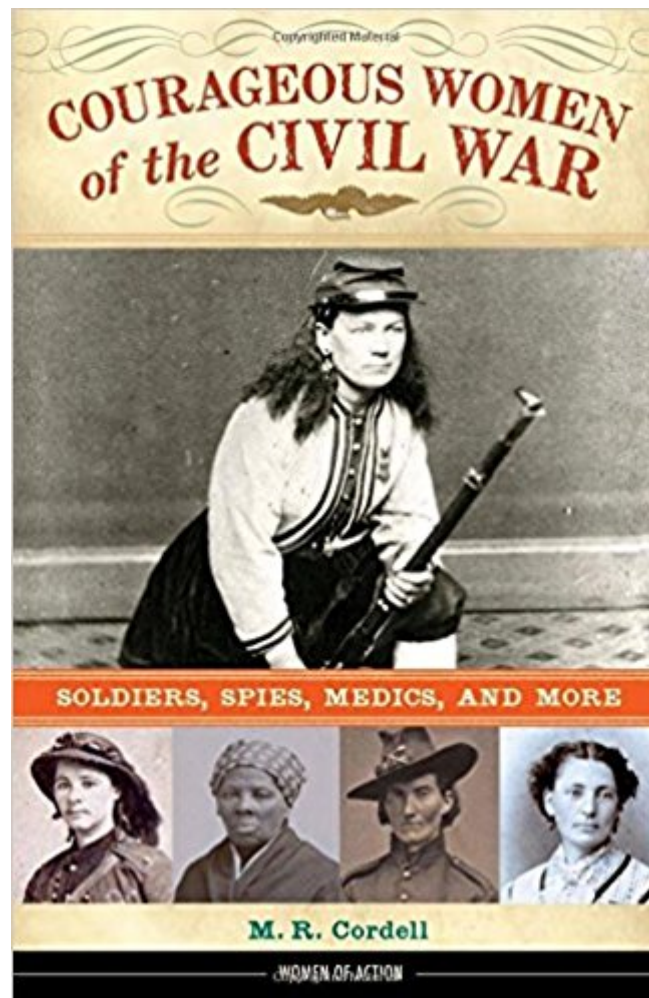




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# Courageous Women Of The Civil War: Soldiers, Spies, Medics, And More (Women Of Action)



## Synopsis

At the outbreak of the Civil War, nearly everybody was caught up in patriotic fervor—men and women, Union and Confederate. Many women supported soldiers through knitting and sewing needed items, growing food, making bandages, gathering medical supplies, and more. But others wished they could be closer to the fight. These women defied society's expectations and bravely chose to take on more dangerous, unconventional roles. *Courageous Women of the Civil War* reveals the exploits of 16 of these remarkable women who served as medics, spies, battlefield helpers, and even soldiers on the front lines. Meet fascinating figures such as Maria Lewis, a former slave who fought with the Union cavalry as it swept through Virginia. Disguised as a white male soldier, she adopted the fear of Hell into Confederate enemies. Kady Brownell supported her husband's Rhode Island regiment as a vivandière, training with the soldiers, fighting in battle, and helping the injured. Mary Carroll, a Missouri rebel, forged a copy of a jail cell key to break her brother out before his scheduled execution. These and other little-known stories are told through gripping narrative, primary source documents, and contextualizing sidebars. Civil War history is woven throughout, offering readers a clear overview of the era and the war. Also including numerous historic photos, source notes, and a bibliography, *Courageous Women of the Civil War* is an invaluable resource for any student's or history buff's bookshelf.

## Book Information

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Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

## Customer Reviews

Gr 7 Up "Leaving behind the cult of domesticity and the traditional belief that a woman's place was in the home, the 16 women highlighted in this volume put their ambitions and convictions into action. At a time when women had few legal rights and could not vote, these figures took an active role in the Civil War by disguising themselves as men in order to fight or act as spies. They worked as nurses and found ways to assist soldiers on the battlefields. Spies included Harriet Tubman and Mary Jane Richards, who was planted in the Confederate White House to gather information. Georgeanna Woolsey is an example of one of the more than 21,000 women who were on the army payroll as nurses. Some women served as vivandières "women who were hired as cooks or laundresses and paid by the soldiers. One such woman was Annie Lorinda Etheridge, who followed her husband into the army and became a cook and nurse for the Fifth Michigan Regiment. The book begins with an introduction, providing historical context as to why the North and the South opposed each other and covering the events leading up to South Carolina's secession from the Union, the role of slavery in this opposition (Cordell wisely does not portray white Northerners simply as saviors in the fight to abolish slavery but rather as having their own legal, economic, and ideological reasons for it), and how the start of the war stirred the hearts of Northern and Southern women alike. Sidebars and photographs are scattered throughout the text. VERDICT An excellent addition to history collections." Patricia Ann Owens, formerly at Illinois Eastern Community College, Mt. Carmel

"Much of what Melinda Cordell presents here is new, often persuasive, always interesting, and testifies to the desire of women of the war era to play their part in their nation's greatest moment." William C. Davis, author of *An Honorable Defeat*, *Breckinridge*, and *Battle at Bull Run* "These women faced down the guns of the enemy, or the disdain of the surgeons, at the same time they were facing down the racial and gender prejudices of their society. The research in this book is very good, and the selection of biographies is excellent" a nice mix of both well-known and obscure heroines." DeAnne Blanton, coauthor of *They Fought Like Demons: Women Soldiers in the Civil War* "The impressive research and impeccable storytelling brings these amazing women to life on every page. I loved so many things about this new volume in the *Women of Action* series, the sidebars, the thorough background information, and most especially the riveting stories of the female soldiers, spies, and nurses so rarely written about in Civil War history accounts. What

a contribution to women's history and an inspiration to young and older women today." "Claire Rudolf Murphy, author of *My Country Tis of Thee: How One Song Reveals the History of Civil Rights* Cordell gives a rousing account of 16 women who defied traditional roles to serve as soldiers, spies, medics, and vivandières during the American Civil War. • "Booklist" The biographies include photos of some of the women and provide a fascinating and engaging look at their activities, motivations, trials, and later lives. Excellent, detailed backmatter adds to the volume's usefulness. A solid resource." "Kirkus Reviews" "[A] book which is sure to be popular among young history students, but is also satisfying for those older readers who want an easy-to-read, general overview of the subjects covered in Cordell's fine work. • "Cannonball" "An excellent addition to history collections. • "School Library Journal

From Soldiers to Spies, from Nurses to Vivandières, these women's stories will inspire and intrigue you beyond your wildest imaginings! I absolutely loved this book and hope it will become required reading in every school across the United States at the very least, and even the entire world!

It is a great book and kept my interest with intriguing facts and great story line throughout the whole book.

The book is excellent and all ages would like to read it. The Civil War and wonderful stories of the women.

I really enjoyed reading this book very much. The author did an excellent job in her research. The material is interesting and engaging. I would recommend this to anyone middle school and up.

I wouldn't normally pick up a nonfiction book on the Civil War. That being said, I loved this book! I enjoyed every story. These women were amazing. So much information packed into an approachable, easy-to-read format. I'm proud to have this one on my shelf, and I look forward to having my daughter read it.

Good book! Great researcher with stories to tell!

A summary of the review on [StrategyPage.Com](http://StrategyPage.Com) In her first contribution to the "Women of

Action series, free lance writer Cordell offers us profiles of sixteen women who served in various ways during the Civil War, grouped into four categories, Soldiers, Spies, Nurses, and Vivandiers. Noting that thousands of women served in various ways including perhaps 500 or so in the ranks Cordell limits coverage of those already rather well known, such as Harriet Tubman, Loreta Velazquez, Annie Etheridge, or Sarah Emma Edmonds, so that she can offer a number of lesser known cases, such as Maria Lewis, a teenaged African-American who managed to pass as a Union cavalryman, the volunteer Southern nurse Susie King Taylor, the Confederate spy Mary Carroll, among others. Cordell does a good job of sorting reality from myth in the stories of some of these women, notably the self-promoting Velazquez, while introducing us to yet more young women who served in various ways. She also makes use of side-bars to help the reader understand events and aspects of contemporary military life that are likely to be unfamiliar to the younger reader. This is an excellent introduction to women's role in the Civil War, the War itself, and can be read with profit even by adult.'For the full review, see StrategyPage.Com

I really enjoyed reading this book, I found it to be extremely engaging and informative. I feel I learned more about the civil war reading this book than I did in both my high school and my college history courses. The author did an amazing job gathering sources, which then enabled her to provide quotes from letters and diaries that helped bring these women to life. I'd love to meet some of these women, they are amazing, and they truly feel real to me now. I highly recommend this book to anyone with a teenager, who teaches high school, or who is just interested in history. I think some middle school students would even enjoy this book.

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