Liar, Temptress, Soldier, Spy: Four Women Undercover in the ...

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

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SPEAKERS

Mark Wetherington, Question, Karen Abbott

Mark Wetherington 00:00
Karen Abbott is a New York Times bestselling author of sin and the second city and American rose. She is a regular contributor to smithsonian.com, and also writes for disunion The New York Times series about the Civil War, and native of Philadelphia, she has worked as a journalist, she now lives in New York City. And she's already at work on her next book, a semi true tale of a gilded age con artist. That one sounds great. Thank you, and welcome to the Filson.

Karen Abbott 00:43
Thank you, Mark, for that great introduction. Thank you to the Filson for having me here tonight. Thank you all for coming out. It's really great to be in the vitaly important border state of Kentucky. So I remember quite a few bits of interesting research about Kentucky when I was working on this book. My favorite one was that there was a proprietor of a local boarding house by the name of Mrs. Long, who used to serve Union soldiers fresh copy Season Two with a dash of poison. So somewhere around here, Mrs. Long, up to no good. But I like to start usually by talking about how I became interested in this topic. I was born and raised in Philadelphia, and moved to Atlanta in 2001. And had never spent time in the South before and it was a bit of a culture shock. I was immediately struck by the fact that, you know, the Civil War seeped into conversation and daily life in a way that it never does. Of course, I had to get used to the occasional confederate flag on the lawn, the jokes about the war of Northern aggression. And the point was really driven home for me one day when I've stuck in traffic on route 400. For hours, if anybody's been in Atlanta, you know what I'm talking about. I was behind a pickup truck with a bumper sticker that says, Don't blame me, I voted for gently. So I sat and stared at this thing for two hours, which gave me a lot of time to start thinking about the civil war in more detail, and did my interest immediately start thinking about well, what were the women doing? I wanted to figure out what their role the roles they were playing. And of course, women were darning socks and selling uniforms for the soldiers. Some of them were holding his arse to raise money for supplies. There were others who took things a step further, and became
informal recruiting officers. They were shaming anyone who served his duty to fight. And I thought these women were interesting. There were quite a few cartoons in the southern newspapers were in which picturing women dressed in pants as looming over your calorie and husband saying that either you enlist or I will. And that's one of these cartoons. And there was one story in particular that made me laugh. There was a Southern belle who heard her fiancee refused to enlist. And so she sent her slave over with a package and the package contained a dress and a credit line and a note, and the note said, wear this dress and crinoline or volunteer. And then he ended up volunteering that he was embarrassed. And I wanted to find women who took things even a step further than that. Women who lied, cheated, fought shot, drank stole events, we flirted and murder their way through the Civil War. And I found to the north and to the south. And my goal for the book was to weave their stories together and to create a tapestry and hopefully tell the story of the Civil War as it hasn't been pulled before, in ways where the stories intersect, and the women each touch in interesting and significant patterns and how to cause and effect upon one another. So I hope that's what I've done here. And without further ado, I'm going to introduce my slides to this is my first spy. This is Belle Boyd. She was 17 years old when we were birthed out she was a Confederate girl living in the Shenandoah Valley, Virginia, and Val had no filter. She was all added. She had quite a high opinion of herself, as exemplified by this brief letter I'm going to read to you that she sent to her cousin, lobbying him to find her a husband. I am tall, I weighed 106 and a half pounds. My form is beautiful. My eyes are a bit dark blue and so expressive. My hair of a rich brown and I think that tied up nicely. My neck and arms are beautiful and my foot is perfect. Only work size two and a half shoes, my teeth the same curly whiteness, I think perhaps a lawyer knows quite as large as ever, neither Grecian or Roman, but beautifully shaped. And indeed I am decidedly the most beautiful pull up all your cousins. So go clearly had no problems for self esteem. And she kicks things off in July of 1861. The door is very new, it's only a couple of months old. And at this point there are Union forces marching down Shenandoah Valley effort of small slice of which they want and they're planning on having a fourth of July celebration in Marksburg, which was Bellingham town. And Bella sitting there waiting for them. She has a pistol by her side, and the Union forces come in they rampage, they steal liquor, they start bringing on breaking into zones terrorizing everybody, and they finally happened on Beltone. And one of the Union soldiers threatens to raise a federal flag over her house and bail you know, being a cool, calm collected story shoots this guy did get away with it. She tells the union authorities that he had attacked her mother when he was going after her mother which there was some truth to that. And then she shot him dead in self defense. Because Bella is really molded by it's time to then join the Confederate Army as a courier and spy and she had many relatives in the Confederate Army and so use those connections to advance herself and bell here as well in her Confederate Army Barbie Little River Park. She crossed quite a bit to address them in boys bar and she also had very a fondness for dressing in Confederate uniform as much as she could. And so she became a spy and and paradoxically did a lot of things to draw attention to himself usually know his vits to be her main screen and people look profile. The belt goes the opposite of that. But she quickly became a notorious seductress and I filed this other things you can make up one of her power Moore's major declaw. Journalism. She was closeted for four hours with Union channel James Shields, and once they emerged, Val subsequently wrapped a rebel flag around his head celebration was conquest. She was really overt with both her opinions and her sexuality. It was an odd combination for the time for women. It was sort of like it Sarah Palin and Miley Cyrus had a 19th century baby. Her fellow teenagers called her the fastest girl in Virginia or anywhere else for that matter. And that she went on to have quite two adventures and as you would read in the book. This is private Frank Thompson. Private Frank Thompson enlisted in the Union Army in spring of 1861. And he came into the army with a secret private crime Thompson was really Emma Edmonds, who had been living as a mask for two years. And Emma had quite a tragic upbringing. She was born in Canada and her father had one at all
sons, and so she was a disappointment. And he had arranged for her to be married to an elderly neighbor, and Emma wanted no part of this all of her sisters had been sent off to marry in similar fashion and were miserable. And Emma dreamed for more for herself and women to live with adventure. So she cut her hair, she found her breasts, she traded in her dress for a man suit. And she migrated to the United States, and began working as an itinerant Bible salesman. And when she started hearing about abolitionists, John Brown and all the drumbeat of events leading up to the Civil War, she decided she was going to a list and she wants to know what kind of drama she likes to call a war. And I'm just really interested in interested in how women got away with enlisting in the army, you know, you would want to think or be a pretty thorough medical examination for recruits. And the US army official protocol did dictate that a federal medical examination be given to all recruits. But doctors always flout that these laws, they had quotas to fill, they needed bodies quickly. And so they only cared if you had, you know, a finger Polish rigor, enough teeth to tear off counter cartridges. You know, it didn't matter if you were dead with your Waltons, it didn't matter as long as you could fight in March. And the doctor merely shook his hand in the army and said she was you know, fried rice hops. She was off. And I also was curious about how women got away with pulling their comrades I mean, these men they were living with in such close proximity for years. It's estimated about 400 women, before headsail disguised themselves as men and enlisted in the army to fight and I came to the conclusion that they were able to get away with it mostly because nobody had any idea what a woman would look like wearing pants. People are so used to seeing women's bodies pushed and folded into exaggerated shapes by their crinoline, that workhorses that the very idea of a woman wearing pants, let alone an entire army. It was so unfathomable that nobody could even even picture it. And so that really worked to me admin slash private practice advantage. Oh, there was a wrinkle in her story. No, I should say, Edmonds happens to fall in love with a fellow Union soldier by the name of Jerome Robbins, this dashing fellow right here. And so that presents a problem. Your diary, I was really lucky to find his diary, a couple of microfilm and figuring this out. You know, he has these great diary entries where I had a really pleasant conversation with my friend, friend Tom. So the subject of religion we discussed God and, and also we can call them plans are for tomorrow. But there was something really strange about my friend Fred Thompson, I can't quite put my finger on. So Emma, is falling in love with this guy. And she, you know, she has a conundrum that she's suffering silence that she just spiteful her feelings? Or does she risk everything and count and who would want she really is, if she was discovered, if she revealed herself. She could be arrested, she would be charged with prostitution, and she would certainly be kicked out of the army, which would have been the worst worst case for her since she really, really been saying like, so their love affair is something that it plays out from but here's my third spy. This is Rosa Miele greenhouse with her eight year old daughter, little rose, her namesake. And we're within an interesting position. By the time the war began. In the previous years, her life had completely fallen apart. She had lost five children in four years. She lost her husband and freak accident. She lost her financial stability. And she lost her access to the White House. She has so many who have been long standing friends with Democratic politicians, she can't even up and advise her very close bracket on President James Buchanan. So all of this was over for our West Lincoln and the Republicans came to office. And she was desperate, desperate to get this back. So in the spring of 1861, when a competitor had approached her and asked her to run a Confederate spider in Washington, DC, she jumped at the chance. And she began cultivating sources by cultivating I mean, I mean to do so it was very, I should say, you know, sort of Queens, I would say if Hellboy wanted to be rose when she grew up, one of her power Wars was a Union Colonel. One was a US senator from Oregon. And the most important source is this guy, Senator Henry Wilson of Massachusetts, who was an abolitionist Republican and he was also the Lincoln's chairman of the committee of Military Affairs. And he would send Tara love letters to rows. One of them reads, you know that I do love you. I have suffering this morning. In fact, I am sick
physically and mentally and no, nothing that would suit me so much. It's an hour with you. So you can imagine that they had some interesting pillow talk and Rose made quite good use of it. This is roses cipher. The Confederate captain that recruited rose to become a spy, gave her a cipher. And she had it memorized. She spent hours memorizing these symbols and learning how to work in code or dispatches. You can see the symbol for Lincoln there on the left, lower side left that looks like an inverted triangle bisected by slash. And of course, Rose had no love loss for Lincoln. She had two nicknames for meaningful and safe. Sleep. I should say the union officials and Lincoln himself believed that the war would end in 90 days they thought this was going to be fast for the plan was to overpower Confederates that the first battle will run from the south, and then we're going to Richmond and carry out to Richmond. Well, Confederates had different ideas and Rose greenhouse had different ideas. And shortly before the First Battle of Bull Run in July 1861, Rose summoned a 16 year old courier to her home on Lafayette Square in Washington DC. And his partner's name was Betty devolve, and she sits me down in her dresser. She wraps up an encoded dispatch, certainly containing information gleaned from her union paradores in her pillow talk, wraps in that piece of black silk and boils it up into a bun and baby's hair probably like this. What I've been tasked with this patch is in my hair and she tells Betty to put on a simple dress and pretend that she's a farm girl just passing home from the market. The Union centuries will just let her go up is pretty girls spiking nothing and Betty does exactly this and continues on to what Confederate General PGT Beauregard type orders on does her hair and romantic fashion enhance over this note and then no contained information about eating it and plans to advance on that So when that was happening, and so the Confederates were ready. The first Battle Bull Run came around. And it was sort of a thrill for me as a as a nonfiction and research junkie to sit in the National Archives where this black scrap of silk is today and hold it in my hand and just realize, you know, 150 years ago where history melts, when he went back home and asked us for this piece of so this is my final spy. This is Elizabeth famzoo. And she was sort of the exact opposite. She is a union spy living in Richmond. So they had directly opposing viewpoints in cities. And whereas Rose was a celebrated beauty. Elizabeth, one contemporary said, was it never as previous portrait shoot No, she wasn't, she was a spinster. She was in her 40s. She lived alone with her mother and a house was at Churchill Griffin, which was the most wealthy neighborhood in Richmond. And she was always seen as an eccentric. She was a Richmond native, but had been sent more for her education and had come under care of an abolitionist governance. So when she came back to Richmond, she held these views with her to not agree with slavery, and subsequently began freeing her family slaves and also using her inheritance to buy slaves for the express purpose of freeing them. And so maybe worse before the war just wash toward the weary I She was sort of European suspicious, but after the war, having such a strong abolitionist viewpoint, and having that sort of history was dangerous. It was something that can get you killed, enrichment, and Elizabeth received death threats. She had competitors protect this following her. Nevertheless, she went through with her plans to spark a union spy ring enrichment, and was really brazen, and and sort of ingenious with this. When I had the good fortune to connect with her brother, John Van Lew, I'm not actually John knew I could not tell John Rambo. Blue, Elizabeth's brother had two nieces. And I connected with a great grandson of one of these nieces. And he told me some information about her operation that had never been published or spoken about before. So it was fascinating to sort of piece together more of the of the puzzle of exactly how she carried out her fantastic espionage operation. And her brother, nobody knew this was quite an instrumental party. And he had inherited the family hardware business. And he would take blank invoices and purchase orders. And he would fill them out as if you were conducting normal business. He was just filling out as purchase orders. But every number we were down there would correspond with certain military terminology. For example, 370 Iron hinges might be 3700 calorie 30. And those would mean 30, batteries, artillery, and so forth. So if the Confederates looked at his papers as he passed with the lines, they wouldn't suspect
anything, but just like business, business documents. So it's quite ingenious. But I think Elizabeth's biggest coup was placing a former family slave in the Confederate White House, a remarkable woman by the name of Mary Jane Bowser. And Elizabeth early. This is about December of 1861. Pay a visitor Brianna Davis and said I understand you're looking for help. You know, you're setting up your White House staff. I have a woman she's not very smart. She folds in the kitchen, but she's a reliable servant, and I think she'll serve you well. So Mary Jane Bowser goes to work at the Confederate White House. Little does anybody know that Mary Jane Bowser is not only literate, but she's highly educated and has a photographic memory. So well, deverson David's you know, is leaving his papers and NASA on his desk and she's dusting around them. She's picking up all sorts of information that she then passes along to Elizabeth. So quite a good source to have a Confederate White House. This is somebody who probably needs no introduction of Confederate General Stonewall Jackson, who was one of my favorite characters. He's just so eccentric, who's sort of my civil war boyfriend. And, you know, I thought it was interesting to sort of like the closest thing to civil war and little rock star. I mean, people swarmed around him, he was their idol. I read one great report about women finding him at the hotel, Shenandoah Valley in 1862. And they ran after him and cornered him in the lobby, and we're calling him and ripping the buttons off of his code and taking them for seven years. And Simone takes a step back and says, Ladies, ladies, I think this is the first time I was ever surrounded by the enemy. Guys, bellboy, of course, was obsessed with Stonewall Jackson. She told reporters that she wanted to, quote, occupy his pen and share his dangers. Protecting stock symbol Jackson would have scared me more than anything that you could argue was capable of that bill Boyd was so intent on occupying my test. And so then they proceeded to sing activating 62 When bellboy becomes determined to get his attention this is General George McClellan. He sort of the union's answers Stonewall Jackson, at least for a while, he took over the Union Army in eastern PA or the army after the disaster, defeated Bull Run. And McClellan as you probably saw from this photograph, and Matisse, imitating Napoleon was quite an egomaniac kind of a very high image of himself. He told people that you could bend Porter between his thumb and forefinger, and then he could lift the 250 pound man over his head. If he believed that God Himself had sent him to safety union and always talked about this letter states like the guy himself and had no brace to call it off at center safety. And his soldiers adored him. They believe he was divinely set, and they include private rock concert admits is one of the soldiers. And she has worked in as well as all this other meant. But he claps constantly with President Lincoln, especially as the war went on. He thought Lincoln was quote, nothing more than a well meaning Babbu who come first presents some problems as the union struggled to regain its footing. Well, this is one of my favorite Civil War cartoons, introduces the topic of the Union blockade, which was a really a key component of the Union strategy to session off 3500 miles of Confederate coastline and starve the confederacy of supplies, coffee, sugar, goods, weaponry, medicine, everything, making things scarce and make it really expensive. And it was so incredibly effective that a smuggling operation no sprung up around this. And Southern women were, of course, very adept at smuggling. And they primarily used their Grinling, which was the rigid cage like structure that had a diameter of about six feet. And you can imagine all sorts of things that you could attach to that credit line and I dress. One woman managed to conceal inside her group skirt, a roll of army cloth. several pairs of Calvary boots are rolling crimson final packages of skilled trades can to preserve meats and a bag of coffee. That was the contraband tally for a single crossing. bellboy was the queen of running the inland blockade as they called the blockade off, it was just inland, not the ships that went to Europe. And she was particularly adept at funneling quinine weapons because she wants smuggle or that 20 Pennsylvania regiment one day in 1862, discovered that they were missing 200 savers, 400 pistols, cavalry equipment for 200 men and 1400 muskets. This was an enterprise primarily wiped out. And I thought this was a fascinating part of women's roles in the Civil War. They sort of took society's ideas of the weaker sex and constructs about womanhood
and really brilliantly exploited them, and use them genders with physical and psychological disguise, physically, using it hiding various materials and contraband on their skirts and up in their hair, and psychologically, just hiding behind the idea of the weaker sex. You know, anytime one of these women was accused of treasonous activity, the immediate response to being How dare you accuse me of such behavior is beneath the conduct from an officer of a gentleman, and it's an insult to unprotected Lee. And of course, we will be accused or be immediately chagrined. And, and of course, these women were anything that defenseless, so sort of a genius way that they could exploit to the weaker sex. Here's another story from the analysis smuggling. This is a doll by the name of Luciana. Today she lives in the Museum of Confederacy in Richmond. But back when the Civil War she was used to smuggle quinine across the lines, why, I mean, the very necessary medicine to combat malaria. And last was stuck her head was just made of paper mache full of finite and just give these dolls to their daughters, and tell them to walk across the lines and don't say a word and pull and pull your calls tight. Don't twist the head off. And so so that's one way is that a mother is also involved in children and spotlight and more activities. And this is a little bit radar, just telling you. This was also a little piece of history I found at the Museum of the Confederacy enrichment. The curator there told me that a woman came in one day carrying this object and said that her ancestor had been a Confederate spy, and then he would use this object to smuggle finite dispatches. And has anybody if anybody's seen Pulp Fiction, the scene where Christopher Walken talks about the watch and how he smuggled the watch for Several years in a place that red sun does not shine. Above, a curator, the museum and confederacy call this the annual acorn. I really doubt that this five themselves use that term. But it's an interesting piece of history nonetheless. This is my last favorite cartoon. And this has to do with, again with smuggling. As the war went on, and the blockade kept typing, southerners were getting increasingly angry about the effects that it was having businesses in school shut down. Nobody could afford to pay teachers. Nobody could afford to provide the Confederate proof textbooks. You know, as soon as the war broke out, all the staff and Confederate came through textbooks, and I'd love to get rid of that type of referencing question one of them pose this question. In one Confederate soldier kills 90 Yankees, how many Yankees contend Confederate soldiers killed. The prices kept rising, and by 1864 Baking was $20 a pound and 1864 That's $302. In today's money, you can imagine that in a 16 700% increase from the beginning of war. So quantitative is very effective. And here's a cartoon just showing how angry southerners are about this and the items that they wish they could be smuggling across the blockchain. There's a let me say there's a necklace made in Yankee T. There's a novelty of Yankee skull and various other McCobb things of a paperweight made me happy Jehovah. And so so they're of course these things were figments of their imagination. They were asked modeling these items across the board game, but there were reports of Confederate ladies wearing jewelry made again. This is Detective Alan Pinkerton sheen here with Lincoln. And he was hired to do secret service work for the Union Army, who's actually contracted by McClellan himself. And Pinkerton was not very good at estimating Confederate troops forces. But he was good at conducting surveillance on lease buys. One of his first missions was to come to a stake out of Confederate fibres greenhouse. So one night in 1861, he brings to admit detectives to roses home and tries to peek in her windows, see what she's up to, and what does he find but burrows greenhouse sitting there with the traders, union captain, Max and forth, you know, documents spread everywhere, and the two are passionately kissing. So Pinkerton is very enraged about this, and rose becomes public enemy number one. And there was it was a great cause of concern. It was a new idea that, you know, women have always been victims of war, not as perpetrators. So the very idea that women were now highly capable of treasonous activity, but more capable of conducting it more definitely than men. This was a whole new concept to them to the Union governments that were under government, and they did not know what to do about it. When Lincoln official actually said, what do we do with these fashionable women spies, fashionable women spy? And so it was a problem that the
dog had throughout the war, you know, they were afraid to make them these women, Confederate martyrs, how could they torture or hang a widow in a way, you know, with a mother of a young girl, it was a situation they had approached very delicately. Well, there were several slides I came across and I had to leave on the cutting room floor, just because there wasn't a way to really fit them into the book. But here's one I give a brief mention too, because I thought he was really fascinating. This is a fellow by the name of Benjamin Stringfellow. He was a Confederate spy for Jeff Stewart. He had blond hair, blue eyes, fair skin, and as according to one comrade a waste like a girl's, you buy Chinese pork nails. And he used to take off his uniform and put on the laverick downs and call himself Sally markson, and then go to Union military balls, and he would glean information about your business brand from his dance partners. So as you can see, the women's vice versa really wants cross dressing here. Here's one of my slides. Speaking of cross dressing, here's one of my strat spies dressed up as a slate. And it was quite common for spies to employ all sorts of techniques to disguise themselves into even even with silver nitrate. There were stories about once by faking epileptic fits, another spy would remove this glass sigh, and another would fake limping and quite a few guys themselves as slaves and using silver nitrate, which I would say posed a problem once it got very hot and they started melting. So that's something that actually happened. And it is a story one of my favorite stories in the book. So this concludes the slideshow, but I would love to open it up to questions and do you all have any good things better ancestor stories or are you divorced? ancestor stories

**Question 30:03**
eventually happened with female spies were they discovered and executed or

**Karen Abbott 30:09**
what do you really want me to remove? I will say that there's a there's an exciting, you know sake Elton's and the women are just as widely as the men trying to pursue so

**Question 30:28**
she's what she came United States wasn't she far away from home, she didn't leave.

**Karen Abbott 30:36**
Why did she enjoyed the life she was living in Japan at that time. I mean, the the freedom that she had as a man exceeded the freedom to have as a woman. And when she decided to weather the list, she was already used to living as a man that I imagined that she was pretty confident about her ability to maintain that sky security to hit two years on her belt. You know, a lot of women put listed, you know, had not been really has been at work and some of the work, so at least you probably felt a little bit better about her chances of not being discovered. One of my favorite though, although she constantly worried about it, I will say that and some of my favorite stories to do with how when we were discovered, there was one who was a corporal in New Jersey, who gave birth while she was on. Her secret was out.
Karen Abbott 31:33
right, how many? How many spies? is a good question. There were kind of different levels of spies that I actually talked to a man who was a former CIA cooperator about a couple levels of spy event the manuscripts for for all the FBI talk. There were a couple of different levels there, there were women who merely peek their head out the window and just counted the troops passing, as a viewer reported that there were people like deltoid who were used as couriers and send messages and were contracted to do a certain low level bits of espionage and information gathering and disseminating. And then there were people like rosemary Hallows divadlo, especially Elizabeth van Lew, who were our highest echelons and really sort of formally formally brought into the fold of the Secret Service of their respective sides. And we're counted on to ensure very important information, so varying levels and no real way to tell. I mean, the top levels, very few, very few, you can probably count them on one hand, and the rest, just, you know, probably hundreds and hundreds. There's actually a great quote unquote word said, the ladies of Winchester, Virginia did a lot of spying in which no one seemed to be hard. As a man most of us here will start is the first sibling plan. That's right. For you up north.

Karen Abbott 33:35
You know, I imagine that the people who have been there for a long time their families have lost everything. That's something that gets passed down to them convenient. You understand why it's still yours? Yeah. Oh my god. Did you call them safe? Yes. Yeah. So I think you know, there's great little screws to my husband's old colleague in Atlanta just told me that his daughter's sixth grade girl had to dress up like bellboy for a school project. Which is kind of frightening and interesting at the same time, but But yeah, they you know, it just it's I mean, you can you can understand why, why it's still it's alive down.

Karen Abbott 34:30
Can you provide us an overview of how you conducted your research, how you
basically getting a general lay of the land. And then the really interesting resource come the diaries and the personal letters in the archives. I spent quite a bit of time in Washington DC, where he was available right now sees correspondence is all there. I spend a lot of time in Richmond, but I spend a lot of time in New York Public Library, Elizabeth van whose papers are there, and she had very good for some time, but then resurrected them later on. I think she was really terrified of anybody finding them. And it was there that I found some of the death threats she proceeds. If you really want to call the whitecaps, the end of its note by saying please give us some of your blood to write with the whole thing imagine how things chilling for me to free that and you know that I can imagine how it was for her to receive that back in this world I hate internet research I don’t i Everything is already curated for you for you to take through and put a fix and put online I like going to somewhere and getting my hands dirty in the box and you didn't need me I was going to be in the next folder. But the internet is very valuable and telling you where things are. So I knew you know, Parkersburg, West Virginia Rich, who knew there was a early bladder for a bellboy got the 1940s and papers to St. Louis to his papers are in Parkersburg, West Virginia. I got on a plane, I was the only person on the plane Parkersburg, West Virginia. And nobody has opened his papers for 50 years. So sort of thrilling to just sort of pour through there. I think that’s where I found majored in law, actually. So, yeah, so it was it was worth it just for that. But um, but yeah, but there’s nothing quite like going and finding the primary source material and getting answers.

**Question 36:37**

You have mentioned for Mr. Whitman on both sides, that he has concealed themselves. You don't have any data. As part of

**Karen Abbott 36:49**

that. I don't know how many ended up asking for pensions. But I do know that that one, a couple were successful. And that the United States Government at first refused to acknowledge that women thought served in the army. So it's quite a while for them to even acknowledge that let alone to get the requisite bills passed to.

**Question 37:16**

So most of these women that were in the service, go back the women.

**Karen Abbott 37:24**

Yeah. To the best of my knowledge, so the ones that I followed all went back to being women after the war. And I spent a bit of time there, you fall into these rabbit holes of research. I, you and I spent quite a bit of time to like look, looking to see what happened to women in general after the war. And it was one of the most fascinating things was how the Civil War changed the rules of courtship and how family was conducted women's roles and family and it's sort of society afterward. You know, in the antebellum years, if a woman were going to get married, her prospective mate had to have a letter of introduction, a former letter of introduction, we got to meet the parents with the neighbors, they waiting says that sort of long courtship process. Before the Civil War, all of that went away on both sides to loosen, all the men were gone. And
the women had this newfound freedom. And people wouldn't move months. You know, they
could go and characterize with mad men whose names they didn't even know. But so there was
sort of a even an increased physical intimacy, although in diaries, of course, other women only
been flirting head and you know, women there were 60, about 60,000 widows after the Civil
War. And so a whole generation of women not expect to marry or did not expect to remarry.
And we're sort of resigned to the old face. And a lot of that also 1000s and 1000s of amputees
came back. And these were men who were not able to work. So women had to become the
patriarch of the family. It was an entirely new role that was being designed for women. That
was different from the Southern belle sort of idea they had before before the war broke out.
And I think all of this led to sell her chip and sort of women's rights Elizabeth van Lew would
only send in her property tax with a note of protest that she didn't have a right to vote so I
think all of these things were after the board started moving in that direction please trust me,
because it's such an amazing use case and trust, they weren't gonna send this to so Rosendale
greenhouse effect the man who approached her was tops to work yes, we use an alias name
calm is where he for he called himself and she was to address all correspondence and Tom was
free for comments referred and sent a courier they had code that the courier had to give and
you know if he gave that to the Rose knew that it was being set by office breakers, and she
would set cars by itself. So they had little ways to verify each other with the union side, they
actually had tokens that organ government procured a certain amount of a certain number of
tokens with Union slogans on them. And what if you had this token and you knew the
passwords are along with that you would be trusted tips so that you find out a little away as far
as identify each other.

Question 40:29
Where the spies on either side where they recruited, or did the volunteer,

Karen Abbott 40:36
ask the question it and that I think it goes back to what I was saying to the lady over here. The
ones who were the informal variety spies, nobody was recruiting them, nobody, you know, they
might appreciate the information that they saw, but nobody was recruiting them and they just
were doing their patriotic duty by reporting maybe the troop numbers that passed by or if they
saw something, they felt like irrelevant. And the other front, bellboy wasn't really recruited, she
sort of thrust herself into the board in some ways, but people like Elizabeth famzoo Elizabeth
fan who was recruited and I think she was in arguably, you know, ultimately Ulysses S Grant so
support spy and once the Bureau of military information was formed in 1863 she was sort of
the the person they depended on that person was in there if there are some as I said where
there's some interesting sales and some some hairy experiences but you know the women kind
of way way of getting away with things to do expected in your office from Hollywood from you
know, from Louisville on Hollywood zero I think I just pronounced hitting cribbage Luhut road
right oh, I can I can normal Philadelphia i There are there's an offer for a TV show. You know it's
not official yet but not a wedding. You never believe these things are gonna happen unless you
start seeing it on the screen. So I just hopefully a nine nine movie but probably the TV show.

Question 42:27
In your book you wanted to turn the television half of each of these people was over? Yes.
Karen Abbott 42:32
Yeah. In fact, like my publisher read it said why don't you work the epilogue, maybe maybe go back and write it up a lot. So you can thank him if you want to know. Is there a final question? Thank you very much.