



# The Bohemian Flats: A Novel

*Mary Relindes Ellis*

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**The Bohemian Flats: A Novel** Mary Relindes Ellis

In *The Bohemian Flats*, Mary Relindes Ellis's rich, imaginative gift carries us from the bourgeois world of fin de siècle Germany to a vibrant immigrant enclave in the heart of the Midwest and to the killing fields of World War I.

Shell shock, as it was called, lands Raimund Kaufmann in a London hospital, a victim of the war but also of his own, and his brother's, efforts to get out of Germany and build a new life in America. While his recovery eludes him, his memory returns us to Minneapolis, to the Flats, a milling community on the Mississippi River, where Raimund and his brother Albert have sought respite from the oppressive hand of their older brother, now the master of the family farm and brewery. In Minnesota the brothers confront different forms of prejudice, but they also find a chance to remake their lives according to their own principles and wishes—until the war makes their German roots inescapable.

Following these lives, *The Bohemian Flats* conjures both the sweep of irresistible history and the intimate reality of a man, and a family, caught up in it. From a nineteenth-century German farm to the thriving, wildly diverse immigrant village below Minneapolis on the Mississippi to the European front in World War I, and returning to twentieth-century America—this is a story that takes a reader to the far reaches of human experience and the depths of the human heart.

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