

# **Rilla of Ingleside Study Guide**

**Rilla of Ingleside by Lucy Maud Montgomery**

(c)2015 BookRags, Inc. All rights reserved.



# Contents

<a href="#">Rilla of Ingleside Study Guide.....</a>	<a href="#">1</a>
<a href="#">Contents.....</a>	<a href="#">2</a>
<a href="#">Plot Summary.....</a>	<a href="#">4</a>
<a href="#">Glen Notes and Dew of Morning.....</a>	<a href="#">5</a>
<a href="#">Moonlit Mirth and The Piper Pipes.....</a>	<a href="#">6</a>
<a href="#">The Sound of a Going and Susan, Rilla. . . . .</a>	<a href="#">7</a>
<a href="#">A War-Baby and Rilla Decides.....</a>	<a href="#">8</a>
<a href="#">Doc Has a Misadventure and The Troubles of Rilla.....</a>	<a href="#">9</a>
<a href="#">Dark and Bright and In the Days of Langemarck.....</a>	<a href="#">10</a>
<a href="#">A Slice of Humble Pie and The Valley of Decision.....</a>	<a href="#">11</a>
<a href="#">Until the Day Break and Realism and Romance.....</a>	<a href="#">12</a>
<a href="#">The Weeks Wear By and A War-Wedding.....</a>	<a href="#">13</a>
<a href="#">They Shall Not Pass and Norman Douglas Speaks.....</a>	<a href="#">14</a>
<a href="#">Love Affairs are Horrible and Little Dog Monday Knows.....</a>	<a href="#">15</a>
<a href="#">And So, Goodnight and Mary Is Just In Time.....</a>	<a href="#">16</a>
<a href="#">Shirley Goes and Susan Has a Proposal of Marriage.....</a>	<a href="#">17</a>
<a href="#">Waiting and Black Sunday.....</a>	<a href="#">18</a>
<a href="#">Wounded and Missing and The Turning of the Tide.....</a>	<a href="#">19</a>
<a href="#">Mrs. Matilda Pittman and Word from Jem.....</a>	<a href="#">20</a>
<a href="#">Victory! and Mr. Hyde Goes to His Own Place.....</a>	<a href="#">21</a>
<a href="#">Rilla-my-Rilla.....</a>	<a href="#">22</a>
<a href="#">Characters.....</a>	<a href="#">23</a>
<a href="#">Objects/Places.....</a>	<a href="#">27</a>
<a href="#">Themes.....</a>	<a href="#">29</a>
<a href="#">Style.....</a>	<a href="#">31</a>



Quotes..... 33  
Topics for Discussion..... 34



## Plot Summary

"Rilla of Ingleside" is a novel in the Anne of Green Gables series, describing the coming-of-age of Anne's youngest daughter, Marilla or Rilla. Set during the First World War in Canada, the narrative traces Rilla's development from a self-obsessed fifteen-year-old girl to a mature and brave nineteen-year-old.

At the beginning of the book, the family discovers that the Archduke of Austria has been assassinated, setting off the events that will eventually lead to war. Rilla, however, is more preoccupied with her first real dance, and her future with her crush, Ken. At the dance, though, the group discovers that war has been declared, and many of the young men talk about joining up. As Rilla's oldest brother Jem and his friend Jerry leave for war, others struggle with whether or not to join up such as Ken, who has an old sports injury, and Walter, Rilla's favorite brother. In the end, both of these boys also enlist.

On the home front, Rilla joins her mother in contributing to the war effort by starting a chapter of the Junior Red Cross. Shortly into her work, she discovers an abandoned baby, whose mother has died and whose father is off at the front. Initially disliking babies, Rilla "adopts" the young boy, naming him Jims, and spends her time trying to properly raise him. She simultaneously keeps working for the war cause, organizing recitations and concerts, and selling war bonds. Day to day life goes on: the antics of the family's housekeeper, Susan, are particularly noted, as she becomes a fierce patriot and is proposed to by a noted pacifist, who she rudely refuses. At the same time, the family pets play a large role in the book, as a two-sided cat has bad and good moods, and Jem's dog waits patiently at the train station for the full four years.

When Walter dies abroad, the family is heartbroken and even more scared when their youngest son, Shirley, also joins. Rilla was particularly close to Walter and takes the news very hard. In the meantime, she receives letters from Ken, who stopped by her home on his way to war and kissed her, giving her the idea that they are more or less engaged. As the war goes on, though, his letters become less and less romantic.

In the end, Jem is wounded and lost in battle, but eventually makes his way home. Ken comes home as well. Jims' father returns, with a new and capable English wife, and Jims has been left an inheritance by a neighbor, ensuring his future. Ken comes for Rilla and the book ends on the implied promise that they will spend the rest of their lives together.



# Glen Notes and Dew of Morning

## Glen Notes and Dew of Morning Summary

"Rilla of Ingleside" is the story of Rilla Blythe, the youngest daughter in a large family, and her coming of age in Canada during the first World War. The book begins at Ingleside, her family's home, where Susan, the family housemaid and cook, gossips with Mrs. Blythe, Miss Cornelia (the tutor), and other family members about the family itself. The family pets are also introduced here, particularly one known as Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, and a dog called Dog Monday. The group discusses the eldest son, Jem, who is courting a neighborhood girl called Faith Meredith, and Walter, who has been recovering from typhoid. During this section, the characters also read the newspaper and, amidst their local gossip, discover that the Archduke of Austria has been assassinated.

Rilla makes her first appearance in the second chapter, "Dew of Morning." In this chapter, she appears as a fifteen-year-old girl discussing her future with Miss Oliver, who is in her twenties and still young enough to be a friend to the girl. Unlike her many brothers and sisters, Rilla has no academic aspirations, and doesn't know what the future will hold for her. For the moment, she is greatly looking forward to her time as an older teenager, thinking that a girl can most enjoy herself between the ages of fifteen and nineteen.

## Glen Notes and Dew of Morning Analysis

The first two chapters of the book introduce both the characters and the main events of the following narrative. Beginning with Susan in the kitchen at Ingleside, the book seems to have a light and happy tone as the group pours through the local announcements in the paper, which also serves to introduce the myriad neighbors to the reader. This lighthearted tone is contrasted by the political news elsewhere in the newspaper, and made even darker by the fact that the reader knows, in retrospect, the consequences of the Archduke's assassination, while the characters are still hoping for the best.

Rilla's introduction reinforces the lighthearted positivity of the earlier gossips. She is not serious, like the rest of her family, and thinks only in the vaguest terms about the future. Her statement that she will be happiest between the ages of fifteen and nineteen is particularly sad as a foreshadowing device, as these will end up being the war years.



# Moonlit Mirth and The Piper Pipes

## Moonlit Mirth and The Piper Pipes Summary

In "Moonlit Mirth," foreign affairs are beginning to take their toll on the everyday lives of the characters, as the adults worry that there will be war. Miss Oliver, in particular, has had a symbolic dream that she believes predicts the coming of disaster. Nevertheless, it is also the evening of Rilla's first dance, at Four Winds, and she is more preoccupied with what she will wear and who she will dance with than anything happening in Europe. Some of Rilla's brothers and sisters also go to the dance, walking with their sweethearts to the shore. In this section, Rilla also thinks of Ken, the boy whom she has a crush on, for the first time.

"The Piper Pipes" describes the dance and its outcome. Rilla greatly enjoys herself at first, and Kenneth Ford asks her to dance. They dance together, and then go for a walk; she is pleased that he is talking to her like an adult, rather than like a child, since she has always been the younger sister of his friends. The mood is spoiled when they receive a telegram that war has been declared in Europe, and the boys start discussing joining up. Rilla's older brother, Jem, and his friend Jerry have particular military ambitions. In the chaos of the news, Rilla's family leaves her behind, and she can't make it home on her own, especially in her flimsy shoes. Moreover, her vanity will not allow her to wear borrowed shoes, for they are ugly. Mary Vance, a neighbor, teases her, but helps her stay overnight until she can make it home in the morning.

## Moonlit Mirth and The Piper Pipes Analysis

The dual threads of the novel, the happiness of home and the threat of war, come together in these two chapters. Miss Oliver's premonitions, though not yet proven, will come to play an important role in predicting various events in the characters' lives. At this point in the novel, though, none of the characters realize this.

The disruption of war is sharply contrasted with the happy evening of dancing that has been taking place, and particularly Rilla's budding romance with Ken. In fact, all of her brothers and sisters present have some form of sweetheart, setting up a possibly tragic outcome. However, this outcome has yet to be determined, though the reader knows that some of the couples must be broken apart. This is underscored by the young men who decide to enlist right away.

Rilla's inability to get home can be read as symbolic of this disruption. She is stranded from those she loves and what she knows, and cannot take herself back in her flimsy shoes. This illustrates how ill-equipped a lighthearted and flippant girl is to deal with the realities of war she will soon have to face.



# The Sound of a Going and Susan, Rilla. . .

## The Sound of a Going and Susan, Rilla. . . Summary

In "The Sound of a Going," Jem follows through on his earlier speeches and enlists in the navy, as does his childhood friend, Jerry. The entire family is desolate to see them go, and the Dog Monday accompanies them to the train station to see Jem off. Walter, Rilla's second brother, takes a walk with her and confesses that he is too cowardly to go. Because he has been recovering from typhus, nobody expects him to go, but he says that he would if he weren't such a coward.

Rilla begins to get tired of all the war talk, but in the following chapter, her mother encourages her to start a junior chapter of the Red Cross, and she willingly takes it on. Basting sheets for the soldiers and organizing her friends into the group, she dedicates herself to the war effort, though a little grudgingly. Meanwhile, Susan declares that she will do whatever it takes to help Canada. Finally, no matter what the family does, Dog Monday will not leave the train station, as though he is waiting for Jem to come home as he left.

## The Sound of a Going and Susan, Rilla. . . Analysis

Family and politics come together once again in these two chapters. Jem, the bravest of all of the Ingleside boys, immediately leaves. There is little sadness in his going on his end, though the family is of course upset. Their grief is embodied in Dog Monday, who never leaves the station, patiently waiting for his master to return, much as the family who is left at home has to do.

Rilla takes her first step towards growing up her, albeit unwillingly, as she pitches in with the war work. Part of this is perhaps due to Walter's influence on her, which is greater than anyone else's. He is ashamed of not joining up himself, though it is understandable as he is physically weak, but he sees himself as morally weak, as well. After his confessions to Rilla, we see her pitch in to help her mother and sisters, as well as Susan.



# A War-Baby and Rilla Decides

## A War-Baby and Rilla Decides Summary

While out collecting funds for the junior Red Cross, Rilla decides to go to the home of the Andersons, which is just a shack. However, she knows that Mr. Anderson is away fighting, and thinks that Mrs. Anderson might help with whatever she can. When Rilla enters the house, however, she finds a slovenly neighbor and a baby. Apparently, Mrs. Anderson has died, and the neighbor has been "looking after" the baby - who is in a sad state, looking very sickly. Rilla decides that she cannot leave the baby there or he will die, and says that she will take him with her until he can go to the "asylum," or orphanage. However, she rode on a horse, and will have trouble taking the baby back with her. Thus, she uses one of the only things left in the house, a soup tureen, to bring the baby back to Ingleside.

In "Rilla Decides," she has to cope with the reality of the baby's presence. She reads religiously from a book called "Morgan on Infants" about how to feed and care for it, and the family helps her a bit. Her father offers to take it to the asylum, but Rilla says that she will keep it until they hear from his father. Meanwhile, her brothers and sisters are going back to school, and the house feels more empty than usual. Kenneth Ford has also gone back to Toronto, though he stopped by Ingleside first. Unfortunately, Rilla was not at home to say good-bye to him.

## A War-Baby and Rilla Decides Analysis

Rilla's major obstacle appears in the form of the war-baby in the first chapter of this section. Though Rilla detests babies, she cannot in good faith leave a helpless infant to almost certain death. Though the moral conflict is a weak one, as taking the baby on is the only really moral choice, it is one of the first decisions she has to make on her own. Her commitment to raising the baby, and the later enjoyment she will take in doing so, will prove to be one of the major factors in her coming of age. Note that bringing the baby home in a soup tureen uses one of Montgomery's classic juxtapositions: a serious situation with ridiculous elements to it. The changes the baby will bring into Rilla's life can already be seen in the following chapter, when Rilla's duties have made her unavailable to see her sweetheart.





# Doc Has a Misadventure and The Troubles of Rilla

## Doc Has a Misadventure and The Troubles of Rilla Summary

Rilla finally decides to name the baby in "Doc Has a Misadventure," since she has not heard back from Mr. Anderson. They will call the baby Jims. Doc, the cat, gets his head stuck in a bowl of salmon, to the family's amusement.

In "The Troubles of Rilla," Walter writes to her that he is being treated as a coward at school, as all his classmates are enlisting in the war and he has not. He also mentions his affection for one of their neighbors, Una. The household, and especially Susan, are very upset at the events in Europe. During this turmoil, Rilla goes and buys a very expensive hat. When her mother scolds her for being wasteful during wartime, Rilla retorts that she will wear the hat for three years. Later, she has visitors for the junior Red Cross meeting. One in particular, Irene, is especially condescending and rude about the baby Jims, angering Rilla. Rilla does not show her rage, though, until Irene repeats rumors about Walter being a coward, at which point Rilla is very rude and outspoken.

## Doc Has a Misadventure and The Troubles of Rilla Analysis

These chapters again combine both the silly and the grave. The family cat with his head in a salmon jar is a ridiculous image and gives the family much to laugh about. At the same time, though, Walter's struggles cause Rilla much concern, though she never judges him while pitching in on her own. She still retains childish elements herself, shown in her purchase of an unnecessarily extravagant hat. This hat also shows her stubborn nature, as she swears to wear it for three years. Good qualities of her character emerge during this section, as well: her defense and utter loyalty to Walter in the face of Irene's nastiness serve to endear her even more to the reader.



# Dark and Bright and In the Days of Langemarck

## Dark and Bright and In the Days of Langemarck Summary

It is Christmastime in "Dark and Bright." Walter returns home, bearing a cruel and anonymous letter mocking him for not joining up. The entire family is subdued, with Jem being away. They discuss the comings and goings of their neighbors, and particularly a man nicknamed "Whiskers-on-the-moon," who is a noted pacifist. Meanwhile, Rilla goes to give a recitation in public to convince men to join the cause, which particularly scares her as she had a lisp in childhood. At the end of the chapter, the family receives a letter from Jem, claiming that all is going well.

In the following chapter, Kenneth has written to Rilla that he has enlisted as well, as a lieutenant. Rilla has to organize a concert for the benefit of the "Junior Reds," and the family becomes more and more worried about Jem at the front, though his letters continue to be cheerful.

## Dark and Bright and In the Days of Langemarck Analysis

"Dark and Bright" shows the truly personal effects the far-away war has begun to have on the family, as they have their first Christmas with Jim abroad. In addition, the novel becomes more political here, as the reader sees another political view here: that of Whiskers on the moon and his pacifism. Though the narration never praises or disparages him, the characters themselves - and particularly Susan - are not at all supportive of his views.

Another blow comes for Rilla when Kenneth enlists. Though she is not certain of where they stand, his going will remove all romance from her life for the moment, consigning her to the duller, more mundane tasks of war-work and raising Jim.



# A Slice of Humble Pie and The Valley of Decision

## A Slice of Humble Pie and The Valley of Decision Summary

Rilla must return to her fight with Irene in "A Slice of Humble Pie." The singer for the concert Rilla is organizing has backed out, and nobody in the area can sing well except for Irene. However, rumors have reached Rilla that Irene is angry about their falling-out over Walter. With no other options, Rilla decides to go apologize, though she is still angry. She arrives at Irene's house to a cold reception, only to realize that she is wearing two different shoes. After some discussion, Irene finally accepts her apology and says that she will sing at the concert.

In "The Valley of Decision," Italy declares war. Rilla sees Irene at the concert, who casually tells her that Walter has enlisted. Rilla can hardly believe it, but later has a late-night talk with her brother. He tells her that he is no longer afraid of death or mutilation, and that he must go now. Walter is not going to appease those who have been cruel to him, but to satisfy his own conscience. Rilla asks her mother how she can bear it, for her mother is very depressed at the news as well. However, their youngest son, Shirley, is not yet old enough to enlist.

## A Slice of Humble Pie and The Valley of Decision Analysis

Sacrifice, even in its smallest forms, comes into play in "A Slice of Humble Pie." Rilla must swallow her pride and go ask Irene for help. She does so not because her own opinion of Walter's decisions have changed, but rather because Irene's help with the concert is the only way the concert can succeed. Therefore, Rilla's learning to put her personal feelings below the actions that will serve the common good.

Walter has also done so, but on a far greater scale, as he enlists. He does so with the noblest motives: the reader should note that he has not caved into the pressure others have put on him, but has decided to go for his own conscience. This will prove important later on, as he sacrifices his life for his country.



# Until the Day Break and Realism and Romance

## Until the Day Break and Realism and Romance Summary

"Until the Day Break" describes Walter's last day at home with his family. He tells Rilla that their home, and the natural beauty that surrounds them, will always be in his heart, and that he believes the soldiers are going to fight for a better kind of happiness. While they talk, he mentions Una, who he has tender feelings for, and asks Rilla if she feels romantic about anyone. Here, she confesses that she has a crush on Kenneth, for the first time. Later in the chapter, Walter leaves. Though Rilla is desolate, she hides her feelings the best that she can, and thus seems "unfeeling" to people like Irene.

In "Realism and Romance," Ken calls to ask if he might drop by Ingleside to say good-bye. Rilla is delighted, especially because most of the family will be gone that evening. However, when he comes by, the pair hardly have a moment to chat before Jims begins fussing and Rilla must bring him out with them. She is horribly embarrassed at this, but Ken finds it endearing. They are speaking very earnestly when Susan comes home and joins their group, much to Rilla's disappointment. Susan will not leave, and as it gets later, Ken must go home. As Rilla walks him out, he kisses her when Susan's back is turned, and asks her to promise not to kiss anyone else while he is away. She promises. Later that night, she wonders whether or not they are engaged.

## Until the Day Break and Realism and Romance Analysis

Emotions play the major role in these two chapters, both in what is shown and what is hidden. Walter can only confess to Rilla on their own, and does so in a way that lets her accept his enlisting as a natural outgrowth of his character. Their natural affinity makes his going all the sadder. Nevertheless, the novel draws a clear line between private and public emotions; hence Irene's comment that Rilla seems unfeeling. The novel implies that the deepest feelings are those which are not shown.

This is shown in a more romantic light in "Realism and Romance," where Kenneth and Rilla's romantic words keep being interrupted by more prosaic factors, such as the baby or the housekeeper. However, their feelings are deep enough that they manage to kiss and to confess their feelings in a semi-private manner, without anyone (namely, Susan) finding out.



# The Weeks Wear By and A War-Wedding

## The Weeks Wear By and A War-Wedding Summary

In "The Weeks Wear By," the Blythe family discusses the war, and Susan reveals her ever-developing patriotic side. A close friend of Rilla's, Carl Meredith, enlists, and everyone is sad to see him go. Christmas comes around again, and this year both Jem and Walter are missing. Fred Arnold, a young neighbor, pays a visit to Rilla, who worries that he is courting her, after the promise she made to Ken. Meanwhile, Miranda Pryor, the daughter of Whiskers-on-the-moon, wants to marry a young man named Joe, but her father will not let her because Joe has joined the army. Miranda promised her mother on her deathbed that she would not run off to be married, and does not know what to do.

Rilla solves Miranda's problems in "A War-Wedding." She arranges for Miranda and Joe to come to Ingleside when Miranda's father is away. Rilla also asks Susan to bake a wedding cake and has other people aid in preparations for a quick wedding, as Joe will leave soon. However, the ceremony, while successful, is not as romantic as Rilla had hoped. Joe cries throughout it, and Miranda's dog has a fit. The young couple are happy to be wed, and Miranda finds when she tells her father that he is not as upset as she had feared he would be.

## The Weeks Wear By and A War-Wedding Analysis

These chapters provide a picture of life on the "home front" and take the reader away from the characters of Ingleside to focus more on Miranda and Joe. Rilla is the decisive force in their wedding, which again reveals the differences between the romance she craves and the mundane realities of life. Her planning of the wedding demonstrates how capable she has become as she organizes everything that needs to be done; nevertheless, her emotions and disappointment over the way it actually turns out show that she is still an idealist at heart.

Politically, the novel here turns against pacifism, as the characters delight in fooling Whiskers-on-the-moon.



# They Shall Not Pass and Norman Douglas Speaks

## They Shall Not Pass and Norman Douglas Speaks Summary

Miss Oliver has another premonition in "They Shall Not Pass," in which those words are spoken by a French soldier. Thus, even though France is invaded shortly thereafter, she has faith that they will not be defeated. At the same time, Walter wins a medal for showing great heroism in battle, where he saved another soldier by pulling him back into the trenches. He has also written a short poem that has been published widely in well-known publications, about the war. Miss Oliver receives news that her childhood sweetheart has been killed in action, but later learns that he has only been wounded.

In "Norman Douglas Speaks," the community is gathered at church, where Mr. Pryor (Whiskers-on-the-moon) gives a long sermon against the war. Some people hear this sermon and believe it to be pro-German, and there are several soldiers in the audience. A man named Norman Douglas stops him mid-way and curses him, scolding and berating him for his bad taste. Back at home, Dr. Blythe comments that though it was an inappropriate outburst, it was satisfying to witness.

## They Shall Not Pass and Norman Douglas Speaks Analysis

In these two chapters, the political comes to dominate the book. Miss Oliver's predictions have turned out to be right in the past; however, her dreams and their symbolic language are hard to decipher. The reader also sees another side of Miss Oliver, as she shows that she is in love, and has a childhood sweetheart of her own at the front. She has hidden this fact until this point in the novel.

The narrative takes on an even more patriotic tone with its celebrations of Walter's triumphs, as well as the pleasure the characters take in Norman Douglas's outburst.



# Love Affairs are Horrible and Little Dog Monday Knows

## Love Affairs are Horrible and Little Dog Monday Knows Summary

"Love Affairs are Horrible" ends the romantic feelings Fred Arnold has for Rilla, as he comes and confesses his feelings for her and she tells him that she can never feel anything but friendship for him. Feeling badly that she can't even lie to him as he goes off to war, she cries to her mother and confesses everything that's happened with Ken. Her mother tells her that she did the right thing, though she is sad that her smallest girl is so grown up and basically engaged. Rilla takes a little pleasure in the fact that her mother agrees with her hopes about Ken.

In "Little Dog Monday Knows," Rilla recounts a letter she has received from Jims' father, who had written several times before but never managed to get a letter through. He is relieved that Rilla is taking care of the baby, though Rilla is slightly saddened that she will have to give him back one day. At the train station, Dog Monday starts to howl and will not stop. The family waits, fearing the worst news from the front, but five days pass and nothing comes. They begin to relax, only to receive the news that Walter has been killed in action.

## Love Affairs are Horrible and Little Dog Monday Knows Analysis

"Love Affairs are Horrible" serves to establish Rilla as a person of integrity, as she refuses to betray Kenneth at all, even to help a friend of hers going off to war. This reinforces her earlier trait of loyalty, which the reader has only seen in conjunction with Walter to this point. Her actions are partially rewarded as her mother confirms her hopes about her future with Kenneth. In the second chapter, the worst happens, as Rilla will be forced to sacrifice two of her favorite people in the world: Jims, who will have to return to his father eventually; and, in a much greater sense, Walter, her favorite brother, who will never return.

# And So, Goodnight and Mary Is Just In Time

## And So, Goodnight and Mary Is Just In Time Summary

The family receives word, shortly thereafter, that Walter was killed with a single bullet and so did not suffer. Eerily, Rilla receives a letter from Walter several days later, as the mail has taken longer to come. In the letter, he foresees his death, saying that he must follow the 'Piper' but that he is at peace with it. He tells Rilla as well that he sees her growing old with Kenneth, and having a large family of her own. He ends by asking her to share the letter with Una. Rilla goes to see Una, who is desolate. In a rush of kindness, Rilla offers to let Una keep the letter.

In the following chapter, the family again discusses the developments in the war. Later, Rilla and Susan are on their own with the baby, and Jim becomes ill with the croup again. However, it is unlike any other illness he has ever had, and none of the normal remedies work. The two women berate themselves for letting it get so bad, as they were wrapped up in their own grief. Luckily, Mary Vance is passing by, and has an old-wives remedy that soon cures Jim.

## And So, Goodnight and Mary Is Just In Time Analysis

The supernatural tone the book sometimes takes comes to a head in Walter's letter to Rilla, in which he feels that he will die in the next battle. Many of Montgomery's more sensitive characters, including Miss Oliver, have these premonitions - as does Dog Monday, who was beside himself with grief on the very day Walter died, before he could possibly have known. Walter's death spurs Rilla on to new developments, as she selflessly gives his letter to his sweetheart, Una.





# Shirley Goes and Susan Has a Proposal of Marriage

## Shirley Goes and Susan Has a Proposal of Marriage Summary

In "Shirley Goes," the last of the Blythe sons, Shirley, turns eighteen and feels he should join his brothers overseas. He is very business-like about it, and his father gives permission on the condition that Mrs. Blythe agrees. Mrs. Blythe finally gives her consent. Meanwhile, Jerry has been wounded and Faith Meredith, Jem's sweetheart, has joined a nursing corps to travel overseas. The implication is that she is doing so in order to be closer to Jem. Finally, Bruce, a young boy of about ten from the area, comes to Ingleside to talk about Jem, and how he would wish to punish the Kaiser.

In "Susan Has a Proposal of Marriage," Whiskers-on-the-moon decides that his daughter can't keep house for him forever, and that he ought to find someone to get married. He approaches Susan about it. Susan is not only dismissive of the man, but also of his politics, which she cannot stand, and politely refuses him. However, when he tells her that he's surprised because he thought she would be only too happy to get any offer, she chases him out of the house with a boiling kettle.

## Shirley Goes and Susan Has a Proposal of Marriage Analysis

These chapters see the introduction of Bruce, a young boy who both lightens the mood and makes the reader realize the possible consequences of the war on a personal level for those surrounding the soldiers. Bruce symbolizes the hope and faith that the community still has for their soldiers at the front, as well as their naivete and sense of powerlessness.

This section is also lightened by Susan's proposal, which is described in the most ridiculous terms - an interlude to lighten the darkening tone of the book.



# Waiting and Black Sunday

## Waiting and Black Sunday Summary

"Waiting" is comprised mainly of excerpts from Rilla's diary, describing the endless battles and reports of the British (and thus Canadian) army they receive from abroad. For the first time, she confesses to her journal that her only ambition in life is to be married to Kenneth.

In "Black Sunday," the community is distressed to learn that Paris has fallen.

## Waiting and Black Sunday Analysis

In these political sections, the most important element is Rilla's reaction to the political events: she responds mainly to events abroad and thinks about them in very adult terms. She keeps a bit of her girlishness, however, in her confession that she only wants to marry ken.



# Wounded and Missing and The Turning of the Tide

## Wounded and Missing and The Turning of the Tide Summary

It seems that the Blythe family's worst fears have come to pass in "Wounded and Missing," when Jem is reported to have been shot in the leg and then disappeared. The family is beside themselves with worry. However, they take comfort in the fact that Dog Monday has a connection to their boys, and knew when Walter died; therefore, he would certainly react if Jem, to whom he was closer, were dead, and the dog has been very placid. Thus, the family has some small hope that Jem is still all right.

In "The Turning of the Tide," Miss Oliver has another one of her dreams. However, in this dream, she sees a beautiful Ingleside full of colors and rainbows, convincing those around her that the tide really is turning, and that this is the beginning of the end.

## Wounded and Missing and The Turning of the Tide Analysis

In these chapters, the reader is forced to confront the worst possible outcome of the war for the Blythe family: the possibility that all of their sons will be killed in action. Their trust in Dog Monday's intuition is still great, though, and a source of hope for all of them, as is Miss Oliver's dream in the following chapter. The uncertainty of these passages highlights the frustration of the time, and the blind fear that those at home had to face during the war. Montgomery's use of particular characters to illustrate this makes the uncertainty all the more moving.



# Mrs. Matilda Pittman and Word from Jem

## Mrs. Matilda Pittman and Word from Jem Summary

Rilla and Jims' fortunes change forever when they attempt to go to Charlottetown for some shopping. At the very last minute, Jims falls off the train and Rilla must follow him. However, because it is beginning to rain, they have little chance of making it back to Ingleside safely before morning. Knowing that one of her friends lives nearby, Rilla takes Jims to the house and they sneak in through a window when it appears that nobody is home. Rilla is shocked to find, in the morning, that the house does not belong to her friend, but rather to strangers. The couple to whom it belongs are irate, but their mother insists that they be hospitable. She is Mrs. Matilda Pittman, and is delighted by the fact that Jims takes a liking to her. She insists that her son drive them back to the station.

In "Word from Jem," Rilla overhears her mother telling her father that Rilla has really developed over the past four years, since the war started. She used to be vain and self-absorbed, but is now a lovely young woman. Meanwhile, young Bruce from the neighborhood arrives to tell them that he has sacrificed his cat by drowning to make a bargain with God that Jem will come home. Not long afterward, the family receives a telegram that Jem is indeed alive, and escaped to Holland. He will go to England to recover from his wounds, and then come home.

## Mrs. Matilda Pittman and Word from Jem Analysis

Chance and luck permeate these passages. Though the incident with Mrs. Pittman initially seems to be just another of the silly pauses in the narrative, it will ultimately end up securing Jim's future, as his kindness to the older woman results in his being left an inheritance that will guarantee his future. Similarly, Jem's escape - and the news of it - have been partially due to this same fate, as he will soon be coming home. The poignancy in these chapters is embodied in Bruce and his animal sacrifice: as animals have been so humanized throughout the book, this is a particularly tragic moment. Nevertheless, it highlights the superstition behind some of the events, as Jem does indeed come home shortly thereafter.



# **Victory! and Mr. Hyde Goes to His Own Place**

## **Victory! and Mr. Hyde Goes to His Own Place Summary**

In these two brief chapters, the war ends. Germany and Austria sue for peace, to the delight of everyone. Nevertheless, the community still waits in fear as the last lists of wounded and dead are drawn up. Still, the war is over.

In "Mr. Hyde Goes to His Own Place," the cat disappears. He is not dead, but does not come home again. Susan, meanwhile, decides to take a honeymoon - alone. After sixty-four years, she has decided that she deserves one, whether or not she is married.

## **Victory! and Mr. Hyde Goes to His Own Place Analysis**

The disappearance of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde can be seen as a symbol of the resolution offered by the book: the dual nature of the narrative, the pleasant home-side stories, often silly, and the sheer terror of battle and of having loved ones at the front, has disappeared. Susan's brief trip from Ingleside also underscores this sense of relief: she no longer needs to keep watch at home, as things are now safe enough for her to have a vacation.



# Rilla-my-Rilla

## Rilla-my-Rilla Summary

The men come back from the front in this final chapter. Jem is barely recognizable, but Dog Monday recognizes him, and will no longer leave his side, ecstatic that his master is home. Rilla, however, does not know what to do with herself. She knows that Ken is home but hasn't heard a word from him. She considers taking a course in domestic science, but is not really interested in studying. In the final paragraph, however, she goes to the door, and finds Ken there, waiting for her.

## Rilla-my-Rilla Analysis

This chapter simply offers the reader the happy resolution the narrative has built to.



# Characters

## Rilla

The book's protagonist, Rilla (Marilla) is the youngest child of many living at Ingleside. Most of her brothers and sisters have grown and gone on to pursue their educations in different parts of Canada. Rilla, however, has no ambitions as a fifteen-year-old. Perhaps because she is the youngest, she has a tendency to act spoiled and to disregard the wishes of others in favor of her own desires, such as when she buys the very expensive green hat against her mother's will. As the book continues, though, Rilla develops in important and interesting ways. Namely, she grows into an intelligent and wise woman of nineteen. Several outside factors account for this change, but the greatest of these is the war itself, which is the indirect or direct cause for all of the rest. She must raise Jims, the baby, which instills a sense of responsibility and selflessness in her; this is because his father is off fighting abroad. She is in love with Kenneth, but must wait for him, because he too is fighting; this gives her patience she didn't have as a younger girl. The death of her brother Walter in the war changes her as well, giving profundity and depth to a character who was earlier frivolous and self-absorbed. In the end, these changes combine to make Rilla a protagonist worthy of the war-hero Kenneth, and full of virtues as well.

## Anne Blythe

Rilla's mother; the former "Anne of Green Gables." Anne oversees everything that goes on at Ingleside. Earlier books in this series trace the development of the happy home she and Gilbert (Dr. Blythe) have created; however, readers unfamiliar with these works can still see the magical, happy home in the midst of beautiful natural surroundings that has provided so many children with so much pleasure. In ways, the character of Anne can serve as an example of the war's consequences back on the home front: even the bravest and most cheerful of women suffered setbacks, doubts, and tragedies. The resilient Anne of earlier books is here brought to her knees by the death of one of her sons, the disappearance of another, and the enlisting of her youngest. Nevertheless, though she is often depressed and even distraught by the events of the war, Anne keeps going, providing a safe and cheerful home for those left with her. Anne also serves as a gauge of Rilla's development, as it is through her comments, whether to Dr. Blythe or to herself, that the reader is forced to take note of the changes in Rilla's character.

## Walter Blythe

This is Rilla's favorite brother and the second eldest of the Blythe boys. At the beginning of the novel, nobody thinks that Walter will have to go fight in the war, because he has recently recovered from typhoid. He is partially grateful for this, as it spares him the



danger of war, but also realizes that this relief is indicative of a cowardice within him. He is sensitive and poetic, and closest in spirit to his sister. However, as the war continues, Walter begins to be mocked and looked down upon by his peers, even being sent a white feather (a sign of cowardice) anonymously in the mail. As he reflects on his own life and his values, Walter decides on his own that he must go and fight. On the battlefield, he proves to be a brave and fearless soldier, even winning a medal for saving one of his comrades from enemy fire. At the same time, a poem he writes on war becomes quite famous. When he dies, the family is devastated, and this devastation reaches to others: namely, Una, his sweetheart.

## **Kenneth Ford**

This is Rilla's sweetheart and a charming boy who has been friends with the Ingleside children for years, but who has only recently begun to notice Rilla. As he does, however, the war has begun. Though he does not initially think he will fight because of an old sports injury, he eventually enlists. He writes to Rilla from the front, but she doubts his intentions. However, when he comes home, Kenneth and Rilla end up together.

## **Susan Baker**

This is the family's housekeeper. A spirited patriot who serves as the voice of the household. Sixty-four years old, Susan receives her first proposal of marriage in the book from the village's pacifist, which she firmly rejects. Once the war is over, Susan takes a vacation, which she calls her "honeymoon" (though she is still single).

## **Gertrude Oliver**

This is the family's tutor, who has been with them for years. Miss Oliver often has dreams that predict the future in abstract and metaphorical ways.

## **Dr. Blythe**

This is the family father; Gilbert from the earlier "Anne" books in this series.

## **Jem Blythe**

This is the eldest of the Blythe sons and the first to enlist. He is wounded at the front, but escapes to Holland, then England, and eventually makes it home.

## **Faith Meredith**

This is Jem's sweetheart, who becomes a nurse to be overseas near Jem.





## **Shirley Blythe**

This is the youngest of the Blythe sons, and the last to enlist. He too makes it home safely.

## **Di and Nan**

These are Rilla's older sisters and academics who are away studying for their degrees.

## **Una**

This is Walter's sweetheart.

## **Sophia Crawford**

This is Susan's cousin, who provides a sharp and often humorous counterpoint to Susan's claims.

## **Mary Vance**

This is a neighboring woman. She helps cure Jims of the croup, though she can often meddle where she is not wanted.

## **Jims**

This is the baby Rilla rescues, who grows into a charming young boy.

## **Mr. Anderson**

This is Jims's father, who is away fighting at the front and does not realize what has happened to his wife (who has died) and his son for some time.

## **Irene Howard**

This is Rilla's nemesis, who often talks about her behind her back and makes Rilla's life as difficult as possible in petty ways.

## **Whiskers-on-the-moon**

This is the town pacifist and Miranda's father.

## **Miranda Pryor**

This is the daughter of Whiskers-on-the-moon, who gets married to a soldier despite her father's wishes.



## **Objects/Places**

### **Ingleside**

This is the family home and an idealistic, romantic house set in a charming landscape.

### **Rainbow Valley**

These are the lands surrounding Ingleside where the children have grown up.

### **Glen St. Mary**

This is the larger community to which Ingleside belongs

### **Lisp**

This is Rilla's speech impediment, which she has mostly overcome. However, it comes back in moments of stress, and often appears when she is talking to Kenneth.

### **Typhoid**

This is the disease that has weakened Walter.

### **Dog Monday**

This is Jem's dog. After Jem leaves on the train to begin his military training, Dog Monday refuses to leave the station until he returns. The dog also appears to have some sort of supernatural powers, as he howls uncontrollably at the same time Walter is killed, though nobody in town knows it yet.

### **Dr. Jekyll/Mr. Hyde**

This is the family cat, who has two personalities. He disappears at the end of the story.

### **Telegrams**

These are mostly the bearers of bad news, especially of death. However, it is also through a telegram that the family discovers Jem is still alive.



## **Rilla's Diary**

This is the place where Rilla confesses her true feelings about the happenings around her.

## **The Kaiser**

This is the leader of Germany, and an object of much hatred among the Ingleside folk.

## **Soup Tureen**

This is the vessel in which Rilla brings Jims home.

## **The Red Cross**

This is the major occupation of the women. Rilla starts a junior branch to please her mother, but eventually ends up having a talent for organization.



# Themes

## War

War in its many forms, and its many consequences, constitutes one of the major themes of "Rilla of Ingleside." Especially for those readers who have read the earlier books in the "Anne" series, this external disruption and intrusion into the happily-constructed Ingleside family is particularly jarring. The personal consequences of war are particularly relevant to the book, as each character changes because of events happening an ocean away. Rilla, of course, is forced to grow up, nevertheless developing into a mature and serene woman she otherwise might not have become. The ever-spirited Anne of Green Gables (Mrs. Blythe) loses her most sensitive son, causing her deep sorrow. Other characters, as well, change, sometimes physically (for example, Jem returns with his limp). The loss of control that the family feels serves as a microcosm of families around the world who suffered through the same kinds of events. The novel explicitly shows that if such a happy family can be thus affected by these events, every family can. The growing importance of the major world events throughout the novel, such as the invasion of Paris, also shows the beginnings of globalization. Characters, such as Susan, with only a rudimentary understanding of geography end up knowing much about Europe and its politics before the war is over. In one way or another, each character is changed by the war, depicting war itself as a negative, permeating, and unavoidable force that can only be countered through perseverance.

## Coming of Age

Rilla is the main example of coming of age; indeed, the novel takes her growing up as its main subject, as seen through the lens of war. As the story unfolds, Rilla goes from a naive child to an intelligent woman. She develops in several ways: in her family, in her bravery, and in her selflessness. As far as her family is concerned, Rilla begins the story as the spoiled baby of the family, happy to be doted on by her parents, Walter, and the others. While the narrative continues, Rilla becomes far less concerned with their attention to her and more with what she can do to help them. Her heart goes out to Walter, both before and after he enlists, and she keeps the household together after his death as her mother takes to her bed. It is her family's comments, as well, that show Rilla becoming a young woman, rather than a spoiled child. Rilla must also face her fears, and speak in public, though she has a lisp that recurs at inopportune moments. More than that, though, she also has to live with the uncertainty that the war brings - a difficulty for a girl who initially wants everything right away. Finally, by taking care of the baby Jims, Rilla has to learn to care for others more than for herself. Ironically, this brings about the exact chain of events that bring her what she wants. By becoming more selfless, she becomes the perfect character to become Kenneth's wife.



## Hope

Throughout the bleak events that the book sometimes presents, hope for the future prevails. In the dark times of war, every character in the book is changed in his or her own way. Whether this is for better or worse depends on the amount of hope they have. As Walter writes to Rilla on the eve of the battle where he will die, he knows that his time has come. It is perhaps this lack of hope that leads him to his death, though the book never explicitly states this. Rilla, however, must continue to have hope for all of her family and loved ones overseas, just as Susan does (sometimes manically so). The importance of hope is embodied in the character of Faith Meredith, whose first name explicitly shows the kind of attitude that will help Canada prevail. Faith, rather than doing nothing or waiting impatiently at home, becomes a nurse and goes to join the soldiers abroad, showing her utter hope that one day they will return.

# Style

## Point of View

Though far from being a contemporary work of fiction, "Rilla of Ingleside" uses several points of view that contribute to a complex and textured narrative. The majority of the novel is told from the third-person limited point of view, focusing on Rilla herself. The reader is thus privy to her thoughts and feelings, without the extreme limits of the first person, or "I" voice. However, when necessary, Montgomery provides excerpts from Rilla's diary, which do give this more intimate portrait of Rilla and her development throughout the events of the novel. The juxtaposition between the two allows the reader to experience the actions and emotions of other characters in a more objective way than the exclusive use of the first person would, while the snippets from the diary allow for the intimacy of the first-person experience. This combination also allows the reader to judge for herself where Rilla is reliable or unreliable in telling of the events of her life. Finally, Montgomery rarely uses an omniscient voice, but she does use it. This occurs mostly to predict coming events, or to foreshadow changes that Rilla and the other characters can't yet see. Through these three voices, as well as the extensive dialogue that the other characters provide, the readers is left with a sense of understanding the events as they actually "took place" as well as Rilla's own personal interpretation of them.

## Setting

The setting defines the narrative in "Rilla of Ingleside." The characters are in Canada, during World War I. The fact that they are Canadian is extremely important throughout the novel, for Canada is an English territory. Though it is more or less self-governing, it is still a commonwealth country belonging to England; therefore, readers should realize that the events that affect England are equally affecting Canada. It may seem more logical to younger readers for the Canadians to fight with the Americans. While they eventually do so, the Americans do not join the fighting until much later, and Canada's role in the war is thus aligned with England's, in fighting the Germans (among others). The sense of Canadian nationalism, or pride in the country, can be seen in the young characters' eagerness to join up, as well as in the fierce patriotism of the vast majority of the characters.

The war is the determining event of the book. As stated earlier, the war changes each character in particular ways. Thus, the setting challenges each person in the novel and brings their true characters and values to the forefront.

## Language and Meaning

As in the earlier "Anne" books, Montgomery uses flowery and complex language, some of which can be difficult for a modern reader to understand. She does so not simply in



the exposition, but also in the characters' dialogue. Her sentences are long, and she often uses lengthy descriptions of natural surroundings to place her readers in the world of the book. What is most notable about the language, however, is how it changes as the book progresses. Readers should note that the excerpts from Rilla's diary grow less and less fanciful (and consequently more practical) as the narrative progresses, just as the dialogue becomes simpler and more terse, even in the humorous scenes. The war's effect on language, making the characters sound increasingly like the newspapers they scour daily, is one of the most visible effects of the events in the novel. However, it is important that some fanciful language remains, some beauty, and some whimsy. This can be seen in Walter's nickname for Rilla, "Rilla-my-Rilla." Although he dies, Walter has passed the nickname onto Kenneth, who uses it when he returns to Rilla, demonstrating the good values still salvageable from their world.

## Structure

"Rilla of Ingleside" is told in short, titled chapters, as is common for a book of its time. These chapters correspond to singular episodes that usually take place within a period of several minutes or hours. The unifying force behind these episodes is, in this case, Rilla, who is the heroine and star of most of the events. The fact that others start to take her place as the narrative continues - Walter, Jem, etc. - also show the development of Rilla's character. Just as she becomes less self-centered throughout the course of the book, the book too becomes less focused on Rilla herself. Of course, the main event of her life, Kenneth's love for her and his return from the front, takes center stage at the end of the narrative, proving she can still have the romance she desires in her new life as a mature adult.





## Quotes

"Rilla's world had tumbled to pieces the very day after the party" (The Sound of a Going, p. 50).

"Rilla felt as if she were in some fantastic nightmare. Were these the people who, three weeks ago, were talking of crops and prices and local gossip" (Susan, Rilla, and Dog Monday, p. 67).

"She's upstairs, Mrs. Dr. dear, putting her baby to bed" (A War-baby, p. 79).

"Suppose, she thought, I was a tiny, helpless creature only five months old, with my father somewhere in France and my poor little mother, who had been so worried about me, in the graveyard" (Dark and Bright, p. 109).

"A good laugh is as good as a prayer sometimes - only sometimes" (In the Days of Langemark, p. 120).

"There is only one thing of importance just now - and that is that the Allies win the war" (A Slice of Humble Pie, p. 130).

"I wonder," she said to herself, "if I am, or am not, engaged to Kenneth Ford" (Realism and Romance, p. 157).

"I do not know if that was prophecy or desperation" ("They Shall Not Pass," p. 183).

"Rilla found it was possible to go on with existence, since existence still had to be reckoned with" (And So, Goodnight, p. 209).

"That - that - that pacifist has actually had the audacity to come up here and, in my own kitchen, to ask me to marry him. HIM" (Susan Has a Proposal of Marriage, p. 239).

"Why can't yesterday come back, Willa" (Waiting, p. 249).

"Is it Rilla-my-Rilla?" he asked, meaningly" ("Rilla-my-Rilla" p. 300).



## Topics for Discussion

What views of war does "Rilla of Ingleside" present? How are these views embodied by various characters?

Compare and contrast Jem and Walter. How do their attitudes towards war differ? Does this have any effect on their ultimate fates?

The role of women during wartime has often been debated. How do the women in the novel contribute to the war? Does their work make a real difference? If not, what might its purpose be?

The baby Jims can be read in a symbolic fashion. How is he important to the narrative? Correspondingly, what might he symbolize?

Discuss the role of various animals in "Rilla of Ingleside." Why does the author spend so much time describing their antics? What do they contribute to the story?

Various forms of love are shown in the novel. Compare and contrast at least three couples, discussing the nature and outcome of their love, and how it contributes to the overall themes of the book.

In the final estimation, what is the novel's view of the war, and of war in general? Several answers are possible: support your argument with concrete examples from the book.