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# **List:** The Best of the Best Romance Novels of the Twentieth Century

# **Title:** Gone with the Wind

**Author:** Magaret Mitchell

**Ranking in the List:** 2

**Rating:** 4.31

**Genres:** Classics, Historical Fiction, Fiction, Romance, Historical, War, Civil War, Historical Romance, Novels.

**Total Word Count:** 520

**Key-Words:** story, clayton, county, Atlanta, Georgia, American, civil, war, era, struggle, young, spoil, daughter, plantation, owner, means, disposal, claw, way, poverty, features, popular, bestseller.

**Brief Summary:**

The story is set in Clayton County and Atlanta, both in Georgia, during the American Civil War and Reconstruction Era. It depicts the struggles of young Scarlett O'Hara, the spoiled daughter of a well-to-do plantation owner, who must use every means at her disposal to claw her way out of poverty following Sherman's destructive "March to the Sea". This historical novel features a coming-of-age story, with the title taken from the poem "Non-Sum Qualis eram Bonae Sub Regno Cynarae", written by Ernest Dowson.

*Gone with the Wind* was popular with American readers from the outset and was the top American fiction bestseller in 1936 and 1937. As of 2014, a Harris poll found it to be the second favorite book of American readers, just behind the Bible. More than 30 million copies have been printed worldwide.

*Gone with the Wind* is a controversial reference point for subsequent writers of the South, both black and white. Scholars at American universities refer to, interpret, and study it in their writings. The novel has been absorbed into American popular culture.

Mitchell received the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction for the book in 1937.

**About the Author:**

Margaret Mitchell was a lifelong resident of Georgia. She was born in 1900 into a wealthy and politically prominent family. Her father, Eugene Muse Mitchell, was an attorney, and her mother, Mary Isabel "Maybelle" Stephens, was a suffragist and Catholic activist. She had two brothers, Russell Stephens Mitchell, who died in infancy in 1894, and Alexander Stephens Mitchell, born in 1896.

An imaginative and precocious writer, Margaret Mitchell began with stories about animals, then progressed to fairy tales and adventure stories. She fashioned book covers for her stories, bound the tablet paper pages together and added her own artwork. At age eleven she gave a name to her publishing enterprise: "Urchin Publishing Co." Later her stories were written in notebooks. May Belle Mitchell kept her daughter's stories in white enamel bread boxes and several boxes of her stories were stored in the house by the time Margaret went off to college.

Romantic love and honor emerged as themes of abiding interest for Mitchell in *The Knight and the Lady* (ca. 1909), in which a "good knight" and a "bad knight" duel for the hand of the lady. In *The Arrow Brave and the Deer Maiden* (ca. 1913), a half-white Indian brave, Jack, must withstand the pain inflicted upon him to uphold his honor and win the girl. The same themes were treated with increasing artistry in *Lost Laysen*, the novella Mitchell wrote as a teenager in 1916, and, with much greater sophistication, in Mitchell's last known novel, *Gone with the Wind*, which she began in 1926.