



The Calling Card

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

<http://www.swcw.org>

“It Looks Like Richmond in 1865”

One of our members recently so described her city during the CoVID19 pandemic. During this time of hardship for all – and deep sorrow for many of us – we recall the endurance of our Civil War foremothers, and it gives us sustenance to endure ourselves.

We have members who are serving on the frontlines of this, our own war, as first responders, health professionals and caregivers – to them we owe an immeasurable debt of gratitude. Others, like women during those earlier desperate times, keep themselves and their families nourished and cared-for - as logisticians and foragers, financiers, chefs, home-schoolers, safety enforcers, psychologists and home nurses, while either working from home or wondering if they will ever work again – to them we offer our support and our respect for their sacrifices.

The Board of Directors send their sincere wishes that all of our members and friends are safe and well during this pandemic.

The July 2020 *Conference on Women and the Civil War* is Regretably Postponed

The 2020 conference was scheduled for July 24-26 in Harrisonburg, Virginia. Due to uncertainty surrounding the COVID-19 quarantine and both the length of Virginia's announced closure of non-essential business and the Commonwealth's continuing order against gatherings of more than ten persons, the Board of Directors have rescheduled for **July 2021**.

The 2021 Conference will feature the same field trip, and we hope to have the same exciting lineup of speakers. All facilities will remain the same.

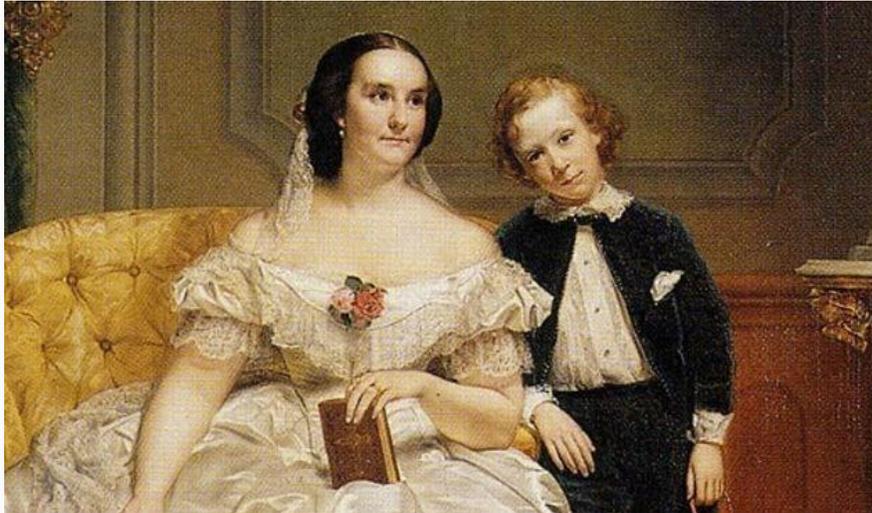
We recommend that those who have reserved rooms for the 2020 conference contact the hotel at 540-564-0200 to cancel their reservation. Once the new conference dates are announced, we recommend that those who are coming to the 2021 conference re-book their rooms well in advance.

Thank you for being so understanding during this time of great upheaval!

Susan Youhn, SWCW President

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

Elizabeth Hart Jarvis Colt, Military Industrialist and Philanthropist



Elizabeth Hart Jarvis Colt and her only surviving son Caldwell, by Charles Loring Elliot, 1865.

When we think of Civil War military ordnance, we think of the Colt .45 pistol as one of the most iconic weapons of the war. We are all aware of the original designer and producer of Colt's weapons, Samuel Colt. However, Samuel Colt died in 1862, and it was his widow, **Elizabeth Hart Jarvis Colt**, who ran the Colt Manufacturing Company after his death, through the Civil War and beyond. A few days after Sam Colt's death, she also lost her one-year-old daughter to illness. Six months into running the company, she gave birth to a still-born daughter, and then her three-year-old daughter died. Despite her grief, Elizabeth Colt ran the company with a deft hand and ensured that every US Army order for Colt weapons was filled. In 1864, the factory was burned to the ground, in what was presumed to be the action of Confederate sympathizers. She'd had the foresight to take out insurance when she took over the company, and so had the funds to rebuild and make the factory fire-proof. She expanded the company, and led the development of new weapons, including the six-shooter Colt Peacemaker and the Colt double-barreled rifle. By the early 20th century, she had taken the company from percussion and later cartridge revolvers to semiautomatic pistols and machine guns. Elizabeth Colt also played a leadership role in social services endeavors. Amongst her efforts, she founded and led a pioneering organization which provided to the children of working mothers daycare services, meals and education.

Additionally, she founded a soldiers aid society which raised large amounts of funds to support veterans' services, provided financial support for the family members of deceased clergy and funded the construction of religious buildings. After the Civil War, in 1869, she organized America's first women's suffrage convention. A true Renaissance woman, the "First Lady of Connecticut" was also a prominent art collector and leading patron of architecture and the decorative arts. Having been born the daughter of an Episcopalian minister in Saybrook, Connecticut, in 1826, she died in Newport, Rhode island, in 1905, as one of the country's wealthiest and most respected persons, outliving her only surviving child by eleven years.

EMERGENCY GRANT FUND FOR HISTORIC SITES

The Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation (SVBF) has established a **Historic Sites Emergency Grant Fund** to assist partners in the Shenandoah Valley during the COVID-19 Pandemic. This program is intended to provide support for historic sites who are or will be suffering financial hardship due to the interruption of normal operations caused by the Coronavirus public health crisis. Sites must be able to demonstrate their need by showing loss or expected loss due to reduced visitation and revenue.

Because many of these small museums, historic homes and battlefield sites don't have fundraising contacts and capability, the SVBF is looking to leverage the power of their donor base to help these partners. They are looking to quickly raise \$50,000 in assisting these many non-profit, historic organizations in their continuing mission to educate the public, and help to ensure that they will be able to re-open once the stay-at-home orders are lifted.

If you would like to help contribute to this fund, you can do so through the non-profit auspices of the SVBF at: <https://bit.ly/3bhH35m>

SWCW Welcomes New Member of the Board of Directors



Highly-respected award-winning journalist **Laurel K. Scott** was elected to the SWCW Board of Directors at its 8 April 2020 monthly meeting. Having previously served as co-marketing director for our 2008 conference, she has since distinguished herself in leadership positions in Civil War reenacting. Laurel also serves on the board of directors of Rear Rank Productions, acting as its coordinator for civilian activities. In that position, beginning with the sesquicentennial cycle, she has been responsible for successfully guiding civilian impressions and managing civilian reenactor participation in several of the most prominent national-level Civil War reenactments and living history events. Laurel's acceptance of this position brings to the SWCW board tremendous resources in skills, experience, enthusiasm and leadership.

Virtual Lecture Series

Do you need more educational stimulation while you are self-isolating? Our friend Mike Movius at the Civil War Round Table Congress has organized a series of virtual lectures by respected Civil War historians, including a May 5 lecture by our own SWCW Board Member Jim Knights. The lectures are FREE (but donations to the CWRT Congress are gladly accepted and easy to make online). With multiple lectures each week through the end of May, this should get you through that stay at home period in good form and help

maintain your sanity. If you'd like to receive notices of these lectures, simply subscribe to the CWRT Congress e-mail list at: <https://www.cwrtcongress.org/>.

The Herndon-Weik Collection of Lincolniana at the Library of Congress is now available online!

The collection can be accessed in several ways:

- Through an **online presentation** (<https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/collmss.ms000093>) that includes not only the collection items themselves, but also a selected bibliography in “[Related Resources](#),” a [timeline](#) of the lives of William H. Herndon and Jesse W. Weik, and featured items displayed in slide carousel of images that suggest the range of materials available in the collection.
 - Through the **HTML version of the finding aid** (<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms001002>); click on the “digital content available” hyperlinks in the Contents List section of the guide. A new window will open containing the object record for that material. Click on the document image in the center to open the viewer that provides access to the content.
 - Through the **PDF version of the finding aid** (<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms001002.3>); click on the “digital content available” hyperlinks in the Container List section of the guide. Clicking on the hyperlink will forward that page to the object record for the material. Depending on your internet browser, hitting the “back” arrow may return you to the start of the PDF, rather than to your last location in the guide.
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Sorrowful Notification.

It is with tremendous sadness that we have been notified that Bonnie Mangan is in hospice care with terminal cancer. Bonnie was the very first person to sign up for our very first conference, and she has been a tremendous supporter of the Society, an organizer of previous conferences, and a Board Member. Everyone who has attended our conferences remember her kindness, wit, boundless energy, and unstoppable enthusiasm for history and life.



Social Distancing Solicitation: please send us suggestions for learning more about the Civil War and women's history. What websites, documentaries, and books do you think Society members and friends might enjoy while we self-isolate? Please send your recommendations to DeAnne Blanton, editor of *The Calling Card*, at dablanton@gmail.com.

The next issue will arrive in your inbox on or around May 15, 2020.



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