



Another Year Finds Me in Texas: The Civil War Diary of Lucy Pier Stevens

Vicki Adams Tongate

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Lucy Pier Stevens, a twenty-one-year-old woman from Ohio, began a visit to her aunt's family near Bellville, Texas, on Christmas Day, 1859. Little did she know how drastically her life would change on April 4, 1861, when the outbreak of the Civil War made returning home impossible. Stranded in enemy territory for the duration of the war, how would she reconcile her Northern upbringing with the Southern sentiments surrounding her?

Lucy Stevens's diary—one of few women's diaries from Civil War-era Texas and the only one written by a Northerner—offers a unique perspective on daily life at the fringes of America's bloodiest conflict. An articulate, educated, and keen observer, Stevens took note of seemingly everything—the weather, illnesses, food shortages, parties, church attendance, chores, schools, childbirth, death, the family's slaves, and political and military news. As she confided her private thoughts to her journal, she unwittingly revealed how her love for her Texas family and the Confederate soldier boys she came to care for blurred her loyalties, even as she continued to long for her home in Ohio. Showing how the ties of heritage, kinship, friendship, and community transcended the sharpest division in US history, this rare diary and Vicki Adams Tongate's insightful historical commentary on it provide a trove of information on women's history, Texas history, and Civil War history.

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