavy fine, that the Seabrooke family does not have the money for. So, secretly, Mrs. Merritt gives Abbie enough money to pay the fine, with money she kept safe from New York. she thanks her very greatly and leaves, and Susanna is allowed to visit Abbie again. Then, her older sister Caroline has just given birth to a baby and is very ill, and at the same time, Susanna has a terrible toothache, so, her brother has to drive into Niagara to get it pulled. But the next morning, Ellis gives her a rude awakening, asking her to buckle on General Brock's sword before the battle, she does it nervously, and The General takes off. Ellis still looks very nervous and insists that General Brock is going to be killed, but Susanna isn't very sure. They help put out fires in Fort George to help out since they are older children. Ellis is proven right, because General Brock is killed. After the battle, Susanna meets her new niece, Adelaide and gets to play with her because she and her mother (Susanna's sister) are living with them until the war is over.

The book was pretty exiting, Susanna is a likeable character and I like how she was so brave during the battle. Very tragic, but very fun to read. It was also fun because we are celebrating the bicentennial of The War of 1812 and I live near where the Battle of The Thames (When Tecumseh is killed) took place. As always, another Great Dear Canada.

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### **Meghan says**

I liked how in the story itself it shows the point of view of both loyalties. I felt that there should have been more of that balance in the epilogue and historical note. I also liked how the author used her ancestors as characters.

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### **Katrina says**

okay!  
but not great.

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**Tessa G says**

Her story is so sad.

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**Tiffany says**

This book was a lot more personal to me than any other Dear Canada book. I grew up very close to Niagara Falls, and the War of 1812 was a huge part of the curriculum of every school that I attended when I was a child. Niagara Falls and the surrounding area has a rich history, including a rich war history. The War of 1812 affected Niagara Falls, Fort Erie, and Niagara on the Lake during one of the American invasions.

Susanna Merritt is a young girl who provides a personal account of the war that did affect upper Canada during the year of 1812. At first, there are whispers of war, and though most Canadians felt that war was imminent during this period, and a lot of anti-American sentiment had existed, this issue is barely raised by the author. Sure, there is an American family that is very close to Susanna, and the narrator worries considerably about this family, but I would have loved to see more of this sentiment because that was a very real reality in upper and lower Canada during this time.

One thing that I really love about Whispers of War is how the author is able to provide a story that entices young children to learn Canadian history. Personally, I loved history at a young age and didn't think that picking up a history book was a bad thing, but I did have friends who groaned and moaned about learning history. Since I spent half my childhood close to Niagara Falls, and the other half three hours away, I loved the idea that a book had been written from the female perspective.

Looking back at the book in my adulthood, I do wish that the author focused a lot more on how Canadians truly felt about this war, and how it affected Canadian/American relations for more than a century. I do wish that Pearson focused a lot more on the anti-American sentiment that was very much present in every Canadian town and city.

This book is a good way to teach children about Canadian history, but there are other books that do an amazing job at depicting the times. A side series to Dear Canada is called 'I Am Canada', and is written from the perspective of males, and is a good series for both young boys and girls. The book called 'A Call to Battle' is a good story, and gets into a little detail about the war.

All in all, this was a lovely book, and though it is meant for a more juvenile audience, is definitely well worth the read.

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**Jessie says**

Living in a town that neighbors one of The War of 1812's historical sites, I was instantly drawn into this diary. Another great read!

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### **Erin Kinsella says**

I was really hoping that this book would finally explain the War of 1812 to me, but alas, even the characters involved seem confused. *Whispers of War: The War of 1812 Diary of Susanna Merritt* by Kit Pearson is about 12-year-old Susanna in the first few months of the war. I can definitely see how it would be a confusing time. The generation of American loyalists who fled the Revolution are now parents in Upper Canada and faced with the prospect of fighting their homeland.

If I've gotten it right, the War of 1812 is sort of a spillover of multiple wars: the Revolutionary War, the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars. France supported America during the Revolution, France and Britain are currently at war and Upper Canada is firmly in British hands, so by proxy they are also at war with France, who is a staunch ally of America.

So far as I can tell, Susanna seems to be based on a real person. Her historical father is Thomas Merritt, the Sheriff of Niagara and her brother is William Hamilton Merritt who was influential in the area with his work on the Welland Canal. I couldn't find any actual mention of a Susanna Merritt, but at least her family existed.

The plot reminds me a little of *Anne of Green Gables*, where it's very much about a young girl and her enjoying life, being picked on by the boy she later marries and her adventures. She experiences the war first hand, is at Niagara when the cannons of the Americans burst through the walls.

I kind of wish it went a little longer into the war, since it extends into 1815 and is fought all through eastern/southern America and eastern Canada. Still, it's an interesting take on the early months and it's from a perspective we don't often see in war.

It's not my favourite of the series so far, but it was still an enjoyable read.

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### **Jeel says**

This is a story about the War of 1812 and a girl named Susanna Merritt. Susanna is writing a diary and at the same time surviving through the War of 1812. I would recommend this book to people who love historical fiction books.

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### **Rebecca says**

Another phenomenal dear Canada book.

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### **Kelly says**

Loved reading about places I go everyday and learning about the people who's names I hear and see

regularly.

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### **Rebecca says**

The year is 1812 and 11 year-old Susanna Merritt, a first generation Canadian from 'late-loyalist' Americans is living life like a normal girl; she hates boys, loves books and playing with her best friend, Abbie. But Susanna's world soon starts getting confusing as her new country has just declared war on the country of her parents birth. Susanna doesn't know how to feel but her bravery and good spirits gets her through the only war Canadian soil has seen battle on: the war of 1812.

I've been wanting to read one of the 'Dear Canada' books for awhile now. I know that it would have been a series I would have read when I was around 8 or 9 and I've heard very good things about them so my expectations were high. I picked this one up as my first in the series as it was written by one of my favourite children's author- Kit Pearson. And like always, she delivered a heartfelt story with colourful and relatable characters and I was soon lost in Upper Canada in 1812.

What made this story even more intriguing was the fact that it was based on one of Pearson's own relatives and a family story that has been passed down generations.

What I really loved was Susanna's confusion on what side she should be on in the war. I think Pearson was really great on showing how this was a difficult war on both sides and how it brought up mixed emotions and mixed loyalties.

Overall, a wonderful book for any little girl. I actually knew very little about the War in 1812 and I can walk away from with book with a great story in my heart and a little bit more knowledgeable about a very important war in Canadian history. Thanks again Kit Pearson!

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### **Nicola Mansfield says**

Not one of my favourites, which was a disappointment as I live in the Niagara region and was looking forward to this one. I've read some of Pearson's historicals and she's a fine author, but somehow I failed to connect with this book. The story was very slow until the ending Battle of Queenston Heights. But most of all the book failed to convince me of its time period. With most of the story being day-to-day life for the characters during this time, I completely forgot we were in the Napoleonic era as the voice was much more modern. OK, but should have been better.

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