



Courageous
WORLD CHANGERS



by **SHIRLEY RAYE REDMOND**

ILLUSTRATIONS BY *Katya Longhi*



HARVEST HOUSE PUBLISHERS
EUGENE, OREGON

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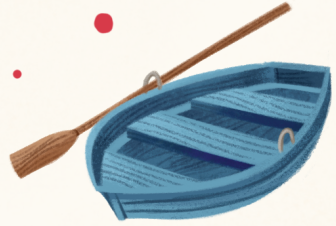
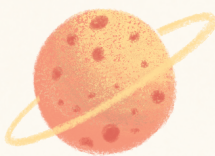
Cover floral illustrations, hand lettering, and design by Juicebox Designs

Cover women illustrations and all interior illustrations by Katya Longhi

Interior design by KUHN Design Group

Published in association with Books & Such Literary Management, 52 Mission Circle, Suite 122, PMB 170, Santa Rosa, CA 95409-5370, www.booksandsuch.com.

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Courageous World Changers

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Published by Harvest House Publishers

Eugene, Oregon 97408

www.harvesthousepublishers.com

ISBN 978-0-7369-7734-0 (hardcover)

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Control Number: 2019017174.

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Printed in South Korea

19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 / FCSK-SK / 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1



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Introduction

Faithful Christian women are like salt and light in their communities. They all make a difference. But some have such a vibrant faith that—like a stone tossed into a pond—their influence ripples throughout the world. The fifty women included in this book fall into that category. Each took seriously Jesus’s words in Matthew 28:18: “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.”

Blessed with a variety of talents—writing and preaching, teaching and nursing—these women used their gifts to glorify God. Aviators and athletes, musicians and mathematicians, many of them forged their faith in the fires of persecution, prejudice, and pain.

Several entered the mission field. Others took their faith into the world of politics or medicine. Strong, smart, and sometimes outspoken, they recognized Jesus as Lord of everything, including the arts and sciences, education, and athletics.

These brief cameos of strong women will inspire young girls to live out their own Christian faith in bold and innovative ways. As the courageous reformer Pandita Ramabai once declared, “A life committed to Christ has nothing to fear, nothing to lose, and nothing to regret.”¹



Cornelia “Corrie” ten Boom

Dutch Underground Volunteer

{ 1892–1983 }

Corrie ten Boom was the youngest of four children in a Dutch family known for their Christian zeal. They invited soldiers, servant girls, and children with mental disabilities to their home for meals, prayer, and Bible study. Corrie helped her mother in the kitchen and her father in his watch shop. After special training in Switzerland, Corrie became the first woman in the Netherlands to become a licensed watchmaker.

During World War II, Corrie became the organizer of a secret ring of eighty Dutch volunteers who helped Jews escape the Holocaust. She and her sister Betsie designed a special hiding place inside their home. They also developed a secret code to deliver messages safely.

One day, betrayed by an informant, Corrie and her family were arrested by the German secret police. They were handcuffed, beaten, and sent to a deplorable concentration camp in Germany, where they lived with meager food, overflowing toilets, and biting fleas. Corrie smuggled a Bible inside her dress. It was never discovered even though she was searched many times. After nearly a year, Betsie died. Corrie was heartbroken, but she was eventually freed to return to Holland.

She wrote about her experiences in a popular book titled *The Hiding Place*. Corrie traveled to more than sixty countries, sharing the good news about Jesus and forgiveness. She said, “Never be afraid to trust an unknown future to a known God.”²

Corrie died peacefully on her ninety-first birthday, surrounded by friends and birthday bouquets from well-wishers around the world.

Cornelia "Corrie" ten Boom





Pandita Ramabai

Social Reformer

{ 1858–1922 }

Pandita Ramabai’s father, a Sanskrit scholar, trained his daughter rigorously in the art of memorization. By the time she was twenty, Pandita spoke five languages and could recite 18,000 verses of the Hindu holy book. After her parents starved during a famine, Pandita traveled to Calcutta. There she became an overnight sensation as a female scholar, which was unheard of at the time.

Moved by compassion for the plight of millions of childhood widows—some as young as eight years old—Pandita dedicated her life to social reform. In 1889, she became the first woman to address the National Social Congress in Bombay, pleading boldly on behalf of the girls starving on the streets or exploited as temple slaves.

Although Hindu scholars rejected her when she converted to Christianity, Pandita testified, “I realized after reading the fourth chapter of St. John’s Gospel that Christ was truly the Divine Savior he claimed to be, and no one but he could transform and uplift the downtrodden women of India.”³

Pandita was a born leader, trusted by the poor and respected by the rich. A lively speaker who moved her audience to tears and laughter, Pandita lectured in India, Great Britain, and the United States. Her fundraising efforts allowed her to open the Mukti Mission School in India. Traveling in disguise, she rescued destitute girls and widows, piling them into an oxcart to transport them to her school.

Despite her busy schedule, Pandita still found time to translate the Bible into her native Marathi language before she died.

Pandita Ramabai



Elizabeth Greene

Missionary Pilot

{ 1920–1997 }

Elizabeth Greene was the first pilot to fly for the Mission Aviation Fellowship.

As a little girl, Betty was fascinated by airplanes. She eagerly read news stories about Amelia Earhart and Charles Lindbergh. Betty saved her pennies, and at the age of sixteen, she began flight lessons. She dreamed of a life of travel and adventure.

Before her dream could come true, the United States became embroiled in World War II. Betty joined the Women Airforce Service Pilots. She flew radar missions and even piloted B-17 bombers in high-altitude equipment tests.

After the war, one of her friends suggested that she become a missionary pilot. Betty admitted, “My mind leaped for joy at the thrilling thought of combining flying with my love for God.”⁴

When former Navy pilot Jim Truxton learned about Betty’s interest in mission aviation, he wrote to her, suggesting they form an organization of Christian pilots. Soon Betty was helping missionaries all around the world. She flew supplies to missionaries in Mexico and Peru. She became the first woman to pilot an airplane over the Andes Mountains in South America. She flew over deserts and jungles in Africa. She delivered medical supplies and food to missionaries in sixteen countries. She often received urgent calls to transport sick or injured people from remote mission stations to faraway hospitals.

Betty served as a missionary pilot for sixteen years. She was respected for her strong faith and passion for flying.



Elizabeth Greene

