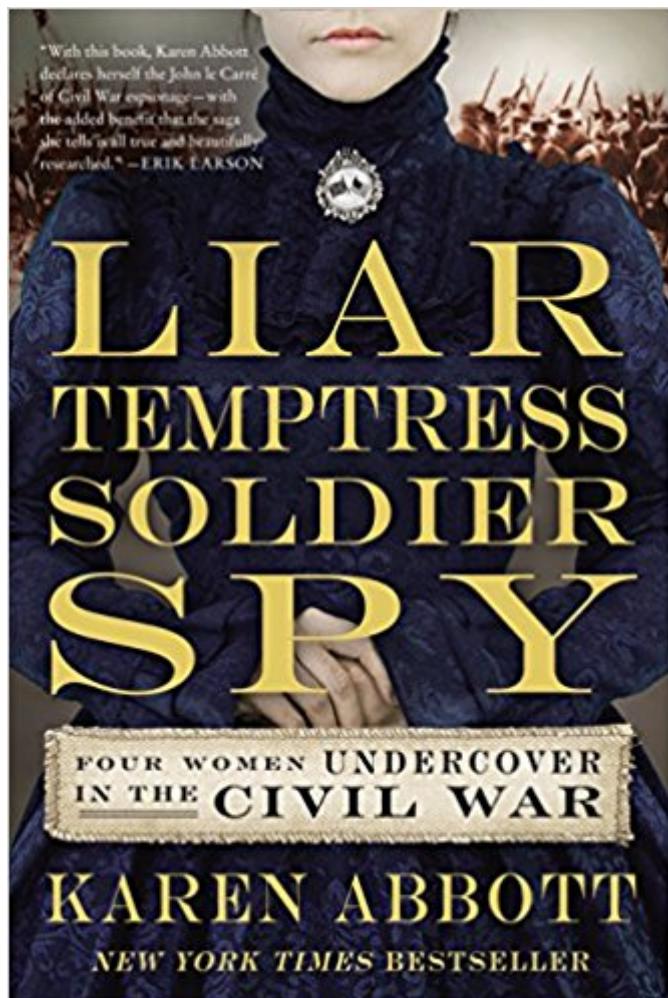


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# Liar, Temptress, Soldier, Spy: Four Women Undercover In The Civil War



## Synopsis

Karen Abbott, the New York Times bestselling author of *Sin in the Second City* and a pioneer of sizzle history (USA Today), tells the spellbinding true story of four women who risked everything to become spies during the Civil War. Karen Abbott illuminates one of the most fascinating yet little known aspects of the Civil War: the stories of four courageous women—a socialite, a farmgirl, an abolitionist, and a widow—who were spies. After shooting a Union soldier in her front hall with a pocket pistol, Belle Boyd became a courier and spy for the Confederate army, using her charms to seduce men on both sides. Emma Edmonds cut off her hair and assumed the identity of a man to enlist as a Union private, witnessing the bloodiest battles of the Civil War. The beautiful widow, Rose O' Neale Greenhow, engaged in affairs with powerful Northern politicians to gather intelligence for the Confederacy, and used her young daughter to send information to Southern generals. Elizabeth Van Lew, a wealthy Richmond abolitionist, hid behind her proper Southern manners as she orchestrated a far-reaching espionage ring, right under the noses of suspicious rebel detectives. Using a wealth of primary source material and interviews with the spies' descendants, Abbott seamlessly weaves the adventures of these four heroines throughout the tumultuous years of the war. With a cast of real-life characters including Walt Whitman, Nathaniel Hawthorne, General Stonewall Jackson, detective Allan Pinkerton, Abraham and Mary Todd Lincoln, and Emperor Napoleon III, *Liar, Temptress, Soldier, Spy* draws you into the war as these daring women lived it. *Liar, Temptress, Soldier, Spy* contains 39 black & photos and 3 maps.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Like most Civil War buffs, I read every new book that comes out on the subject, whether to confirm/contradict what I already know or to learn new information to add to my mental database. *Liar, Temptress, Soldier, Spy: Four Women Undercover in the Civil War* does both. The author, Karen Abbott, has selected four women whose lives are chronicled in the book - two from each side of the conflict - who served during the war in some capacity, mainly as spies. The book will be for sale on this September. I am familiar with all four women, to a lesser or greater degree. Surely the most infamous female spies of the war were those supporting the Southern cause: Rose O'Neal Greenhow, a Washington Socialite who coaxed many northern politicians into divulging secrets, and Belle Boyd, a small town girl from Martinsburg, Virginia (later West Virginia) who through sheer moxy served as a courier by carrying intelligence to her hero Stonewall Jackson. They were certainly the most colorful and flamboyant of all who served. The two women supporting the north were Elizabeth Van Lew and Emma Edmonds. While Greenhow's and Boyd's names were splashed across newspapers of the time, celebrating (or condemning) their accomplishments, Van Lew and Edmonds by necessity served in silence. Van Lew lived in Richmond yet remained loyal to the Union. Her efforts at assisting Yankee soldiers escaping from Confederate prisons and runaway slaves from their masters were no small feat during war time. Her neighbors as well as the government suspected, but were never able to catch her in the act. And finally, Emma Edmonds, who passed herself off as a man and served the north as a soldier/spy in some of the bloodiest battles of the war.

*Liar, Temptress, Solider, Spy* follows four women's efforts to help their respective sides during the course of the Civil War and fight alongside men breaking gender norms of the time. The women Belle Boyd, Rose O'Neal Greenhow, Elizabeth Van Lew and Emma Edmonds each have a unique story and the author keeps a fast pace making this book a page turner. Belle Boyd was living in what is now West Virginia and a supporter of the south when Union soldiers came into the town to occupy. Upon entering the house Boyd shot a Union soldier and earned notoriety for it. She continued her work as a courier for the confederates and serving her idol General Stonewall Jackson. After being arrested and sent to prison in the north where she continued her strong acts of defiance she was finally exchanged on parole and told to stay out of the North. Acting as an overseas courier she was stopped on a ship and detained by the navy where she charmed one captain into marrying her. Boyd is a southern hero who craved fame above all else and was a true believer in the cause especially wanting to follow her idol Stonewall. Rose O'Neal Greenhow was a socialite in Washington DC who was a strong supporter of the Southern Cause. She charmed top

military leaders and senators to gleam information and send them to her friend Beaugrard. She was credited by confederate authorities for providing the key information in allowing First Manassas to be a victory. Greenhow was arrested by the north and became one of the first women detained during the war along with her daughter. After she was exchanged she was a celebrity in the south and was sent on a diplomatic mission to England and France to try and win support for the cause there.

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