



They Fought Like Demons: Women Soldiers in the Civil War

By De Anne Blanton, Lauren M. Cook

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“Albert Cashier” served three years in the Union Army and passed successfully as a man until 1911 when the aging veteran was revealed to be a woman named Jennie Hodgers. Frances Clayton kept fighting even after her husband was gunned down in front of her at the Battle of Murfreesboro. And more than one soldier astonished “his” comrades-in-arms by giving birth in camp.

This lively and authoritative book opens a hitherto neglected chapter of Civil War history, telling the stories of hundreds of women who adopted male disguise and fought as soldiers. It explores their reasons for enlisting; their experiences in combat, and the way they were seen by their fellow soldiers and the American public. Impeccably researched and narrated with verve and wit, **They Fought Like Demons** is a major addition to our understanding of the Civil War era.

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Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

At least 250 women served-disguised as men-in the ranks of both North and South during the Civil War. Although works about female Civil War soldiers have appeared over the past several years, this volume, by National Archives archivist Blanton and Cook, a Fayetteville State University employee in North Carolina, makes a nice summation. After covering the major combat actions in which women served (and in which several were killed), the authors reconstruct the reasons why women entered the armed forces: many were simply patriotic, while others followed their husbands or lovers and yet others yearned to break free from the constraints that Victorian society had laid on them as women. Blanton and Cook detail women soldiers in combat, on the march, in camp and in the hospital, where many were discovered after getting sick. Some even wound up in grim prisons kept by both sides, while a few hid pregnancies and were only discovered after giving birth. Many times the rank and file hid them from officers, who were duty-bound to discharge women if they were found out. Some remained in disguise for years after the war; Albert D.J. Cashier (nee Jennie Hodgers) of the 95th Illinois Infantry was only unmasked in 1911, when she suffered a fractured leg in an automobile accident. The authors make a strong case that the controversial Loreta Janeta Velazquez (alias Lt. Harry T. Buford, C.S.A.) actually did perform most of the deeds she wrote about in her 1876 memoir, which has previously been discounted as fiction by most Civil War historians. Solid research by the authors, including a look at the careers of a few women soldiers after the war, makes this a compelling book that belongs in every Civil War library.

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Review

“This book breaks new ground. . . . Documenting the service of more than 240 women soldiers . . . the authors show that courage and honor under fire were shared by men and women alike.” – James M. McPherson, author of **Battle Cry of Freedom**

“Detailed and convincing” –*Smithsonian Magazine*

“A compelling book that belongs in every Civil War library.” --*Publishers Weekly*

From the Inside Flap

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Users Review

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