



Sunrise

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The true love story behind one of Georgia's most famous antebellum mansions. In the 1850's Anne Tracy, a smart and well-educated young woman from the stifled but elegant world of Macon, Georgia, made a polite marriage with an older, wealthy merchant, William Butler Johnson. The unlikely pairing blossomed into a romantic and devoted marriage. The Butlers' wide travels through 1850's Europe inspired them to return to Macon and build an incredible Italianate mansion. Anne's privileged life was soon tested by tragedy and war. Her journey from bitter heartbreak to renewed faith and forgiveness created a powerful legacy far greater than money.

Sunrise Details

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From Reader Review Sunrise for online ebook

Debbie Maskus says

This is a fictional rendering of actual people of Macon, Georgia, during the 1860's. Sidney Lanier, the poet and musician plays special prominence in the story. I felt that the writing was juvenile at times, but I imagine that the author was employing the social mores of that era. The story exposed the heartaches of early deaths and troubled times. The house Ann Clark Tracy and her husband William Butler Johnston, the main characters, may be toured in Macon, Georgia.

Erika Smith says

Felt like the authors were trying to race through a list of events, checking them off as they went. Characters were somewhat uninteresting with only one or two exceptions. I love historical fiction but this one fell flat.

Shelby Henderson says

Sunrise brings to life the love of William and Anne Tracy Johnston, residents of Macon, Georgia, who married in 1849. Though there was a huge difference in their ages, these Maconites grew to love and cherish each other, as family tragedies and the Civil War changed the course of their lives.

During their marriage, the Johnstons built the "Palace of the South", which is known as the Johnston-Felton-Hay House. As I travel by the Hay House in Macon, Sunrise has forever changed the way I view this beautiful home.

(This novel also follows the life of another famous Maconite, Sydney Lanier from childhood until his death.)

Cindy Griffin says

I enjoyed this book more than I thought I would. It is a look into a prominent Georgia family just before and during the Civil War. I found it interesting to read about the communities and streets that are still a part of Georgia. The novel is innocent, but it maintains an emotional impact throughout. I look forward to the sequel.

Stephanie Heuerman says

This book takes place during one of the darkest periods of our nation's history. I really had a difficult time sympathizing with the main character. She was downright obnoxious at the beginning of the story and her about-face didn't quite come across as believable to me. Her life was so very privileged, it was difficult to take her seriously. It's difficult to feel sorry for someone who busies themselves decorating a mansion while so many around her were suffering terribly. I could go on, but you catch my drift.

J. Ewbank says

This book by Jacquelyn Cook was a very interesting and solid read. Enjoyed the characters and the plot. The plot was a historical Civil War events as they work out in the life of a large family and friends. It is totally believable and the characters become familiar friends. A very good job.

J. Robert Ewbank author "John Wesley, Natural Man, and the 'Isms'".

Nancy Bennett says

It was okay. As other reviewers mentioned, Anne is rather whiny and self-centered. Maybe that's what the author was going for: depict how Southern women felt they were the ones that suffered because of the war. I might buy that, except that so many of Anne's sisters/friends were able to be compassionate human-beings.

Not all stories based during the Civil War have to include the detailed horrors of slavery, so that wasn't my problem. I just found Anne to be superficial and annoying, which only works if the surrounding characters (including locations) are fleshed out to make up for her.

I'm not expressing myself very well; this book just left me "meh".

Sherrie says

I really enjoyed reading this book. The author took me to places I've dreamed of seeing. And I felt like I was there with William and Anne. When William and Anne come home to build their home, they didn't know they were headed for trouble. The trouble being The Civil War. All of Anne's brothers and friends march off to serve and Anne is worried about them. William is in the financing business and is chosen to help Georgia to build up their reserves of gold. All the heartache, love and family is in this book. If you like to read about the Civil War, this is a wonderful book to read.

Sara says

I really enjoyed reading this as I've become newly interested in historical fiction. It was an easy read, but not in such a way that I felt it was immaturely written. There were still complexities to it that made it easy and pleasurable, but not dumbed down. I had a hard time keeping the characters straight sometimes, but maybe I shouldn't kept a little log as I was reading it. I also had a hard time grasping the amount of tragedy, but that's not a disgrace on the book, that's more a mark of my own character. Overall, I enjoyed it and I'm a little sad to see it end.

Wendy says

Didn't finish

Jen says

Sunrise is the first book in a historical fiction trilogy. This first installment focuses on Anne and William Johnston from Macon, Georgia, starting in 1849 and moving through the Civil War and Reconstruction. Unlike many Southerners during this time, Johnston made his fortune in through the railroads and banking. He also played a significant role in the Confederate Treasury Department during the Civil War. Anne was a Cinderella character of sorts. Anne's mother died when she was young, her father when she was 19. And while her stepmother, also her aunt, wasn't cruel, Anne still felt on the outside of things. When William Johnston asked her to marry him, she wasn't in love with him, but she agreed nonetheless. The two managed to find a great love for each other, and this book centers around their lives, their families and their close friends.

The characters that populate this book are fascinating people, but what I found while reading was that I wanted more. I wanted more dialogue and I definitely wanted more detail. There is very little dialogue in the novel and I believe what is there was drawn from actual letters. I think this book would have been sensational if Cook would have taken what actually existed and developed it according to her imagination and what she knew about the actual people. So much of who a character is grows from their interactions and conversations with those around them, especially when relationships are as important as they are in the lives of these people.

There were many times when I would start to grow excited about something that was going on. I would be waiting for more detail to come along and then the plot would jump ahead a couple months or a year or so. I would continually think, "but I want to know more!" The lack of detail and dialogue prevented the characters from having much dimension. And they had so much potential. I believe that because I never desired to just give up on the book. I still wanted to find out what happened with everyone.

So, overall, it was a quick read, but it definitely left me wanting more from the book. I found a lot of what was there to be superficial, and I think that's because it just seems to magically happen. Very little of the development leading up to actions is present making it harder to believe it's genuine.

Margaret Metz says

This was an interesting book that followed one family through a very turbulent time in history. You see not only their personal struggles with relationships, health, faith, finances, and all the things everyone has to deal with - but also the larger struggles that the war between north and south brought to the table.

I've always felt that one of the best ways to learn about history is through the eyes of those that lived it - and not just "factual" documents. I'm not one that supports the views the south had, but this book doesn't attempt to preach the politics of the war - only to tell the story of one family who lived through it and what they felt - and how they lived.

This was a book based on a real family and I think I walked away feeling as if I knew them - and respected them. I may not have agreed with them about everything they stood for, but I think we could have found enough common ground to enjoy mutual respect.

In the end, I think whenever I think about the Civil war from now on I know this family will enter my thoughts.

Staci says

Would give 4 1/2 stars if I could. This book is a well written Civil War, Christian fiction. It covers the lives of a family during the Civil War and how it effects their relationships. This book was hard to put down.

Laurel says

Free Kindle book. Based on the journals and letters of real citizens of Macon, GA, in the third quarter of the nineteenth century, this could have been a really interesting book. It fell short, however, and read more as a bulletized list of marriages, births, and funerals than a novel. There were interesting passages including newlyweds Anne Tracy and William Butler Johnston on The Grand Tour and witnessing the Civil War from the Confederate perspective. Needed to be either longer to flesh out the decades-long story or more focused to better examine one facet of the tale.

Angela says

This is a free Kindle-book. I gave it a low rating because it is Christian Fiction which gets very Preachy at about 40% of the way through. It is a period romance set pre civil-war era America and Europe. I am sure that it will apeal to folks who are fans of that genre, but if you don't like Christian romances you will not like this book.
