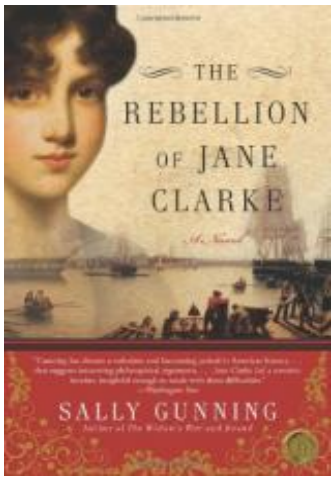
# The Rebellion of Jane Clarke

by Sally Gunning




## About the Book

Jane Clarke leads a simple yet rich life in the small village of Satucket on Cape Cod. The vibrant scent of the ocean breeze, the stark beauty of the dunes, the stillness of the millpond are among the daily joys she treasures. Her days are full attending to her father's needs, minding her younger siblings, working with the local midwife. But at 22, Jane knows things will change. Someday, perhaps soon, she will be expected to move out of her father's home and start a household of her own.

Yet some things --- including the bitter feud between her father and a fellow miller named Winslow --- appear likely to remain the same. When the dispute erupts into a shocking act of violence, Jane's lifelong trust in her father is shaken. Adding to her unease is Phinnie Paine, the young man Jane's father has picked out as son-in-law as well as business partner. When Jane defies her father and refuses to accept Phinnie's marriage proposal, she is sent away to Boston to make her living as she can.

Arriving in this strange, bustling city awash with red coats and rebellious fervor, Jane plunges into new conflicts and carries with her old ones she'd hoped to leave behind. Father against daughter, Clarke against Winslow, loyalist against rebel, command against free will --- the battles are complicated when her growing attachment to her frail aunt, her friendship with the bookseller Henry Knox, and the unexpected kindness of the British soldiers pit her against the townspeople who taunt them and her own beloved brother, Nate, a law clerk working for John Adams.

But when Jane witnesses British soldiers killing five colonists on a cold March evening in 1770, an event now dubbed "the Boston Massacre," she must question seeming truths and face one of the most difficult choices of her life, alone except for the two people who continue to stand by her?her grandparents Lyddie and Eben Freeman.

Grippingly rendered, filled with some of the lesser known but most influential figures of America's struggle for independence --- John and Samuel Adams, Henry Knox, James Otis --- **The Rebellion of Jane Clarke** is a compelling

story of one woman's struggle to find her own place and leave her own mark on a new country as it is born.

## Discussion Guide

**1.** At the beginning of **The Rebellion of Jane Clarke** Jane appears to share her father's political view. Discuss how this changes or remains the same throughout the novel.

**2.** Jane rebels against her father by refusing to marry Phinnie Paine. What else or who else does Jane rebel against?

**3.** Discuss Jane's changed feelings for her stepmother. What factors influence this change?

**4.** After the massacre Jane resents the fact that Henry Knox exposed her to danger. Is this resentment justified or misdirected?

**5.** Jane is older than her brother. Does she seem so? What factors of their time and circumstance might influence this preception?

**6.** Discuss the role of James Otis in the novel and his effect on Jane.

**7.** Discuss the influence of Jane's grandparents on her decisions.

**8.** If you were Jane, would you forgive Aunt Gill?

**9.** What parallels do you see between the politics of 1770 and those of today?

**10.** Does the Boston Massacre in **The Rebellion of Jane Clarke** differ from the version you learned in school?

## Author Bio

Sally Gunning lives with her husband in Brewster on Cape Cod, Massachusetts, where her roots go back over three centuries. She came to writing at a young age, driven to it in desperation one rainy day when she ran out of books. Today Gunning focuses on digging out the back story to the history that we thought we knew but didn't, and giving it a human face. She is the author of three historical novels set in New England during the tempestuous years that led up to the American Revolution: The Widow's War, Bound, and her latest - The Rebellion of Jane Clarke.

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