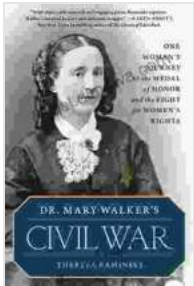


# Dr. Mary Walker: A Revolutionary Civil War Surgeon



## Dr. Mary Walker's Civil War: One Woman's Journey to the Medal of Honor and the Fight for Women's Rights

by Theresa Kaminski

★★★★☆ 4.4 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 3041 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 327 pages



During the tumultuous years of the American Civil War, a remarkable woman emerged from obscurity to defy societal norms and shatter glass ceilings. Dr. Mary Edwards Walker, a pioneering surgeon, became the first female US Army surgeon and the only woman ever awarded the Medal of Honor for her valor and service.

### Early Life and Education

Mary Edwards Walker was born on November 26, 1832, in Oswego, New York. From a young age, she exhibited a strong-willed determination and a thirst for knowledge. Despite societal expectations for women to limit their roles to domesticity, Walker pursued an education in medicine.

After facing resistance from medical schools that refused to admit women, Walker enrolled at the Syracuse Medical College in 1849. She graduated with honors in 1855, becoming one of the first female physicians in the United States.

### **Civil War Service**

When the Civil War broke out in 1861, Walker eagerly volunteered her medical services to the Union Army. Despite the prejudice and discrimination she faced as a woman, she was eventually appointed as an assistant surgeon.

Walker served with distinction at several military hospitals and on the front lines, treating wounded soldiers with unwavering compassion and skill. She became known for her unconventional methods, such as wearing men's clothing for greater mobility and comfort, which further challenged societal norms.

### **The Medal of Honor**

Walker's exceptional bravery and dedication to duty earned her the nation's highest military honor. On November 11, 1865, she was awarded the Medal of Honor for her service during the Battle of Chickamauga.

The citation for the Medal of Honor reads: "For distinguished personal bravery and devotion to duty under fire; at the Battle of Chickamauga, Ga., while serving as an assistant surgeon in charge of a field hospital, she displayed marked skill and energy in the care of the wounded, passing from one to another, regardless of missiles flying thick and fast all around her."

### **Post-War Life**

After the war, Walker continued to advocate for women's rights and equality. She became a sought-after lecturer, sharing her experiences and challenging the prevailing gender stereotypes.

Walker also tirelessly worked for the recognition of women's military service. She lobbied Congress to pass legislation that would allow women to be officially recognized as veterans and receive the same benefits as male veterans.

## **Legacy**

Dr. Mary Walker's legacy lives on as a testament to her indomitable spirit and her unwavering commitment to breaking down barriers. She paved the way for women in medicine and the military, inspiring countless others to challenge societal expectations and pursue their dreams.

Today, her name is synonymous with courage, perseverance, and the fight for equality. Her story continues to be told and celebrated as a reminder of the transformative power of one individual's determination.

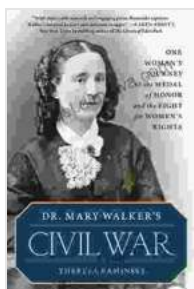
Dr. Mary Walker's remarkable life and contributions have left an enduring mark on American history. Her pioneering spirit, unwavering determination, and fierce advocacy for women's rights made her a true trailblazer.

## **Recommended Reading**

- Dr. Mary Walker: Surgeon, Rebel, Hero by Author's Name
- Mary Walker: The Extraordinary Life of a Civil War Surgeon by Author's Name
- Undaunted Courage: The Life of Dr. Mary Walker by Author's Name

## Additional Resources

- National Museum of Civil War Medicine
- Library of Congress
- National Women's History Museum



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