



# A Rebel's Daughter: The 1837 Rebellion Diary of Arabella Stevenson

*Janet Lunn*

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After her father is jailed for taking part in the 1837 Upper Canada Rebellion in Toronto, Arabella's upper-class mother is unable to cope. It is up to twelve-year-old Arabella to take care of herself and to pray for her father's safe return.

## **A Rebel's Daughter: The 1837 Rebellion Diary of Arabella Stevenson Details**

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## **From Reader Review A Rebel's Daughter: The 1837 Rebellion Diary of Arabella Stevenson for online ebook**

### **Young Adult Historical Vault says**

The plot might echo *A Little Princess* in a lot of places (and a lot of ways), but this wonderfully-spun tale is interesting enough to stand on its own. A great depiction of upper-class Toronto in the 1830s, with a frisson of darkness at how terrible Arabella's mother is to her throughout.

For my full review including spoilers, check out Young Adult Historical Vault  
<https://yahistoricalvault.com/2017/07...>

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### **Sheila says**

The second Juvenile book I have read in the Dear Canada series. I chose this book because I wanted to learn more about the 1837 Rebellion in Eastern Canada. Arabella Stevenson is a 12 year old girl, the daughter of a Barrister. At the beginning of the book, the rebellion has just started. Arabella's father has been arrested and sent to jail for his part in the confrontation. Her 15 year old brother is missing. Arabella's mother cannot cope and remains in her bedroom. Through diary entries, we learn how life could have been for the families of those men involved in the rebellion. At the back of the book, we learn more about the actual history of the Rebellion and the author's difficulty obtaining the background information for the story.

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### **kayla says**

giant buzzkill

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### **Meaghan Steeves says**

This is difficult to rate. On the one hand it took me 40 pages to get into it (and for such a small book that's a lot), but once I did I became enthralled with her story and grew to really admire the main character, Arabella. Then I got to the epilogue and it kind of ruined everything; it felt like the author was just trying to fill space with useless information and shouldn't have been the one to write this story in the first place. It felt rushed and sloppy at times.

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### **Rita Bailey says**

Arabella Stevenson attends a private school and has servants, but her upper-class lifestyle is turned on its head when her barrister father is jailed for his part in the Rebellion of 1837. Her brother has disappeared, her mother sits and sulks, and Arabella is forced to support herself by working as a scullery maid in the home of a former classmate. Worse yet, she is forced to endure the agony of not knowing whether she will ever see

her beloved father again.

Told in the form of a diary, this Canadian historical fiction stays true to a young girl's voice as she is forced to make decisions about her life and her future. The story contains fascinating details about Toronto and the class attitudes prevalent in Upper Canada at that time. This book would appeal to students from grade 5-8 and corresponds to topics in the Grade 8 history curriculum in Ontario.

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### **Twyla says**

In this book, Arabella's father gets put in the gaol and can't earn money, so her family goes poor. They move to a small apartment, and Arabella's brother Charlie runs away. Then Arabella's mother sends Arabella away and she has to work as a scullery maid. I learned that bad things can turn good. Auryn 12 years old, 2016

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### **QNPoohBear says**

Before William Lyon Mackenzie and the rebellion, Arabella Stevenson was an ordinary, upper middle-class Canadian girl. Now Papa is in jail, Arabella's older brother Charlie has disappeared and Mama refuses to acknowledge the situation. Papa is not a traitor! He was supporting reform and doing what he felt was right. That doesn't stop Arabella from hating the rebellion and WLM. Her whole life changed in one night.

My only complaint with this novel is that Arabella took too long to explain the rebellion. Not being Canadian, I had to start with the Historical Note to learn all about the rebellion. It still doesn't make much sense to me but knowing a bit about British government at the start of the Victorian era, it does make sense. I absolutely could not put this novel down. I had to find out what happened to Arabella and her Papa. The story does resemble A Little Princess and I think a little bit of suspension of disbelief is required but I really liked it. I learned a lot too.

Arabella is a great heroine. She isn't plucky and resourceful in an unbelievable manner. She's strong and brave when she needs to be. She is tough and resilient. I would not have done as well going through what she went through. Most of the secondary characters are stock characters but some surprised me. I won't say who because that would spoil the story but for a middle grades book, this one has some surprisingly complex characters and deals with a dark and difficult time in Canadian history. It is one of the better entries in the series but not my very favorite.

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### **Sara says**

It was okay. I didn't know about this event before I read this book and didn't feel very well informed afterwards. I feel for her though because of her treatment by her mother who I had no sympathy for.

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### **Emma says**

i loved this book, it taught me soooooo much about the rebellion. I would recommend this book to anyone.

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**Emily Messer says**

My first Dear Canada ever and it got me hooked. It was well written and believable. It didn't feel like I was learning but I was. It was really sad and I wanted to just hug Arabella and comfort her. It was interesting and fun to read with a few twists.

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**Renaë says**

I thoroughly enjoyed this one. Arabella is a great heroine--a little bit Jane Eyre, a little bit Burnett's Little Princess--who is genuinely likable.

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**Nicole says**

Not the best of the series, but not the worst either. It really, really excelled at explaining the life of a scullary maid, though the actual rebellion not so much.

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**kit says**

vindicATIOOOOON

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**Georgia says**

Young Arabella Stevenson has lived a comfortable upper class life in the growing city of Toronto, Upper Canada. But lately her barrister (lawyer) father has been talking with "suspicious" characters who want to reform the colony's heavily English-immigrant influenced government. Finally, there unrest explodes in open rebellion and Arabella and her mother are left penniless after their father is jailed and after their son/brother runs away. Mrs. Stevenson does not believe that they have no money and leaves Arabella to fend for herself. Arabella is forced to flee. Although her father's former lawyer, Mr. Dewhurst and his wife provide a roof over her head it is evident that she (Arabella) must find employment as a maid to get her and her mother out of poverty. Unfortunately, her new employers are former family friends, the Harvard family. Life is difficult. Arabella has hardly done any work in her life and the other servants are rude to her because of her background. Will Arabella ever adjust to her new life and will a family member take her under her wing?

This is one of my favourite books in the series. It was a new perspective on the rebellion, being set in Upper Canada (Ontario) rather than in Lower Canada (Quebec). It also takes place in an urban area unlike many stories in Canada that take place in the wilderness at the time. Arabella is a very well developed character and her family members and friends have very distinct personalities. I did find Arabella's tendency to shorten

peoples names (ex. "It was my day off so I was invited over to Mr. D's house and had a lovely afternoon with A. and J. ") which can be confusing to the reader as some characters share names/ surnames that begin with the same letter. But this is overshadowed by the book's promising plot and characters. 5 Stars!

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### **Meghan says**

Wished the story talked more about the actual rebellion so readers would know what it was about before the historical note. The story was very good and I could sympathize for Arabella with all the changes in her situation, though the writing was quite hyper.

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