

## Red Badge of Courage *by* Stephen Crane



**ISBN:** 0460013092

**ISBN13:** 978-0460013093

**Author:** Stephen Crane

**Book title:** Red Badge of Courage

**Publisher:** Everyman Paperbacks (January 15, 1991)

**Language:** English

**Category:** Genre Fiction

**Size PDF version:** 1823 kb

**Size ePUB version:** 1861 kb

**Size DJVU version:** 1364 kb

**Other formats:** mobi lrf lrf docx

0460013092



## Reviews of the **Red Badge of Courage** *by* Stephen Crane

- **Rageseeker**

It took me a while to get into the story because I had been reading so many modern novels lately, but once I did, it became a glorious and horrific wonder for my imagination. The story spelled out the inner workings of a mind on the battlefield in ways I haven't encountered in other novels. After chapter 3 I was captivated! I fully and heartily recommend pressing through if the beginning seems a bit stilted to you. The ending left this reader satisfied, not as if there's some happily ever after, but because there is some gleaming of hope even in the bitter horrors of combat. Crane captures the full gamut quite well.

- **Zeks Horde**

An extraordinary book for its time, Stephen Crane describes the intimate details and the innermost thoughts of a newly minted soldier on the front lines of a Civil War battlefield. With bullets whizzing

about him, and thick smoke and corpses as a backdrop, Henry flees his first encounter with battle. As he wanders about in the aftermath, he struggles with his shame and seeks rationalizations for his cowardice. Was he not the wiser for having fled a battle that was lost? Does not an animal flee a predator when sensing the predator is a superior force? But then Henry discovers that his battalion actually won the battle, and he returns to it after suffering a rather ignominious wound. But his comrades assume he was shot in the head and consider him a hero. Henry is transformed and goes on to fight courageously, earning the admiration of his comrades.

I find Crane's writing choppy and stilted. But it is perhaps this writing style that adds a sense of realism to his novel. The young Crane, who never saw battle and was writing more than a decade after the end of the Civil War, displays an astonishing talent for introspection. He creates with Henry Fleming a timeless protagonist in a coming of age novel that remains an American classic.

- **Brick my own**

This novel is the fictionalized story of a young man who enlists in the Federal Army in the midst of the American Civil War (1860-1865). The boy's illusions about himself and warfare are shattered during his first battle as he runs from battle in fear for his life. The story recounts his struggle to come to grips with himself in order to overcome his fears and redeem himself through heroic actions during a subsequent battle. Despite the fact the author never experienced combat I believe that the battle descriptions serve as benchmarks for all war novels.

This book was an exceptional read, a true example of the great "Classic American Novel", truly one of the top 100 novels ever written. I read it once before, while in high school, as part of an assignment designed to teach students about great novels. I recall enjoying the experience, but by no measure did I really understand how remarkable, how eloquent a testament to letters and reading this book truly stands. I think my improved understanding of this book comes from my many years of life experiences, including my years as a warrior, coupled by the many years of reading I've completed. The author's beautiful prose, the narrative, the pacing of the story, the author's ability to capture the humanity of characters, all of these factors and more have created this masterpiece. Almost everyone would enjoy reading this book! It is not simply a war story, it is a story about growing up, and facing whatever life throws at you.

- **Mautaxe**

I purchased this for my husband after an episode of "Boardwalk Empire" where a character has a dream sequence and appears to be dying (we don't know if he is/does).

I asked if he (my husband) had ever read this story and he didn't know what I was talking about. This book was required reading for me in high school (1994-95) and I LOVED it.

Many people in their reviews talk about the characters, plot, etc so I won't do that.

I will say that when this book arrived it was in great condition, brand new.

HOWEVER!! The print is SO TINY! If you are purchasing this for an older person I would recommend trying to find an edition that has larger font or maybe a Kindle edition so that the reader can enlarge the words.

- **Samardenob**

Stephen Crane. What bad is there to say about him? Sure, he never went to war - but that does not detract from the visceral experience one has in reading this work. Plus, Crane had a really wacky way of phrasing sentences which is inescapably modern. I read this novel over and over again. In

this edition, it is 100 pages long. There is also Frank Norris' hilarious send-up of Stephen Crane's style and some other English-professor commentary. This is indispensable reading for anyone trying to understand war.

- **Goltizuru**

I first read this book when I was 12 years old, many years ago, and I remember that it was one of my favorites in those days. But I didn't remember much beyond that, so I decided to read it again.

This classic was written in a style you don't see in American literature any more; a very descriptive book with elegant language, typical of 19th century writing. It is the story of an 18-year old young man who joined the Union Army and fought in the Civil War. Much of the story is about the feelings of this boy turning into a man in the harshest way, so there is not as much action as you would expect from a book written today. The book is about Henry Fleming's experiences in one particular battle, the first fighting for the 304th Infantry Regiment. In the battle, it is about what he sees and how he feels during the fight, rather than who is winning or losing, and how Henry changed from the first attack until the end of the battle, when they were marching away from the battlefield.

I found this look at how the young men who fought that war felt about the experience to be realistic and very interesting. But if you are looking for a guts and glory book about fighting and winning and heroic deeds, you may not enjoy this one.

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