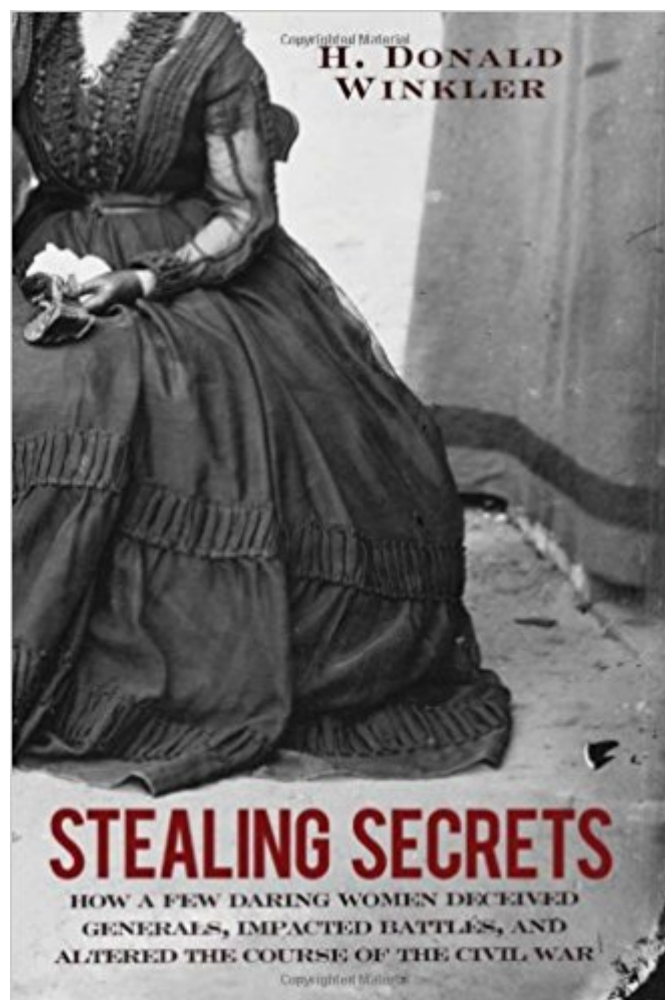




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# **Stealing Secrets: How A Few Daring Women Deceived Generals, Impacted Battles, And Altered The Course Of The Civil War**



## Synopsis

Clandestine missions. Clever, devious, daring. Passionately committed to a cause. During America's most divisive war, both the Union and Confederacy took advantage of brave and courageous women willing to adventurously support their causes. These female spies of the Civil War participated in the world's second-oldest profession-spying-a profession perilous in the extreme. The tales of female spies are filled with suspense, bravery, treachery, and trickery. They took enormous risks and achieved remarkable results-often in ways men could not do. As stated on the grave marker of Union spy Elizabeth Van Lew: "She risked everything that is dear to man-friends, fortune, comfort, health, life itself." Told with personality and pizzazz, author H. Donald Winkler uses primary Civil War sources such as memoirs, journals, letters, and newspaper articles, plus the latest in scholarly research, to make these incredible stories come alive.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

In this breezy overview of 36 women who spied for the Confederacy and the Union, Winkler (Lincoln's Ladies) tells "stories of women spies...filled with suspense and seduction, treachery and trickery, romance and bravery." Divided into chapters on each woman, Winkler finds his heroines equally appealing, no matter what side they spied for. He strongly sympathizes with Mary Surratt, who became the first woman executed by the U.S. government; although many female spies were caught, their gender saved them (it was not considered moral to hang women). Winkler argues that Surratt "was not a spy and played no role on the night of Lincoln's assassination," but was hanged, along with three male collaborators of John Wilkes Booth, "primarily because of the dogged

determination, vindictiveness, and unforgiving actions of Secretary of War Edwin Stanton." Winkler also includes an account of Harriet Tubman's services organizing slaves into a guerilla force behind enemy lines, but most of his stories are in a lighter vein, showing women using their charms to wheedle secrets from officers and soldiers. Although Winkler could have delved more deeply into gender issues in the 19th century, this effort entertains. (c) Copyright PWxyz, LLC. All rights reserved.

"Don Winkler's *Stealing Secrets* is a first-rate contribution to the literature of Civil War espionage. His meticulously researched and straightforward accounts of some of the most effective female spies for both the Union and the Confederacy contrast sharply with many of the more fanciful stories that have appeared through the years. Fascinating to read, they convey the passion and depths of commitment these women brought to their warring causes. These are tales of "ideological motivation" at its best." - "The reader will buy into the fact that truth is stranger than fiction." - *New York Journal of Books*"The book, Winkler's fourth, is another winner. It's comprehensive, covering women who were famous and obscure, served on both sides of the conflict, and were from society's highest circles and humble backgrounds. It's chock-full of information, including anecdotes and trivia, is written in Winkler's highly readable style, and is very nicely illustrated. The cover is gorgeous." - *Farmville Herald*"A fascinating read that opens new insights into the secret world behind the military operations, Winkler's treatise is first rate and enjoyable." - *Cannonball*"Told with personality and pizzazz, author H. Donald Winkler uses primary Civil War sources such as memoirs, journals, letters, and newspaper articles, plus the latest in scholarly research, to make these incredible stories come alive." - *Night Owl Reviews*"You do not need to be a history buff or an expert in the Civil War to understand and appreciate the contributions that these women made. You too will be amazed at everything that they did to further their cause!" - *Dad of Divas*"It is comprehensive on the lives of the women who aided in the war, and who they assisted during that time. It's an inspirational read for young woman, and women's studies students, who could respect strong-willed women who worked hard and made a great difference during a large and important war." - *Snitch Seeker*"*Stealing Secrets* is an attractive volume that is well presented and written. Its accessibility of subject matter and style should ensure that it appeals to a wide audience, ranging from those who are interested in the course of the American Civil War to those who are intrigued by any works to do with espionage and the role of women in conflict." - *Bookpleasures.com*"A lively addendum to Civil War collections." - *Library Journal*"The book was well done with enough interesting side notes to make the lengthy tome worth

reading. Winkler's research, descriptions and detail with an eye for accuracy make "Stealing Secrets" interesting and lively." - Waterloo Cedar Falls Courier

"Historian and author, H. Donald Winkler has turned his remarkable research abilities on the topic of female spies during the Civil War. The result is his highly entertaining book, Stealing Secrets." - Examiner.com

"Stealing Secrets offers up stories that Ian Fleming would have been proud to write. Winkler fills the pages with intrigue, romance, double-dealing, daring nighttime escapes and bold daylight heroics." - Internet Review of Books

"Stealing Secrets" by H. Donald Winkler is a fascinating look at the under-explored world of female espionage during the Civil War. This is a wonderful addition to the bookcases of Civil War fans, history buffs, and anyone who enjoys reading about people facing danger and intrigue." - Night Owl Reviews

"Winkler tells the stories as historically accurate but easy enough for anyone to read even if you don't know that much about the Civil War. But there is enough context and historical information to make it interesting to those who are very interested in matters of the Civil War." - Simply Stacie

"Lively and laced with sometimes astonishing switchbacks." - American History

"This book is extremely well-researched and is a wonderful compilation of biographies that highlight the important and daring work of these brave women. It is a worthwhile contribution to Civil War spying scholarship." - Civil War News

This book reviewed the women who served as spies and allies to each side during the civil war. It also explained the role each woman played as a spy, as well as information on why these women may have taken such a grave risk with their lives. It explained what might happen to each woman if caught, although during the civil war, there was discretion on the punishment for women spies. As a civil war buff and also as an advocate for battered women for 20 years, this book interested me from page one. It had great information on the courageous women on both sides of the conflict. The information on each woman was limited and I often found myself wanting to know more about a particular woman. However, I believe the author did this so that more women could be covered in the book. I think this is a must read for civil war buffs, especially women civil war buffs. You will not be disappointed!

I loved this book!! I love history and Stealing Secrets gave me plenty of history. I was not aware that there were so many female spies during the Civil War. I discovered so much about the Civil War. Learning how these young ladies risked their lives, both on the North and South, for what they believed gave a new look at the fair maidens of that time and the foolishness of the men of rank. I couldn't put the book down; it is enjoyable and educational, a great read. I have told all my friends to

read it.

While I love history, this collection of short biographies about women who were civil war spies was rather repetitive, written with as much excitement and voice as a college research paper. I skipped around, trying to find the most interesting cases, and ended up not finishing.

Super interesting book purchased for a civil war project and was read and reread. Now while traveling through the south we stop at all the civil war historical sites

An interesting departure from the typical Civil War era reads, "Stealing Secrets" provides insight to the oft-overlooked role the spy played during the Civil War. The methods by which these spies transported documents and secrets across hostile enemy lines is a feat in and of itself. This book is a must-read for Civil War buffs.

A very interesting book. It adds important information to Civil War literature.

As others have mentioned, the book itself focuses on the exploits of female spies during the Civil War -- with a nice balance between Northern and Southern spies. I greatly enjoyed the read -- and it was amazing to me to see what these "delicate women" were able to accomplish against "the enemy". I also found it interesting, as a whole, how the men in command responded to the activities of these females -- both adult and teen. Definitely worth reading -- and I know I will read it again!!

This book is a terrific resource and I will tell you why. It covers a great variety of women from both the North and South who were involved in the covert element of the Civil War. You get a good picture about each one and better still, it will inspire you to pin point the one or ones you would like to learn more about.

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