

Roles of Women in the Revolutionary War

During the American Revolution, women worked as farm managers, home front business owners, military camp laundresses, cooks, and paid army nurses. Thousands also served as undercover intelligence spies, couriers, and secret soldiers disguised as men, while others joined as active combatants on the battlefield.

Home and Business Management Farm and Estate Managers: Ran family farms, harvested crops, and handled livestock.

Merchants and Artisans: Operated shops, taverns, and print businesses when husbands left.

Home Textile Producers: Spun yarn and wove "homespun" cloth to replace British goods.

Military Camp and Support Roles Laundresses: Washed uniforms and linens to stop the spread of camp disease.

Cooks and Bakers: Prepared rations for troops in field encampments.

Nurses: Cared for sick and wounded soldiers in dangerous military hospitals.

Seamstresses: Mended and sewed clothing, tents, and blankets.

Combat and Covert Roles Spies and Couriers: Smuggled letters and gathered enemy troop intel.

Water Bearers / Artillery: Brought water for troops or stepped in to help fight (like Margaret Corbin).

Enlisted Soldiers: Disguised themselves as men to fight in the ranks (like Deborah Sampson)