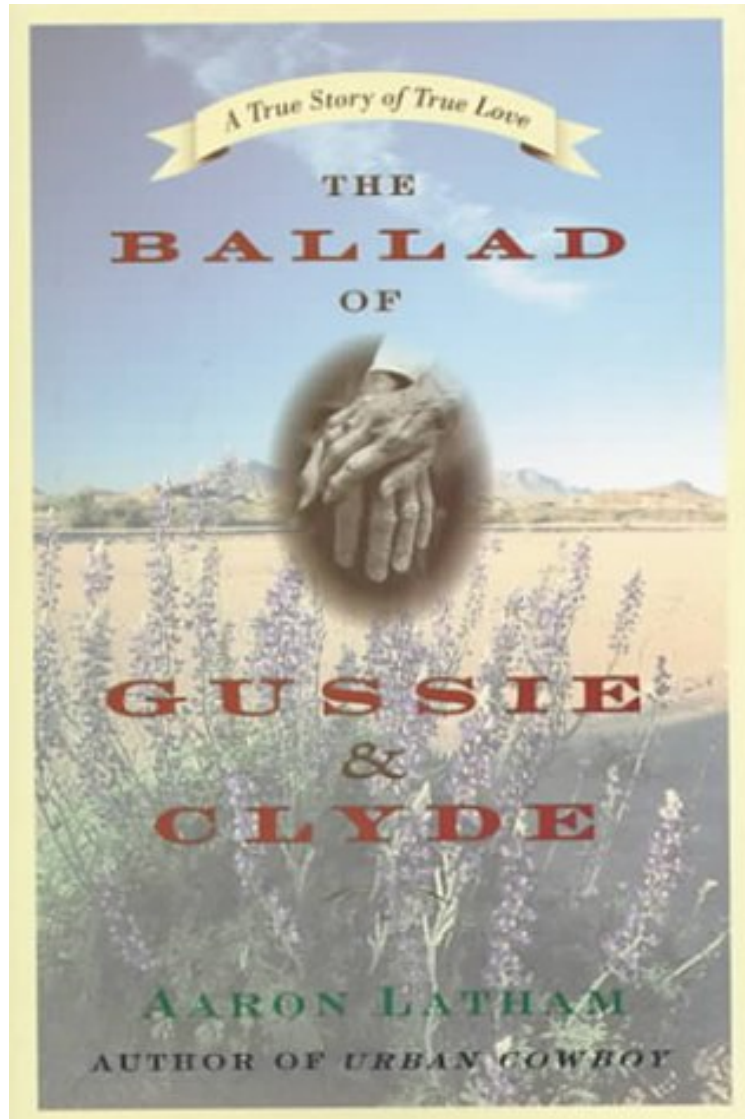


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## The Ballad of Gussie Clyde: A True Story of True Love

*Aaron Latham*

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**Aaron Latham : The Ballad of Gussie Clyde: A True Story of True Love** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised *The Ballad of Gussie Clyde: A True Story of True Love*:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A little story of hope By J. R. Smithers Well known author writing about a personal story, that of his widowed father finding a lost love. This is a book about hope. Hope for something to live for. Hope for things lost to be restored. Hope for small odds. It is a gentle story of life's renewal, even for a couple who are great-grandparents. It is also about romance and the call of the heart. I am a family history buff and after reading the book the first time through, went back and pulled out the genealogy details, which amplified and enlarged

the story itself. Who cares? you say, well, if you are interested in the book's characters enough to go back through the book to better understand them then you know the book has been worth your time. A gentle read and heart warming, and good character studies. Enjoy! 3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. True Romance at its Best! Inspiring and Delightful! By A Customer 5 stars aren't enough for the romance of a lifetime! This had to be one of the most romantic tales I ever read and the best thing about it is - IT'S ALL TRUE! This is the story of Clyde Latham (the author's father), an octogenarian who falls in love with Gussie Lancaster, a childhood acquaintance who he loved "since he was 3 years old". The couple behave like love-struck teenagers and live "happily-ever-after"! This tale was simple and sweet and I can't sum it up any better than Aaron Latham did in his toast to Gussie and Clyde at their wedding reception: "We are happy to be here today" - my heart was thumping irregularly or so it seemed - "because Clyde and Gussie give us all hope. These newlyweds are going ahead of us, holding up romantic torches, to light our way to love, to being in love at any age. They're from pioneer stock and they're still pioneers marking the trail." (p. 116) I definitely recommend this book to anyone who ... well, anyone who wants to believe in the power of love and be totally uplifted emotionally! 0 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Nice, but does not deliver By Manola Sommerfeld This was a nice, quick read, but i was left unsatisfied. The writing style is very simplistic, and although whimsical at times, i found it too basic. Sometimes the book reads like a composition assignment written by a high-school kid. If you are looking for an account on elderly love, pick up *\_Spence + Lila\_*, by Bobbie Ann Mason. In that excellent novella, an elderly couple faces together the medical problems of Lila. That book made me believe that true love is possible!

As romantic as *The Bridges of Madison County*, this moving, revealing, true story recounts the tale of an elderly couple, Clyde Latham and Gussie Lancaster, who find love in their eighties.

From *Library Journal* In this celebration of life, New York writer Latham, a novelist and author of the screenplay *Urban Cowboy*, relates the charming story of how his father, Clyde, found love at age 84. When his mother died after more than 50 years of marriage, Latham worried about his father's being lonely. Alone, but not lonely, Clyde renewed a childhood friendship with recently widowed Gussie (age 81) whom he had not seen in decades. The romance is set in the town of Spur, located in "a godforsaken corner of west Texas," where "some days more tumbleweeds than pickup trucks come rolling through town." However, neither the town of Spur nor his father is willing to give up on life. Even with the son's concern for his father and the problems that arose when Clyde became ill, it is, as Clyde says, "a pretty old world." A beautifully written memoir; highly recommended for all readers. ? Linda L. McEwan, Elgin Community Coll., Ill. Copyright 1997 Reed Business Information, Inc. From *Booklist* Clyde Latham was 6 foot 4, 200 pounds, and 80 years old. He was also a widower, and his son Aaron feared that loneliness would get the better of his charming dad. He need not have worried, because the sprightly Texan would soon reunite with an "uptown" widow from Sacramento whom he hadn't seen in 67 years. The result of that reunion is a tender, compelling story of lovers with 80 years' experience. Aaron, screenwriter of *Urban Cowboy*, cleverly casts out lines from John Donne's "The Bait" to catch the growing romance between two people who never intended to remarry. In fact, Gussie Lee Willis Lancaster planned to stay only four days in Spur, Texas, but soon found herself holding hands with Clyde as they sat in matching lounge chairs and reminisced about this "pretty old world." Their love led to engagement and elopement and a son's lessons about his own marriage, the need to accept a parent's remarriage, and the marvelous possibilities of "new love in old bottles." A captivating memoir. Patricia Hassler From *Kirkus* A son's affectionate but sketchy little memoir of the bittersweet romance between his octogenarian father, Clyde, and Gussie, a widow of similar years. Latham, a New York journalist (*Rolling Stone*, *Esquire*) and screenwriter (*Urban Cowboy*, etc.) became concerned when his newly widowed father back in the tiny west Texas town of Spur began to develop a long-distance telephone relationship with a former childhood friend living in California. After numerous broken promises to come back to Spur for a brief visit, Gussie eventually made the trip, and the telephone romance quickly flowered into an engagement. Latham, in plain, rather flat prose, shows the old couple revisiting childhood scenes, getting reacquainted, and even necking in a parked car like a couple of teenagers. When Gussie returned to California, Clyde followed her the next day, and a week later the impetuous couple was married. Harboring major reservations about his father's whirlwind romance, Latham, accompanied by his wife, 60 Minutes reporter Lesley Stahl, flew out to meet his new stepmother and discovered that Gussie's family tree was entwined with his father's in a surprising way. A few months later, Clyde became dangerously ill, had one leg amputated, and underwent abdominal surgery. In the book's final chapter, the honeymoon may be over, but love persists. The last image Latham gives us is a tender one: the two old newlyweds "sitting side by side in their recliners, fast asleep, smiling, holding hands." Of such images are television movies-of-the-week made. The message that love knows no age barriers would be perfect around Valentine's Day, and actors might bring some life to Latham's two-dimensional characters. Wait for the screen version. (Author tour) -- Copyright 1997, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.