



Down to the Bonny Glen

Melissa Wiley , Renée Graef (Illustrator)

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Martha is frustrated because Mum has said she's too old to be playing on the moors now, and she must have a governess. First there's Miss Norrie. All she must to do is teach Martha sewing and etiquette. But Martha's high spirits are too much for her, and she leaves in a hurry. Martha thinks that's the end of that, but then another governess shows up. Her name is Miss Crow, and Martha is sure she's going to be even worse!.

Down To The Bonny Glen is the third book in The Martha Years, an ongoing series about another spirited girl from America's most beloved pioneer family.

Down to the Bonny Glen Details

Date : Published May 8th 2001 by HarperTrophy (first published May 1st 1901)

ISBN : 9780064407144

Author : Melissa Wiley , Renée Graef (Illustrator)

Format : Paperback 321 pages

Genre : Historical, Historical Fiction, Fiction, Childrens

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Download and Read Free Online Down to the Bonny Glen Melissa Wiley , Renée Graef (Illustrator)

From Reader Review Down to the Bonny Glen for online ebook

Heather C says

In this third book of what is a four book series, we see Martha hitting that age where she is starting to grow up. She still loves to be outside and have fun instead of doing her lessons (like any child), but she starts to become aware of the world around her. She begins to see that her sister, Grisie, is of an age where she might be leaving home soon and what responsibilities growing up and becoming a woman entail. You can see a real difference between the reckless child of the beginning of the novel (or from the first two books) and the young girl who is taking her actions into account and starting to consider the future beyond five minutes away. This is certainly the theme of this novel and one that most of the age-appropriate readers will understand. Despite this growing up phase, there is still one rollicking adventure in the last quarter of the book!

We also see some set up in this novel for obviously book 4, but also for what will take us into the Charlotte years (Martha's daughter). We first meet Lew Tucker, who will end up becoming Martha's husband down the road and there is a lot of discussion regarding what lies beyond the glen that they live in – the big cities and America, where Martha will eventually travel.

There are still some Scottish traditions, dialogue, and stories here that we have grown to expect and enjoy from the earlier novels.

I look forward to seeing how this series concludes and how it will link into the next – the Charlotte Years. I have read widely from within the various parts of these series, but never completely through each to see how they connect.

This review was previously posted at the Maiden's Court.

Amanda says

I feel as though this book really only deserves a 3.5 stars but I can't bring myself to poorly rate a little house book! I enjoyed the story quite a bit but the ending is what really lowered my rating. The family is in the middle of a situation (multiple things are going on actually) and it pretty much ends! The author doesn't elaborate or smooth out these new plots and it appears the next book is about 2 years later when she is 10. I found this to be slightly frustrating because these final situations appear to be of the utmost importance to Martha yet there is no closure at the end. Other than that I enjoyed reading about this spirited little girl =)

Anna says

The excitement picked up in places, but these aren't very well written books and there are a couple of oddities. Yellow yarrow flowers? Plans to grow cotton in Scotland of all places? The book ended without finishing the story of the character I was most worried about, too. A climax with no resolution.

Kirsten says

For completeness' sake. :)

Anabella Dente says

I think that it is a good book for children 5 and up. I enjoyed it very much. I would recommend this book.

Rea K says

N'aww.

Martha's eight and a half in the beginning of this book. One of the things that I love is that Martha doesn't repeat herself. She doesn't go and watch sheep shearing two book in a row.

We see Martha growing up. She hadn't realized until this book how different life as the laird's daughter is compared to a tenant's daughter. Even the other children realize the difference.

When I was eight and a half, I was flying through third grade, not a care in the world. Other than that, I don't remember what I was doing. For real. I barely remember what responsibilities I had, but I know for certain that I didn't get to touch a fire for anything other than marshmallows. Annie Davis was eight and a half and in charge of getting food cooked for her family. Goodness. Today I am glad that I live in the present.

Things are changing. We meet one governess who is a total waste of time for Martha. Then we meet the next one who is nice and lovely. The boys are away at school, Grisie is seventeen and has the boys after her hand in marriage. Wowza. I didn't even like weddings when I was seventeen.

One thing that I dislike is that Melissa Wiley will mention Lew Tucker and Ian Cameron by name, but Not Lew Tucker's older brother. I'm guessing part of it has to do with Lew and Ian being closer to Martha's age, not to mention what we already know Lewis Tucker and Martha Morse have a... history. I'd really like to know how that one happened, but the last we hear from Martha until Charlotte's series is when she is ten. Ten year olds don't catch husbands. Well, they're not supposed to anyway.

One book left. :'(

Tarissa says

'Tis a bonny book, indeed!

The chapters simply fly by -- I, for one, couldn't stop reading it! When away from the book for hours at a time, I found myself wondering what would happen next to Hedgie (Martha's dear little pet hedgehog that lives in the larder to collect the bugs), or what special bit of wisdom that Auld Mary would next impart to her starling pupil, or worrying about whether or not Martha will end up sending the second governess packing, just as she did to Miss Norrie.

Martha Morse herself is quite a bonny girl. She loves spending her days out on the moors and imagining where the little fairy folk flit about. Even though she's the daughter of the Glencaraid laird, she doesn't put on fancy airs, and instead desires to put in some honest work whenever she can finagle it in (which is mostly when her parents or governess isn't looking). I like her character a lot -- she's a good, honest lass that other

girls can look up to as a role model.

I tell you, I read so many passages aloud to myself (always in as best a Scottish accent as I can manage). The writing is simply perfect. The author somehow went above and beyond what is needed for a children's book to truly convey the Scottish heritage. I really liked how in this volume, it covers several months of time and we get to experience quite a few special days and holidays of the Scottish culture with Martha and the Morse family (most of the traditions I barely knew about myself!).

NOTE to the discerning reader & parents: There's a lot of folklore, fairy tales, and superstitions that the villagers of Glencaraid either believe in or at least talk of often. At a later point in the book, the mother tells the story of her own birth.

Rosa Cline says

Just like Ms Wiley did with the first book in this series, this is the third book in the Martha Years, she incorporated lots of History in her writing. This book opens the doors for the older readers to do independent research about the various traditions, ways of life she writes about. 9 year old Martha experiences more in this book than she has in the other books, and most are traditional life living in the late 1700's in Scotland. Had my attention that I feel asleep each night reading since I didn't want to stop and put the book down. This one (to me) was the best one thus far.

You could probably read it without reading the first two books and not be 'lost'. But the first two books help the reader understand about her siblings especially her three older brothers whom have gotten old enough to go away to school and in this book they are mentioned quite a bit but they aren't a main character. Also in the other books you learn the relationship Martha has with her older sister and why she is so confused at her acting so strange now that she's gotten older (courting age...is she really old enough to be married Martha wonders) And the other books just establishes Martha's love for those around her and without reading those you miss out on that but this book is wonderful and I'm so glad I decided to read them!

Diana (Bever) Barber says

Martha isn't really that old, but she is now "too old" to be running wild on the moors. She's been assigned a governess. The first one is not patient nor very kind to her. The second (Miss Crow) is a dear soul, though not completely trusted at first. Martha's brother and best playmate, Duncan, is away at boarding school with his elder brothers. Martha's sister, Grisie doesn't pay as much attention to Martha as she used to. Grisie is turning into the refined beauty of the land, but she isn't really old enough to be married yet, is she? Martha's playmates are not as comfortable around the laird's daughter as they used to be; their differences are more obvious now. How does Martha handle being alone and lonely? Just like the two previous books and the original Little House series, the music, the food, and the culture of the era come alive.

Elizabeth says

Down to the Bonny Glen has always been my favorite of the Martha books. It's longer than the others and is mostly concerned with the character development and growth of Martha. Martha is more than just a spirited

young girl in this book—she's now finally starting to realize that she's the daughter of a laird, and in that sense she's quite different from other children around her.

This conflict is sown all throughout the book—Martha's awkwardness around her friends, her brother and his friends' hesitation at seeing one another after Duncan comes back from school, Martha's realization that as a laird's daughter she has different expectations. And yet we also see her determination to not let things like that bother her, to push past barriers and boundaries and do what she wants to do. We see that in her eagerness to cook and her parent's appall at the thought of her cooking for a living, we see that in her desire to go to America, to have adventure, to play outside instead of sit in and sew. And we see that in the hints and subtle indication that connect Martha and the blacksmith's son, Lewis Tucker.

Other than the character development, Martha also gets some personal growth in terms of her rashness and thoughtlessness. Her new governess helps by channeling Martha's energy into suitable tasks and by the end of the book, Martha is much more careful without having lost any of her spiritedness.

The Martha Years will never be as memorable or long-lasting as the Little House books, but Down to the Bonny Glen is the highlight of the series, chock-full of thoughtless Martha, interesting events (my favorite is Martha and Grisie cooking for the house), and lots of character development.

Allison says

[the part where she cooks breakfast for her whole family? And she's like, 8 or 9? (hide spoiler)]

Jaime K says

Martha is now 8 and a half years old, an age that allows her to have a governess.

Yet Miss Norrie does not understand Martha at all. She may be trying to teach the girl manners, but she doesn't show those manners to others. In particular, she is disrespectful to "mere servants," and others beneath her station.

What I have loved about Martha's family is that they constantly show love and respect to others, whether they're blood, of high stations (like other lairds), or servants & tenants. More love and joy is spread that way - and they in turn receive respect.

Nannie and Gerald get married. I think it's weird that there was no mention of the wedding cheese like in the first book.

I find it interesting to learn of how Auld Mary explains how to best dye different things. Like Martha, I'm boggled at how pink heather flowers are best in creating yellow dye. And I learned of "home brew" which made me think of how we currently use vinegar for color-stay. Indian saffron was also used to create yellow colors, and that was clickbait for me.

I am surprised that Auld Mary hasn't mentored anyone in the different things she knows how to do.

Something that is noticeable in Martha's interactions is her station. Although she's not yet 9, her friends have many responsibilities, including cooking. Martha's been busy too, though with tutelage under her

governesses - for Miss Crow ends up replacing Miss Nonnie. As a laird's daughter, Martha IS different and is of a higher station, but it's never been important until now, when even her tenant children friends point out that she will never need to do certain things. The parents are no longer allowing Martha to help, now that she's older and instead of being play to keep children occupied, it'd be more considered work.

At one point Martha feels like she's not /needed/ like her friends are, because she can't do much and only "helps" in ways to humor adults (I don't mean funny-haha humor, but more of accommodation). I understand why she would feel that way.

This is seen even more when Duncan and the other boys come home for summer break. There is awkwardness between him and Martha, and Lew & some other boys. Knowing that Martha and Lew end up marrying makes this more bearable.

Fortunately, Miss Crow helps with that, including requiring her to brush her own hair! Miss Crow is awesome and takes the time to know and understand Martha. This respect then makes Martha respect her and not complain about the required lessons.

I LOVE the Saint Michael story.

Martha taking charge of the kitchen on Handsel morning was perfect. Grisie allowing this was even better. Despite being 8 years older, she recognizes where her sister's talents lie and is more than willing to let the young one take charge.

The last two chapters had me red with concern and crying - almost sobbing.

Ashley Perham says

This book doesn't have as many descriptions of Scottish culture as the other Martha books I've read, but it did seem to have more character development.

At first, I was disappointed in Mrs. Morse. I mean, come on, can you not see the obvious problems with your kid's governess? But the apology made me like her again, and see her as a real person, who can make mistakes!

Miss Crow is basically Mary Poppins, down to the umbrella! She's strict, but lovable. It makes you realize how much easier it is to work with people who have clear expectations! And the fact that her brother lives in America is cool because it gives American readers a foreign perspective on America!

Grisie grows up a lot in this book! So much so that she has suitors! (A fact that slightly disturbed me since I'm the same age as her...)

It was cool to see Mr. Morse in action. He seems like a wonderful Laird, always doing what's best for his tenants.

Martha gets developed the most in this book. She goes from being slightly discontented to realizing how blessed she is to have the father she has. I love how the different fathers were woven in near the end of the story to give Martha perspective! She's growing into a wonderful young lady!

Two things that are not characters that I loved were Nanny's wedding and Auld Mary's story! The wedding had a lot of description about customs and such, and Auld Mary's story was wonderful as always!

Kelly says

Martha is frustrated because Mum has said she's too old to be playing on the moors now, and she must have a governess. First there's Miss Norrie. All she must do is teach Martha sewing and etiquette. But Martha's high spirits are too much for her, and she leaves in a hurry. Martha thinks that's the end of that, but then another governess shows up. Her name is Miss Crow, and Martha is sure she's going to be even worse! Down To The Bonny Glen is the third book in The Martha Years, an ongoing series about another spirited girl from America's most beloved pioneer family.

I recommend this book for all ages. I just finished reading this to my 18 month old and we loved it.

I loved reading this out loud to my son. A lot of times in my best Scottish accent (horrible but he knows no better.) This book was bittersweet, Martha is still an innocent but adventurous little girl but at the same time is starting to notice and wonder about adolescent things.

I loved seeing Martha's brain work in this book. The way she notices her brothers and sisters changing and growing up. How she notices other kids and the classes of society. My favorite was her observations on how kids feel about their fathers and how she feels about her own. It's sad to think she will probably be all grown up.

I love how this family has genuine love and respect for each other and how they are always going out of their way to help others.

I rate this book a 5 out of 5 stars.

Kristen Luppino says

Such growth in Martha. I'm loving this series. A wedding, governesses, dancing, and understanding family.
