



# KIT COLEMAN

Real name Catherine Blake Ferguson, 1864-1915  
Journalist and War Correspondent

## The world's first woman war correspondent

Irish-born Kit Coleman's story reads like a real-life adventure saga.

In 1884, as a young widow, Kit headed to Toronto by ship. A second marriage failed and with two children to support, she knew she had to work for a living.

Bolstered by her solid education and talent for writing, Kit started out cleaning houses, quickly moving on to writing articles for local magazines. In 1889, she became a columnist for the *Toronto Daily Mail* newspaper, earning her the title of "Kit of the Mail" and the honour of being the first woman journalist in Canada to head a section of a Canadian newspaper. A real trailblazer, she penned some powerful prose on social reform and women's issues, including sharp critiques about domestic violence and the poor working conditions women endured.

During the Spanish American War of 1898, the *Daily Mail* sent Kit to Cuba, where she became the first accredited woman war correspondent in the world, writing moving accounts of the war's horrendous human toll. In 1904, she helped establish the Canadian Women's Press Club.

Kit's columns were syndicated to newspapers across Canada. In May 1915, when she contracted pneumonia and died in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada lost a pioneering journalist and a passionate social activist.

OCTOBER 2011

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

WOMEN IN CANADIAN MILITARY FORCES:  
A PROUD LEGACY



Status of Women  
Canada

Condition féminine  
Canada

