



Historians Corner, Paul R Petersen

Paul is the Author of *Quantrill of Missouri*, *Quantrill in Texas*, *Quantrill at Lawrence* and *Lost Souls of the Lost Township*. Petersen is a retired U.S. Marine Corps master sergeant and a highly decorated infantry combat veteran of the Vietnam War, Operation Desert Storm, and Operation Iraqi Freedom. He is a member of the William Clarke Quantrill Society, the James-Younger Gang Association, the Sons of the American Revolution, and the Jackson County and Missouri State Historical Societies.

The Hand of God on a Female Rebel Spy

Charlotte "Lottie" Moon was born in Albemarle County, Virginia on December 12, 1840. Her father was a doctor while her mother influenced her in her strong Baptist faith. In the 1830's the family moved to Oxford, Ohio. As a young woman one of Lottie's suitors was a young man from nearby Indiana named Ambrose Burnside, one-time commander of all Federal forces. Sources say she jilted him at the altar. After her father's death the family moved to the Southern State of Tennessee settling in Memphis. Lottie enrolled at North Carolina's Albemarle Female Institute in 1857. She graduated with a master's degree in 1861. After graduation Lottie returned to Memphis where she busied herself tending the Confederate wounded while helping to run the family estate. Lottie's two brothers had already enlisted in the Confederate army. Lottie Moon had something in common with most other Confederate sympathizers, a love of God and a devotion to Christ which was only foremost to her devotion to the Southern Cause.

During the war while the men were off to the battlefields across the South many women chose to aid their efforts by becoming spies. Using their unsuspecting nature, wit, and bravery women could more easily procure top secret information from the hands of their enemies and deliver it to the front lines. Southern women's beauty, natural charm and personable attitudes attracted many admirers enabling them to acquire vital information. Women were adept at spying. Females found excuses like critical illness or death of a relative to secure passes to travel into enemy territory. It was quite easy for ladies to carry messages or contraband, medicine, money, maps, etc rolled up in their long hair or sewn into the lining of their clothes or tucked up under their voluminous skirts. It was very bad etiquette to frisk a female.

Military intelligence was profoundly important to the Southern armies. In an era before telephones, cars, or computers, gathering intelligence information was exceedingly difficult even if extremely essential. The work could be harrowing and dangerous. If caught women spies were searched, arrested and thrown in prison despite being favored for being the fairer sex.

Lottie first volunteered to carry secret messages through the Union lines in Southwestern Ohio to Confederate General Edmund Kirby Smith in Kentucky. She disguised herself as an old woman, and headed for Lexington, Kentucky, by boat. She delivered her dispatches to a Rebel officer, then used her acting talents to persuade a Union general to help her return home by train to Memphis. By this time Lottie's younger sister was assisting her, wrapping bandages and nursing wounded Confederate soldiers, and carrying secret coded messages through the Union lines. Her older sister was a physician and served as a Confederate Army doctor.

In 1863, Lottie was discovered sneaking opium, quinine, and morphine into the South, medicines that were badly needed in the Confederate army. She was rescued from death as a spy by the intervention of Lottie's former fiancé' Union General Ambrose Burnside. She was kept under house arrest for months until being banished from the North after refusing to take the oath of allegiance to the Union.

When the war ended Lottie became a novelist and a newspaper correspondent, covering stories all over the world. Being over-educated for a Southern woman Lottie established a female school in Georgia. Although the school was successful Lottie remained unsatisfied. The times were changing, and positions were opening for unmarried

female missionaries. Lottie decided to enter the mission field in China. Lottie spent 40 years as a missionary to China. While serving there she was feared and rejected but the aroma of fresh-baked cookies drew people to her house. She adopted traditional Chinese dress, and she learned China's language and customs. Lottie wrote letters home challenging the American church to send support and more workers. While serving as a missionary in China Lottie confronted many obstacles. She lived through a Civil War back home to face the First Sino-Japanese War, the Boxer Rebellion and the Chinese Nationalist uprising that overthrew the Qing Dynasty. She also confronted famine and disease.

Lottie wrote letters home detailing China's hunger for truth and the struggle of so few missionaries taking the gospel to the 472 million Chinese in her day. She also shared the urgent need for more workers and for Southern Baptists to support them through prayer and giving.

When Moon returned to China from her second furlough in 1904, she was deeply struck by the suffering of the people who were literally starving to death all around her. She pleaded for more money and more resources, but the mission board was heavily in debt and could send nothing. Mission salaries were voluntarily cut. Devotion to the Cause was her undoing. Just like her undying devotion to the Southern Cause Lottie's devotion to her religious beliefs brought about her early demise. In China she was sharing her personal finances with those in need and giving others her own food until she herself was dying of starvation. In 1912, she only weighed 50 pounds. Alarmed, fellow missionaries arranged for her to be sent back home to the United States. However, Moon died en route at the age of 72, on December 24, 1912.

In 1888, the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering was established to empower the international missions' efforts for Southern Baptists. After more than a century, the annual offering continues its steady growth. The annual goal exceeds \$160 Million. The Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions has raised a total of \$1.5 billion for missions since 1888 and finances half the entire Southern Baptist missions budget every year. Today there are 70,000,000 Christians in China. Lottie Moon has become a legend because she risked everything that is dear to man: friends, fortune, comfort, health and life itself.

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