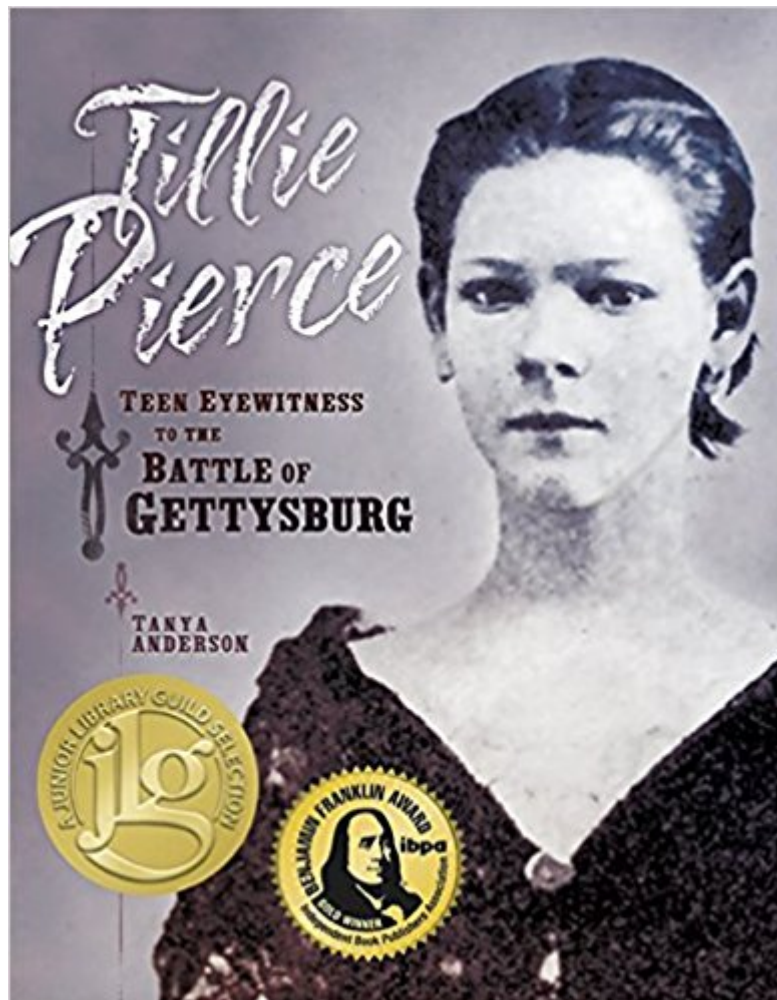




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Tillie Pierce: Teen Eyewitness To The Battle Of Gettysburg



Synopsis

Imagine being fifteen years old, facing the bloodiest battle ever to take place on U.S. soil: the Battle of Gettysburg. In July 1863, this is exactly what happened to Tillie Pierce, a normal teenager who became an unlikely heroine of the Civil War (1861-1865). Tillie and other women and girls like her found themselves trapped during this critical three-day battle in southern Pennsylvania. Without training, but with enormous courage and compassion, Tillie and other Gettysburg citizens helped save the lives of countless wounded Union and Confederate soldiers. In gripping prose, *Tillie Pierce: Teen Eyewitness to the Battle Gettysburg* takes readers behind the scenes. And through Tillie's own words, the story of one of the Civil War's most famous battles comes alive. This acclaimed library title is offered as an affordable softcover for the first time.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Gr 6-9-Fifteen-year-old Gettysburg resident Matilda Pierce witnessed the momentous 1863 battle and recounted it in her 1889 memoir. Anderson combines lengthy excerpts from the memoir with a narrative that follows the teen and her family through the battle and includes background information about the Pierces and Gettysburg and its importance in the Civil War. The family lived in town, but as the Union and Confederate armies drew near, Tillie's parents sent her to a nearby farm to help a neighbor. It was there, near the area known as the Round Tops, that she observed some of the most savage fighting of the day. As she and the women at the farm saw the horrors of war firsthand, they aided Union soldiers, cared for wounded and dying men, and worried about their relatives in town. The memoir records the girl's anguish, and Anderson's use of those quotes and a smooth narrative will help readers identify with Tillie's feelings and better understand the human cost of the

war. Large, well-captioned period photos and maps and sidebars about related topics supplement the text. Offering far more detail than Patricia Gauch's fictional account of Tillie's experiences, *Thunder at Gettysburg* (Coward, 1975), this book offers a unique perspective through the eyes of a young woman who observed and survived the worst of war. --Mary Mueller, Rolla Public Schools, MO

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This is not a book about what happened on the battlefield of Gettysburg. Rather, it is a book about a real-life 15-year-old girl and the small Pennsylvania town where she happened to live in 1863. Based mostly on Tillie's own recollection of the conflict, which she wrote and published in 1889, this book combines that writing with Anderson's smooth retelling to describe the weeks leading up to and following the battle from the perspective of an extremely relatable young witness. Anderson describes Tillie's fear at seeing the arrival of Confederate cavalry on an otherwise quiet afternoon at school, as well as her tireless tending of the wounded as the battle raged. The narrative is driven home by captivating photographs of the town before and after the battle and of artifacts that were dear to the Pierce family. Copious endnotes and a carefully selected bibliography with plenty of primary source documentation speak to Anderson's careful research on one of the most exhaustively covered events in American history. Grades 6-9. --Erin Anderson --This text refers to the Library Binding edition.

Tillie Pierce: Teen Eyewitness to the Battle of Gettysburg is a perfect book, balancing historical scope (the Battle of Gettysburg) with an intimate narrative of a fifteen-year-old girl caught within the three-day maelstrom of war. Anderson allows us to experience the Battle of Gettysburg through the eyes and words of Matilda "Tillie" Pierce, who accompanies her neighbor Hettie (whose husband is in the army) and children to escape the imminent dangers posed by the Confederate and Union armies converging on the town. By foot they hurry from Baltimore Street to what they expect will be a safer locale, farther south of town, along the Taneytown Road, east of Little Round Top. They head to the residence of Hettie's parents: the Weikert Farm. For those who a little about the Gettysburg Battle, this farm was about to become a field hospital for over 700 soldiers, from both the North and South. Anderson retells the story first written by Matilda Pierce Alleman herself as a mature woman and published in 1889: *At Gettysburg; or What a Girl Saw and Heard of the Battle*. In retelling the story, Anderson provides what "Tillie" could not: the larger historical context within which to place the personal narrative. And she does so deftly, not only through a concise yet

interesting overview of the political and social struggles between North and South but also convey through photographs taken from that period and side bar information on cultural customs (like hiding a child's shoe in the walls of a house for good luck) and current history relevant to key locations during the battle. What is most amazing, of course, is Tillie's specific experiences, narrated mostly by Anderson and sprinkled with direct quotes from Alleman's own narrative (a book I intend to read immediately). A wonderful story teller, Anderson's account will keep you glued to the pages of this incredible story. I highly recommend this book and can't imagine a school library without it.

Really a 4.5! This is how students should learn history--from resources that help them think about what people experienced, not just lists of dates, battles, generals, and casualties. I don't know how old I was before I realized that war showed up in people's back yards, not in designated zones like football games. Anderson paints a vivid picture of civilians trying to protect themselves, soldiers in desperate need of food, water, and nursing, and other details that make the Civil War seem real, not ancient history. While I would like just a bit more in this volume about the actual flow of the battle (mainly because I'd rather have students learning it from Anderson's vivid prose than from dry resources) I realize that this may have made the book too long and also have detracted from what Tillie actually saw. I learned from this volume and hope it makes its way into history lessons across the country.

The winds of war were in the air, swirling around Gettysburg and families prepared for the onslaught. The Shrivvers and the Pierces, residents of the town, grew fretful when they heard "alarming news about growing tension between the Southern and Northern states." Troops were converging on Gettysburg and families began to prepare, hiding their valuables and stockpiling food. Tillie Pierce, a fifteen-year-old girl, nervously watched the changes around her. The free blacks, fearing for their lives, began to move because they knew "they were in danger of being captured and dragged back into slavery." Some fled to the woods while others sought shelter with families in the community. The shouts began to ring out while Tillie was in class. "Children," Mrs. Eyster urged, "run home as quickly as you can." The desperate Rebels, led by Major General Early, were filling the streets. They began to plunder and loot the town, demanding food and stealing their very horses, including Tillie's. The town became silent as they moved on and a few days later Union soldiers began to arrive and shots were fired. Hettie Shriver came knocking, asking for Tillie's help with her children. She was going to head to her parent's farm on Taneytown Road. Surely they would be safer there, so the Pierces agreed to the request. Three miles seemed like a hundred as

they waded through mud, trying to get to the farmhouse. The safety they longed for was not to be had, because the horrors of war quickly descended upon them. An explosion rocked the air and they "saw a man thrown high in the air and come down in a wheat field close by." The man was brought into the Weikert household, but he would be the first of hundreds to fall in battle. Tillie began to hand out water to anyone in need, but soon knew that "instead of being safer out in the country, she and the others in the house were in great danger." The Battle of Gettysburg and begun ... around the farmhouse. This is a stunning account of Tillie Pierce, a teenager who witnessed the Battle of Gettysburg. Later, upon the urging of others, Tillie wrote her own story, excerpts of which are in this book. Instead of fleeing to a safe haven, Hattie Pierce, her young daughters, and Tillie found themselves in the midst of battle. The history of the Battle is here, but seen through the eyes of a teen the glories of war are definitely absent as she recalls piles of amputated limbs and hundreds of dying men. She tends to them as best she can, all the while fearful for her own family. The pages are liberally illustrated with black and white photographs, maps, and contains numerous informative sidebars. In the back of the book is an index, an amazing activity (Taking Tillie's Path: An Activity Using Google Earth), source notes, a selected bibliography, and additional recommended book and website resources to explore. This is a Junior Library Guild Selection. This book courtesy of the publisher.

This book is a compelling story that comes from a very different perspective than I have read before. It is from a teenage girl who was an eyewitness to the Civil War. I appreciated the photographs and extra information included in the book. A few years ago our family visited Gettysburg and I remember seeing Big Round Top and Little Round top. It was so peaceful when we visited, and so hard to believe such atrocities occurred there. I will be sharing this book with my two older grandsons who like to read non-fiction books. I think they will enjoy the story. This book is especially great for young people wanting to understand more about the Civil War. There are even activities in the back of the book to help them learn more. I received a copy of this book in exchange for my honest review.

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