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# The Gilded Mirror: Corfe Castle (Volume 1)



## Synopsis

Age Level: 12 and up In this first book of the teen/young adult series of *The Gilded Mirror*, fifteen-year-old Anna Moore discovers an antique mirror that whisks her back in time to seventeenth-century England. The year is 1643 and the English Civil War is underway. Anna finds herself at Corfe Castle with the Bankes family when the castle is laid siege. Against all odds, she helps the family defend the castle from rebel forces who hopelessly outnumber them. What will happen and will Anna be able to return to her own time? Inspired by true historical events, *The Gilded Mirror* is an adventurous tale that crosses centuries in time through the forces of a mysterious mirror. It is a story of friendship, tremendous courage in the face of adversity, and the indomitable human spirit.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

*The Gilded Mirror* Corfe Castle by Jocelyn Murray The main character Anna Moore steps through a gilded mirror in her grandmother's home. Which sends her time-traveling to Corfe Castle. You will experience the characters' emotions, adventures, hopes and fears in this historical fiction story. Jocelyn Murray shows her readers with unique talent in word pictures the life in time long ago.

This takes place in the 1600s around the time of King Charles of England. Corfe Castle was built by William the Conqueror in the eleventh century. Jocelyn has done her homework and it shows when you read this well written story. I enjoy reading the works of Jocelyn as she has the ability to transport you to a place that existed many years ago. Great characters help to take your imagination on this trip. I have rated this story a solid 5 stars. I look forward to reading more of the books written by Jocelyn Murray. One of my favorite lines from the story. "He was like a dog with a bone, determined and obstinate." Looking forward to reading the other two books in this series. Well written and a great choice to add to your reading list.

I bought this for my 12 year old daughter as an alternative to the dystopian fiction that kids seem hooked on these days and when she took a break, I grabbed it and started reading it myself. What a great surprise! I occasionally read historical fiction so am familiar with the genre (and this is all based on a remarkable true story), but I never remotely thought I'd get pulled into this like I did. Murray is a very talented writer and story-teller and I'm again jealous of another author. If there indeed were punctuation and grammar issues when the book was first offered as one reviewer complains of, they have since been fixed, I noticed none. The plot is simple: Anna, a bright and curious 15 year old, discovers an old mirror in her grandmother's house and magically steps into 1643, smack in the middle of the English Civil War. In the ensuing adventure she begins to learn the meaning of courage. Murray doesn't spend time explaining how or why this happens, but gets right into the telling of the story. The first half of the book is very descriptive, thoroughly fleshing out the environment of 17th century English castle-life. Foods, clothes, customs, the darkness of the nights without electric lights, the quietness of the days without planes and cars, and all the little things that might not occur to you at first thought are explained in thoughtful detail:~ Anna looked out over the landscape. It rose and dipped for miles, rugged and rocky, then soft and velvety as the meadows blended into the craggy heath. It was hard to believe that something so pretty had been witness to something so ugly. But then she remembered the spider and the butterfly they had just passed moments before... Around the mid-point of the book, the excitement begins, and Anna is pulled into the conflict as she tries to find her role while helping her "cousin" Elizabeth defend the castle from a besieging army. There is excitement, trickery, humor, doubt, and fear and a poignant moment when she comes face to face with the evils of war as she struggled for her very life:~ Tossing hot embers was just as difficult when Anna watched in shock as several of the enemy caught fire. One of them had reached the top of the wall, his roughly gloved hands grasping the battlements. His helmet must have fallen off in the climb. Stepping back briefly in surprise, she grabbed one of the embers with

her gloved hands and threw it in his face. He ducked a moment so that the smoldering piece glanced off his head. One spark was all it took for his hair to ignite. For a moment Anna could do nothing but stare in horror as his hair caught fire and burned wildly. The pungent smell of scorched hair and flesh was revolting, but she still could not avert her eyes as she watched in morbid fascination, the flames engulfing his face like a malevolent halo crowning a god of the underworld. Then their eyes lock in an excruciating moment that Anna would never forget as long as she lived. In the depths of those liquid orbs, wild with panic and fear, Anna saw the awareness of his mortality flash before him, and the vain grasping at a life that was fast slipping away. He stared into her eyes, pleading for something, but what? And as the fire consumed him, he lost his grasp and footing, and a blood-curdling scream escaped him as he plunged to his death below. And as the story progresses to its finish, Murray inserts some fine examples of insightful and touching writing:~ "Time stops when one is ill. Gravely ill." Anna told her. She was remembering a time when she had been sick with rheumatic fever as a young child. Her joints had been so inflamed she could not even walk to the bathroom. Her father had to carry her. The pain was a blur now, but time seemed to have stopped then. Pain and illness have a way of pulling you out of time's current and leaving you momentarily by the wayside. Your world shrinks to a string of moments, held together by an acute awareness of nothing, save your own overwhelming predicament. The Gilded Mirror: Corfe Castle is a surprise gem, a clean and healthy well-written alternative to what's commonly offered to teens (and adults!) these days. Murray obviously loves her subject and is as good a writer of historical fiction as is out there.

A fascinating tale about the actual siege that took place in 1643 when Parliamentarians sought to capture Corfe Castle during the English Civil War. Some of the characters are based on the real people who were there. The story unfolds beautifully, drawing the reader into the lives of the characters and the conflict they experienced as the tension escalated. It brings the events that happened to life in exquisite detail. This is a great book for older children and adults who love historical fiction and stories about courage and bravery amid great odds. The mirror itself makes for a wonderful premise that lends itself well to future books, and something that I would definitely look forward reading. The knowledge of the period that the author shows is amazing! This is a must read book! it will become a classic!

Very well written story that combines historical occurrences with fantasy. The author's rich vocabulary gives the reader a great mental/visual description of the events that took place in 17th

century England. Fascinating reading. I'm looking forward for another book by this author, Jocelyn Murray. Good job!

I am reading my way through English history through fiction and when this one was offered free, I downloaded it for my kindle. Though I appreciated the author's knowledge of Corfe Castle, I found myself losing interest in the storyline after a few chapters. This book has a bit of historical detail in the story as Anna, from the future learns about the castle from her cousin, Elizabeth. There is a lot of telling about the castle and every day life between the two and a lot of description of rooms, clothes and layout of the place - with a little of the "plot" added in here and there. I found myself losing interest among paragraphs of descriptions while waiting for the story to start. This is a fantasy in a historical setting, so the reader will need to suspend belief in parts. Not much is explained about how the time travel works. There are also other questions that I wondered about such as - would they have really played sardines in the castle? Is it really called spinning cloth or spinning yarn? And why didn't more people wonder about Anna being a semi-stranger yet cousin at a time of political unrest and war? If you can suspend your belief for awhile and put any of those kinds of questions aside, you may enjoy this book. There is a bit of history you can learn and the story seems clean as a whole. But if you're like me and need a little more "logic" in your fantasy and more storyline than description, you may want to give this a pass.

I thoroughly enjoyed this book. I found myself caught up in the story and wanting more detailed information about the characters despite the info given at the end.

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