



Get Along, Little Dogies: The Chisholm Trail Diary of Hallie Lou Wells (Lone Star Journals)

By Lisa Waller Rogers

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Noon Gabby, Dovey, Gussie, and I were frosting lemon cookies when we felt the rumble. It was like an earthquake. We rushed outside. Without my bonnet to shield the sun's glare, I couldn't see at first. I had to squint. To the southwest, I saw a thick cloud of dust rolling our way. The low rumble we had heard in the kitchen had, by then, become deafening thunder. Thousands of hooves pounded the earth. It was the herd running toward us. It looked like a great brown river. . . . The roundup was done. The men were home with the cattle. It's spring of 1878 on the Rockin' W in South Texas, and Hallie Lou Wells is as cross as any fourteen-year-old redhead has a right to be. Her teacher says she has to memorize page 112 of Webster's School Dictionary; her most exciting decision is whether to wear her peach organdy or blue silk to the dance; and only boys can go on trail drives. But in country where anything can happen, something does. When Hallie's mother discovers she's having another baby, Hallie's father decides not to join the trail drive to Dodge City, and Hallie convinces him to let her represent the family's interests at the point of sale. So begins an adventure well worth chronicling. The first of the Lone Star Journals by Lisa Waller Rogers, Hallie's Chisholm Trail diary is filled with adventures that will engage any middle reader, girl or boy, and is so rich in its depiction of ranch and trail life in the late 1870s that it should make any reading list, Texas or national. Following Hallie's diary is a historic summary of life along the Chisholm Trail in 1878, complete with photographs and map, useful to young readers and teachers alike.

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Grade 4-7-Fourteen-year-old Hallie Lou insists that she can ride a horse as well as a boy can. She would much rather join the cattle drive from South Texas to Dodge City, KS, than stay at home and behave in a ladylike fashion. Amazingly, her dream comes true, and she and her Mexican-American maid set off in a buggy, along with some cowboys and thousands of cattle from her father's and neighbors' ranches. This novel records that trip in diary fashion. The general trials of such a drive-lack of water, dust, bad food, the dangers of crossing Indian Territory-are noted as well as Hallie Lou's more specific concerns: sunburn on her fair skin, her disgust with a vulgar horseman, her attraction to two very different young cowboys, and her perhaps anachronistic repulsion at the slaughter of buffalo by two English hunters. For some readers, Hallie Lou's self-willed, somewhat melodramatic narrative will seem exactly right for a girl feisty enough to undertake a man's job in a man's world; for others, it may seem too much like the breathless self-satisfaction of a middle-grade romance novel. While not first-rate historical fiction, this is an acceptable addition to collections seeking more stories for this time period or for libraries in which the "American Girls" books (Pleasant Co.) are popular.

Coop Renner, Moreno Elementary School, El Paso, TX

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About the Author

Lisa Waller Rogers is the author of three Lone Star Journal novels for young readers, as well as an anthology, *A Texas Sampler*. She lives in Austin, Texas.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Sheri Reagan:

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