

THE CALLING CARD
June 15, 2021



The Calling Card

The monthly e-newsletter of the Society for Women and the Civil War

<http://www.swcw.org>

The Conference on Women and the Civil War

A LIVE ZOOM EVENT!

Resilient Women of the Civil War

July 24 – 25, 2021



Image courtesy of the Library of Virginia

Presentation Schedule:

Saturday, July 24, 1:00 – 4:00 pm

- **Jonathan A. Noyalas** will speak about Rebecca McPherson Wright, the Union spy who was critical to the success of Sheridan's 1864 Shenandoah Valley Campaign.
- **Sarah Bierle** will give us a civilian-focused tour of New Market Battlefield in the Shenandoah Valley.

Sunday, July 25, 1:00 – 4:00 pm

- **Megan Hildebrand** reviews the relationships between Roman Catholic nuns serving as nurses and their Protestant soldier patients.
- **Steve Magnusen** discusses the Cutler, Dawes, and Gates women of Marietta, Ohio.

Registration fee: \$25. Zoom log-in information plus an electronic "conference notebook" will be emailed to participants in advance of the event.

More information: [2021 Virtual Conference Details - Society for Women and the Civil War \(swcw.org\)](#)

Registration: [SWCW 2021 VIRTUAL CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FORM - Society for Women and the Civil War](#)

Registration Deadline is July 22!

News of Note

Civil War Photo Sleuth.

In April, *Civil War Talk* featured an online program with **Dr. Kurt Luther** of *Civil War Photo Sleuth* (<https://www.civilwarphotosleuth.com/>). The program covered the use of crowdsourcing and facial recognition technologies to identify Civil War soldiers, sailors and civilians in photographs. The replay of the program is now available on YouTube: <https://youtu.be/yEX7C4hmFXE>.

GAR Museum Reopening.

The Grand Army of the Republic Civil War Museum and Library (www.garmuslib.org) will reopen to the public every Tuesday from 12 pm to 4 pm beginning June 1, 2021. Please call the Museum before planning your visit to confirm that the volunteer staff will be in attendance. Open House Programs will continue on Zoom. The Museum is following the current CDC guidelines.

Dear Readers: if you are affiliated with a historical or cultural institution that has reopened to the public, contact us and we will print the details in the July issue of *The Calling Card*.

Send the name of the institution, location, website, and hours of operation to swcw1865@gmail.com with the subject line Reopening.

Our deadline for submissions is July 10.

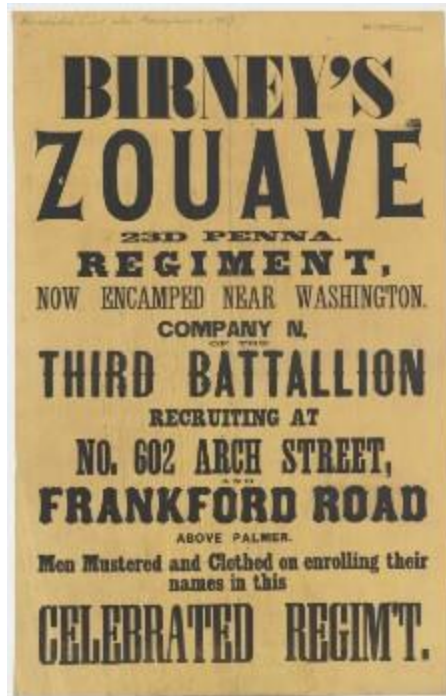
50 Civil War Uniforms in 10 Minutes.

Lion Heart Filmworks presents a beautiful, chronological presentation of some of the more unique and important uniforms representing the evolution of the American Civil War “Blue and Grey” from just before the spark of the war in 1861 to Union victory and occupation in 1865. Check it out on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zLoq9vNvvFQ>

Conferences!

SWCW members and friends may be interested in the following conferences scheduled for 2021.

- ***CWRT Best Practices***, presented by the **CWRT Congress**, September 17 - 19 in Blackwood, New Jersey. [2021 Congress | CWRT Congress](#)
- ***Tar Heels in the Valley***, presented by the **Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation**, October 23 in Raleigh, North Carolina. [Tar Heels in the Valley: A Civil War Conference – Shenandoah at War](#)
- ***"We Shall Have Graveyards at Every Door": The Lower Shenandoah Valley's Border Region during the Civil War***, presented by the **McCormick Civil War Institute**, November 6 in Winchester, Virginia. <https://www.su.edu/mcwi/upcoming-mccormick-civil-war-institute-events/fall-semester-seminar-tour/>



David M. Rubenstein Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Duke University.

Research Resource:

The Broadside and Ephemera Collection

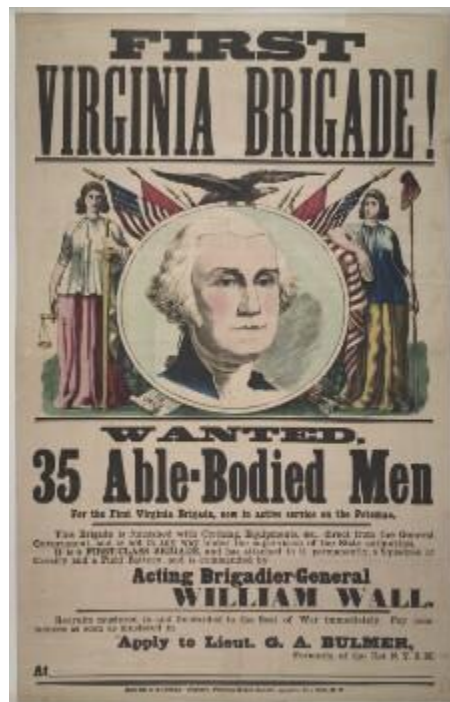
David M. Rubenstein Rare Book and Manuscript Library
Duke University

[Broadside and Ephemera Collection / Digital Collections / Duke Digital Repository](#)

The **Broadside and Ephemera Collection** contains broadsides, pamphlets, form letters, posters, newspapers, tickets, and other short printed items dating from the eighteenth to the twentieth century (with the majority dating from the nineteenth century). Truly an interdisciplinary

collection, the Broad­sides and Ephemera Collection includes materials related to political campaigns, politics, theater, dance, popular entertainments, immigration and emigration, advertising, travel, expositions, military recruitment and campaigns, as well as issues related to race, class, gender, and religion.

More than 5,000 items are now available online.



David M. Rubenstein Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Duke University

The Society for Women and the Civil War is dedicated to recognizing the efforts of women who lived

through or participated in the American Civil War, and those who research, reenact or otherwise honor these women of the past.

Join our efforts and become a member.

[Join the Society - Society for Women and the Civil War \(swcw.org\)](http://swcw.org)

Membership year runs from January - December.

Society Notices

NRWSCW Needs Your Help!

SWCW continues our work in building the National Registry of Women's Service in the Civil War (NRWSCW). The latest project in conjunction with this effort is to glean data from the *Carded Service Records of Hospital Attendants, Matrons and Nurses*. SWCW is requesting volunteers to assist in this task, in order to add the names and service of the 2,000+ women documented in these records.

The National Archives digitized this series of records in full, and it is available online. The *Carded Service Records* were created by the Record & Pension Office of the Adjutant General's Office in the post-

war years. Clerks transcribed verbatim information from the original hospital muster rolls. These carded records provide proof of service for nurses, matrons and attendants who were carried on the rolls at Union general hospitals.

Volunteers for this project will access the records online and add information for each individual in a Service Excel spreadsheet, which will be imported into the NRWSCW by the SWCW Project Manager. To volunteer, email swcw1865@gmail.com with NRWSCW in the subject line, and we will contact you when we are ready to start!



DONOR LIST

SWCW gratefully acknowledges the following individuals
for their contributions:

Claudia Floyd

Individuals wishing to donate to our General Fund or Scholarship Fund should visit our website at [Donations - Society for Women and the Civil War \(swcw.org\)](https://www.swcw.org). SWCW is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and all donations are tax-deductible.

**National Register of Women's Service in the Civil War
(NRWSCW):
Woman of the Month**

Sarah Emma Edmonds Seelye

Soldier, Nurse, and Author, USA



Born December 1841 in New Brunswick, Canada

Died September 5, 1898 in La Porte, Texas

Buried at Washington Cemetery in Houston, Texas

Sarah Emma Edmonds was the eldest child born into a hardscrabble farming family. She spent her childhood working on the farm under the direction of her abusive father, who

resented her because she wasn't a son. At the age of sixteen, she ran away from home to escape an arranged marriage to a much older man. Fearful that her father would track her down, Emma cut her hair and procured a set of boy's clothing, assumed the name Franklin Thompson, and made her way to Michigan. There is some evidence that her mother assisted her in leaving Canada.

To secure a job and support herself in her new country, Emma maintained her male identity, and Franklin Thompson was hired as a bookseller. She succeeded in her career, and by the start of the Civil War, had built a comfortable life for herself in Flint. An ardent Unionist, Franklin Thompson enlisted in the 2nd Michigan Infantry on May 25, 1861. She went on to serve in the regiment for nearly two years.

During her tenure in the Union Army, Private Thompson was often chosen for detached service, and variously worked as a regimental nurse, regimental mail carrier, and orderly, most notably serving as General Poe's orderly during the Battle of Fredericksburg. She contracted malaria during the Peninsula Campaign, but refused to enter a military hospital for fear that the surgeons or nurses might discover that she was a woman passing for a man. One soldier in her company discovered her secret, kept it, and helped care for her during her illness.

In mid-April 1863, while suffering a recurrence of malaria, Emma realized that she could no longer serve as a soldier without medical treatment. She requested a furlough, but was denied. Rather than face expulsion from the army for being a woman, Emma deserted her regiment while stationed in Kentucky. She made her way to friends in Ohio, where she finally received medical care and recuperated. It was during this convalescence that she put aside her male persona, and began writing her bestseller, *Nurse and Spy in the Union Army*. She then went to work as a nurse for the Christian Commission for the remainder of the war.

Nurse and Spy in the Union Army was published in 1864, and was enthusiastically devoured by the reading public. Although it purported to be a memoir, it was, in fact, a highly fictionalized account of Emma's wartime service. In a spirit of patriotism and generosity, she donated all the profits from *Nurse and Spy* to various soldiers aid societies.

In 1867, Emma married Linus Seelye, a mechanic, and they had two sons together. She continued to suffer recurrent bouts of malaria, and her mounting medical bills put the family in financial straits. The woman who had selflessly given away the proceeds from her book found herself in desperate need of funds. A disability pension for her military service would significantly help her family, but Emma faced three significant issues. She needed to prove that she was, in fact, the individual who served under the alias Franklin Thompson. She needed proof that her health problems were a result of wartime service. And Franklin Thompson was a deserter, thus ineligible for a pension.

Emma attended her first regimental reunion in 1875, and her former comrades-in-arms were surprised to learn, for the first time, that Franklin Thompson was a woman. They nevertheless accepted her, and were instrumental in her fight to secure a military pension. She directly petitioned Congress for that pension, and backed by the numerous affidavits of men with whom she had served, successfully proved her identity, as well as proving that she first contracted malaria in the service. General Poe also wrote to Congress on her behalf. On July 3, 1886, the Bill to Remove Charge of Desertion from the Record of Franklin Thompson passed, thus clearing the way for Sarah to collect the enlistment bounty she never received during her service, as well as a monthly pension of \$12. Emma continued to attend regimental reunions for the rest of her life, and she was also admitted into the Grand Army of the Republic, a powerful Union veterans organization. Sarah Emma Edmonds Seelye died on September 5, 1898, at the age of 58.

Emma has been the subject of numerous books and articles, and *Nurse and Spy in the Union Army* has been reprinted numerous times. A documentary about her life, *The Unsexing of Emma Edmonds*, was produced by Canadian Public Television.

Sources available upon request.

Partner Organizations Spotlight



Pallas Athena Ladies Aid Society

American Civil War-Era Authentic Civilian Reenactor Unit

“Offering Wholesome Amusements and the Comforts of Home
for our Gallant Soldiers in the Field”

Pallas Athena Ladies Aid Society (PALAS) is an independent and neutral soldiers aid society serving Civil War-era soldier reenactors. PALAS not only portrays an aid society, but actually serves as an aid society for reenactors. It participates in battle reenactments and in living history presentations which have been documented as period-appropriate for an aid society based in a mid-sized town.

PALAS makes and distributes free comfort supplies to soldier reenactors and offers to them free hot meals and supplementary rations. PALAS is resourced to feed up to 600 soldier reenactors per day. Additionally, the unit provides to soldiers the use of period reading materials, games and sports equipment at its site, and provides musical entertainment for soldiers. PALAS offers interpreted displays which include aid society activities, soldier food and field cookery. PALAS' other impressions also include a restored and equipped original Civil War Army field medicine wagon (mobile apothecary), period field

medical practice, civilian herbal medication production, and operation of a restored farm cabin.

As an “authentic civilian” unit, PALAS adheres to the highest standards of historical reenacting, and has been jury-selected by the sponsors of the most prominent national-level reenactments and commemorations to participate in those invitation-only events. It is a family-friendly/physically challenged-friendly unit. It also welcomes associate members who are unable to deploy to the field but, with materials supplied by the unit, can assist with making comfort supplies.

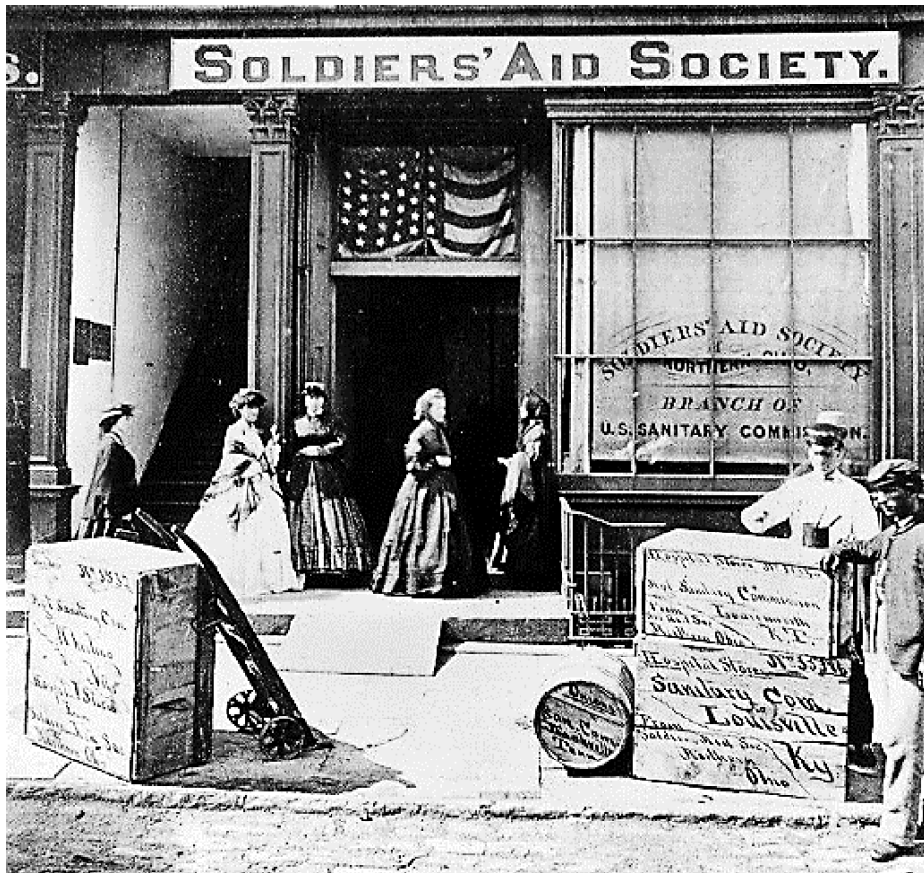
Membership is free, with no dues or mess fees. Assistance is available to beginning reenactors. As well as an organizational partner, PALAS is an organizational member of SWCW, and can be reached via PallasAthenaLAS@aol.com.

The Calling Card accepts submissions.

We are eager to share the achievements of our members, and to advertise the activities of the Civil War and Women's History communities. We also welcome individual research requests, and notifications about educational and archival resources.

Please send your submissions to swcw1865@gmail.com, and please write Calling Card in the subject field. (Submissions may be edited for brevity or clarity.)

The Calling Card is distributed on the 15th of each month, and our deadline for same-month submissions is the 10th.



Headquarters of the Northern Ohio Soldiers Aid Society.

Much can be learned from studying the image above, including the style of labeling for shipping boxes of comfort supplies for Union soldiers in hospitals. It is also a great image for use in displays about aid society work.

Additional information about the Northern Ohio Soldiers Aid Society, along with more images, can be found in the article *Soldiers Aid Society*, at

<https://clevelandhistorical.org/items/show/264>. Two audio presentations about the aid society by SWCW member **Tim Daly** can also be heard at this website.

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