Mary Elizabeth Bowser was a slave during the 1800’s. As a young woman, she was freed by her owner and sent to a Quaker school where she learned to read and right. Once the civil war began her kind, former owner asked if she would help the union by spying on the Confederacy.

To do this, Mary had to pretend to be dim-witted and uneducated. She also had to go back to being treated like a slave, a life she had largely gotten a way from. She was hired by Jefferson Davis, the president of the Confederacy. Using her position within his home, she would eavesdrop on conversation’s read private communication’s and then relay the information to a fellow spy who posed as a baker making regular bread deliveries. More than 100 years later, Mary was inducted into the U.S. Army Military Intelligence Corps Hall of Fame for her efforts.
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