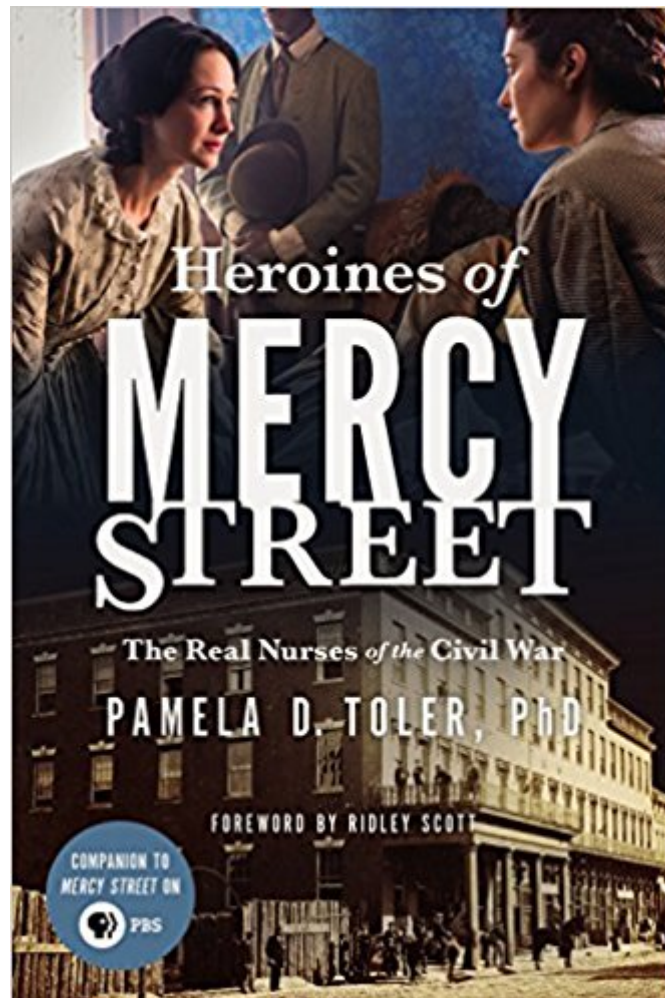




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# Heroines Of Mercy Street: The Real Nurses Of The Civil War



## Synopsis

The true stories of the real nurses on the PBS show *Mercy Street*. The nurses of the Civil War ushered in a new era for medicine in the midst of tremendous hardship. While the country was at war, these women not only learned to advocate and care for patients in hostile settings, saved countless lives, and changed the profession forever, they regularly fell ill with no one to nurse them in return, seethed in anger at the indifference and inefficiency that left wounded men on the battlefield without care, and all too often mourned for those they could not rescue. *Heroines of Mercy Street* tells the true stories of the nurses at Mansion House, the Alexandria, Virginia, hotel turned wartime hospital and setting for the PBS show *Mercy Street*. Women like Dorothea Dix, Mary Phinney, Anne Reading, and more rushed to be of service to their country during the war, meeting challenges that would discourage less determined souls every step of the way. They saw casualties on a scale Americans had never seen before; diseases like typhoid and dysentery were rampant; and working conditions--both physically and emotionally--were abysmal. Drawing on the diaries, letters, and books written by these nursing pioneers, Pamela D. Toler, PhD, has written a fascinating portrait of true heroines, shining a light on their personal contributions during one of our country's most turbulent periods.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Accessible and well researched... Successfully illustrates the beginnings of nursing as a designated field of medical practice."—Rebecca Hill, *Library Journal*

Pamela D. Toler is a writer with a Ph.D. in history from the University of Chicago and a fascination with historical figures who step outside the constraints of their time. She is the author of *Mankind: The Story of All of Us* and *The Everything Guide to Socialism*. She lives in Chicago.

I saw the television version of *Mercy Street* before reading the book and I admit it kept my attention better than the book. That said, I still thought the book was worth reading. I learned quite a few things that I had not been aware of before. The last part of the book really dealt more with the topic of nursing in a war zone versus just the Civil War and this was unexpected. All in all, it's worth reading.

Really well done book. The author presents the right balance of stories about many different nurses, and those about the two nurses central to the TV series. The stories are the right length, too. It's a fairly Union-centric look; though efforts are made to cover some Confederate stories.

This is an extremely excellent book. I feel like my knowledge of civil war history has increased ten fold for having read it. If you think the VA treats current veterans bad, it's nowhere near as bad as how the battle wounded were treated by the then medical establishment. This is not the book version of the television series, which is excellent itself. Instead, the book tells of the true lives of some of the characters that are in the TV series. If you are a student of the civil war, or a student of medical history, your knowledge is not complete without this book.

Interesting history of nursing. After seeing the PBS show "Mercy Street" and realizing it was inspired by Mary Phinney's memoirs, I was intrigued. I was surprised to learn how relatively new the field of nursing is, as we now know it.

If your getting this book in hopes of it being like the TV series your going to be a little disappointed... It goes into more of the history of the nursing profession of that era. While it does cover the lives of the nurses it also gives you an understanding of what life was like during that era and information on battles... Informative and interesting... Not a romance story!

This is a well written account of women's roll in nursing during and after the US Civil War. I enjoyed reading this book and highly recommend reading it.

The book can be considered more a lite history about nursing in the Civil War. It was written by one of the advisors on the show and it covers with broad strokes how these women were recruited and assigned to their duties. I was disappointed that the author didn't get into how the volunteer southern nurses came into story but that hopefully will be covered at a later date. Reenactors should study this book .

I didn't realize it was non-fiction until I started to read But having watched the first season of Mercy Street, I loved reading about the facts and the real-life people and comparing and contrasting truth and fiction.

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