

Rose Neale Greenhow - The Fearless and Cunning Civil War Spy



During the American Civil War, several individuals played critical roles in intelligence gathering for their respective sides. One particularly influential spy was Rose Neale Greenhow, a remarkable woman who proved her mettle as a

Confederate operative. Greenhow's cunning, intelligence, and dedication to her cause made her a remarkable figure in the history of espionage.

Rose Greenhow's Early Life and Sympathy for the South

Rose Neale Greenhow was born in Montgomery County, Maryland, in 1817. Coming from a wealthy and politically connected family, Greenhow grew up with a deep understanding of political affairs. Her father, Thomas Neale, served as a joint sergeant-at-arms of the United States House of Representatives, further immersing Greenhow in the world of politics.



Wild Rose: Rose O'Neale Greenhow, Civil War Spy

by Ann Blackman (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.4 out of 5

Language : English

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Text-to-Speech : Enabled

Enhanced typesetting : Enabled

Word Wise : Enabled

Screen Reader : Supported

Print length : 416 pages



Her connections and upbringing led Greenhow to meet and form relationships with influential politicians, including future President James Buchanan. These connections would prove valuable later on, as Greenhow established herself as one of the most successful female spies in history.

Greenhow's political sympathies lay firmly with the Southern states. As tension grew between the North and the South, she became an ardent supporter of the

Confederacy. Her advocacy included actively participating in political discussions and contributing funds to the Southern cause.

The Life of a Spy

With her wealth, status, and influential connections, Greenhow had the means to relay information to Confederate leaders. Her role as a spy began in Washington, D.C., where she used her social gatherings to gather intelligence.

Greenhow skillfully navigated high society, developing relationships with powerful figures such as John C. Calhoun and Jefferson Davis. These connections allowed her to collect valuable information on Union movements, strategies, and plans.

As the war escalated, Greenhow's espionage activities became increasingly daring. She established a network of spies and couriers, passing on secret messages written in code to Confederate commanders. At great personal risk, she successfully transferred vital information regarding Union troop movements, often hiding coded messages in her hair or clothing.

Despite the constant surveillance by Union authorities, Greenhow eluded capture for several years. Her intelligence network became a vital asset for the Confederacy. Greenhow's invaluable contributions led her to be regarded as one of the most influential Confederate spies during the Civil War.

Capture and Imprisonment

Greenhow's luck eventually ran out in August 1861 when, during one of her secret missions, she was detained by Union forces. Her visit to Europe was perceived as aiding the Confederate cause and providing valuable intelligence to her Confederate allies abroad.

Imprisoned at Old Capitol Prison in Washington, D.C., Greenhow continued her defiance. Despite strict surveillance, she relayed information to the South by sewing coded messages into her clothing, which were then smuggled out of the prison.

Only allowed a pen, ink, and paper, Greenhow seized every opportunity to pass on valuable intelligence to her Confederate contacts. She wrote historical accounts of the war and highlighted Union military movements, doing everything in her power to assist the Confederacy.

The Final Chapter

In January 1862, Greenhow was released due to deteriorating health after spending six months in prison. However, this didn't stop her involvement in espionage. After her release, she traveled to Europe to continue her work, building relationships with Confederate supporters and advocating for their cause.

Unfortunately, during her return to America on a blockade-runner ship in September 1864, the vessel ran aground and Greenhow drowned off the coast of North Carolina. Her death was a great loss to the Confederacy and left a lasting impact on the history of espionage.

Legacy and Recognition

Rose Neale Greenhow's unwavering dedication to the Confederate cause made her a notable figure in the American Civil War. Her intelligence-gathering skills and fearless determination remain a testament to her influence as a spy.

Greenhow's contributions were recognized by the Confederacy, with Jefferson Davis personally mourning her loss. Her grave, located in Oakdale Cemetery in Wilmington, North Carolina, serves as a lasting tribute to her courageous efforts.

While Rose Neale Greenhow's story may have been forgotten over time, her actions significantly impacted the course of the American Civil War. Her legacy as a spy serves as a reminder of the powerful role that intelligence gathering plays in military conflicts.



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For sheer bravado and style, no woman in the North or South rivaled the Civil War heroine Rose O'Neale Greenhow. Fearless spy for the Confederacy, glittering Washington hostess, legendary beauty and lover, Rose Greenhow risked everything for the cause she valued more than life itself. In this superb portrait, biographer Ann Blackman tells the surprising true story of a unique woman in history.

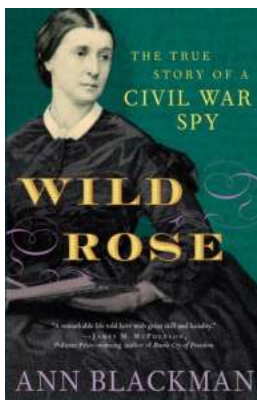
“I am a Southern woman, born with revolutionary blood in my veins,” Rose once declared—and that fiery spirit would plunge her into the center of power and the thick of adventure. Born into a slave-holding family, Rose moved to Washington, D.C., as a young woman and soon established herself as one of the capital's most charming and influential socialites, an intimate of John C. Calhoun, James Buchanan, and Dolley Madison.

She married well, bore eight children and buried five, and, at the height of the Gold Rush, accompanied her husband Robert Greenhow to San Francisco. Widowed after Robert died in a tragic accident, Rose became notorious in Washington for her daring—and numerous—love affairs.

But with the outbreak of the Civil War, everything changed. Overnight, Rose Greenhow, fashionable hostess, became Rose Greenhow, intrepid spy. As Blackman reveals, deadly accurate intelligence that Rose supplied to General Pierre G. T. Beauregard written in a fascinating code (the code duplicated in the background on the jacket of this book). Her message to Beauregard turned the tide in the first Battle of Bull Run, and was a brilliant piece of spycraft that eventually led to her arrest by Allan Pinkerton and imprisonment with her young daughter.

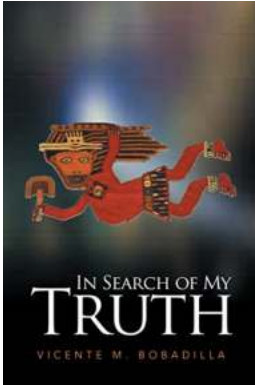
Indomitable, Rose regained her freedom and, as the war reached a crisis, journeyed to Europe to plead the Confederate cause at the royal courts of England and France.

Drawing on newly discovered diaries and a rich trove of contemporary accounts, Blackman has fashioned a thrilling, intimate narrative that reads like a novel. *Wild Rose* is an unforgettable rendering of an astonishing woman, a book that will stand with the finest Civil War biographies.



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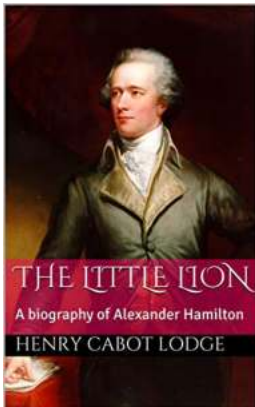
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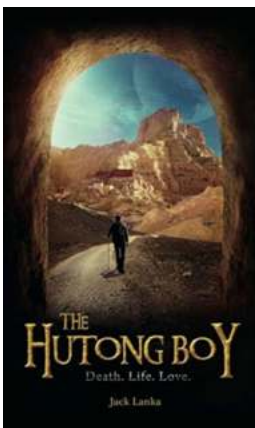
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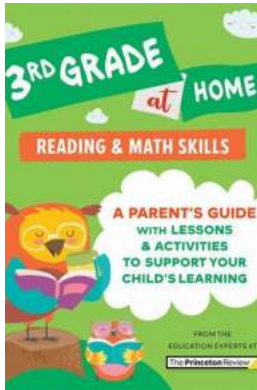
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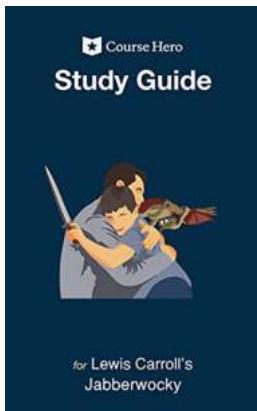
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