

CAPTAIN ANNIE G. FOX
Episode #9 Transcript
Written by Gabrielle Mirabella
Music by Ernie Bird

ERNIE: Hello everyone! Before we begin we would like to thank our generous sustaining sponsors! Your donations go directly towards the musical theatre artists you hear on our program. If *you* have an interest in becoming a sustaining member, head to our site at [Patreon.com/whatwillshedonext](https://www.patreon.com/whatwillshedonext). For as little as three-dollars a month *you* have the power to keep this show running. That's Patreon, P-a-t-r-e-o-n. Thanks!

GABRIELLE: And a quick note for our younger listeners, this episode does feature themes of wartime, mild violence, and the use of loud noises. If these subjects are not suitable for your family please check out another one of our past episodes!

INTRO MUSIC.

GABRIELLE: Hello! And welcome to another bite-sized episode of “What *will* she do next?”

I'm your host Gabrielle Mirabella and together with composer Ernie Bird, (**ERNIE:** Faster.) we've created a podcast that celebrates some of our *favorite* historical women!

ERNIE: Hurry up!

GABRIELLE: On today's episode we take a *brief* look at the life of Captain Annie G. Fox. A member of the American Army Nurse Corps and the first woman to receive the Purple Heart Award.

ERNIE: *Ahh!*

GABRIELLE: This episode was written & narrated by myself with music & Production by Ernie Bird!

ERNIE: Times up!

GABRIELLE & ERNIE: Enjoy!

THEME SONG PLAYS:

*“What will she do next?
What will she do next?
Her aim is true but will she see it through?
Oh, what will she do... next?”*

CAPTAIN ANNIE G. FOX
Episode #9 Transcript
Written by Gabrielle Mirabella
Music by Ernie Bird

GABRIELLE: Annie G. Fox was born August 4th, 1893 in the small Nova Scotian village of Pubnico. Not much is known about Annie's childhood, but in 1918, as the first World War was coming to an end, twenty-five year old Annie started her career in the newly formed United States Army Nurse Corps.

Although the first women nurses did not serve in the American Army until February of 1901, women nurses had played a significant role in every American conflict starting with the Revolutionary War in 1775. Mothers, sisters and wives of American troops were tasked with caring for the sick and injured soldiers, fighting for independence from Great Britain. Their attention to cleanliness and food preparation was essential to the health and success of the army.

The Civil War started in 1861 and with it came an even greater need for volunteer nurses. On April 12th 1861 Dorothea Lynde Dix was chosen as Superintendent of Women Nurses for the Union Army. Dorothea and others worked to offer these volunteer nurses a meager, yet well-deserved salary of twelve dollars a month.

One famous civil war time nurse was Louisa May Alcott, author of the popular novel, *Little Women*. In her short book, "Hospital Sketches" Louisa describes her instantaneous transition from writer into war-time nurse:

"As boys going to sea immediately become nautical in speech, walk as if they already had their "sea legs" on, and shiver their timbers on all possible occasions, so I turned military at once; called my dinner my rations, saluted all new comers, and ordered a dress parade that very afternoon."

Forty years later, in 1898, America saw a new conflict with the Spanish American War. Nurses were once again called to action, now receiving a salary of thirty dollars a month for their work. And, in 1901 the Army created a permanent Nurse Corps, allowing nurses, and women a home in the U.S Army.

Surgeon General George M. Sternberg congratulated the new servicewomen, saying:

"American women may well feel proud of the record made by these nurses, for every medical officer with whom they served has testified to their intelligence, and skill, their earnestness, devotion and self-sacrifice."

Nurse Annie G. Fox was just one of these intelligent and devoted military members. And, for the next twenty years she would be stationed in various places all over the world.

CAPTAIN ANNIE G. FOX
Episode #9 Transcript
Written by Gabrielle Mirabella
Music by Ernie Bird

And on August 1st 1941, after rising to the rank of First Lieutenant, Annie G. Fox was transferred to Oahu, Hawaii where she soon became chief Nurse of the island's brand new Hickam Field Hospital. But little did Annie know that after just one month of becoming head nurse, her quiet island base at Pearl Harbor would forever change the course of world history.

TRANSITION MUSIC.

GABRIELLE: It was early morning, December 7th 1941, when the first Japanese military planes were spotted off the coast of the American Naval Base at Pearl Harbor. The events that would follow were surprising and devastating.

At this point in history, the world was two years into the second world war, and the country of Japan had its sights on expanding into Southeast Asia. But, with American forces so nearby in Hawaii, Japan decided to take action, destroying American boats and planes in a surprise attack.

Annie G. Fox and the other Army nurses stationed at Hickam Field Hospital could hear the fighter-planes howling above. Knowing that time was of the essence, the nurses, with Annie as their leader, got to work, preparing bandages, beds and medicine.

Injured soldiers poured into the hospital, many of them with terrible burns caused by explosions. The amount of wounded were far greater than the nurses available, so Annie had to think quickly. Without missing a beat, she calmly came up with a solution; gathering volunteer nurses and teaching them to care for the wounded. Another problem, Annie realized, were the lack of hospital beds available. Again, Annie found a solution. Creating safe places all over the hospital for the injured civilians and citizens to recover.

The attack on the Naval Base at Pearl Harbor launched America directly into World War Two. The war, which had started in 1939 would last until September 2nd, 1945, following the surrender of the German Army and the devastating atomic bombings of Japanese cities Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

TRANSITION MUSIC.

GABRIELLE: The events of December 7th, 1941 at Pearl Harbor began and ended all within a matter of hours. The hospital at Hickam Field, its staff, and Annie G. Fox were all far from prepared.

CAPTAIN ANNIE G. FOX
Episode #9 Transcript
Written by Gabrielle Mirabella
Music by Ernie Bird

But, with the use of Annie's skills as a nurse and an intense focus, Annie was able to successfully lead her staff through that frightful winter morning.

And, because of her heroism, because of her ability to stay calm and focused during an emergency, one year later, at the age of forty-seven years old, Annie G. Fox was awarded the Purple Heart Medal.

On May 26th, 1943 Annie was later promoted to the rank of Captain, and then Major, and after retirement she settled in San Diego, California, with her two sisters.

And at the age of ninety-three years old Major Annie G. Fox passed away.

TRANSITION MUSIC.

GABRIELLE: Bravery comes in many forms. Yes, a soldier must show great courage on the battlefield, but who are they that run onto the battlefield when the soldier needs help? Who are the women and men who work side by side with doctors to save lives, but who also continue to care for those patients throughout the healing process? Nurses are a fundamental part of the American military. They have been present in its history since the country first began, and they continue their hard work today, on and off the battlefield.

Like Annie G. Fox, and nurses everywhere, we have the power to handle any situation with courage, skill and grace.

So, I wonder, what will you do next?

End of Episode.