

THE CALLING CARD – JANUARY 15, 2022

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The Calling Card

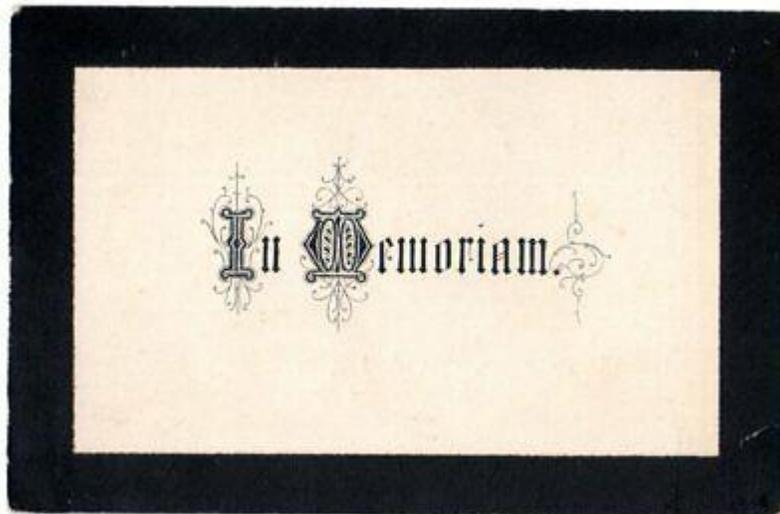


**The monthly e-newsletter of the
Society for Women and the Civil War**

<http://www.swcw.org>

Brenda Chambers McKean

DECEMBER 11, 1941 – DECEMBER 20, 2021



Brenda Chambers McKean died on December 20, 2021, in Raleigh, North Carolina. Brenda was one of the longest-serving and most devoted members of The Society for Women and the Civil War, serving as the coordinator and hostess for SWCW's 2010 annual conference, held at Peace College, in Raleigh, and as a former SWCW Regent.

A proud native Tennessean, Brenda was a graduate of both the University of Tennessee's School of Nursing and Duke University's School of

Anesthesia for Nurses. She spent her professional career as a Certified Nurse Anesthetist (CRNA) at Duke University Medical Center and at the University of North Carolina's Rex Health Care System.

Brenda was an esteemed Civil War-era reenactor and living historian with both the Tarheel Civilians, for which she was a founder, and Pallas Athena Ladies Aid Society (PALAS). She had held an early leadership role with the Soldiers Benevolent Society of the 26th North Carolina Regiment reenactor unit and was an early member of the 1st North Carolina Battalion reenactor unit. She was a pioneer in the representation of the yeoman farm family in reenacting, and kindly mentored two generations in period- and context-correct historical reenacting. She also worked part-time as a seamstress, in order to aid discerning reenactors in ensuring that they were garbed in the most authentic nineteenth century attire.

Brenda was a collector and dealer in Civil War-era medical antiques and books and was generous in sharing her knowledge of them with others who were entering the reenacting field. Her library of Civil War-era medical books was obtained by a SWCW member a few months before her death and have been pledged to the specialty libraries of Auburn University.

Brenda was a highly-valued volunteer who served her adopted state by working as a preservationist and by sharing her expertise as a living historian. She served as a member of boards of directors of organizations and historic sites including the Bennett Place Historic Site, Durham, site of Gen. Joseph E. Johnston's surrender of the Army of Tennessee. She also generously shared her knowledge of North Carolina Civil War history by providing presentations for a wide variety of organizations.

Brenda was best known as the author of the two-volume set of *Blood and War at my Doorstep: North Carolina Civilians in the War Between the States*. The series is considered the most important work addressing North Carolina civilians during the Civil War. Brenda's work as a historian won for her the United Daughters of the Confederacy's Jefferson Davis Historical Gold Medal for excellence in research, and twice won the North Carolina Association of Historians' Willie Parker Peace History Book Award. She was also recently nominated for the prestigious Eric Hoffer Award. Brenda later published *List of Wounded and Deaths taken from the Fayetteville Observer 1861-1865*, as a companion volume to the two earlier works. Her authoritative work is frequently quoted in academic texts, theses and dissertations.

A memorial service was held for Brenda on January 7, 2022, in Raleigh, with representation from SWCW, the Tarheel Civilians and other organizations which held her in high regard. Brenda will also be remembered at SWCW's 2022 annual conference.

In her memory, SWCW has established the Brenda C. McKean Memorial Scholarship for Reenactors, for which information can be found at [Brenda McKean Reenactor Scholarship - Society for Women and the Civil War \(swcw.org\)](#). Those who wish to make donations to the fund for this scholarship may do so via our website donations page: [Donations - Society for Women and the Civil War \(swcw.org\)](#)

2022 Membership Campaign

Now is the time to join us for the first time,
or to renew your annual membership.

Just go to our website:

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

Our membership year runs from January - December*

Exclusive benefits of membership include a discounted rate on our annual conference, a members-only page on our website, and access to our quarterly journal, At Home and In the Field.

The Society for Women and the Civil War is a non-profit, 501(c)3 organization. **Membership dues are tax-deductible, and they enable us to fulfill our mission.** We are 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.

*New members who joined from October - December 2021 do not need to renew for 2022.

The 2022 Conference on Women and the Civil War

Hotel Madison & Shenandoah Conference Center

Harrisonburg, Virginia

July 22-24, 2022

KEEP AN EYE ON YOUR INBOXES --

DETAILS COMING SOON!



Image Courtesy of The Valentine.

Shenandoah Valley: Historical Site Spotlight

The Edinburg Mill

[Shenandoah Valley Cultural Heritage Museum at The Edinburg Mill](#)



The Edinburg Mill is home to the Shenandoah Valley Cultural Heritage Museum, as well as a restaurant, gift shop, and wine shop. The Museum showcases the history of the Great Wagon Road, milling and looming, the Civil War, communities of faith, the first Civilian Conservation Corps Camp, and so much more.

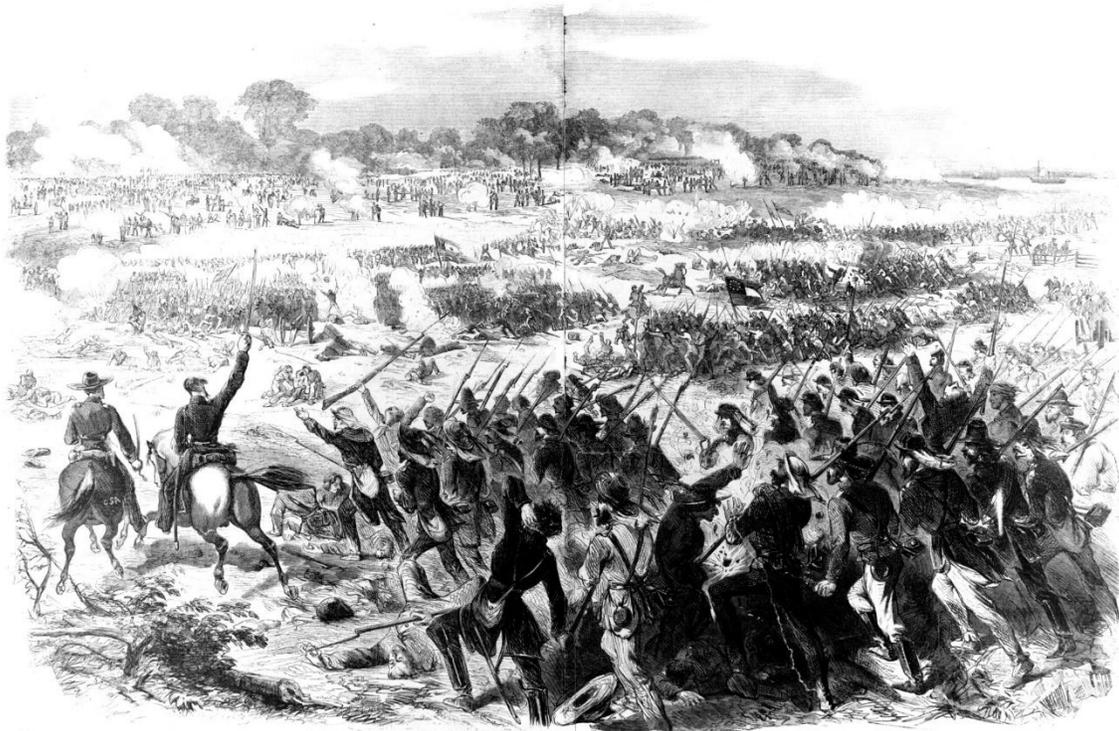
The Edinburg Mill is one of the few that survived The Burning -- and scorch marks are still evident on the structure.

News of Note

Call for Papers, Posters, and Workshops.

The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library & Museum Conference on

Illinois History is accepting proposals that deal broadly with stories of resilience in Illinois's history, culture, politics, geography, or archaeology. They encourage submissions from professional and avocational historians, students, and those engaged in the study of Illinois history at libraries, historic sites, museums, educational institutions, and historical societies. They particularly welcome proposals which illuminate the diversity of Illinois history in regard to race, ethnicity, ability, and/or gender. The 24th Annual ALPLM Conference on Illinois History will be held October 6 & 7, 2022. The deadline for proposals is April 1. For more information, visit their website: [Conference on Illinois History | ALPLM](#)



Conferences and Symposiums Planned for 2022.

- *The Soldier's Civil War*, February 18-20, at the American Civil War Museum in Richmond, Virginia. [Symposium 2022: The Soldier's Civil War - American Civil War Museum \(acwm.org\)](#)

- *A New Birth of Freedom*, April 9, at the Andrew Carnegie Free Library and Music Hall, Carnegie, Pennsylvania. [Tickets for A New Birth of Freedom: Civil War Symposium in Carnegie from ShowClix](#)
- *Jackson's Valley Campaign*, April 21-23, sponsored by the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Association in Staunton, Virginia. [National Conference: Jackson's Valley Campaign – Shenandoah at War](#)
- *Civil War Western Theater Symposium*, April 29-30, at Rutgers University in Camden, New Jersey. [2022 Civil War Western Theater Symposium Tickets, Fri, Apr 29, 2022 at 6:00 PM | Eventbrite](#)

Research Resource:

Accessible Archives, Inc.

[Accessible Archives Inc. - Primary Source Material from 18th and 19th Century Publications](#)
(accessible-archives.com)

Accessible Archives is a subscription service that utilizes computer technology and a large team of conversion specialists to provide easy to use access to vast quantities of archived historical information previously available only in microformat, hard copy form or as images. Diverse primary source materials reflecting broad views across American history and culture have been assembled into comprehensive databases.

Accessible Archives holds significant collections of newspapers relating to the Civil War, Women's History, and African American History, including

*Frederick Douglas Monthly, The Woman's Tribune, Godey's Lady Book,
and Frank Leslie's Weekly.*

Society Notices

SWCW Board of Directors – New Members for 2022

SWCW Board of Directors members **Tabitha Miller** and **Laurel Scott** chose to not stand for reelection for terms beginning in January 2022 due to increasing family commitments. The Board is sorry to see them go, but respects that the needs of their families come first. Tabitha will remain the Regent for the European Region, and both she and Laurel will remain valued Society members and respected advisors.

There were three positions with terms expiring on December 31, 2021. The Board also chose to exercise its option to grow to eleven positions from ten, thus there were a total of four positions available.

To our good fortune, our Treasurer, **Dr. Gary Ryan**, whose term was expiring, chose to stand for re-election. Gary was re-elected to a three-year term on the Board, and separately, re-elected as our Treasurer.

Lavonda Broadnax, **Emily Lapisardi** and **Ashley Sonntag** were each elected for the first time to three-year terms. Lavonda has since been appointed to serve as Recording Secretary. Biographies of Lavonda, Emily and Ashley, as well as all of our Board members, are posted on our website at [Board - Society for Women and the Civil War \(swcw.org\)](https://www.swcw.org) – I'm certain that you will agree that these

are three remarkably qualified women whose abilities will bring great richness to the capability of your Board to serve our members. Please also join your Board in thanking these Society members for their willingness to volunteer, and in welcoming them as they enter their terms of office!

J. White

President, SWCW

SWCW Board of Directors Election Process

The SWCW Board of Directors holds its annual elections at its December monthly meeting. Members are elected for three-year terms, unless elected to finish the unexpired terms of departing members. The Board terms are staggered to ensure that there are always some members who retain experience in Board operations.

The election process follows the specifications of SWCW's Bylaws, which are posted on the SWCW web site's Members-Only Portal. The President appoints a Nominating Committee in October. The Nominating Committee conducts a search for candidates, vets them, and determines if they would be willing to serve if elected. At the November Board meeting, the Committee offers to the Board a set of nominees from which to choose.

Nominations may also be offered from the floor. Those elected in December begin their terms on the first of January of the coming year.

The Society encourages and welcome those who wish to serve it in any capacity – as Board members, Regents, Committee Chairs, and project officers – to contact the President at swcw1865@gmail.com and identify their interests.

New SWCW Committee Chairs

SWCW welcomes two new committee chairs: Board member **Steve Magnusen** will chair the Historical Markers Committee, and Society member **Lisa Samia** will chair the Author Support Committee. Both Steve and Lisa are well-respected authors and they bring considerable knowledge, skill and enthusiasm with them to their new roles.

Please join me in thanking them and in offering every means of encouragement and support as they take up their new responsibilities!

J. White,
President, SWCW

DONOR LIST

SWCW gratefully acknowledges the following individuals
for their contributions in 2021:

Sara Bartlett

Susan Cash

Jeanne Christie

Claudia Floyd

George Foxworth

Mary Louise Jesek Daley

Ellen Higgins

Ann Kilian

Jim Knights

Michelle Krowl

Adrienne Massel
Brenda McKean
Dr. Carole Morton
Lin Russell
Gary Ryan
Andrea Shearer
Susan Wall
Janet Whaley
J. White

Individuals wishing to donate to our General Fund or Scholarship Funds 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.

SWCW Board Member **DeAnne Blanton** will be interviewed on *Civil War Talk Radio* on **February 2**. She and the host, Gerald Prokopowicz, will talk about women's history scholarship and the Society for Women and the Civil War.

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

Woman of the Month

Euphemia Mary Goldsborough Willson
Nurse and Smuggler, CSA



Born: June 5, 1836, in Talbot County, Maryland

Died: March 10, 1896, at Summit Point, West Virginia

Buried: Green Hill Cemetery, Berryville, Virginia

Euphemia Mary Goldsborough was born at "Boston," the Goldsborough family farm in Maryland. Called PHEME by her friends and family, she was the third eldest of Martin and Ann Hayward Goldsborough's eight children. During her teenaged years, she was educated at a girls' boarding school in Tallahassee, Florida, but by 1860, she had joined her family in their new home in Baltimore, Maryland.

With the advent of the Civil War, the Goldsborough family declared their allegiance to the Confederacy, and their home in Baltimore quickly became a safe house for blockade

runners and other Confederate operatives. After the Battle of Antietam, PHEME joined a group of Baltimore women who travelled to Frederick, Maryland to nurse wounded Confederate soldiers. She was 26 years old. When her nursing services were no longer needed in Frederick, PHEME travelled to Point Lookout Prison, where she was allowed to care for wounded Confederate prisoners of war.

Upon hearing news of the Battle of Gettysburg, PHEME travelled to the town, and began nursing Confederate wounded at a makeshift hospital at Pennsylvania College (now Gettysburg College). PHEME's reputation as a compassionate and selfless nurse was solidified immediately, when she volunteered to be a "prop" for Col. Waller Patton (great uncle of Gen. George S. Patton III). Colonel Patton had been shot through the lungs, and was unconscious. Doctors knew that if he did not remain upright, he would suffocate. Other nurses carefully positioned the Colonel against PHEME's back, and fastened his unconscious body to hers. PHEME supported him throughout the night, never moving, and becoming numb from the pressure, until the Colonel passed away the next morning.

PHEME went above and beyond for all of her patients. Noticing that the wounded soldiers needed clothing and shoes, she began making regular trips between Baltimore and Gettysburg, and smuggling these items in her hoopskirts to later distribute to her patients. When Camp Letterman hospital opened, PHEME elected to stay in Gettysburg as a nurse, even though that meant nursing Union troops as well as Confederate ones. She was assigned to care for 100 men -- 50 Union and 50 Confederate. Her favorite patient was Sam Watson, a Texan with an amputated arm. PHEME wrote he was "one of the most attractive boys I ever saw." PHEME was devastated when Watson died on September 13, 1863. She left Gettysburg shortly thereafter.

PHEME returned to Baltimore much broken in spirit, and her sister remarked she was "never the same joyous girl again." And yet, PHEME's cherished possession was the book she had kept as a nurse, filled with the signatures of all the wounded soldiers she had cared for -- and in many cases, the soldiers had filled her book with poems and words of thanks. After some rest, PHEME joined her family in the smuggling of food, medicine, and clothing to Confederate POWs in hospitals and prisons. Union Provost authorities had been long suspicious of the Goldsborough family, and managed to intercept a letter written

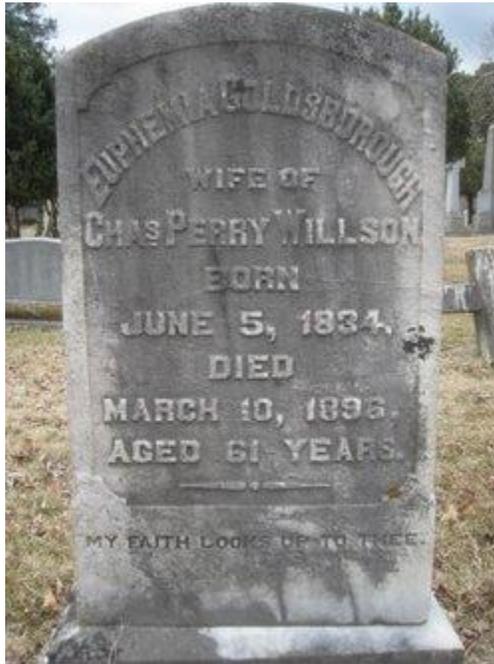
by PHEME. Although the contents of that letter are now lost, it was incriminating enough to lead to her arrest.

PHEME, who claimed her crimes were “feeding the hungry and clothing the naked,” was found guilty of treason and sentenced to banishment from the Union for the remainder of the war. She was put on a steamboat and arrived in Richmond on December 4, 1863. PHEME was quickly accepted into Richmond society. Although offered a home by the family of Colonel Patton, PHEME elected to reside at a ladies boarding house. In need of funds, she was appointed to a job at the Confederate Department of Treasury. For the next 16 months, PHEME's schedule consisted of working each morning at the Treasury, and nursing in the afternoon at one of the many hospitals in Richmond.

On March 26, 1865, PHEME left Richmond with Capt. Thomas Houston, for a visit to his family home in Rockbridge County, Virginia. It was there that she learned of the fall of Richmond and the surrender of Confederate forces at Appomattox. She wrote in her diary of the deep sorrow and fear she felt at the loss of the Confederacy. PHEME finally returned to Baltimore on July 2, 1865. After the war, PHEME and her family were deeply involved in various charities devoted to assisting Confederate veterans and their widows. PHEME was also a Baltimore socialite in the post-war years.

On June 29, 1874, at the age of 38, PHEME married Charles P. Willson, a Confederate veteran and a widower with five children. They moved to Summit Point, West Virginia, where they farmed, ran a mercantile business, and operated a boarding house. PHEME gave birth to three children, Martin, Sam, and Ann. Only her daughter outlived her -- both Martin and Sam died in November 1880. Charles died in 1893. PHEME passed away from cancer on March 10, 1896. Charles, PHEME, and their children are buried at the Willson family plot in Berryville, Virginia.

Euphemia Goldsborough Willson was the first Confederate woman inducted into the Maryland Women's Hall of Fame.



Want to learn more about PHEME?

Read Eileen Conklin's *Exile to Sweet Dixie: The Story of Euphemia Goldsborough, Confederate Nurse and Smuggler.*

Eileen is the co-founder of the Conference on Women and the Civil War, as well as one of the Founding Mothers of SWCW.

***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, 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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swcw.org

Editor: DeAnne Blanton, SWCW Board Member



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