

Historical Nonfiction



Women of the Prairie State: 25 Illinois Women You Should Know

By Marty Darragh, Jo Pitkin and Others
Illustrated by Lisa Greenleaf

RL 5.5 – ages 9 and up
Interest level: grades 5 and above
(136 pages)

These pioneers, torchbearers, and trendsetters of the Prairie State were everyday women who accomplished both personal and professional goals through their strength and determination.

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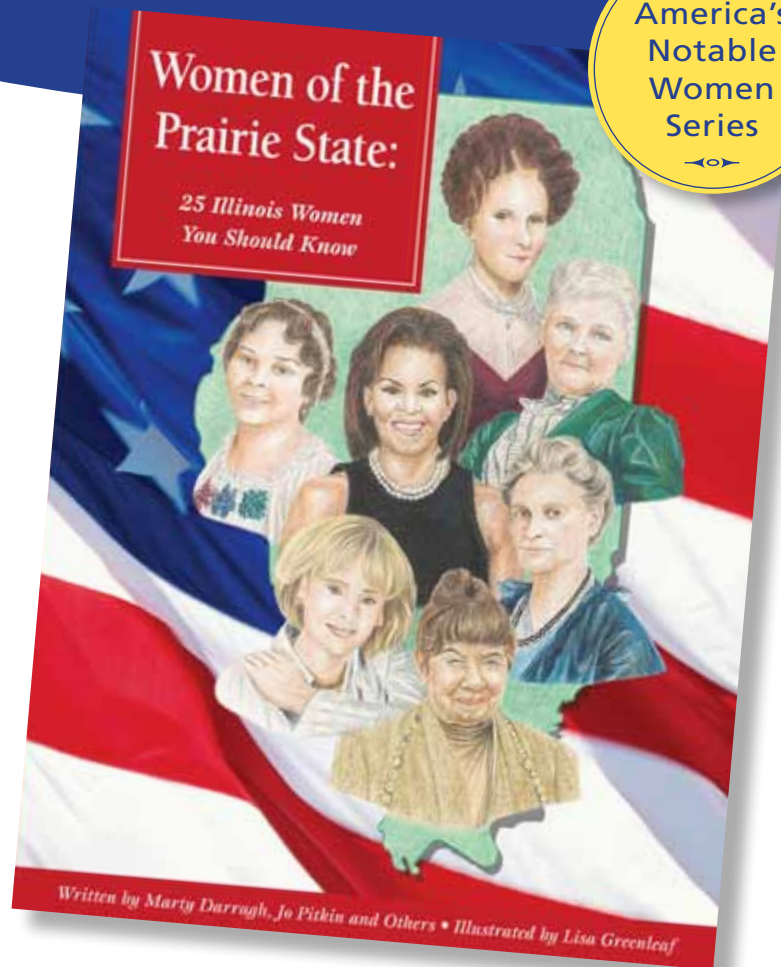
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Featuring 25 Illinois Women

Mary Ann Bickerdyke: *Civil War Nurse*

Willa Beatrice Brown: *Pioneer African-American Aviator*

Jane Byrne: *Chicago's First Woman Mayor*

Mary Chase: *Botanist*

Loïe Fuller: *Dance Artist*

Aida Giachello: *Hispanic Health Advocate*

Jennie Rodgers: *Civil War Soldier*

Irene Hunt: *Teacher, Writer, Newbery Medal Winner*

Janet Jagan: *First American-Born Woman to be President of a Nation*

Mary Harris Jones: *Fighter for Workers' Rights*

Jackie Joyner-Kersey: *World's Greatest Woman Athlete*

Annie Turnbo Malone: *Beauty-Products Pioneer*

Geraldine McCullough: *Welded Metal Sculptor*

Michelle Obama: *First Lady of the United States*

Elizabeth P.W. Packard: *Activist for the Mentally Ill*

Jeanette Ridlon Piccard: *Scientist and Priest*

Florence Price: *African-American Composer*

Kathy Reichs: *Bone Detective and Mystery Writer*

Edith Spurlock Sampson: *First African-American Delegate to the United Nations*

Hannah Solomon: *Faith and Service*

Mary Harris Thompson: *Determined to Help*

Christiana Holmes Tillson: *Prairie Pioneer*

Jennie Ward: *A Beautiful Flyer*

Ida B. Wells-Barnett: *African-American Crusader for Justice*

Willye B. White: *Track and Field Olympian*

Tidbits from the Women of the Prairie State: Illinois



“Mother” Mary Ann Bickerdyke left her children with friends to bring supplies to Civil War soldiers. She nursed soldiers during the war and ran a boardinghouse for them when the war ended.



Jennie Rodgers stowed away on a ship to America as a cabin boy. She earned more money working as a man than as a woman and enlisted in the Civil War as Albert Cashier.



Hannah Greenebaum Solomon created the National Council of Jewish Women and held study circles to teach women and help people in need.



Loie Fuller created a new kind of dance movement using yards of swirling silk that would “glow” as she danced.



Ida B. Wells-Barnett helped start the NAACP and will have a monument built in her honor in Chicago.

Annie Turnbo Malone started a beauty products empire that led to beauty salons being opened in the Caribbean, Africa, South America, and the Philippines.



Mary Chase became a worldwide expert on grasses with only a grammar school education. She travelled the world to study plants and grasses—even travelling by mule in Brazil to conduct her research.



Willie Brown became the first African American woman in the US to get a pilot’s license passing her exam with a 96%. Later, she became the first African American woman to run for Congress.



Irene Hunt *Across Five Aprils* based on Civil War stories her grandfather told her.

Jane Byrne won the largest number of votes in Chicago history to become the first woman mayor of Chicago.



Kathy Reichs is a bone detective who has written books and produced TV shows based on her work as a forensic anthropologist. She even has a skeleton named Jones Bones in her house.



Jackie Joyner Kersee is named after Jacqueline Kennedy and has been called “the greatest female athlete of all time” for setting multiple world records in track and field.



Michelle Obama’s “Let’s Move” campaign encourages kids to exercise and make better food choices. Kids from Washington D.C. schools helped plant a vegetable garden at the White House to encourage healthy food options.