



# Mary Seacole: Bound for the Battlefield

Books Reviewed:

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NewsChoice:

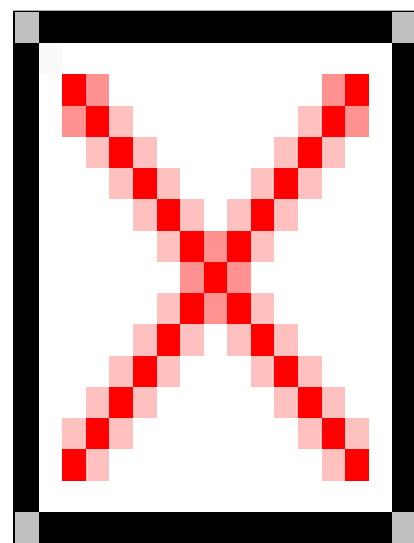
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Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

4



There was a time when biographies of Mary Seacole written for primary school children were few on the shelves. Thankfully that time has passed and there is information readily available. However, it is important to ensure variety of approach and style. Many of the biographies designed for this young audience will rely on sound-bite texts and captioned illustrations ? usually period reproductions and are quickly accessible. Here the author has taken a different approach to produce an extended narrative that will prepare young readers for the type of biographies they may meet later. The result brings Mary Seacole to life; she becomes a person, and we follow her from her childhood in Jamaica to the battlefields of Crimea. The author makes use of Seacole?s autobiography, introducing quotations that further enliven the text and add authenticity, especially in the recreation of conditions experienced by the soldiers (and Mary Seacole) at the front. The friendly accessibility of this biography is further enhanced by the illustrations from Richie Pope, encouraging young readers to see this as living story, not Fdead history. But to ensure that it is not seen as fiction, Rubin includes a brief bibliography and source notes for all her quotes ? an excellent introduction to the use of source material. An enjoyable and valuable addition to the library - it would be good to read aloud as well!

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