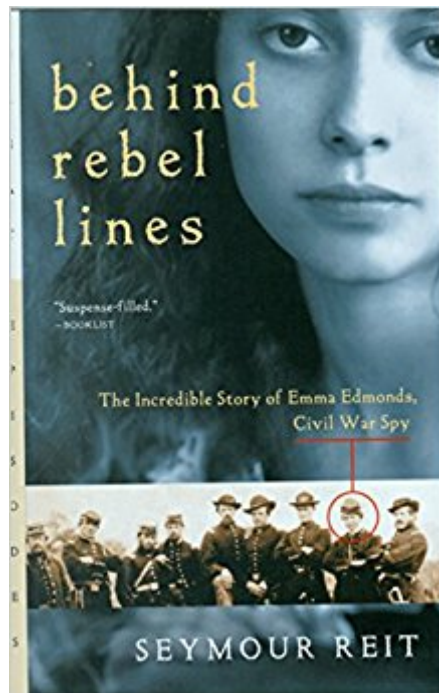




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Behind Rebel Lines: The Incredible Story Of Emma Edmonds, Civil War Spy



Synopsis

In 1861, when war erupted between the States, President Lincoln made an impassioned plea for volunteers. Determined not to remain on the sidelines, Emma Edmonds cropped her hair, donned men's clothing, and enlisted in the Union Army. Posing in turn as a slave, peddler, washerwoman, and fop, Emma became a cunning master of disguise, risking discovery and death at every turn behind Confederate lines.

Book Information

Series: Great Episodes

Mass Market Paperback: 130 pages

Publisher: HMH Books for Young Readers; Reissue edition (August 1, 2001)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0152164278

ISBN-13: 978-0152164270

Product Dimensions: 4.5 x 0.4 x 7 inches

Shipping Weight: 0.3 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars 118 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #14,992 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #1 in Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > History > Canada #1 in Books > Teens > Historical Fiction > Canada #2 in Books > Teens > Education & Reference > History > United States > Colonial & Revolutionary Periods

Age Range: 12 - 14 years

Grade Level: 7 and up

Customer Reviews

Gr 5-8 According to the estimates of some historians, as many as 400 women fought in the Civil War disguised as men. One such woman was Emma Edmonds, 21 years old and Canadian born. She felt fiercely patriotic towards her adopted country, and was determined to fight for the Union. Not only did she serve as a field nurse, tending the wounded at the battle sites, but she also served as a Union spy. Reiter has used Emma's own published memoirs (long out of print), research from the National Archives, and U. S. Army records. It should make for an exciting tale. Unfortunately, the finished product doesn't measure up to its promise. The style is far too episodic, with little unity between adventures, and not enough fleshing out of events. Some fictionalizing of dialogue and thoughts occurs. This is most likely to appeal only to those with a frenzied obsession with the Civil

War. Elizabeth M. Reardon, McCallie School, Chattanooga, Tenn. Copyright 1988 Cahners Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

• "The story is fast-moving, and Emma's spunk...is evident." • "Kirkus Reviews" • "This stranger-than-fiction story will captivate history buffs and hold the attention of the most reluctant reader." • "Bank Street College of Education" • "A suspense-filled account of a brave and loyal feminist." • "Booklist

The story of Civil War nurse, soldier, spy Emma Edmonds is perfect for kids. Unfortunately two attributes mar this telling of it. Readers are told the story is entirely based on fact with only some invented dialogue but there are no footnotes or attributions and many moments that seem too good to be true. Also Edmond's disguise as Cuff the 'spunky black slave' both strains credulity and is offensively worded. Can we really believe a Canadian young woman could successfully pass among African American southern slaves as a black man? The frequent references to his wooly hair grate and her espionage feels too easy: more Nancy Drew than reality.

Interesting story. My son and I learned a lot reading it. We liked it so much we bought another book for a birthday present. The author, Seymour Reit, makes learning history fun and easy in this book. I have to admit, I did not think my son would like it. I was pleased when he shared that he loved it. Books like this one give us a different historical perspective as well as another look at heroism. I probably will read this book again. It is a compelling read.

This is the story of a real-life Civil War hero. Despite technically not being able to join the army at all because she was a woman, Emma Edmonds joined crossed the American-Canadian border to join the Union army for the action and adventure. She knew full well that she could keep up with the men because she grew up helping on her family farm. But, she never expected the adventures she experienced during the war. Seymour Reit tells a fictionalized version of this true story (the events are real, the details, like conversations, are made into a story) that starts out working in an army hospital but soon ends up dressing up in different outfits and crossing the enemy lines to act as a spy and had all sorts of close calls while generating plenty of usable information. This is an immensely readable book. My fifth grader chose it to read for a school project and her enthusiasm for the book inspired my wife and I to read it as well.

I expected more depth but Reit writes for children, alot, and this fits the youth look at this amazing woman. He did have reference works listed, so I was able to search out more detailed information, not only on this woman Civil War soldier but on the others. I'd say this is a decent beginning to discovering how women dealt with overcoming and outmanoeuvring the social limitations put on women at the time.

interesting read for middle school

Very interesting account of a young woman from the North who became a spy in the Civil War. I think my 8th graders will enjoy it for their summer reading assignment.

Corny even if it's true. Elementary school reading.

I absolutely loved this book because it never got boring! the book gets better as the story continues. so if you read the first page and don't like it, keep reading. this was a really good book and more people should know the story of Emma Edmonds.

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