

RIDE PROUD, REBEL!

Andre Norton



Serapis Classics

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Civil War novel set in the western theater during the final days of the war. As the story opens, the protagonist, Drew Rennie, has been serving as a cavalry scout in Confederate general John Hunt Morgan's command for two years, having left home in 1862 after a final break with his harsh grandfather, who despised him since his birth because of his mother's runaway marriage to a Texan.

## Ride Proud, Rebel! Details

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## From Reader Review Ride Proud, Rebel! for online ebook

### Bookworm says

Drew Rennie is a seasoned scout in the Confederate Army, under Morgan's banner, when the story begins. Despised by his grandfather who yet saw his "duty" in raising him after his mother died, Drew has absolutely no ties to the place he grew up in, and calls the army home.

While scouting out good horses for the army on his grandfather's plantation, he runs across his best friend's younger brother, and afterwards Boyd joins in spite of his orders not too. Add a Texan under the name of Kirby who's goal is to learn the art of war so he can go home and revenge his family's death by the Comanche's, and a few other scouts who come and go, and you have a pretty good story of what it was like for the men fighting for their cause in the last years of it's life!

Guerrillas, sickness, battles and always the uncertainty of "after the war" very well portrayed. There is a sequel and I can't wait to get my hands on it as this one leaves so many unfinished parts!!

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### Rose says

Young Drew Rennie's adventures during the Civil War.

This book is told in an unromantic, realistic way that brings the time to painful life. Drew rides under General Forrest, which is interesting. Most people avoid Forrest for his involvement in either Fort Pillow, or his post war activities. However, he was a brilliant general, and this book focuses on that. I highly recommend it.

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### Mark Zodda says

Mostly engaging, but overly long story fictional story that follows a young Kentuckian who rides with General Nathan Bedford Forrest as a cavalry scout for the South. I wonder what Andre Norton knew about Forrest when she first wrote this book in the early 60s? It seems amazing today to read a fictional tale that holds Forrest up as a paragon and hero when what first comes to mind is that he was the first Grand Wizard of the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) and secondarily a brutal Confederate cavalry commander. In this story about the final years of the Civil War, Norton only has Forrest appear as the cavalry commander. Not sure if there is any justification for treating Forrest as sympathetically as Norton does, but I do know that I probably never would have read the book if I had known before I downloaded it that it would treat the man who founded the KKK as a hero.

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### Bram Slaats says

Not a bad story having said that I don't mind a bit of accents worked into the story or unique language but I prefer to have a legend so I at least know what they are saying.

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## **Roger says**

Reminiscent of Zane Grey's westerns, *Ride Proud, Rebel* is equal to any of Grey's writings.

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## **Perry Whitford says**

Drew Rennie is a scout in the Confederate Army during the last year of the Civil War as General Sherman advances into their heartland and the Rebel forces zigzag southwards.

Like many Kentuckians, Rennie comes from a home divided in sympathy by the conflict.

When his fifteen year old cousin, Boyd, threatens to enlist, Rennie tries to persuade him, but to no avail. Their Aunt Marianne tasks Rennie with finding and looking after the boy, who is about to suffer a rude awakening about the inglorious realities of war.

Andre Norton is actually Alice Norton, an influential genre novelist primarily known for her work in that most un-female friendly of all fields, science-fiction.

She proves here to be a dab hand at a Civil War story and the Western too, all in one, for '*Ride Proud, Rebel!*' is a smart and satisfying blending of those two genres, where battles and raids are juxtaposed alongside stick-ups and range riding.

There is also a compelling back-story as Rennie, in the company of Anson Kirby, a laconic Texan with a fine line in Lone Star state slang ("Lucky I ain't in a sod-pawin' mood, hombre" etc), mulls over his own heritage, for his father was from Texas too, which for some dark reason gave him an outsider's upbringing within his adopted family.

As the trio do their best in a losing cause at famous sites such as Harrisburg, the Yankee 'blue bellies' are not the only trouble they face. They also have to deal with the bitter cold weather, starvation, the scavenging of bushwhackers and, in one instance, the designs of their own Rebel comrades.

This book was a real pleasant surprise. I have read a fair few novels covering similar territory over the years, but few as understated yet convincing.

The battle scenes were short but grittily told, the characters brave and likable but not unrealistically heroic such as they often are in similar works.

There was a follow-up story written, called '*Rebel Spurs*', which I will certainly be reading soon.

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## **Lindsay says**

A bit embarrassing to admit, but not coming from the USA, while I know bits and pieces about the American Civil war, the different names for each side kind of confused me. I think I got three quarters of the way through the story before realising what side the main character was fighting for. What never really came across was why he was fighting for the South, when he came from the North. To be honest, I'm still confused.

Apart from that though, it was quite a good adventure/heroism book.

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### **Richard Thompson says**

This was one of the most disappointing books that I have read in a while. Trite, flat, characters that you have seen a dozen times before, always done better, in a story that brings nothing new to the Civil War genre. I remember enjoying Andre Norton's science fiction books when I was growing up, and I was intrigued by a story about the Civil War set in Kentucky about a soldier who fought under John Hunt Morgan, the favorite son of my home town Lexington, whose mounted statue stands in front of our courthouse. I was further attracted by learning that the protagonist ends the war fighting under the enigmatic Nathan Bedford Forest, who is unfortunately largely remembered today as one of the founders of the Ku Klux Klan. So I dived in, not expecting great literature, but hoping for a rousing adventure populated with interesting and colorful characters. But I got none of that -- just a by the numbers story about a young man with a difficult childhood who runs away to join the Rebs and grows to manhood in four long years of bloody fighting and privation. Morgan and Forest are distant figures with no real participation in the story. I have trouble understanding why most of the Goodreads reviews are positive, as I found little here to like.

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### **Rob Roy says**

The prequel to *Rebel Spurs*. An interesting tail of riding with Forest in the last year of the Civil War

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### **Elisabeth says**

*Ride Proud, Rebel!* is a Civil War novel set in the western theater during the final days of the war. As the story opens, the protagonist, Drew Rennie, has been serving as a cavalry scout in Confederate general John Hunt Morgan's command for two years, having left home in 1862 after a final break with his harsh grandfather, who despised him since his birth because of his mother's runaway marriage to a Texan. Already a seasoned veteran at eighteen, during the final year of conflict Drew has the additional responsibility of looking out for his headstrong fifteen-year-old cousin Boyd, who has run away from home to join Morgan's command and has a lot to learn in the school of hard knocks the army provides. The story follows the two of them and a new friend, a Texas trooper named Anson Kirby who provides both common sense and light comic relief, through campaigns in Kentucky, Tennessee and later on deeper into the South, first with Morgan and later under Forrest.

It's adventure, but not romanticized adventure. Norton paints a vivid picture of both men's and horses' struggles with exhaustion, hunger, cold, heat and thirst, aside from the horrors of battle. The historical detail is good and left me curious to know more about battles such as Cynthiana, Harrisburg and others mentioned. I read a lot about the Virginia campaigns a few years ago, but the western theater of the war is less familiar to me. On another level, the story also follows the characters' personal development throughout their travels, as Drew wrestles with the conflicting desires to know more about what caused the split in his family years ago, or to shut off all thoughts of the past to avoid being hurt by it.

Barring a bit of awkward dialogue, I found the writing to be good. Norton does tend to use passive voice a lot. The only place the passivity seems to grate is when it's paired with the aforementioned dialogue or

appears unexpectedly in the middle of action. The final chapter wraps things up rather quickly and abruptly, but then again, it is laying ground for a sequel.

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### **Morris Nelms says**

Well written and well researched historical fiction. Very straight forward. The story centers on a teenager serving under Bedford Forrest in the last days of the war. Norton has an excellent ear for dialects and uses it to great advantage here. Andre Norton is a bit of a magician as a writer. She simply disappears as soon as the story starts, and there is only the story. She's better at this than most, and while I hate to trot out cliches like "underrated," it's applicable here.

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