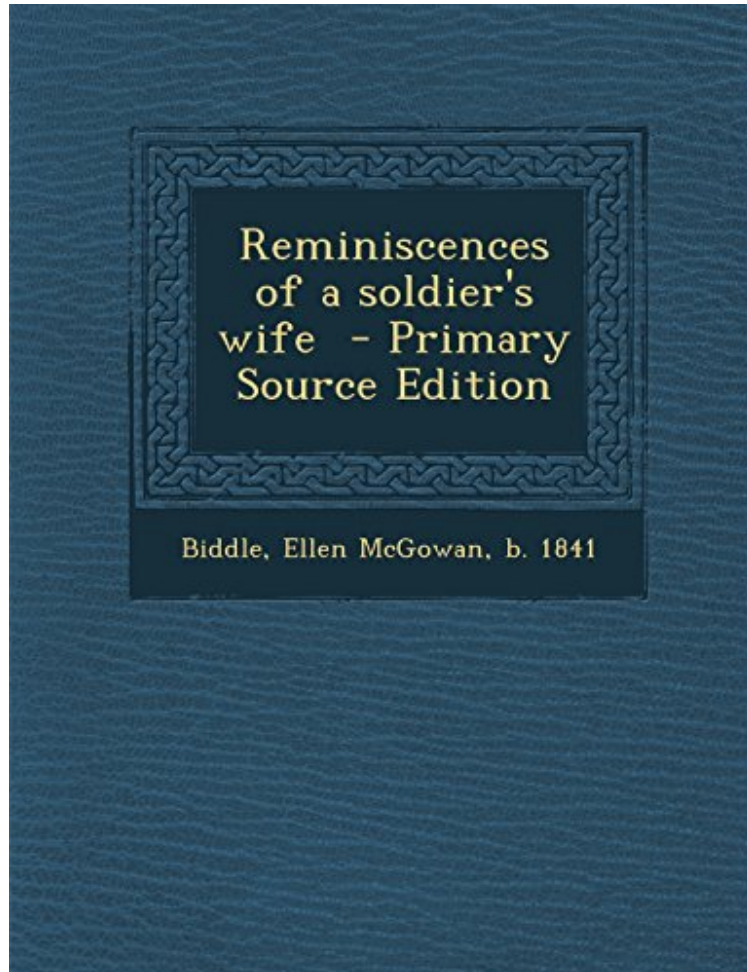


## Reminiscences of a Soldier's Wife - Primary Source Edition

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3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Numerous Historical Errors in New Introduction by CozzensBy Herodotus12The Stackpole Books edition containing a new introduction by Peter Cozzens is riddled with errors. For example, there is a discussion of the father of Ellen McGowan Biddle, the author of "Reminiscences of a Soldier's Wife." The brief biography of John McGowan, Biddle's father, appears in Cozzens' introduction at pages x-xi. There, McGowan is incorrectly described as having entered the U.S. Navy; in fact, he entered the U.S. Revenue Marine (a forerunner of the Coast Guard). He was said to still be on duty in the navy at the outbreak of the Civil War; he had actually resigned his federal commission in 1852, and was a merchant sea captain at the time. Cozzens writes that President Lincoln attempted to resupply Fort Sumter at the turn of the year (1860/1861); it was lame-duck President

Buchanan who made the attempt, Lincoln not even having taken office until March 1861, two months after the mission. Cozzens writes that Captain McGowan made the attempt to resupply Sumter with the Star of the West on June 9, 1861; it was January 9, 1861. Cozzens incorrectly writes that McGowan -- "too old for extended service at sea" -- thereafter returned to New York, where he "remained, passing the war in relative comfort" as commander of the steamer Cuyahoga. In fact, McGowan, who later rejoined the Revenue Marine, held three different sea commands during the Civil War, ranging all along the eastern coast between New England and southern Florida. Among much other wartime service, Captain John McGowan organized and directly supervised the blockade of Chesapeake Bay, preventing the flow of contraband goods and traffic into and out of the northern Confederacy.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. western military historyBy J. Thillmannfantastic period account of post CW military family life1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Hilariously worshipful unobjective in every senseBy ChefdevergueIf any historical researcher needed an example of a primary source that is manifestly unreliable, then he/she could cite this memoir, which cannot be trusted in any sense.If the reader is not familiar with the career of "Black Jack" Logan, one would quickly assume from Mrs. General Logan's gushy, worshipful prose that General Logan was due to be canonized any time now.Mrs. General Logan conveniently glosses over most of Logan's career as a political boss, which had more than a few squalid moments. She would also have the reader believe that her husband's military career was more distinguished than in fact it was. While Logan was one of the better "political generals" in the Union Army (not a rank incompetent such as Banks or Butler), he was nonetheless removed from command by Sherman's request because he was believed to be prioritizing politics over military affairs.If the reader picks this book up believing it contains a gripping account of the tough life in the field --- well, at times it does, but it also contains in equal parts accounts of being received at the Imperial German court, and rubbing elbows with all the famous people that General Logan knew over the years. Mrs. General Logan clearly enjoys life as the wife of a Very Important Person, and enjoys recounting details of moving in selected circles.All of this riveting information is presented in typically gaudy 19th-century prose, which is made even more hilarious by Mrs. General Logan's starry-eyed regard for her saintly, model of perfection husband. The book can get pretty funny at time, because it is simply so over-the-top, but as a historical resource, it should be considered almost worthless.

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