



On Top of Concord Hill

Maria D. Wilkes, Dan Andreasen (Illustrator)

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The Little House books have captivated millions of readers with their story of Laura Ingalls, a little pioneer girl growing up on the American frontier. Now travel back to the generation before Laura's and read the story of Caroline Quiner, the little girl who would grow up to be Ma Ingalls in the beloved Little House books.

The first three books in the series describe the Quiners' first years without Father and the family's move to a new home deep in the big woods of Concord, Wisconsin. Caroline is nine years old, and she feels settled in her new little house. She's beginning to explore Concord, and is looking forward to going to school, when disaster strikes. It's a cholera epidemic, and it's sweeping the state. It's up to Caroline to help keep her family together and pull them through this terrible time.

On Top Of Concord Hill is the fourth book in The Caroline Years, an ongoing series about the adventures of another girl from America's favorite pioneer family.

Author Biography: Maria D. Wilkes first read the Little House books as a young girl and has been fascinated by pioneer history ever since. She did extensive research on the Quiner, Ingalls, and Wilder families, studied original sources and family letters and diaries, and worked in close consultation with several historians and the Laura Ingalls Wilder estate as she wrote the Caroline Years books. She lives in New Jersey with her husband, Peter, and her daughters, Grace and Natalie.

On Top of Concord Hill Details

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From Reader Review On Top of Concord Hill for online ebook

Jaime K says

This book begins with the Camp Meeting mentioned in the previous book. Caroline looks for different signs that her mother is ready to marry Frederick Hollbrook, but everyone's concentration is ruined by Reverend Speakes. The man is a bit of an extremist, calling out sins in a terrifying way (though I'm a bit surprised Caroline was never told things like gossip were sins), saying dancing was a sin, and then screaming out for people to repent. It's....traditional for hyperbolic to make preachers/religious folk out that way, especially in those days.

So Speakes is not someone most people would want to marry them. Still, it's enough for Caroline to tell Charlotte about the secret she's been holding - and Mr. Hollbrook becomes the kids' pa in good time. He's a good pa, and Henry is resentful to him in a few ways. I don't blame his behavior for things like wanting to help build a plank road; wanting to help out neighbors and his town. But his actions become ridiculous and, as Caroline puts it, pigheaded after a while.

Martha definitely matures here.

This book makes me suddenly curious about the gold rush and its "yellow fever." Were explosives used, thus exacerbating California's fault lines? How many people died? How many went home in disappointment? What was gold worth in those days and how useful was it?

I've never cared about these questions before.

Henry wants to go west. He dreams and fights for a sense of independence. As Hollbrook did with Miles (and Wally), he meets Henry where the boy is at. This helps their relationship (and Henry's behavior) a lot.

Reading of Hollbrook creating the bee skep and gathering honey is very interesting!

Thomas is only 4 but he seems quite older.

Cholera spreads and is devastating to towns across Wisconsin. In looking up some of its history, I was met with part of our past that I didn't know about.

Sadie says

The one thing I like about these stories is that, as they are based in fact, there is no promise of happy endings. When sickness comes into the house, there is no promise that people will survive. This adds an element of suspense that I wasn't expecting, and I enjoy it. This one delves a little deeper into the family dynamics as things are changing and the children are growing up. Enjoyable read as I have come to expect.

Emily says

I like this Caroline book but it seems to be a little sad because its hard for her family to adjust to their new

pa. Also the family gets sick with cholera which ends up leaving them very weak for awhile and their new Pa's legs get weak because of how badly he came down with the cholera. The ending though is good because the whole family now gets along. Caroline is now looking forward to a new beginning and the growth of their little farm in Concord, Wisconsin.

Lanki says

Loved this book, its wonderful to see how Caroline's mom is smiling more now and how the family gets fond of Mr. Holbrook more and more :)

Kaye says

Little house, Caroline years. (Laura's mother)

Sannasue says

Little House on the Prarie is one of my favorite kids series, and I am enjoying reading all of these prequels.

Rea K says

So I hadn't read this one. I confused this book with Little House in Brookfield. Oh well.

This one was quite special and also a little nervewracking. Boy, if you don't plan on seeing a portion of this through to the end, you're going to worry your little butt off.

I have to do some mapwork, but I got really excited because I could say Oconomowoc.

All of the sewing has me itching to do some sewing. And knitting. And embroidery.

THIS ONE IS A VERY IMPORTANT POINT IN THE STORY. Well, if you're not a complete blockhead, you might be able to guess what the SECRET is. I knew it, even before I got to this book.

Actually, the next book is important because, guys, we get to meet Charles Ingalls. *squeaks* How thrilling. I've been waiting for that.

This one mentioned the 49ers. Not the football team, sillies. The gold hungry folks. I dunno, man. I don't know if I would go for gold or stay and farm. Based on my present day knowledge, the gold was as much of a tossup as the farm. Not to mention, just as if not more dangerous than farming. I mean, with farming you have to worry about the animals stepping on you or crops not growing right, but with gold you have to worry about some greedy gut slitting your throat for a few flakes of gold. *wrinkles nose* Although, at least back then California had water and no Kardashians.

I don't know what made me think that I'd read this one. I swear, in all of my books, this was marked and it ought to have been the Little House in Brookfield one. I guess it was the snow. I remembered Fox and Geese and that's a snow game.

Dawn says

It was neat to see how the family has come out of particularly difficult times and is doing better. Mother remarried, and that brought changes to the family's life. The kids continue to grow up and adjust to their new life in a new place. I'm looking forward to the next books as Caroline really begins to come into her own.

Roshan Sandaruwan says

Really enjoyed this book. I have read up to this book on this series and eagerly waiting to read the rest. Though it's written by a different author other than Laura, I must say that indeed it gives us the warmth and the sensation which she managed to give by the original little house book series.

Kasey says

This book was a fun read but nothing truly significant happens in it. I would greatly encourage Little House fans to read the whole little house series beginning with Laura's great grandmother, Martha, and ending with Laura's daughter, Rose. It was so much fun reading about the different times these women lived in. Rated three stars because it is way below my reading level so it is a entertaining fast read.

Lea Ann says

I haven't read this yet BUT I just learned to night that Caroline Quiner (who became Caroline Ingalls) grew up about five miles from where I work. I've been captivated by the Mansfield, Missouri, home and museum of laura ingalls wilder... but I didn't know I was so close to where her mom grew up and where her parents met! Sorry - not much of a review - - more like why I want to read this book!

Amy says

Really enjoyed this book, probably my favorite of the series so far. I'd definitely like to own the series to share with my own children in the future - it's a shame it's out of print. I can see why these books are so popular with home schooling families as well - you can do whole unit studies with them from biology (using gardening to teach science) to math (with baking, bean counting, etc.) and character education along with the obvious - reading and writing.

Rosa Cline says

This is the fourth book in the Little House books Caroline series. As with the others this fourth book was better than the first due to already knowing the characters and being able to just enjoy the storyline and being 'there in the moment' with them. A simple but heartwarming easy read, perfect to help drift your mind into

another time and place before you have to go to bed. Love these books!

In this book Charlotte and her children adjust to having a Pa around after Charlotte marries one of the workers they fed and had become dear friends with. Talk of the Gold Rush gets Henry (Caroline's brother) really wanting to go to CA. How Pa and the boys worked their land and made it become a nice 'farm' little by little. And even how the family was stricken with cholera that nearly took their lives.

Katie says

I am reading/re-reading all of the Little House stories in order this year (see my comments under Beyond the Heather Hills and Across the Puddingstone Dam).

I have been writing reviews/comments about these books at the end of each series. I have decided, though, to write a review halfway through the Caroline series because after On Top of Concord Hill the series is no longer written by Maria D. Wilkes (which is such a terrible shame).

I have been looking forward to reading these books so long as I am a Milwaukee girl. I loved Little House in Brookfield. Brookfield is a suburb of Milwaukee and I know the area fairly well. So it is interesting to visualize what is written in the story as opposed to what is located in the areas mentioned now (there is a plaque for Caroline, by the way, on the corner of Davidson and Brookfield Roads for any interested readers in the area). And the overall feel of this book, for me, was very reminiscent of Laura's stories. It tells of the hardships of the family, the friends and neighbors and of the town. I just really enjoyed this one.

I was interested in hearing why Caroline's family left for Concord (I always wondered why they'd leave a place like Brookfield for a place like Concord - I have been out there and around that area a few times). I liked the second Brookfield book and the first Concord book enough (I appreciated the introduction of Frederick Holbrook). But I really liked the second Concord book a lot. It had that same feeling about it that the first Brookfield book did.

Oh, and if anyone is curious to know, Caroline's mother and stepfather (charlotte and Frederick Holbrook) are buried in a cemetery in the small town of Rome (I've been there, too). It is no more than 6 miles from Concord, I think.

Anyway, for the first half of the series, and despite the fact that I have given 2 of the books 3 stars, I would give this half of the series 4.

Rebecca says

My only complaint about this entry in the series is that you really need to have read the one before it to get to know Mr. Holbrook better. I accidentally read this one first, and while the narrator said Caroline was glad about Mr. Holbrook's relationship with her mother, I didn't buy it from what had been written about him thus far in this book. She seemed rather ambivalent about him, finding all his flaws; you have to read the other

book to find out the nice things about him.

Gl says

I am a huge fan of the Laura Ingalls stories!!! The tried and true Laura stories are by far my favorites, but when I came across stories of her great-grandmother all the way down to her daughter, I was thrilled.

Michelle says

After the slight disappointment of the third book, this is much better and has quite a lot of interesting things happening in it. OK I use the term “interesting” lightly, but it’s still a lot faster paced than the earlier book.

This picks up two months after the last one finished, and we have the introduction of a new stepfather for Caroline and her siblings. We mainly see how Caroline and her older brother Henry adjust to this, and seeing the bedroom split into two, with her mother and new stepfather on the other side of the curtain to them! (No new siblings just yet.)

There’s also the talk of the gold rush in California, and the threat of cholera, as well as the planting and harvesting that happens with farm life.

You can see the Mother Caroline starting to appear now, as this book finishes with her turning 10 - still no introduction of Charles but I’m pretty sure that’s the next book - and you can also see certain influences which she passed onto her daughters.

I’m still finding that there are quite a few coincidences that are much too similar to the original books. And these books have obviously had a storyline in mind, with a plan set out what each book will deal with - there’s a lot of padding! It’s not something I really noticed at the time reading the originals as a child, but the books do feel stretched quite thin at times.

With reading this book now, I am really unsure if book 3 actually needed to exist, or if the occurrences in this (such as the introduction of Mr Holbrook) couldn’t have been added into this one. I still feel like there’s not much that really happens in that one. I would recommend skimming #3 at best, and continuing onto this one.

And on a last note - what strange phrasing it is to describe someone has having “square” cheeks.

Mary-Jane says

The excitement of this book is that ma (Charlotte) marries Frederick Holbrook which provides stability for the family, support and companionship for ma, and a new pa for the 6 children. The drama continues when Pa and Henry bring home cholera from the market and most of the family becomes ill. No one dies. Henry has the most difficulty adjusting to his new pa and is tempted to join the California gold rush, but harmony returns to the home by the end of the book.

Rachael says

Honestly this was a book I really got into of the Caroline series for the most part I haven't been overly immerse myself in this series, but this book I really did. Charlotte Quiner gets remarried in this book and that inspired me to fact check the author and she was completely correct. Then from there I just kept researching Laura Ingalls Wilder geneology. I learned so many things because this novel inspired me to fact check. I love Laura and her family so I was glad to be more educated about the Quiners.

<http://rachaelc94.blogspot.com/2013/0...>

Here is my blog post with all the links to my research and a lot of geneology on the Quiner family.

Ashley Perham says

So Charlotte gets married in this book, which I'm pretty sure is not a spoiler at all! (I hope) The whole thing is a leetle awkies, but it's like a natural awkies. (If that makes sense) Mr. Holbrook is a lot different from the whole family, actually, but in the following book he finally seems to fit in. Also, Henry gets obsessed with the gold rush and basically becomes a jerk! Which is sad because I like Henry :(Henry and Mr. Holbrook start on rocky ground, but several incidents help to repair their relationship. Joseph is awesome!! He's so strong and mature, and basically one of the most underrated characters of the series! This book was pretty much the same (rating wise) as the others. Sweet reads to take your mind off your own troubles!
