



The Calling Card

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

<http://www.swcw.org>

*The Board of Directors of the Society for Women and the Civil War
wishes all of you the happiest of holidays.*

New Books by New Members

Jo Ann Daly Carr, *Such Anxious Hours: Wisconsin Women's Voices from the Civil War*.

Information about Jo Ann's book is available at her website, www.joanndalycarr.com

Steve Magnusen, *To My Best Girl: Courage, Honor, and Love in the Civil War: The Inspiring Life Stories of Rufus Dawes and Mary Gates.*

Information about Steve's book may be found at his website, www.stevemagnusen.com

2020 Conference Update

Your SWCW Board of Directors is fast at work planning our next conference. We are pleased to announce that the conference will be held at the Hotel Madison in Harrisonburg, VA!

Hotel Madison will host our hotel room accommodations, allowing the Board to focus our efforts on the speakers, field trips, and hospitality suite. We will also have our lectures in the hotel, which means that the conference will be all under one roof!

We have negotiated a great rate for our members at the hotel. Rates for either single king or double queen are \$99.00 per night (\$112 with taxes), with additional rates for either a studio, or limited two bedroom suites. The conference rate is good for reservations made for up to three days before or three days after the conference. When making your reservation, be sure to tell them you are with SWCW. And plan your accommodations early.

Check our website after January 1, 2020 for the registration form.

A Note from Our Membership Chair

According to our newly-accepted bylaws, our fiscal year is now aligned with the calendar year, with annual dues to be paid in January of each year. **All members who paid their annual dues after July 31, 2019, will be members in good standing through 31 December 2020.** The password to the members-only element of the website will be changed annually on 1 February of each year.

National Registry of Women's Service in the Civil War (NRWSCW)

An update from J-M White

As we research women to include in the NRWSCW, we find some real surprises, including the woman who inspired and mentored Clara Barton.

Shortly after Lincoln's election, Almira Fales, a modestly-financed philanthropist with great prescience, anticipated a Civil War and began preparing for it. To the dismay of her neighbors, she began collecting bandages and stockpiling hospital supplies. Upon the commencement of hostilities, she became one of the first women to provide nursing and soldiers aid services. She inspired her boarding house tenant, Clara Barton, to take up the cause. She mentored Miss Barton and served beside her, without seeking self-publicity.

For more information about the work and inspiration provided by Almira, see the Library of Congress' *Almira L. Fales: Portent of Rebellion* at <https://guides.loc.gov/civil-war-soldiers/almira-fales>.



Research Request: Pauline Cushman

M.J. Henion, of the Confederation of Union Generals (COUG), is researching Pauline Cushman in support of an impression of Cushman for COUG. MJ seeks information regarding Cushman's wartime activities, and in particular, that which might support a report of Cushman having been wounded while serving as a spy for the US Army. Anyone with information and sourcing to contribute to this effort is asked to please contact MJ at pauline.cushman@uniongenerals.org.

If any SWCW members and friends have specific research requests, send your inquiry to

the Editor of *The Calling Card*, DeAnne Blanton, and she will include your request in a future issue.

Wreaths Across America

by SWCW President Susan Youhn

For the second year in a row, I came from Southern Maryland to Arlington National Cemetery with my husband, TJ, to honor the doctors and nurses buried there from the Civil War. No one remembers these graves, but we did as we made our way to their location.

We woke early and took the Metro to join the nearly 100,000 other volunteers arriving at Arlington where we were to help lay the 253,000 wreaths, one for each grave. The wreaths were donated by others across the country who paid \$15 for each wreath. The wreaths are then trucked from Maine (by more volunteers) to Arlington. The number of trucks, wreath-handler volunteers, and coordinators was astounding.

Together, TJ and I placed the wreaths at the graves of Dr. Clinton Wagner, Dr. Anthony Heger, 1st Lt. Surgeon J.M. Thompson, and contract surgeon Edward C. Barstow to complete the Civil War Surgeon list.

Then we started on the Civil War Nurses. Although the graves are just off the sidewalk, no one had bothered to lay a wreath for any of these women. Tucked away in Section 1 of the cemetery there were a group of nurses who remained in Washington through the war and most were members of the National Association of Army Nurses when they died. Now buried and forgotten, we laid wreaths at their graves and said a prayer of remembrance for their courage during a dark time.

The nurses included Sarah J. Alexander, Elvira Bliss, Louise V. Bryant, Cynthia Bright Case, Martha V. Coleman, Nancy L. Donaldson, Eliza DuBois, Mary A. Feland, Adele Jeanette Hughes, Adelaide E. Spurgeon, Aurila A. Mathews, Anna S. Shuman, Augusta Kratzenburg, Grace McGee, Sarah S. Sampson, Joanna W. Turner, Susan R.O. Verplanck and Leonora Wright.

As we left the site, I thought back more than 150 years about how these women left their homes and families to serve a greater cause and how their graves are always forgotten for the next generation of veterans. As long as I can walk I will be there again next year to remember, honor and teach.





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