

Civil War Women Spies
Document-based questions with lesson plan
Barbara Fowler, McLaughlin Middle School

Grade Level : 8 and up

Below are excerpts of documents to read and use in answering the question that follows. The question was written to use your ability in using historical documents for research. Study each document and consider each in each one's source and the author of each.

Directions:

- Read carefully each document.
- Answer the questions that follow the document.
- Use facts from each document to make your details support each topic main idea that proves your explanation.
- Be sure to include any specific related outside information.
- Write a well-organized essay that follows the required five paragraph framework: an introduction, at least four main points with supporting details, and a conclusion.

Historical Background: From using the textbook, *A Call to Freedom* by Holt, background on the events leading up to the Civil War have already been discussed. The war front itself involved sides taken from both the North and the South who were very decisive and you could tell which side each represented...However, there were Union spies living in the South and Confederate spies moving around in the North. Different people who seemed to be something they weren't in many cases. One would expect the men to be the espionage specialists in the military during this time. Actually, also there were several ladies who represented the North and the South, posing as themselves or as in "cover" to be used successfully without being detected. If found out, the penalty could be imprisonment which could lead to a firing squad or being hanged on the gallows...Regardless, the cause each represented was strong enough to risk one's life. The next few documents, read on to discover individual's lives that were definitely affected and were the risk takers.

Task:

For Part I, carefully read each document and answer the question or questions after each document. Then read the discussion for Part II and write your essay.

Document 1:

Political Cartoon from *Harper's Weekly*:

On **April 4, 1863**, *Harper's Weekly* featured a cartoon about a female spy in the Civil War.

General Stuart's New Aid

**"The rebel cavalry leader, Stuart, has appointed to a position on his staff, with the rank of Major, a young lady residing in Fairfax Court House, who has been of great service to him in giving information," etc.-
-Daily Paper.**

Artist: unknown

From the following explanation taken from the website, About.com, you will better understand the situation for the cartoon given below:

"The female spy in this cartoon is Antonia Ford, who was 23 years old when the Civil War began. She was the daughter of a well-to-do merchant in Fairfax, Virginia, and the sister of a lieutenant serving in the Confederate cavalry under General J. E. B. Stuart. After a skirmish at Fairfax, Union troops occupied the Ford home in 1861. Antonia Ford listened to conversations and reported what she could to Stuart's troops located near the Fairfax Courthouse. For the advantageous intelligence her espionage provided to the Confederate military, Stuart commissioned her on October 7, 1861, as an honorary aide-de-camp. She secreted the commission under her mattress, but had to hide it and other valuables under her hoop skirt when Union troops searched the Ford house.

The Ford home became a boarding house for Union officers, giving Antonia an ideal setting to continue her secret intelligence-gathering. In August 1862, Antonia Ford rode 20 miles in the rain, passing Union troops, in order to warn Stuart about a Union ploy before the Second Battle of Bull Run (Manassas). In December 1862, when Union general Edwin Stoughton set up headquarters at Fairfax Courthouse, she relayed the Federals' movements to Stuart and Lieutenant John Mosby.

On March 8, 1863, a party hosted by General Stoughton for his visiting mother and sister at the Ford home (where the women were staying) caused Union security to become lax. The Confederate Mosby was able to capture several Union officers and 60 horses and, later that night, to nab Stoughton while he was sleeping. (When President Lincoln learned of the incident, he responded sardonically that he could make new generals, but not new horses.)

Mosby later denied that Antonia Ford gave him the inside information, but Union officials suspected her as the likely source and concocted a plan to expose her clandestine activities. They sent a female agent, Frankie Abel, to Fairfax, posing as a distressed Confederate refugee fleeing from Union-occupied New Orleans. The Ford family generously opened their residence to her, and she soon became a confidante to Antonia.

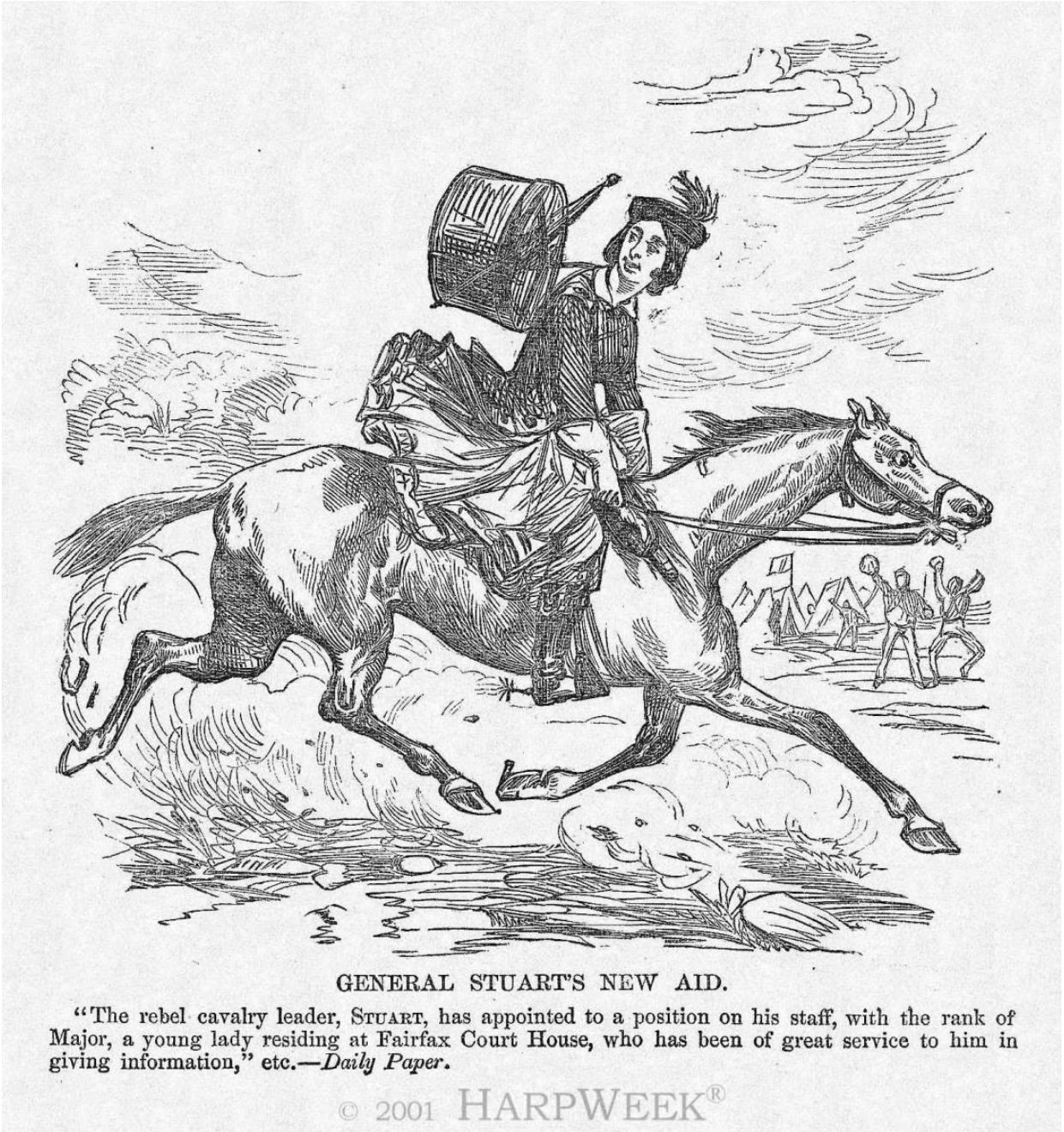
When Abel left, Federal officers arrested Antonia Ford and her father on espionage charges. (This cartoon, which quotes the discovered commission, appeared after her arrest.) The father was released, but Antonia was held until a prisoner exchange with the Confederacy was arranged on May 20, 1863. She resumed her spying, however, and was rearrested and incarcerated in Washington, D. C."

Taken from Mosby's Rangers.com is a photograph of Antonia Ford Willard. (<http://mosbystrangers.com/civilians/antoniaford.htm>)

Antonia Ford Willard

Antonia Ford was the daughter of Edward R. Ford, a prominent secessionist citizen of Fairfax City, who lived across from the Courthouse on Chain Bridge Road. Her brother Charles served in General JEB Stuart's artillery company and the family was good friends with Gen. Stuart.





GENERAL STUART'S NEW AID.

“The rebel cavalry leader, STUART, has appointed to a position on his staff, with the rank of Major, a young lady residing at Fairfax Court House, who has been of great service to him in giving information,” etc.—*Daily Paper*.

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Cartoon and explanation provided by HarpWeek.

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Keep in mind that this cartoon which stated the discovered commission appeared in Harper's Weekly after Antonio Ford was arrested for espionage charges by the Union Federal officers.

Questions:

1. What is so unusual about this young lady serving as a spy for rebel cavalry leader, Jeb Stuart? _____

2. What was Harper's Weekly poking fun at then about the importance of the commission? _____

3. Do you think since Gen. Jeb Stuart intentionally hired Antonio as a female spy because he realized if she were caught, the Yankees would not execute her? Why or why not? _____

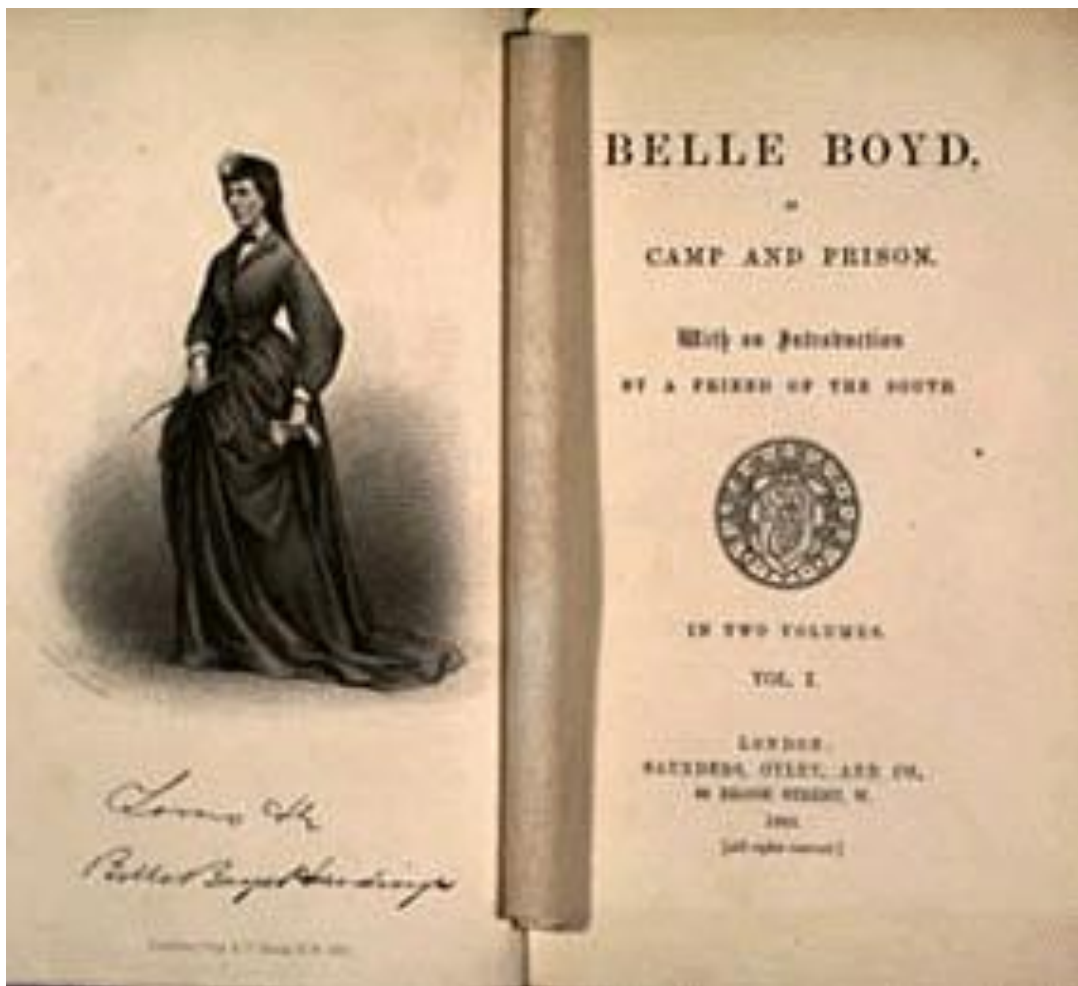
Document 2:

Belle Boyd

"Boyd, Belle, **Belle Boyd, in camp and prison. With an introduction, by a friend of the South**, London: Saunders, Otley, and Co., 1865. Belle Boyd (1844-1900) spied for the Confederacy by carrying important papers across enemy lines. At one time, she was imprisoned in a Union prison for her espionage activities. In the passage shown, we find Belle Boyd on the Greyhound, a ship captured by the Union navy while attempting to run the blockade and get to Europe. A Union naval officer, Captain Harding, took command of the ship and brought it to Boston. Belle Boyd, masquerading as a Mrs. Lewis, tells

how she helped the Confederate Captain "Henry" of the Greyhound escape from the captured ship. Soon after, U.S. Marshal Keyes boarded the vessel to bring Captain "Henry" ashore but could not find him. When Marshal Keyes informed Belle Boyd of Captain "Henry's" escape, she writes: "What!" said I; "it is impossible! Only a few moments ago he was here!" And I looked very serious, though all the while I was laughing in my sleeve, saying to myself, "Again I have got the better of the Yankees!" Ironically, before the war ended, Belle Boyd married Captain Harding, the Union naval officer who took command of the ship."

---Taken from Hearts at Home: Southern Women in the Civil War
[URL: <http://www.lib.virginia.edu/small/exhibits/hearts/index.html>]



from force of circumstances; for Captain Almy had refused to put on board of us our chief engineer and first officer, without whom the attempt could not possibly succeed.

Another plan, quietly prepared by us previously, and which had reference to the escape of Captain "Henry," had better luck. Whilst we were coming to an anchor off the Boston Navy Yard, and Mr. Hardinge was forward, giving orders to the men, Captain "Henry," Mr. Pollard, and myself were aft, seated in the cabin. I asked the two Yankee pilots if they would join us and partake of a glass of wine. To this they of course assented, and drank freely; for doubtless such wine but seldom passed their lips. I then nodded to Captain "Henry," who, carelessly putting on his hat, and taking his umbrella in his hand, walked

up on deck and went aft, where he stood for some moments. Everything seemed to favour us, for Mr. Hardinge had called a harbour-boat alongside, that he might go ashore to report his arrival.

Before starting, Mr. Hardinge came to me and asked "where his papers were;" when I replied that I thought they must be "in the lower cabin, where he had been dressing himself." He immediately went down to fetch them; and this was the golden opportunity for which we had waited. In less time than it takes me to write it, Captain "Henry" stepped into the boat, which dropped slowly astern with the tide; and, when Mr. Hardinge reappeared, the captain was safe on land.

The whole scene was amusing in the extreme to those who understood it, so well

Questions:

4. Belle Boyd was a very attractive and young Confederate lady who was used to being the "belle of the ball" and use her feminine attractiveness in achieving what important event on the ship?

5. Keep in mind not all lady spies married the enemy! According to the information above, the witnesses on the ship viewed this event as being?



*Learn the
Pettit Bayard Handwriting*

Saunders, Otley & Co. Brook St., W. 1865.

Document 3: Rose O'Neal Greenhow = Photos



"A Confederate Spy in Prison--Mrs. Greenhow and Her Little Daughter." This illustration appeared in 1911 ten-volume series edited by Francis Trevelyan Miller, *Photographic History of the Civil War: Vol. 7, Prisons and Hospitals*.

Prints Files, Special Collections Department

Right photo taken from:

***Rose O'Neal Greenhow Papers
An On-line Archival Collection***

Special Collections Library, Duke University

<http://scriptorium.lib.duke.edu/greenhow/>

Rose O'Neal Greenhow, 1817-1864

Her biography is below, following the document excerpt needed for the questions:





Rose O'Neal Greenhow was born in Montgomery County, Maryland in 1817. "Wild Rose", as she was called from a young age, was a leader in Washington society, a passionate secessionist, and one of the most renowned spies in the Civil War.

Among her accomplishments was the ten-word secret message she sent to General Pierre G.T. Beauregard which ultimately caused him to win the battle of Bull Run. She spied so successfully for the Confederacy that Jefferson Davis credited her with winning the battle of Manassas.

She was imprisoned for her efforts first in her own home and then in the Old Capital Prison. Despite her confinement, Greenhow continued getting messages to the Confederacy by means of cryptic notes which traveled in unlikely places such as the inside of a woman's bun of hair. After her second prison term, she was exiled to the Confederate states where she was received warmly by President Jefferson Davis.

Her next mission was to tour Britain and France as a propagandist for the Confederate cause. Two months after her arrival in London, her memoirs were published and enjoyed a wide sale throughout the British Isles. In Europe, Greenhow found a strong sympathy for the South, especially among the ruling classes.

During the course of her travels she hobnobbed with many members of the nobility. She was received at the court of Queen Victoria and became engaged to the Second Earl Granville. In Paris, she was received into the court of Napoleon III and was granted an audience with the Emperor at the Tuileries.

In 1864, after a year abroad, she boarded the Condor, a British blockade-runner which was to take her home. Just before reaching her destination, the vessel ran aground at the mouth of the Cape Fear River near Wilmington, North Carolina. In order to avoid the Union gunboat that pursued her ship, Rose fled in rowboat, but never made it to shore. Her little boat capsized and she was dragged down by the weight of the gold she received in royalties for her book.

In October 1864, Rose was buried with full military honors in the Oakdale Cemetery in Wilmington. Her coffin was wrapped in the Confederate flag and carried by Confederate troops. The marker for her grave, a marble cross, bears the epitaph, "Mrs. Rose O'N. Greenhow, a bearer of dispatches to the Confederate Government."

--<http://americancivilwar.com/women/women.html>



Rose O'Neal Greenhow Papers

Letter to Jefferson Davis, July 16, 1863

Wilmington, N.C. From Rose Greenhow to Jefferson Davis. Letter describes her recent meeting with General Robert E. Lee in Richmond. Included are detailed descriptions of battles fought and to be fought as well as the "temper and spirit of the people" involved. The last page of this letter is missing. (Jefferson Davis Papers, Special Collections Library, Duke University)

Charleston July 16th [1863]

To The President

My dear Sir

I arrived here yesterday (Wednesday) at noon after rather a fatiguing travel from Richmond, not stopping by the wayside long enough to wash my face.

The only thing to mark the journey was the excitement and anxiety manifested by all classes to hear the news from Richmond, and especially from Lee's army, and many a sigh of relief was uttered. When I spoke of his calm confident tone. I endeavored also to impress upon every one your conviction as to the necessity of reinforcing the army by the most rigorous means.

Just as I left Richmond news of the fall of Fort Hudson had been received which was confirmed by the intelligence of the wayside. On reaching Wilmington the situation of Charleston became the engrossing subject of conversation and of interest, which was not diminished by the accounts received from time to time by passengers who got on the principle portion of whom were from Charleston or the vicinity. Doubt and anxiety as to the result was the general tone of the people, and occasionally severe animadversions upon the conduct of the military affairs, especially instancing the supineness, in the construction of the defenses. These I mention--nor [do] I attach importance to criticism of this nature but rather to show you the temper & spirit of the people. Soon after getting with the territory of S.C. hand bills were distributed along the route setting forth the imminent peril of Charleston and calling upon the people for 3000 negro's to work on the defenses. On nearing the city the booming of the heavy guns was distinctly heard, and I feared that the attack had been going on with but little intermission for several days. I omitted to mention also that the cars coming were laden with cotton and in many instances carriages & horses also being sent to the interior, showing the sense of insecurity which very generally prevails. Friday-- Knowing upon what slight grounds panics are often based, I did not even give due credit to these indications as to the actual state of affairs but put aside my letter until I could obtain a better insight into them. --And I now resume my letter, feeling that I can confidently state the result, and only wish that I could honestly make a more cheering exposition. The impression here that Charleston is in great danger is sustained by the opinion of the Military Authorities. I saw Genl. Beauregard who came to call upon me, and had a very long conversation with him, and he is deeply impressed with the gravity of the position. He says that three months since he called upon the planters to send him 2000 negro's to work upon the fortifications at Morris Island and other points and that he could only get one hundred, and that they would not listen to his representations as to the threatened danger. That he considered the late successes against the Yankee Iron Clads, as a grave misfortune, as the



people in despite of his protests to the contrary have been lulled into a fatal security--That the Yankees are in force upon a position of Morris Island from which it will be impossible to dislodge them, as they are protected by the sea and marsh on one side and by their Iron Clads on the other that we must eventually abandon the portion of the Island which they now occupy, but that he is erecting works on James Island which will command those works, which he will destroy and render it impossible for them to reconstruct. He says the fall of Charleston now depends upon his ability to carry out his plans. He proposes and has commenced (for yestery 1500 negro's came in and today the balance of the requisition) a line of fortifications which will completely envelope Morris Island and surround them as he says "*by a line of fire*" in this form [small diagram of rebel forces at Morris Island] but to effect this heavy guns and mortars are necessary, and without them Charleston must fall. He told me that he was making out a report to be sent to the War Dept--and made use of the remark that the "Yankees had started [to] march upon us-" I said how is that Gen. with your great sagacity? He saided that they had built a tower of some 80 feet upon some hill, which completely overlooked Charleston and his position and thus so soon as they found that he had sent off a portion of his forces south they commenced re-inforcing believing him weaker than he even was--that if he had had the force in the first instance when they landed on Morris Island he could have prevented it. *Many say that he could have done it and should do so yet, even now that his loss will be heavy.* The skirmishing continues active on both sides. They enemys shells being principally directed to Fort Wagner--I am told just now by a *reliable party* that the enemy has commenced throwing up works in the middle of the Island and have commenced to dig and that Fort Wagner is *greatly endangered thereby*. Beauregard is at Morris Island and other points Superintending and directing. He told me that he had plenty of men for the present, and thus only needed the heavy guns & mortars



I have talked with a number of men of high military position as also prominent Citizens, and altho they blamed Beauregard in the first instance for inactivity in not fortifying the known weak point of Charleston, and that he should have allowed himself to be taken at a disadvantage. All now concur in believing that every effort will be made to defend and save the City--her fate stands trembling in the ballance.

Beauregard says that he made a requisition for heavy guns some months since and sent Maj. Blanding in to Richmond with the Sec. of War--But that they will be no time now.

Riply is severely sensured by many as having been too busy with **his cotton speculations**--until very recently to think of fortifications, also that **a point of etiquette between some corps** have left his defenses in this deplorable state of weakness. I tell you this as I think it right that you should know all that is said; and that it is not **idle street gossip** but comes to me from men in high position. At the same time I know you to be too wise to be unduly influenced by the best founded gossip, without more substantial grounds. But of one thing be assured that every body is wide awake just now--and no one ignorant of the danger to the Palmetto City--which, by the way, takes its name from their being but one tree of that discription visible. Gen. Bonham is here in active Co-operation with Beauregard. Clingman's Brigade made the attack night before last and behaved very well--so far we have repulsed them every where --but alas their overwhelming numbers are not sensible even of heavy loss--our own loss always very slight. The Yankee guns are of greatly improved range. Their guns larger and ther Iron Clads far more formidable than at first[.] Some of their shells pass over Fort Sumpter. The attack is evidently in earnest and made with more method and determination, and with greatly improved practice. Dalgreen is in command of this naval and who was in Fort Sumpter at the bombardment at first and knows ever crook and inlet of the approaches around Charleston. Gen. Bonham who has been with him for a long time this evening says the plan now followed is strictly the one which this man described at that time as the one by which Charleston could be taken. Bonham thinks that an undue panic prevails altho it will be hard work to save his plan since he saw this exposed position some months since--I asked in Heaven's name why did you not as Gov. of the State point it out. "He said he did not like to interfere with the military--that **there had been like to have been some ill feeling between him and Gen. Beauregard brought about by Gordon on account of the laborers** which he could by law have no authority to compell. He also told me that there had been some ill feeling between you and him, but that after he was elected Gov. he had sent you word that from this time it was forgotten and that he would co-operate with you in all things & he spoke with great solicitude of your health, and when I told him that you had had only an attack to which any one was liable and was not quite well he exclaimed, "thank God for that, for I am free to say that his loss would be the greatest calamity which could befall us--for what would Stevens be in a crisis like this"--It is with deep gratification that

I hear this universal sentiment even from those who consider themselves bitterly agrieved by you--Gov. Bonham asked me if I thought that you would intrust the affairs of the Navy to Mallory at this crisis. I replied that it was my impression that you would, save in its minor details, intrust the affairs of no one of



the departments to any head however able that you were too fully possessed of the responsibilities of your position to allow them to be decided by other than your own judgement, even tho your physical health was all unequal to such an amount of labor. He said you gave him great satisfaction--He is a wonderful man, but can he stand it?

News reached here this morning that Johnson still near Jackson altho fighting was going on--Vizitelli of the London News who has been down there has just left me and given me some very interesting details of that region--He says that heavy responsibility rests somewhere for the fall of Vicksburg--and he gives me all that he gathers, altho under the seal of confidence as I told him I should tell you.

He says the universal crie is that had the Commissariat done his duty and properly provisioned the place that the greatest military move of modern times would have been accomplished--but that instead of buying beef, bacon, & corn &c when offer[ed] at the most ridiculously low prices offered and urged upon him he had said he knew what was needed and refused? I then asked is any blame attached to Pemberton? No not after the place was invested? He did all that mortal man could do? That before the surrender his garrison had been five days on quarter rations and five days on mule meat which was then exhausted--he summoned his officers and men and put it to them whether they should cut their way out--he himself favored this--but it was found upon examination that not one out of 100 of his garrison were able to march the eight miles even without equipments of any kind so exhausted were they from starvation--hence the surrender. He says had they been able to have held out twenty days that Grants army would have been precisely in the position of Vicksburg--as Johnson, Smith, and others were surrounding the avenues of

his supplies. That then Johnson resolved to pull back his advance of Grant--and that the falling back from the Big Black was without example in the world that he had been in Solferino and all the wars of Europe and never saw its equal that not a drop of water is to be found in the whole route traversed, and that he saw eight men within a space of thirty feet fall down from want of water--that he looks upon Grants Campaign in the region as over unless he can carry tanks [?] which is impossible--He says that Johnson made as much as possible out of the position and cannot be driven from Jackson--This mans account inspired me r[e]ally with great hope--and he thinks that the tighter we are pressed the better our chance of recognition--He says that the European world will never allow the reconstruction of the American Union--that their sympathies are naturally with the Anglo-Saxon race who are represented in the South that they will say let them alone they can accomplish their destiny with[out] us--but the moment they found that the chances are that we are likely to be overcome by that Northern race--that moment will they rise up to prevent it. He thinks our people unduly depressed now by the events at Vicksburg &--and is writing a series of articles (incog.) on the subject one of which for the Courier he has submitted to me. He says he is very glad that I am going to England as he knows I will be useful, and gives me some very good letters [word torn out] Beauregard thinks that he can save Charleston if allowed to carry out his plan (--altho the Yankee Generals says he will dine in Charleston at the Miles House on Sunday)--and drive the enemy hence--in which case he is exceedingly anxious to join the army of Gen. Lee for he says "my affections and feelings are there"--and that he had great respect and admiration for





Lee--I suggested that there would be no position of sufficient grade to which he could be assigned. He said he would accept any position in which you would consider that his services could be useful for his only wish was to end

the war and return to his home, that he was tired engineering and longed for active service (I told him that at one time rumor had assigned him to the command of Jackson's Corps). He said he would have gladly accepted it, as any other in which you would think him useful, that did not disgrace him. I told him of course that could never be attempted as you were too just and too proud to do an act of injustice &. He replied that he was sure of it--the Iron Clads have been coming nearer all day, and now are firing at Sumpter and Wagner and Moultrie which are returning the compliment a new Yankee batterie has just been unmasked--I have just returned from St. Stevens tower where I had a good view, and the shells are flying thick and fast and their gun boats are blackening the waters--altho they have not yet got in reach of our torpedoes all the vessels which come into the harbor are seized by Beauregard and torpedoes attached. It is impossible to run the blockade from here--as there are no vessels--Mr. Tranholm has just called upon me and told me of the impossibility of getting out from this port and tells me that there are a number of Gov. vessels now at Wilmington and advises me to go from there so I have once more my kind friend to trouble you--will you cause the necessary directions



to be sent me here so that I may be enabled to go from Wilmington and together with the permit to ship cotton for my expenses, and if it be not possible to ship the whole amount required by any one vessel can be distributed amongst the number so as to enable me to take the necessary amount--Mr. Trenholm, told me that he had dispersed of his vessels, and also that he had just agreed to sell a vessel now at Wilmington to the Gov.--he advises what I have asked above [and] promises me all aid in his power. I am to dine with him on Monday--I shall remain here until Wednesday or Thursday and shall hope to get a letter from you--which I can frame as an heirloom for my children also--I hope to get the letters I have asked be forwarded here.

I will continue to write to you but will promise not again to inflict such a long letter as I consider by this I have cleared away the rubbish and can now have an unobstructed view of the whole situation--and the conversation is more and more strongly impressed that Charleston at this moment should not be in this straight.

Yesterday M. Mincado the Spanish Consul called upon me, and I am reluctantly compelled to prolong my letter in order to give you the results of his--visit. He repeated his instructions which Mr. Tassara had formerly given him--and that he has [word torn out] been informed by him as he [wrote] me that the new Spanish Minister at Paris had been sent there for the purpose of urging the recognition--and that Mr. Tassara had instructed him had made him deem it prudent to remain quiet as he feared to fix Swards attention--that Tassara had more recently instructed him by letter to say that there was not the slightest truth in Swards assertion that the French Emperor no longer interested himself in Confederate affairs, as discussions were daily taking place between his minister and the Emperor on the subject--He sayed he had now to make a communication of the greatest delicacy--as he would not wittingly

impeach the integrity of Mr. Paul the French Consul at Richmond--But that immediately after his return, and after the attack at Charleston he had written a full statement of events to Mr. Tassara containing a great deal of matter and had sent those dispatches through M. Paul--but that they had never reached M. Tassara and he has subsequently informed him and that the suposition by both was that M. Paul conceived that those dispatches interested the French Gov--to know the contents--Both Mr. Tassara and himself wished this fact to reach Mr. Benjamin Moncado has subsequently been under the impression that the circular

addressed to the British Consul affected the Consular relations of all others and regretted his inability to communicate with his Gov--I told him this was not so & He also said that our commisioner to Spain had not been there since the winter, and that M. Tassara thought it highly improbable that an able man should be sent there, as the Spanish people know little of any portion of North America save New York--I will not add further...

[The letter is incomplete, the final sheet apparently missing.]

[Rose O'Neal Greenhow Papers - Homepage](#) or [Index to letters](#).

A project of [The Digital Scriptorium](#), [Special Collections Library](#), [Duke University](#).

Questions:

6. How knowledgeable is Rose in regards to giving advice to President Jefferson? _____

7. List at least 3 situations that Rose shares as important information. _____

8. Why is her opinion so valuable to the Confederate Jefferson Davis?

9. From the details, describe how valuable she is to the Confederacy and how different she is to the previous two female spies: _____

Document 4: See below graphic for questions

A woman disguised as a soldier...Madame Loreta Jenata Velazquez, alias Lieutenant Harry T. Buford of the Confederate States Army

Brief Description:

"...Full description of the numerous battles in which she participated as a Confederate Officer; of her perilous performances as a **spy**, as a bearer of despatches, as a secret service agent, and as a blockade-runner; of her adventures behind the scenes at Washington, including the bond swindle; of her career as a bounty and substitute broker in New York; of her travels in Europe and South America; her mining adventures on the Pacific slope; her residence among the Mormons; her love affairs, courtships, marriages, &c., &c." &c."

Taken from


First Person Narratives of the American South, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

REPOSITORY

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fpnas <http://docsouth.unc.edu/velazquez/menu.html>

 AMERICAN MEMORY	PREVIOUS	NEXT	ITEM LIST	NEW SEARCH



Loreta Janeta Velazquez, b. 1842 and C. J. Worthington

"The Woman in Battle: A Narrative of the Exploits, Adventures, and Travels of Madame Loreta Janeta Velazquez, Otherwise Known as Lieutenant Harry T. Buford, Confederate States Army. In Which Is Given Full Descriptions of the Numerous Battles in which She Participated as a Confederate Officer; of Her Perilous Performances as a Spy, as a Bearer of Despatches, as a Secret-Service Agent, and as a Blockade-Runner; of Her Adventures Behind the Scenes at Washington, including the Bond Swindle; of her Career as a Bounty and Substitute Broker in New York; of Her Travels in Europe and South America; Her Mining Adventures on the Pacific Slope; Her Residence among the Mormons; Her Love Affairs, Courtships, Marriages, &c., &c. Richmond, Va.: Dustin, Gilman & Co., 1876."

Summary

"Loreta Janeta Velazquez, born in Cuba in 1842, was the daughter of a Spanish official. She was sent to school in New Orleans, but ran away and married an officer in the United States Army in 1856. They had three children, but all died young. After they had been married for several years, she persuaded her husband to renounce his commission and join the Confederate forces. In fact, Loreta herself joined the troops by dressing as man and in this disguise she served as a Confederate officer, a spy, and a Blockade Runner. She was wounded several times, and was involved in several intrigues in and around Washington. During her military action, her husband was killed suddenly by a weapon malfunction. She remarried to one of her first husband's close friends, Captain De Caulp, who did not realize that for three years he had been engaged to a woman whom he also knew as a Confederate officer. Although Velazquez writes that he was killed in action shortly after their marriage, he actually survived the war. Following the Civil War, Velazquez was married twice more, went on an extensive expedition to Venezuela, Cuba, and other Latin American countries with her third husband, and lived throughout the American west with her fourth husband who was a miner. She died in 1897.

The Woman in Battle: A Narrative of the Exploits, Adventures, and Travels of Madame Loreta Janeta Velazquez (1876) is Velazquez's story of her experiences as a woman in male-dominated arenas. As she writes in chapter ten, "A woman labors under some disadvantages in an attempt to fight her own way in the world, and at the same time, from the mere fact that she is a woman, she can often do things that a man

cannot." In her memoir, Velazquez begins with an explanation of her background. She describes the effect of the Mexican War on her family, her education in New Orleans, and her early interest in dressing as a man and imagining a destiny similar to Joan of Arc's. She also recounts her experiences as a Confederate soldier. Velazquez fought at the Battles of Bull Run and Ball's Bluff and at the siege of Fort Donelson, and she served as a military conductor before going to Nashville. She was arrested as a Union spy in New Orleans, but successfully cleared her name without revealing her true identity. After leaving New Orleans, she joined a Louisiana regiment and fought at the Battle of Shiloh, where she fought by the side of her fiancée, Captain de Caulp, although he did not recognize her. Velazquez became a spy shortly thereafter and went to Cuba in order to discuss tactics with Confederate officers living there. Her experiences during the war were as varied as they were unique, and her memoir captures the typical life of a Confederate soldier, describes camp-life, and depicts the adventures of war. The narrative continues beyond her war adventures, and details her travels in Latin America and the American West."

Works Consulted: Garraty, John A. and Mark C. Carnes, eds., *American National Biography*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1999; Ireland, Norma Olin, *Women in World History: A Biographical Encyclopedia*, Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1998

By Harris Henderson

Questions:

10. Knowing a little about Loreta Velazquez from the background information above, study the two likenesses of her. How do you think she was able to fool the men she fought with?

11. List the battles she fought in:

12. When did she become a spy and where was she used?

Document 5:

Pauline Cushman (1833–1893)

"In 1862, Pauline Cushman was a struggling actress employed in a Louisville playhouse. In a play that required her character to give a toast, she was dared on one occasion to toast Jefferson Davis. She agreed, but gained the permission of the federal provost marshal first. Perceived now as a self-proclaimed Southern sympathizer, Cushman was expelled from the theater. In 1863, a new opportunity presented itself, the chance to spy for the Union. In lace and petticoats, she became a camp follower of the Confederate army in Kentucky and Tennessee. Her allure and beauty aided her in obtaining information that would be of value to the federal army. Yet the frustrated actress soon proved to be wanting in spying as well. She aroused suspicions and was finally caught with secret papers. General Bragg had her tried, and a military court sentenced her to hang, whereupon her health broke and her sentence was delayed. Yet military operations intervened. Bragg moved his army and left Cushman behind. Rescued by Yankees at Shelbyville, Tennessee, she traveled north to much acclaim. President Lincoln made her an honorary major, and wearing her new uniform, she lectured about her clandestine adventures behind rebel lines. ""

--Taken from **About.com**



Question:

13. Describe the appearance of Pauline

Cushman: _____

14. Put yourself in the place of this woman. What problems could she have had posing as a spy and a soldier? _____

Part II

Directions: using the documents, the answers in Part I, and your knowledge of American History, write a well-organized essay to answer the following:

Question:

How were female spies on both sides in the war effective to carry out what was expected to aid in the cause they believed in?

Include also the details of the different types of women that enabled them to follow orders despite the dangers they faced and the sacrifices they made.

Compare and contrast the different women in your essay as well. Make your conclusion tie all those involved together.

