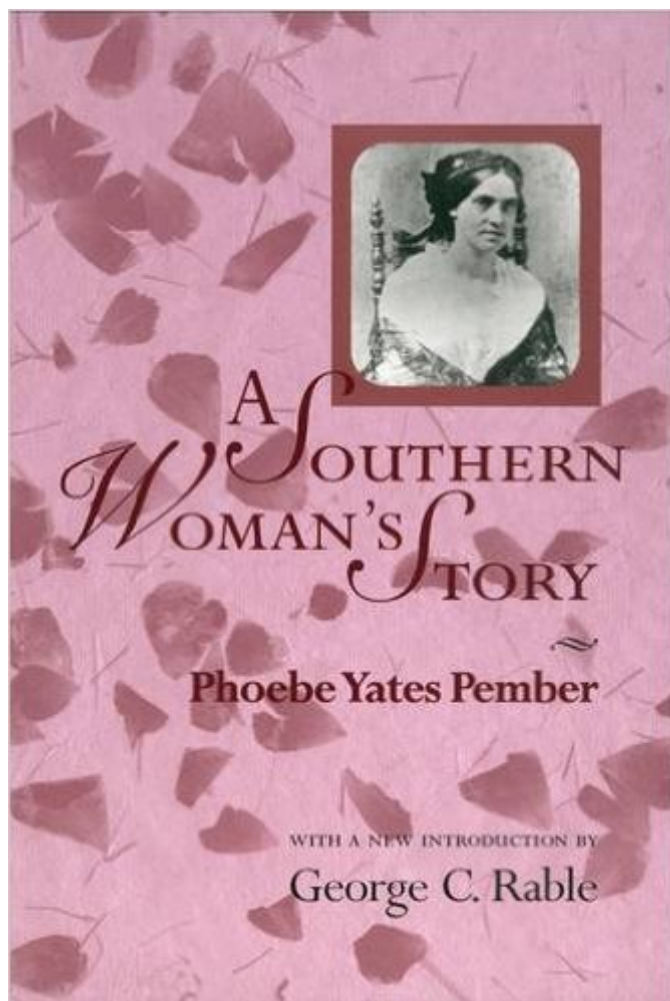


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A Southern Woman's Story



Synopsis

Phoebe Yates Pember's *A Southern Woman's Story* is the inaugural volume in the University of South Carolina Press's new paperback series, *American Civil War Classics*. First published in 1879, *A Southern Woman's Story* chronicles Phoebe Pember's experiences as matron of the Confederate Chimborazo Hospital from November 1862 until the fall of Richmond in April 1865. Long an important source in Confederate history, *A Southern Woman's Story* is also a valuable book for students and scholars of women's history and the social history of the Civil War.

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 stars Â Â See all reviews Â (16 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

Originally published in 1879, this one qualifies as an original source document, and is, indeed, a gem. Prior to the Civil War, it was considered "improper" for a woman to walk inside a hospital, much less work in one. War creates need, and need creates change....The Confederacy passed the "Matron Law" in 1862 as an attempt to free Doctors to treat patients. It worked. Many of the ladies the Confederacy was able to hire were free blacks, or even slaves. Phoebe Pember was a rich, high society, Jewish lady from Charleston, SC, who wanted to help in the war effort. She took a job as Head Matron of Division #2 at Chimborazo Hospital in Richmond, the largest Hospital of the war. [The site on East Broad St. now holds the Confederate Medical Museum, though no original buildings still stand] This short account of day to day life in Hell is always inspiring, usually charming, and sometimes even funny. [the infamous whiskey barrell]. Through it all, the patients ate, the Doctors had enough supplies to get by, and the Hospital still had resources at the end.

President Davis said that the Medical Department was the only part of the Confederacy that wasn't demoralized by the end; ladies like Phoebe Pember made it happen. She made Dr. McCaw and his staff better doctors. Mrs. Pember was a successful magazine writer for many years after the war; we can all be thankful that she wrote of her wartime experiences. Read this one, and be inspired....Having reviewed this wonderful book, I shall now digress into one of my pet theories: Why were the best hospitals, both government and private, run by rich society ladies like Mrs. Pember and Capt. Sally Tompkins? [and there were others]. What is it about a high level lady that makes her the best boss?

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