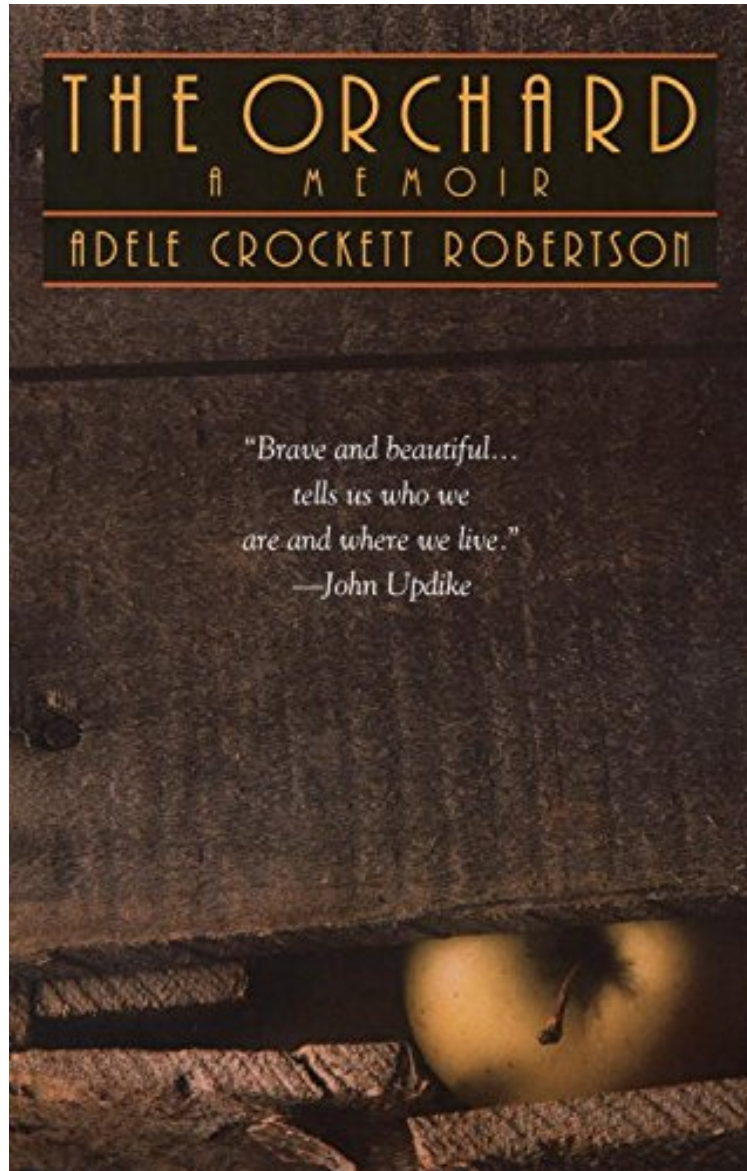


The Orchard: A Memoir

Adele Crockett Robertson

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Adele Crockett Robertson : The Orchard: A Memoir before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Orchard: A Memoir:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. A vintage classic By drbwodrich After a gap of two years, I just finished re-reading The Orchard. This is a true, powerful story of honesty, courage and human decency. The writing is hardly noticeable, so clearly does Robertson convey each scene of her story. The challenges she faces would be too

great for one person and a great dane, yet again and again she rises to meet them. And each poignant moment is conveyed with the simplicity of a master craftsman. Never does she miss a step. She carries us along with her feelings and the feelings of her characters, even those of the great Dane, Freya. Sometimes when you finish reading a book you want to say "Thank you" from the heart. In this case, I want to say Thank you both to the Adele Crockett Robertson, and to her daughter, for the Forward and Afterword that provide a setting for this gem of a book. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Great book

By E. Anderson

This book tells the story of Kitty Robertson, a single woman trying to keep up an apple and peach orchard to help pay the bills and avoid having the bank take over the family home during the Great Depression. Her work ethic is admirable. She lives in a home she can barely afford to heat, puts up with frozen and bursting pipes and learns how to manage a tractor, caustic chemicals, and a questionable group of peddlers (she used her father's target pistol). Kitty's story of the difficulties of managing the farm moves at a quick pace, and I found myself absorbed in the telling of her story. If she had written more volumes, I'd have purchased all of them. At one point in the story, after she worked frantically to pick apples to keep them safe from a pending storm, she falls asleep in the house and wakes to find the thermometer outside reading 19 degrees below and worries that the apples stored and packed in the basement might be freezing. She slides down the basement chute in the barn around 2:30 in the morning to avoid letting in the cold air from the basement door and finds the temperature at 24 degrees. Some of the apples have frozen and have gone from \$2.00 a crate to being worth no more than a dime per bushel. Kitty's manuscript was discovered by her daughter years later, under a pile of papers and a phone book. This story seems to parallel some of what is happening with the economy of the United States now, with the foreclosure crisis and the loss of jobs. Kitty was a Radcliff graduate who gave up her job at the Hartford Museum to take over the family farm. Later, she would find herself employed at the Sylvania factory as an assembly line worker. Kitty said, "I never felt hopeless unless I was hungry or cold or had nothing to do." She always had something to do, which made her life rich, earning her a great deal of personal and public respect from those that knew her or learned of her years later.

38 of 38 people found the following review helpful. If I could give this one Six Stars, I would!

By Thomas Leo Ogren

The Orchard, a Memoir, is a great book. Last week I was on a long flight back to San Luis Obispo from Omaha and I had this book with me, a gift from my mom. I started reading it and totally forgot about the flight, never noticed the movie they were playing. A good number of times tears were just pouring down my face and I'd wipe them away, wondering if the people on the plane around me thought I was a bit crazy. But I tell you, I'm crazy about this book! Honestly, I read a good deal and this is easily one of the most interesting, deepest, most powerful books I have read in years. Although true, a memoir, it reads just like a fine novel. I was so totally absorbed reading this rare gem of a find, that it was difficult to realize that the author had died some 20 years ago--she, Adele Crockett Robertson, seems so real, so full of life, so gutsy, so immediate. Briefly, this is the story of a young girl, a smart, educated girl with a good head on her shoulders, who loses her job in the great Depression, and goes back to the family farm to try and save it from the bank. The many people in the book all come to life perfectly and there are surprises aplenty. I am a gardenwriter (author of Allergy-Free Gardening) and have farmed myself, and I appreciate what Adele went through. I would also add that this is no doubt the best picture of life during the Depression I've ever come across. I plan to review this book every place that I can, because to my mind, this one is so good, so readable, so well worth reading, so enjoyable, so satisfying, that it completely deserves to be a best seller. Do yourself a favor and read this marvelous book!

The Orchard is an exquisitely beautiful and poignant memoir of a young woman's single-handed struggle to save her New England farm in the depths of the Great Depression. Recently discovered by the author's daughter, it tells the story of Adele "Kitty" Robertson, young and energetic, but unprepared by her Radcliffe education for the rigors of apple farming in those bitter times. Alone at the end of a country road, with only a Great Dane for company, plagued by debts, broken machinery, and killing frosts, Kitty revives the old orchard after years of neglect. Every day is a struggle, but every day she is also rewarded by the beauty of the world and the unexpected kindness of neighbors and hired workers. Animated by quiet courage and simple goodness, The Orchard stands as a deeply moving celebration of decency and beauty in the midst of grim prospects and crushing poverty.