

THE CALLING CARD – February 15, 2020



The Calling Card

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

<http://www.swcw.org>

21st Conference on Women and the Civil War

Registration for *Women of the Shenandoah Valley* is now live.

For all the conference details, and to register online,
visit our website: <http://www.swcw.org/annual-swcw-conference.html>

Be sure to make your separate hotel reservations, too!

Speaker Spotlight:

Conference on Women and the Civil War

Jonathan A. Noyalas

Director, Shenandoah University's McCormick Civil War Institute

Presentation – “That Woman was Worth a Whole Brigade”: Rebecca Wright and the Opening of Sheridan's 1864 Shenandoah Campaign

Background and Education - I did my undergraduate work in history at Shenandoah University and my graduate work in history at Virginia Tech. I am now in my 17th year of teaching at the collegiate level. Currently I am the director of Shenandoah University's McCormick Civil War Institute and a professor in the history department at Shenandoah University largely teaching courses in Civil War Era Studies and historic methodology. I also am the founding editor of *Journal of the Shenandoah Valley During the Civil War Era*, a peer-reviewed annual publication which examines various aspects of the Civil War era in the Valley.

How did you get interested in the topic you will be presenting? My interest in Rebecca Wright stems from my days as an undergraduate at Shenandoah University in the late 1990s. She was an integral part of the Valley's story, but had not received wide attention. Throughout my professional career my research has always focused on various aspects of Shenandoah Valley Civil War era history that were understudied or pushed to the fringes. Wright's story is so compelling because it not only brings to light the important role women played in intelligence gathering, but Wright's story also offers an opportunity for a much broader examination of Unionists in Virginia.

What has been your biggest victory in researching your topic? There are various victories, particularly uncovering evidence of Wright's near-iconic status among Union veterans by the late 1870s as well as uncovering a postwar meeting between Wright and Sheridan. Of course having the opportunity to turn that research into publications (an article with *Civil War Times* and a portion of my book *Civil War Legacy in the Shenandoah*) could also be considered a victory as more individuals are made aware of Wright's significant role.

Anything else you'd like to tell us about yourself or your topic? I've received various awards for my teaching and scholarship including in 2016 the State Council for Higher Education in Virginia's Outstanding Faculty Award and in 2018 Shenandoah University's Teaching Excellence Award for the First Year Seminar. I have authored or edited thirteen book and published more than 100 articles, essays, reviews, and book chapters for a variety of scholarly and popular publications. My next book, *"To be Free Some Day": Slavery and Emancipation in the Shenandoah Valley During the Civil War Era* is currently under contract with University Press of Florida.

Shenandoah University's prestigious McCormick Civil War Institute will host its Spring 2020 Conference, *The Civil War on the Water*, on April 4, 2020 in Winchester, Virginia. Information and registration is found on the university's website: <https://www.su.edu/mcwi/upcoming-mccormick-civil-war-institute-events/mccormick-civil-war-institute-spring-conference/>

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

As we research women to include in the NRWSCW, we discover women who were uncommonly remarkable as pioneers. In honor of Black History Month, we are learning about Anne Bradford Stokes Bowman (1830-1903).

Bowman stands out for several firsts in women's Civil War service. In January 1863, the US Navy enlisted fifteen nurses for service on hospital transport vessels. These women, Anne amongst them, were the first women officially enlisted into the US Navy, and they were the first African-American nurses in the US Navy. Anne was herself the first US Navy nurse to serve on a US Navy ship, the USS Red Rover. After the war, Anne was denied a military pension for which she had applied based upon the service of both her late first husband

and her current husband. She learned to read and write, and thus able to put forward her own arguments in her favor, she applied for a pension in her own right. In 1890, the pension was granted. Anne Bradford Stokes Bowman became one of the first women to receive a pension based upon her own military service.

Sources: <https://www.blackpast.org/african-american-history/stokes-ann-bradford-1830-1903/>
<https://www.blackpast.org/african-american-history/african-americans-medicine-civil-war-era/>
<https://onlinenursing.duq.edu/history-wartime-nurses/>
<https://www.ilhumanities.org/events/ann-stokes-african-american-civil-war-nurse/>
https://s3.amazonaws.com/hmp-wounds/TWC_0916_Gaydos_HistoryProfiles.pdf
<https://www.americancivilwarforum.com/female-sailors-2518324.html>

New Book Announcement

Jeanne Christie, SWCW member and one of the founders of the Conference on Women and the Civil War, is pleased to announce publication of *The Women of City Point, Virginia 1864-1865*, available from McFarland Press. (ISBN # is 9 781476 678771).

While the title suggests that City Point is the focal point of the book, the stories spread to Richmond and the surrounding communities. City Point on the James River was a military hospital and encampment, where women played a variety of roles and come from a variety of backgrounds: nurses; Sanitary Commission and Christian Commission agents; civilians residing in the Safeguard area; African-American contrabands; and the wives of officers. Based on contextual research, *The Women of City Point, Virginia, 1864-1865*, extends beyond the Civil War and concludes with an analysis of the women's post-war lives.

New Book Release

In honor of Julia Dent Grant's birthday in January 2020, Southern Illinois University Press released a 45th-anniversary edition of *The Personal Memoirs of Julia Dent Grant (Mrs. Ulysses S. Grant)*, edited by John Y. Simon, with new material by Pam Sanfilippo, John Marszalek, and Frank Williams, and with additional photographs.

SWCW members will receive a 25% discount by using code SWCW and ordering from www.siupress.com or via phone: 1-800-621-2736, fax: 1-800-621-8476, or e-mail: custserv@press.uchicago.edu. SIU Press books are also available at major retail, independent, and online bookstores.

Upcoming Reenactment

The Siege of Port Hudson will take place March 29 - 30, 2020, at the Port Hudson State Historic Site near Jackson, Louisiana. Camps are open 9 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., and battles are scheduled for Saturday at 2 p.m. and Sunday at 1:30 p.m. For information about Port Hudson, visit their website: crt.state.la.us/louisiana-state-parks/historic-sites/port-hudson-state-historic-site/index

Encore Learning

SWCW Board Member **Bonnie Mangan** will present a four part class for Encore Learning in Arlington, Virginia, entitled *Civil War Soldiers' Experiences: Four Years of Warfare and it's Effect on Those Who Fought*. The class will be on consecutive Wednesdays, April 8 - 29, from 2:00 - 3:30 p.m., at the Arlington Campus of George Mason University. Contact Encore Learning for information on their classes: www.EncoreLearning.net

Want to share your book, event, or award news with the members and friends of the Society for Women and the Civil War? Send your announcement to DeAnne Blanton, editor of The Calling Card, at dablanton@gmail.com. Monthly submission deadline is the 10th.



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