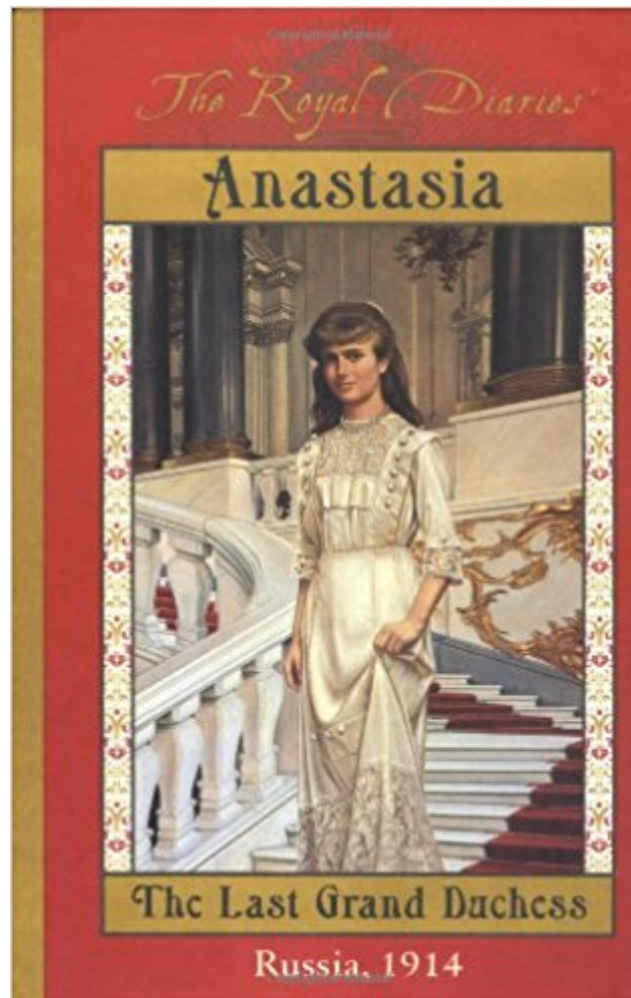




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The Royal Diaries: Anastasia: The Last Grand Duchess, Russia, 1914



Synopsis

A novel in diary form in which the youngest daughter of Czar Nicholas II describes the privileged life her family led up until the time of World War I and the tragic events that befell them.

Book Information

Lexile Measure: 860L (What's this?)

Series: The Royal Diaries

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Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars 160 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #165,470 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #15 in Books > Children's Books > Biographies > European #127 in Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Historical Fiction > Europe #306 in Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Royalty

Age Range: 9 - 12 years

Grade Level: 4 - 7

Customer Reviews

Anastasia is a carefree young duchess, daughter of Nicholas Alexandrovitch Romanov, tsar of all the Russias in 1914. While her father attends to the turbulent affairs of a vast and complex country, Anastasia's major concerns are how to get out of her detested schoolwork to play in the snow, go ice skating, or have picnics. She wears diamonds and rubies, and every morning her mother tells her which matching outfit she and her three sisters shall wear that day. Slowly a hint of future trouble enters her happy, pampered life. Anastasia's younger brother, the future tsar, is a hemophiliac--a "bleeder" who cannot stop bleeding if he is cut or bruised. Anastasia begins to learn that all is not well in the outside world, either. Not everyone in Russia worships her father as she does, and the Germans are about to declare war on Russia. Anastasia's world gradually deteriorates, as reported in her youthful, often playful journal. As Russia entered World War I, hunger and poverty grew among the peasants, and the Romanov ruling family began to lose favor, culminating in their murders--including Anastasia's--by Bolshevik revolutionaries. This fictionalized

diary of the mischievous youngest daughter's last four years gives a fascinating glimpse into a life of unlimited wealth--and the subsequent downward spiral. Historical notes, family trees, and photographs round out Carolyn Meyer's compelling contribution to the popular Royal Diaries series. (Ages 9 to 14) --Emilie Coulter

Grade 4-8-Given to Anastasia by her grandmother as a keepsake, this diary begins on the day after the Winter Ball, January 3, 1914. The 12-year-old is the youngest daughter of the last tsar of imperial Russia, yet beneath the surface of her royal life full of wealth, prominence, and opulence, readers find a typical preadolescent who misses her father when absent. Youngsters will worry over younger brother Alexei's hemophilia, experience concern as Russia comes under German attack, and feel fear and uncertainty during the family's captivity. Anastasia writes of plans for the future, but her diary abruptly concludes on May 18, 1918. Through careful research, the author successfully provides interesting glimpses into daily events, family relationships, and growing up royal. Russian terminology, unobtrusively explained, is carefully blended into the narrative. Entries are simply written, brief, and sometimes unexciting. Lulls occur in some of the everyday events; yet little expressions, mini-tantrums, and exasperation reveal Anastasia's personality, her temperament, and feelings. The epilogue details events leading to the family's assassination. Black-and-white pictures, a bit grainy in quality, pique readers' interest in the Romanovs. Additional information on life in Russia in 1914, historical notes, a family tree, information about the Russian language and calendar, and a list of characters all provide wonderful background information. Susan Shaver, Hemingford Public Schools, NE Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc.

I really enjoyed reading this book. It shows a royal's life that isn't spoiled rotten. Anastasia would much rather be doing things outdoors than be at fancy balls. I was really interested in the subject when a friend gave it to me. It was nice to hear about her day to day life. When I researched her, all I could really find was little scraps about her childhood and her tragic death. I like how it shows the hope the family has to the end. I would recommend this book to anyone interested in the subject of the last Royal Russian family. I would say anyone looking for a everybody lived happily ever story should not read this book. It gives a good story, but her life was short and her death was sad. Also unless you want gruesome details, I would not read deep into how she died outside of this book. In all it told me more about the life of a mysterious character in history and gave her more personality than a royal who was thought to have escaped for a long time.

SCHOOL, FOR SOME, HAS ALWAYS BEEN A CHORE. HISTORY CAN seem dry and dull. Many children will ask: "What do these stories have to do with NOW...TODAY? And royalty???? The USA is supposed to be a democracy, isn't it?" This series, from Scholastic Press, can change children's minds around! Focusing on female members of royalty -- from all eras, from Cleopatra to Anastasia, (The Last Grand Duchess) -- these books show these always historic, sometimes triumphant, and sometimes tragic royal ladies as precisely what they were -- real human beings, with faults, and virtues, just like the readers of these books! Every book has a glorious colour cover, depicting a very realistic, and character-evoking portrait of the Royal person whose "diary" the book purports to show. Obviously, these are not actual diaries, but an acute and realistic novelization of what such a "diary" could have been like. (In some of the other volumes, in fact, this fact is printed on one of the beginning pages.) But in all the books, the "giveaway" that this is actually the novelized, (or novella-ized) work of author, is given by the "by....." followed by the author's name, either on the cover, or on the inside title page. The volume I now possess is: "Anastasia, The Last Grand Duchess", by Carolyn Meyer. Ms. Meyer does an admirable job of describing the splendour of the Russian Court, as seen by the Czar's youngest daughter, Grand Duchess Anastasia Nicholaievna Romanov. Starting with observations about a ball, continuing with a wedding, a trip on the Royal Yacht, ((actual HOME-MOVIES of which, can be seen on YouTube to this day!)), descriptions of famous and not so famous people and events, all from the viewpoint of this very perceptive 13-17 year old, are described in one or a few paragraphs, all diary-like. One really does get "inside the head" of the fictionalized Anastasia Romanov, reading this book. Plus -- it's an excellent book for those who, having watched TV all their lives, find their attention-span decimated by having commercials breaking up the story, every 15 minutes or so. In this book --and, I suspect, in all the other "diaries", as well -- these "bite size", diary-entries make for easy, (and exciting!) reading! The "diary" ends, as the Royal Family leave their next-to-last place of imprisonment, to go to their (unknowingly) last imprisonment home, in Ekaterinberg, Siberia. At the end of the "Diary" section, there is an "Epilog", stating in detail what happened to Anastasia and the rest of the Imperial family, after the end of the diary. There follows a short, but very detailed "Historical Note", describing in easily understood language, the heart-wrenching facts that led up to the Imperial Family's murders. A family tree -- starting with Alexander III, and Louis IV, Grand Duke of Hess, and their spouses, (Anastasia's grandparents), and their generation and offspring, through several generations, (including the most recent death -- in 1979! -- of a not-so-distant cousin, Lord Mountbatten of Burma, (also, strangely, killed by an assassin), ends with DIRECT descendants of Alexander III and Louis IV, Grand Duke of Hess -- the Czar's five children, all born in different years, but all, tragically, dying in 1918. (The

youngest, Czarivich Alexei, was only 14 years old when he died.) Following the Family Tree is a brief description of the principle people on this tree. From this, we learn that Anastasia was her grandmother's favourite grandchild, and that her elder sister, Grand Duchess Tatiana, was her mother's favourite companion. Following this is a nice selection of 20 photographs, showing not only the Imperial Family, but the palaces -- and Siberian prison -- where they lived. A picture of Rasputin, ((hisssss!)), a St. Petersburg street scene, an Imperial Easter Egg, and the Royal Yacht, 'Standart', are also shown....as well as the July, 1998 ceremony, re-burying the remains of the Russian Imperial Family, attended by Boris Yeltsin, and his wife.....A 1-page explanation of the Russian Language, and a two-page explanation of the Russian Julian Calendar, and how it is different from, and co-existed with, the Gregorian Calendar, used in most of the Western world, is also given. There follows a 4 page listing, with one or two line descriptions, of every historical personage mentioned in the "diary" -- including "Jim", one of two American black men, who had jobs as door-keepers of the Czar! The life of the author, Carolyn Meyer, is described on the next two pages. Acknowledgements for the cover painting, (a truly regal, yet tellingly personal portrait of Anastasia), by Tim O'Brien, and for the sources of the photographs, previously mentioned, follows. A page listing the other books in the Royal Diaries series, (only 5, when my copy was printed....but now, happily added to!), follows, and on the last page, copyright, and dedication ("For Patricia Clark Smith"), information is given -- along with the caveat: "While Royal Diaries are based on real royal figures, and actual historical events, some situations and people in this book are fictional, created by the author." Happily, also -- as in the best old books -- a description of the typefaces used is also given: 'Longfellow' for display type, and 'Augereau' for the text. (('Fontaholics', such as myself, truly appreciate this information being given!)) The book has beautiful, patterned endpapers, and what must be a gold-foil simulation of the real gold, used on many diaries in the past...and even a few, right now. The binding is VERY good -- and is the very best I have ever seen, outside of really old and/or expensive books, which are sewn by hand in signatures, which costs of producing this book at its modest price, obviously prohibited. But -- a very, very good binding, nonetheless! I suspect that the "Royal Diary" series was inspired by both the Walt Disney "The Princess Diary" movie series, (and the books that inspired them), and, perhaps, also "The Diary of Anne Frank". A diary is always intriguing, after all, no matter who has written it. And a diary written by a Royal personage, perhaps even more so. Anyone who can learn a great deal by finishing this easily read, omtriguing, totally involving book. On the "FrozenTears.com" website, which is devoted to the Romanovs and their senseless killing, one lady -- obviously a cousin to the murdered Romanovs -- has written, simply and eloquently: "I wish I had known my family". In this book, we come not just to know the Grand Duchess Anastasia

Nicholaievna Romanov -- but every person with whom she came into contact, during her brief life. How sad that we can know the Romanovs, now, only through books, photographs, and a few historic films. As I have commented on YouTube, "If, someday, someone invents a Time-Machine, please go back to 1900 and warn the Romanovs!" In the meantime, we are fortunate to have the photographs, the historic film clips -- and books such as this one, which bring the last Imperial Russian Family, (last, that is, as of this writing!), vividly, realistically, and poignantly, to life!

My elementary school age daughter loves these books. Glad I found the series. This particular one is about King Kristina of Sweden - who knew a woman could actually be a King! I love the mix of historical fiction along with actual facts and photos at the backs of the books. Great way to introduce other cultures into my child's life. She has been fascinated with history and I give some credit to these books. Got most of the books used - always high quality. Very impressed.

I bought this book and the rest of the set for my nieces. My mom grew up with these books and in her stead I ordered this entire set. These stories are all about women role models and strong women through history. I would definitely recommend the stories. As for the condition -- the book was not in the greatest condition. It had obviously been loved and most likely in a child's library. All in all these are great stories and I would definitely recommend them!!!!

Love these books

Love it!

My 9 year old daughter has an obsession with Imperial Russia. Anastasia is someone she could research for hours and not become bored. This book provided a bit of historical information from the unique perspective of the young girl who was living it. While it is a fictional book, it is based on true events, and provides a perspective that a child can easily relate to.

I read this on a trip to Russia, not expecting much except to get the historical info. But it's written with actual wit and whimsy. Anastasia becomes a real child, and a mischievous one at that. She tells her story in the first person. Charming.

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