

The Indigo Girl by Natasha Rosenfeldt Boyd

5 stars

The story of Eliza Lucas and her passion for *Indigofera tinctoria*

In 1739 sixteen-year-old Eliza Lucas is left in charge of her father's plantations in South Carolina – an unheard-of thing for a woman in those times! Eliza already has a keen interest in plants thanks to a childhood friend but when her father takes her along when he goes to inspect one of his plantations, before he leaves, her interest is caught by some slave women carrying bundles of sticks back towards the dwellings wearing faded blue sack skirts swishing against dusky dark skin. Eliza made a deal with her slaves: she would teach them to read and in return they would teach her the secrets of making indigo. Thanks to Eliza's vision and perseverance indigo went on to become one of the largest exports of the colonies, laying the foundation for colonial wealth that shaped United States history.

The story is based on true events and historical documents but certain elements had to be created to demonstrate character or give fabricated reasons for actions where the truth behind certain deeds has been lost to time. Being a woman and of farm stock myself I identified with Eliza. She was ambitious and headstrong, she didn't always conform to society's expectations, she made friends with whom she chose and not who was expected and she did not have an idle bone in her body. Two hundred years after her death, Eliza Lucas Pinckney was inducted into the South Carolina Women in Business Hall of Fame and in 2017 she will be the D.A.R. Woman of the year. Also, to this day, the South Carolina state flag is blue in honour of indigo.

Saphira

Breakaway Reviewers received a copy of the book to review.