

THE CALLING CARD - July 15, 2021

## *The Calling Card*



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

<http://www.swcw.org>

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## **The Conference on Women and the Civil War**

**Registration Deadline is Thursday, July 22!**  
**PayPal ONLY**

[DETAILS](#)  
[REGISTRATION](#)

**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, Eastern Time

- **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, Eastern Time

- **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 \(swcw.org\)](https://www.swcw.org/2021-virtual-conference-details)

**Registration:** [SWCW 2021 VIRTUAL CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FORM - Society for Women and the Civil War](https://www.swcw.org/swcw-2021-virtual-conference-registration-form)

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## News of Note

### **GAR Civil War Museum.**

In our last issue of *The Calling Card*, we reported that the **Grand Army of the Republic Civil War Museum** in Philadelphia had reopened to the public. We have been recently informed that the museum has once again closed, this time in advance of its move to a new location. Their archive and library remain open by appointment only. For more information, visit their website: [Grand Army of the Republic Museum & Library \(garmuslib.org\)](http://garmuslib.org)

### **157th Anniversary Reenactment of the Battle of Cedar Creek.**

The **Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation** is excited to announce that participant registration for the 157th Anniversary Reenactment of the Battle of Cedar Creek is open! At this time, all reenactor and sutler participant registrations are being processed by mail using the forms and instructions available on their [website](#). Walk on registration will also be available during the weekend event. Additional information such as the event schedule and public ticket purchasing options will be available soon.

### **Women's History Resource Guides.**

The **National Museum of American History**, part of the Smithsonian Institution, has created women-centered resource guides to museum objects, archival holdings, oral histories, and more. Check them out here: [Women's History | National Museum of American History \(si.edu\)](http://si.edu)



ca. 1860 quilt by Susan Holbert  
National Quilt Collection  
National Museum of American History

**Research Resource:**

*African-American Genealogy*

Anyone who has spent time doing family history research knows the many challenges involved in building a family tree with complete and accurate information – but researching African American ancestors can present its own unique set of complications due to the complex history of enslavement, oppression, and marginalization of people of African descent in the United States.

The following websites offer research guides, strategies, and assistance to individuals building their African American family tree.

[Robert Frederick Smith Explore Your Family History Center | National Museum of African American History and Culture \(si.edu\)](#)

[African American Genealogy: A Guide to Finding Your Ancestors Online \(familyhistorydaily.com\)](#)

[Black Genealogy | Access Genealogy](#)

[African American Family History Step by Step \(thoughtco.com\)](#)



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**The summer issue of *At Home and In The Field*,  
our quarterly, members only e-journal,  
will publish on July 31.**

**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](http://swcw.org)  
 [\(swcw.org\)](http://swcw.org)**

Membership year runs from January - December.



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## Society Notices

### DONOR LIST

SWCW gratefully acknowledges the following individuals  
for their contributions:

Susan Cash

Ann Kilian

Jim Knights

Michelle Krowl

Adrienne Massel

Andrea Shearer

Susan Wall

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.

### 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](mailto:swcw1865@gmail.com) with NRWSCW in the subject line, and we will contact you when we are ready to start!

### **Volunteer List**

SWCW gratefully acknowledges the following individuals  
for their time and effort:

Remy Caimi

Jean Halls Muetzel

Lisa Samia

Individuals wishing to volunteer for projects relating to our annual conference or the National Register of Women's Service in the Civil War should send an email to [swcw1865@gmail.com](mailto:swcw1865@gmail.com).

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

**Woman of the Month**

**Sally Louisa Tompkins**

Captain, CSA



Born November 9, 1833 at Poplar Grove in Mathews County, Virginia

Died July 25, 1916 in Richmond, Virginia

Buried in the Christ Church cemetery in Mathews County

Sally Louisa Tompkins was the eighth and youngest child of Col. Christopher Tompkins and Maria Patterson Tompkins. When Sally was nearly five years old, her father died, and when she was nine, she lost three of her sisters to illness in the space of a few weeks. Not much else is known of Sally's early years at Poplar Grove. In 1849, Sally moved with her mother and her sister, Maria, to Norfolk, Virginia, where the two girls were enrolled in the Norfolk Female Institute. In 1854, the three women moved to Richmond, where Sally's

mother died shortly thereafter. Sally and Maria rented rooms in the city and were welcomed into elite society.

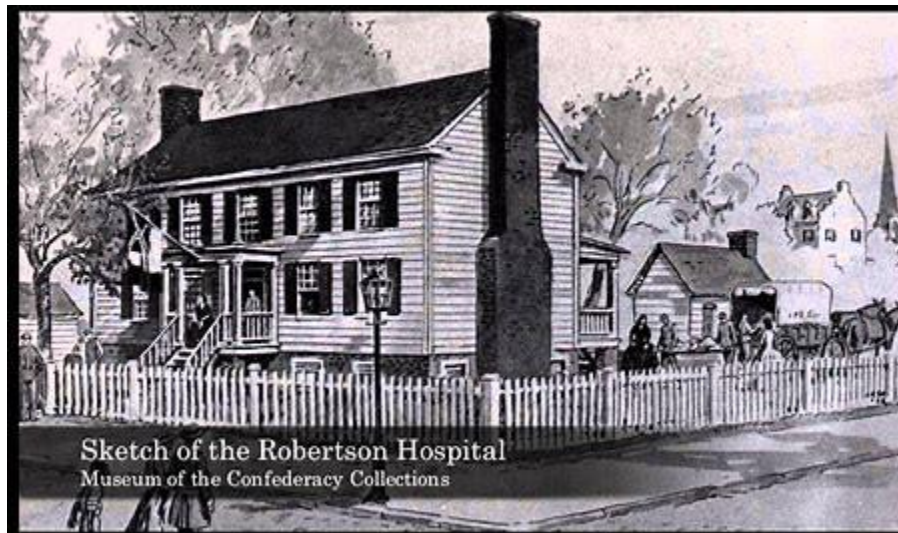
In July 1861, as the casualties of the Battle of First Manassas flooded into Richmond, Sally established a private hospital to tend to the wounded overflowing from the military hospitals. She procured the home of Judge John Robertson, who was leaving Richmond with his family, and organized a hospital staff comprised of women from the congregation of St. James Episcopal Church, plus an unspecified number of enslaved persons. The white women became collectively known as The Ladies of Robertson Hospital.

After this initial hospital crisis, Confederate President Davis established regulations pertaining to hospitals, including the provision that all facilities be under military control. Recognizing the early success of Robertson Hospital in Richmond, and the Ladies' Relief Hospital in Lynchburg, Davis commissioned Sally Tompkins and Lucy Otey as Captains in the Confederate States Army, thus giving them authority to continue administering their hospitals. Sally's commission was dated September 9, 1861. Both women refused pay for their services.

Robertson Hospital operated throughout the war. As supplies to treat the patients became increasingly difficult to procure, Captain Sally (as the men called her) hired her own blockade runner. By all measures, Robertson Hospital was a well-run facility with good outcomes. The staff treated 1,334 wounded soldiers, with only 73 recorded deaths. The last patient was discharged on June 13, 1865. Many historians claim that Robertson Hospital had the lowest mortality rate of any Civil War military hospital. It is widely believed that Sally's "obsession" with cleanliness was a major factor in the

recovery of her patients.

Sally Tompkins never married, despite the numerous proposals she received from current and former patients. She spent the post-war years traveling to visit friends throughout Virginia, but always returned to Richmond, where she was a local celebrity and active in charitable causes. She hosted a reunion for her patients during the Grand Confederate Reunion of 1896. By 1905, she had spent the last of her inheritance, and moved into the Confederate Women's Home, where she lived until her death. She was buried with full military honors.



### **Want to Learn More?**

Records relating to Robertson Hospital:

- Morning Reports of Patients, Robertson Hospital, 1863-1865. National Archives, Washington, DC.

- Confederate Hospital Muster Rolls, 1861-1865. National Archives, Washington, DC.
- Robertson Hospital Reunion Register, 1896. Library of Virginia.
- Materials concerning the establishment of Confederate States of America hospitals by Lucy Wilhemina (Norvell) Otey at Lynchburg (Ladies' Relief Hospital) and Sally Louisa Tompkins at Richmond (Robertson Hospital). Virginia Museum of History and Culture.

Records relating to Sally Tompkins:

- Letters of Sally L. Tompkins, 1860-1866. Library of Virginia.
- Papers of Sally L. Tompkins, 1838-1966. Virginia Museum of History and Culture.

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## **Partner Organizations Spotlight**

## *Shenandoah Valley Civil War Era Dancers*



*Cheerfulness and joy in measured time.*

*We call and demonstrate Victorian Era dances.*

The **Shenandoah Valley Civil War Era Dancers** is an all-volunteer, non-profit organization. Their main goal is raising money for historic land preservation by teaching and enjoying early American dance. They enjoy dances of the 1800's, but also perform dances of the Colonial period. Along with leading dancing at living history events and reenactments, the SVCWED have experience in leading a variety of community, family, church, and school dances. All performance fees are donated to preservation groups such as **The Civil War Trust** and **The Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation**. Since forming in 2012 the SVCWD have raised and donated more than \$62,000. They are looking forward to dancing again at events in the fall of 2021. For more information, please check their website at <https://sites.google.com/site/svcwed/>

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## ***The Calling Card* accepts submissions.**

We are pleased 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](mailto:swcw1865@gmail.com), with 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.

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Newsletter Archive - The Calling Card - Society for Women and the Civil War  
(swcw.org)

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