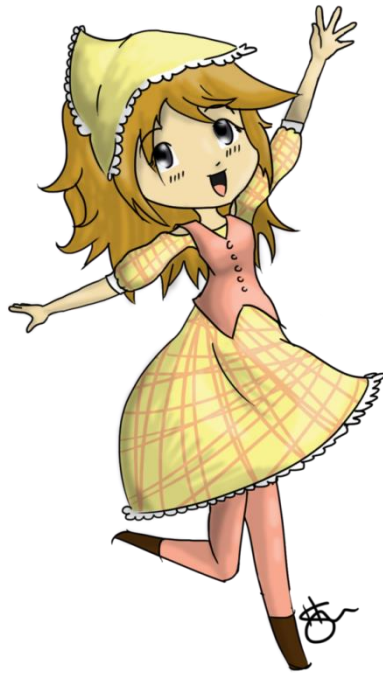



HEROINES OF THE WAR OF 1812



Sharon Moreland Myers
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- A true account of the War of 1812 must also include stories of those affected by the absence of fathers, husbands, or sons in service to their country, and of those in harm's way due to their close proximity to enemy invasions, military battles and campaigns

- It is the voices of the mothers, wives, and daughters of the War of 1812 that were often unheard and unrecorded




- The women in the camps were usually wives of soldiers
- They were chosen by a lottery system – only 6 wives were allowed in each camp for every 100 soldiers




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- If a woman's husband was killed, she had 3-6 months to grieve and then she had to re-marry or leave the camp
 - The women cooked the meals in the army camps, cared for the wounded, made repairs to uniforms and equipment and provided morale for the troops




- Women courageously passed water to the soldiers in the battlefields
- They also cared for officers' families while they were away fighting

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- Two women served as nurses aboard U.S. Stephen Decatur's flag ship – the American Commodore -Mary Allen and Mary Marshall
 - Some women who wanted to play an even bigger part in the war cut their hair, dressed like men, and enlisted





Women, many with young families, were sometimes left alone to face the enemy. With their husbands and older sons serving in the Army or in the militia, they experienced the stress of an enemy invasion, watched as their personal possessions were damaged or stolen, or their houses put to the torch


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- Etiquette precluded thorough searching of women so the role of espionage was popular for women. If they were caught, they could expect lighter punishments than men

EUNICE OVIATT

- Eunice, was wife of Capt. Heman Oviatt, trader of Hudson and later Richfield
- Indians would frequently stop and trade with the Oviatts
- Some were very friendly and others could be hostile

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- A Chippewa Indian by the name of Ogontz was more of the hostile type
 - One day when Capt. Oviatt was absent from home, Ogontz and a few others came to the house
 - Ogontz began bantering Mrs. Oviatt for a trade for a fine horse owned by Capt. Oviatt

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- She told him she would not sell the horse at any price
 - He insisted upon having the horse
 - She finally sold him a pony and he went on, but that night he returned and insisted Mrs. Oviatt give him the large horse

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- She refused and the Indians concluded to stay all night
 - When Ogontz lay down he put his knife and tomahawk under his head
 - A kinder Indian, George Wilson, began disarming Ogontz when he fell asleep

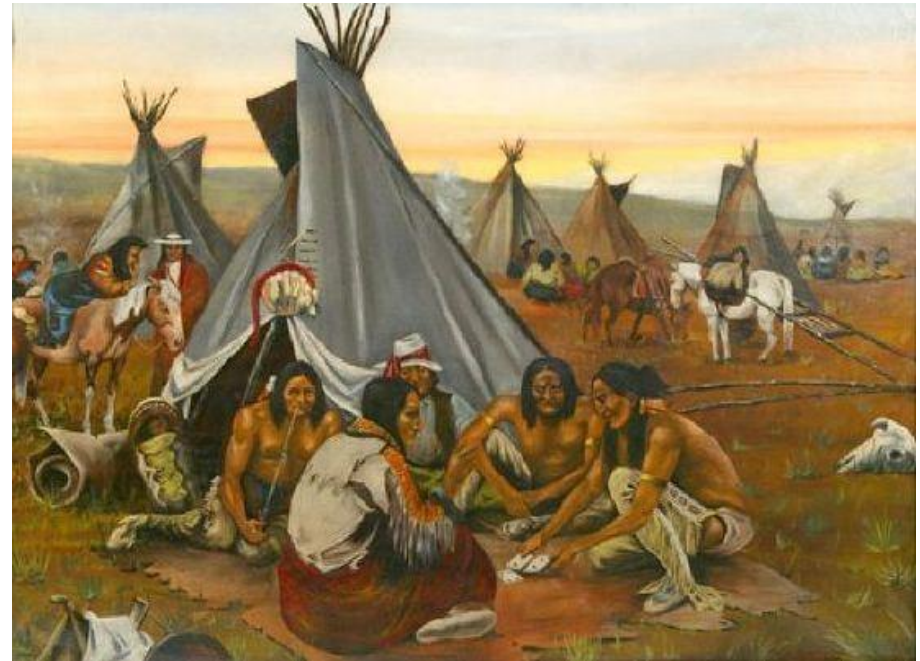



- The family felt safe and were about to retire when Capt. Oviatt came home and took care of things

NANCY CRANMER BACON

- Nancy was married to Isaac Bacon, a native of Boston, MA who was the first settler in Northfield in 1807
- No one lived within 6 miles of the cabin they built
- The Bacons lived a very isolated life

- Almost every stream of any note which flowed into the Cuyahoga River was the site of numerous Indian encampments






One day when Mrs. Bacon was alone in the cabin, a party of 6 or 7 Indians came to the house, entered and called for whiskey

Knowing her helpless condition and foreseeing extreme danger should her visitors become intoxicated, she informed them that she had none and that they better be going on as her husband would soon appear


- The Indians insisted that she did have whiskey and proceeded to search for it
- A large bottle containing a gallon of liquor was soon found and was quickly passed from hand to hand until all was gone






Nancy attempted to interfere when the bottle was first discovered, but several of the Indians drew their knives, and circling them in the air, as if in an act of scalping, sternly motioned her back

They departed and were seen no more



Many desperate men passed through the frontier settlements on the lookout for any game that would meet their desires or selfishness

One day, about noon, a man appeared at the cabin when Mr. Bacon was away and learning of his absence, sat down with his eyes fixed on Nancy and the large dog that lay near the hearth watching every move of the stranger



As night approached, the man was informed that he could not be accommodated until morning and that he should be going

He did not seem inclined to leave and to her alarm, he asked one of the little boys to turn the grindstone while he sharpened his knife




As midnight approached the stranger asked her why she didn't turn out the dog and go to bed

She replied that the dog was allowed to sleep in the house

- He opened the door and told the dog to go, but the faithful creature, with a fierce growl, refused to move







The man seemed disappointed and sat down and thus matters stood until morning, when the unwelcome guest departed


The family forever thought that the presence of the dog, alone, saved Mrs. Bacon from insult or death

ELIZABETH WHITTAKER

- Elizabeth and James Whittaker were captured separately in PA by Indians as children and married after being adopted by the Wyandots
- Elizabeth knew American Indian language and customs

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- So it wasn't difficult for her to learn from the Indians, who were British allies, that the British planned to attack Fort Stephenson in Fremont
 - Whittaker went to Fort Stephenson and warned Col. George Croghan the British were coming
 - The British suspected that Elizabeth had helped the Americans

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- The Wyandots gave the Whittakers their reserve, once known as the Whittaker Reserve and now goes by Peninsular Farm in Fremont Ohio
 - It was a 1,288 acre reserve


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- After the Battle of Ft. Stephenson and as the Indians were leaving town, they burned down the Whittaker house, trading post and other buildings, fences and destroyed an orchard

ROSANNA WATROS

- Rosanna and her husband John came to Ashtabula in 1810 with eight of their children
- Their son, William, had come three years earlier and built a log house near Lake Erie for the family.


- He had not been able to finish the floor of the cabin before his family arrived
- Six weeks after arriving, John hurt himself lifting the planks for the floor and died leaving Rosanna to face pioneer life alone




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- When the War of 1812 broke out scouts appeared with news that the British were near and told people to keep their valuables safe
 - Rosanna put their silver and jewelry in kettles and buried them in the ground


- Before the Battle of Lake Erie, British vessels were sighted off Ashtabula and about thirty men and boys, including the Watros sons, were hastily called to assemble at Fort Hill



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- To appear more numerous than they were, they fashioned men of clothing and straw, placed sticks on the shoulders to look like guns and carried them between them
 - Around the hill they marched in double and triple file, again and again, to give the appearance of large numbers of men

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- This trick appeared to be successful, as the British delayed landing and finally left the area

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- After the Battle of the Thames in October 1813, the air was filled with sobs from the children and women of the defeated British army
 - Perry learned about a young British widow with a pair of twin babies from Amherstburg without any means to travel home safely

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- Instead of ignoring her plight, Perry sent her money for food, clothing and to buy passage back home
 - The beneficiary of his generosity described him as an angel of mercy to her and her babies

SARAH WHIPPLE SPROAT SIBLEY

- Sarah and her three small children were safely secured inside the fort along with others just prior to British General Brock's August 15, 1812 artillery bombardment of Fort Detroit, Michigan

- Sarah was the daughter of Colonel Ebenezer Sproat, an American Revolutionary War veteran and she was known as not being one to give way to fear



COLONEL EBENEZER SPROAT

- She was also the wife of Solomon Sibley who was a Captain in the 1st Michigan Militia



- Sarah and the other women at the Fort spent many anxious hours throughout the attack making cartridges and scraping lint to dress the wounds of injured soldiers



- After the War, Sarah devoted her life to her family of eight children and to her husband's career. He was appointed as the first US Attorney for the Michigan Territory



BETSY DOYLE

- On November 12, 1812 during a cannonade with the British at Ft. George, Betsy hauled red-hot cannonballs to gunners on the rooftop battery of the old mess house




- In December 1813, just prior to the British capture of Ft. Niagara, Betsy put on a soldier's uniform and stood a sentry's shift.



LUCRETIA LEWIS

- Lucretta's father, Reuben Lewis moved his family from CT to Michigan in 1806. He served in the War of 1812 and narrowly escaped with his life, the Battle of Frenchtown [the River Raisin Massacre] Jan. 1813





Lucretia had just made a new red cloak with brass buttons. During a surprise Indian attack on their home, the cloak caught the eye of one of the Indian raiders.

A tug of war for the possession of the cloak ensued between the Indian and Lucretia.



Lucretia fought with determination and won the prize.

However, the safety of her family was foremost in her mind.

She threw the cloak out an open window.




The raiding Indians raced for the coat and began quarrelling among themselves.


The distraction over the red coat gave the family the opportunity to escape unharmed.


REBECCA & ABIGAIL BATES



- Rebecca and Abigail were daughters of Scituate, MA lighthouse keeper Simeon Bates.
- They became known as the “Army of Two”


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- Scituate was visited by British troops during the summer of 1814, when a number of local ships were plundered and burned
 - Militia guards were placed around town and at the lighthouse to guard against further attacks

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- The militia stationed at the lighthouse taught Rebecca and Abigail how to play their fife and their drum
 - As the possibility of additional British attacks appeared to subside, the militiamen withdrew from their stations

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- On a day the girls were left in charge of the lighthouse, a British ship appeared in the harbor
 - Fearing another British attack, the girls sprang into action
 - As barges filled with soldiers rowed into shore, the girls took the town's fife and drum to an area in a grove of trees near the water



- The loud sounds of the fife and drum were soon heard by the British indicating to them that the local militia were on their way to shore to meet them


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- The British turned their barges back to their ship and withdrew from the harbor
 - The town was saved by the courageous action of two young girls, the “Army of Two”

ANNA WARNER BAILEY

- By 1813 “Mother Bailey” was already known for her fearless actions at Ft. Griswold during the Revolutionary War
- In the War of 1812 her patriotic endeavors once again brought her worthy recognition



- During preparations for the defense of New London, CT against the British, a shortage of wadding material for guns precipitated a military call for donations of flannel

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- Anna is recorded to have publically removed her flannel petticoat and presented it to the cause
 - As she did this she stated with a loud wish to the American soldiers to “Give it to the British at the Cannon’s Mouth.”

MARY YOUNG PICKERSGILL


- In the summer of 1812, Major George Armistead commissioned flag maker Mary Pickersgill to sew two flags for Ft. McHenry in Baltimore, MD
- He specifically asked for a 17 x 25 foot storm flag to be used in inclement weather and a 30 x 42 foot garrison flag



- He wanted a flag “so large that the British should have no difficulty seeing it from a distance”
- With the help of her 30-year old daughter Mary spent several weeks making the two flags



- The flag flew over Ft. McHenry on the morning of September 14, 1814 after the U.S. succeeded in defending Baltimore against a British invasion

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- This flag was also viewed by Francis Scott Key and was the inspiration for his famous poem now sung by all Americans as our National Anthem, the “Star-Spangled Banner”

DOLLEY PAYNE TODD MADISON

- First lady and wife of President James Madison is greatly celebrated for her actions in Washington, DC on the night of August 24, 1814





- Dolley procured a wagon and helped the servants load it with important documents, books, china and silver and Gilbert Stuart's 1796 portrait of George Washington as the British advanced toward the city

- Sadly only two objects that were in the President's House before the fire of 1814 remain in the White House today.....the portrait of Washington and a small walnut medicine chest





This giant flag—originally fifty feet long—flew over Fort McHenry when the British attacked the fort in September 1814.

THE END