

THE CALLING CARD

May 15, 2021



The Calling Card

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

<http://www.swcw.org>

The Conference on Women and the Civil War

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

- **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

- **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 \(swcw.org\)](#)

Registration: [SWCW 2021 VIRTUAL CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FORM - Society for Women and the Civil War](#)

Planning Ahead!

SWCW is pleased to announce that it has completed the contract for the **2022 annual Conference on Women and the Civil War**, to be held on July 22-24, 2022, at the Hotel Madison and Shenandoah Conference Center, in Harrisonburg, Virginia. Reservations at the discount rate available to SWCW conference attendees are now available. Please call 540-564-0200 and select extension 2 for the front desk. The discount rate is available for Deluxe Queen and Deluxe King rooms for July 18 - 26. This extended time period will provide attendees the opportunity to use the hotel as a base to explore in depth the beautiful and history-rich Shenandoah Valley. Conference organizers will provide area tourism information in advance of the event.

Accommodations and facilities can be viewed at <https://www.hotelmadison.com>.

News of Note

Women's History Podcast.

Looking for an interesting podcast about women's history? *The Exploress* (<https://www.theexploresspodcast.com/>) offers a wide range of history eras to study, from the life and times of ancient women in Egypt, Rome and Greece to nineteenth century America. Of specific interest to our readers are the episodes in Season 1 which cover Civil War women, including spies, soldiers, nurses and spiritualists. *The Exploress* can be found wherever you listen to podcasts.



Civil War Camp Cooking and Equipment.

An excellent reference for this subject is *Notes on Commissary Cooking and Equipment: 1861-1865* by **Cody J. Harding**. The well-researched and highly-detailed article also features many images showing equipment and techniques used for cooking in both interior and exterior settings. It is particularly useful for those who want to provide accurate period-appropriate impressions of camp cooks – particularly as women cooks employed at the company and regimental level and in hospitals. Find the article here: [Notes on Commissary Cooking and Equipment: 1861-1865 – The Liberty Rifles](#)

Exposition Catalogs Available.

The Centennial Exposition of 1876, held in Philadelphia, showcased the maturity of American technology which began in the 1860s, largely as a response to wartime demand. It also acted as one of the first world's fairs, with displays of

machines, products and culture from other nations. The catalogs for the exposition, rich with period images and descriptions, are an unmatched resource for the study of nineteenth century life. While original catalogs can be found for sale, they often cost hundreds of dollars per volume. **CGR Publishing** offers excellent soft-copy bound facsimile reprints, available as individual volumes focused upon specific aspects of the exposition or purchased as a set. The reprints are available directly from the publisher at www.CGRpublishing.com or from online vendors on Amazon and eBay.



The Women's Pavilion of the Centennial Exposition, Philadelphia, 1876.

Living History Website.

Readers of *The Calling Card* may be interested in [Her War – Interpreting Women's Lives during the American Civil War \(txcwcivilian.org\)](http://txcwcivilian.org)

Virtual Conference.

The **Society of Civil War Historians** will be hosting their annual conference in a virtual format on June 17 and 18, 2021. Of note to our readers is a planned panel session on women and gender. For registration information, check out their link at: <https://training.ua.edu/scwh/>

Research Resource:

Confederate Pension Application Files

In the post-war years, many of the former states of the Confederacy, as well as some border states, granted pensions to **Confederate soldiers and their widows**. Five of these states (asterisked below) additionally granted pensions to **formerly enslaved individuals who had served with the Confederate Army and Navy**.

Applicants typically sought pensions in the state in which they lived, not necessarily the state from which they served.

Online availability of digitized Confederate pension records varies by state.

Alabama

- In 1867 Alabama began granting pensions to Confederate veterans who had lost arms or legs. In 1886 the State extended pensions to veterans' widows. In 1891 the law was amended to include indigent veterans or their widows.
- Repository: Alabama Department of Archives and History

Arkansas

- In 1891 Arkansas began granting pensions to indigent Confederate veterans. In 1915 the State extended pensions to their widows and mothers.
- Repository: Arkansas State Archives

Florida

- In 1885 Florida began granting pensions to Confederate veterans. In 1889 the State extended pensions to their widows.
- Repository: Florida State Archives

Georgia

- In 1870 Georgia began granting pensions to soldiers with artificial limbs. In 1879 the State allowed pensions for other disabled Confederate veterans or their

widows. By 1894 eligible disabilities had been expanded to include old age and poverty.

- Repository: Georgia Department of Archives and History

Kentucky

- In 1912, Kentucky began granting pensions to Confederate veterans or their widows.
- Repository: Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives

Louisiana

- In 1898 Louisiana began granting pensions to indigent Confederate veterans or their widows.
- Repository: Louisiana State Archives

Mississippi*

- In 1888 Mississippi began granting pensions to indigent Confederate veterans or their widows.
- This legislation included formerly enslaved individuals.
- Repository: Mississippi Department of Archives and History

Missouri

- In 1911 Missouri began granting pensions to indigent Confederate veterans only; widows were excluded.
- Repository: Missouri State Archives

North Carolina*

- In 1867 North Carolina began granting pensions to Confederate veterans who were blinded or lost a limb during their service. In 1885 the State extended pensions to all other disabled indigent Confederate veterans or their widows.
- In 1927, pensions were extended to formerly enslaved individuals.
- Repository: North Carolina State Archives

Oklahoma

- In 1915 Oklahoma began granting pensions to Confederate veterans or their widows.
- Repository: Oklahoma Department of Libraries

South Carolina*

- A state law enacted December 24, 1887, permitted financially needy Confederate veterans and widows to apply for a pension. In 1919 South Carolina granted pensions to Confederate veterans and widows regardless of financial need.
- In 1923, pensions were extended to African Americans.
- Repository: South Carolina Department of Archives and History

Tennessee*

- In 1891 Tennessee began granting pensions to indigent Confederate veterans. In 1905 the State extended pensions to their widows.
- On April 9, 1921 the Tennessee legislature passed an act providing pensions for “those colored men who served as servants and cooks in the Confederate Army in the War Between the States.”
- Repository: Tennessee State Library and Archives

Texas

- In 1889 the State began granting pensions to indigent Confederate veterans and their widows.
- Repository: Texas State Library and Archives Commission

Virginia*

- In 1888 Virginia began granting pensions to Confederate veterans or their widows.
 - In 1924, pensions were granted to the formerly enslaved.
 - Repository: Library of Virginia
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Society Notices

Historical Markers Committee

SWCW's Historical Markers Committee plans a new project with **Find a Grave**. <https://www.findagrave.com>

There are two elements to the project:

- Placing SWCW's logo as a tribute on the Find a Grave sites of women who lived during the Civil War.
- Creating a Find a Grave "Virtual Cemetery" for women who lived during the Civil War. A "Virtual Cemetery" is a collection of sites associated with individual persons.

The Committee seeks volunteers to participate in this project. Those interested are asked to contact the committee at swcw1865@gmail.com ATTN: Historical Markers Committee.



Grave of Harriet Tubman, image from Find A Grave, Doug Rankin photographer.

DONOR LIST

SWCW gratefully acknowledges the following individuals

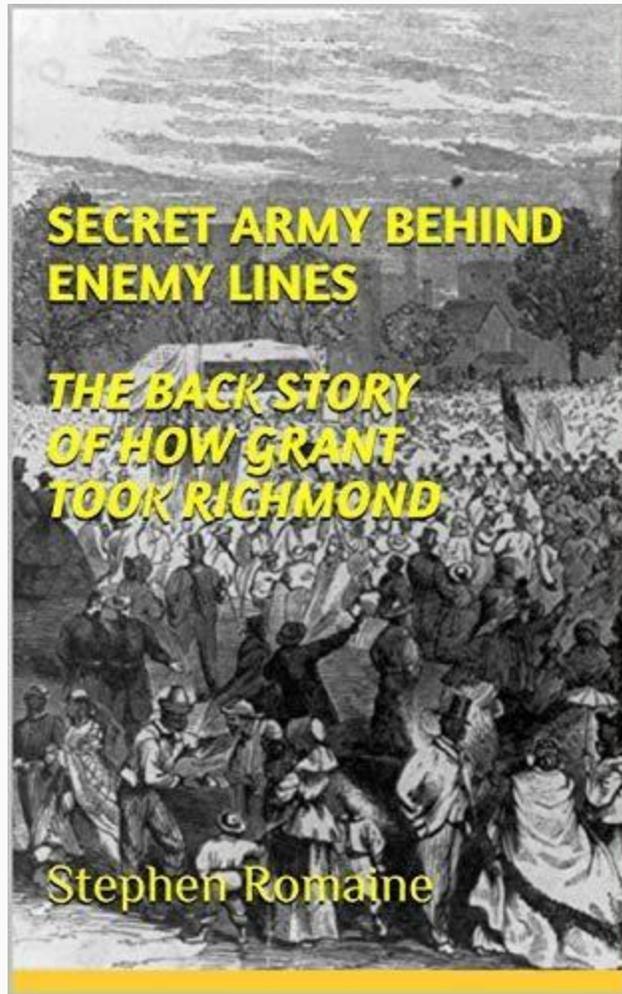
for their contributions:

Jim Knights
Dr. Carole Morton

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.

SWCW member **Stephen Romaine** has published *Secret Army Behind Enemy Lines: The Back Story of How Grant Took Richmond*. This book of historical fiction tells the story of the espionage ring in the Confederate capital. Led by Elizabeth Van Lew, US authorities considered it the most important of all activities collecting intelligence against the Confederate government. One of the key contributors was Mary Bowser, the enslaved servant planted by Van Lew as a mole in the household of Jefferson Davis. The Kindle edition of the book is currently available from Amazon, free as part of a Kindle Unlimited membership.



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

Membership year runs from January - December.

Suggested Reading

READERS CHOICE

*Favorite books about women in the Civil War
selected by our readers.*



SARONY, Photo

"A Lady." *The Workwoman's Guide: A Guide to 19th Century Decorative Arts, Fashion and Practical Crafts.*

Baker, Jean H. *Mary Todd Lincoln, A Biography.*

Berkin, Carol. *Civil War Wives – The Lives & Times of Angelina Grimke Weld, Varina Howell Davis & Julia Dent Grant*

Blanton, DeAnne and Lauren Cook. *They Fought Like Demons: Women Soldiers in the Civil War.*

Brackman, Barbara. *Civil War Women: Their Quilts, Their Roles – Activities for Reenactors.*

Clinton, Catherine. *Fanny Kemble's Civil Wars.*

Colt, Margaretta B. *Defend The Valley: A Shenandoah Family In The Civil War.*

Conklin, Eileen. *Women at Gettysburg, 1863.*

Emerson, James. *The Madness of Mary Lincoln.*

Frobel, Anne S. *The Diary of Anne Frobel.*

Harris, Jessica B. *Iron Pots & Wooden Spoons – Africa's Gifts to New World Cooking.*

Kaminski, Theresa. *Dr. Mary Walker's Civil War.*

Knights, James. *Soldier Girl Blue.*

Leisch, Juanita. *An Introduction to Civil War Civilians.*

----. *Who Wore What?: Women's Wear 1861-1865.*

Leonard, Elizabeth. *Yankee Women*.

Marvel, William. *A Place Called Appomattox*.

Mohr, James C., ed. *The Cormany Diaries: A Northern Family In The Civil War*.

Moore, Frank. *Women of the War*.

Perdue, Charles L., Thomas E. Barden, and Robert K. Phillips, eds. *Weevils In The Wheat: Interviews With Virginia Ex-Slaves*.

Revels, T.J. *Grander in Her Daughters*.

Smith, Diane Monroe. *Fanny & Joshua: The Enigmatic Lives of Frances Caroline Adams and Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain*.

Sutherland, Daniel E. *Seasons Of War: The Ordeal Of A Confederate Community, 1861-1865*.

Taylor, Susie King. *Reminiscences of My Life in Camp with the 33d United States Colored Troops Late 1st S. C. Volunteers*.

Thomas, Sarah Sites. *The Ties Of The Past: The Gettysburg Diaries Of Salome Myers Stewart, 1854-1922*.

Vansteamburg, Ary. *The Everyday Clothing of Rural Women at the Time of the Civil War*.

Welton, J. Michael, ed. *'My Heart Is So Rebellious': The Caldwell Letters 1861-1865*.

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

Woman of the Month

Helen Brainard Cole

Nurse and Government Employee, USA



Helen Brainard Cole, Late in Life

(Images from the *La Crosse Tribune and Leader-Press*, June 15, 1931, and the Sheboygan County Historical Society Museum)

Born July 20, 1838, in Oneida, New York.

Died September 4, 1931, in Sheboygan, Wisconsin.

Helen Brainard was born to Mark and Maria Bush Brainard, who moved their family from Oneida to Sheboygan Falls when she was a child of seven. Helen married William Cole, the scion of a pioneer Sheboygan Falls milling family, in 1858. After a year of marriage, Mr. Cole died of what is believed to be tuberculosis.

At the outbreak of war, Helen's father and brother enlisted in the US Army. Helen volunteered

to serve as a nurse; however, at not quite 21, she was too young to meet the age requirement for nursing. But her persistence obtained for her the job of secretary for Dorothea Dix, Superintendent of US Army Nurses. After working for Miss Dix for one and a half years, the superintendent declared Helen to be sufficiently mature and serious to enter nursing work.

Initially, Helen worked at Campbell Hospital in the District of Columbia, close to the US Soldiers Home. The Lincoln family used a cottage on the grounds of the Soldiers Home as a refuge. Helen's work at the hospital attracted the cordial attention of the Lincoln family. Later in life, Helen Cole frequently related that President and Mrs. Lincoln specifically requested her to serve as a nurse when their son Tad became ill with typhoid fever, thus endearing her to the Lincoln family. Helen worked on the team of nurses led by Rebecca Pomroy, with the team credited with saving Tad's life.

Although nurses working in Washington hospitals did not have a great deal of free time, Helen later spoke of striking up friendships with a number of celebrities during and after the war. They included John Greenleaf Whittier, Charles Dickens, Harriet Beecher Stowe, General and Mrs. Ulysses Grant, Horace Mann, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Theodore Roosevelt and Mary Baker Eddy, with whom she studied. She also spoke of being acquainted with John Wilkes Booth, saying that she spent an afternoon playing whist with him only a few days before the Lincoln assassination, unaware of his plans.

Helen later served in US Army hospitals in Louisville, Kentucky; Memphis and Nashville, Tennessee; and City Point, Virginia. After the war ended, she served at a hospital for African American veterans in Memphis. When that facility closed, she worked at a nursing home for women in Boston. After years of nursing, she returned in 1913 to Sheboygan Falls in order to care for her elderly parents. Selling the family farm, she moved her parents and herself into Sheboygan's Grand Hotel, where she lived for the rest of her own life. A pension from the US government for her wartime nursing services contributed to her financial independence.

Helen became well-known as a speaker about the experiences of women during the war. She worked tirelessly for the causes of the Grand Army of the Republic and other veterans' organizations. She participated as an honored nursing veteran and daughter of a veteran in all of the GAR's Wisconsin state encampments during the remainder of her life. She was also a

founding member - or early member - of a number of organizations serving Civil War veterans and patriotic causes. The organizations included:

- The National Association of Army Nurses of the Civil War – national secretary
- Veterans of the Foreign Wars Auxiliary – charter member
- Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War – honorary president and chaplain
- Women’s Relief Corps – national delegate and chaplain at the local- and district levels
- Daughters of the American Revolution

Helen died at the age of 93, as the result of a broken hip sustained during a fall on a stairway at the hotel where she lived. Shortly before her death, she had been honored as the last surviving Civil War nurse from Wisconsin.

During her lifetime, the Helen Brainard Cole Tent (Sheboygan local chapter) of the Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War was named in her honor. Two years after her death, the tent erected a local memorial to her in the form of a granite boulder. It was proclaimed to “ever be an inspiration to all who gaze upon it to emulate the noble acts and deeds of women, and is a fitting memorial to Helen Brainard Cole.”

Sources available upon request.

Partner Organizations Spotlight



Shenandoah University's McCormick Civil War Institute (MCWI) offers undergraduate courses in Civil War era history and an undergraduate certificate in Civil War Era Studies. In addition to its academic programs, MCWI is responsible for all interpretive and educational efforts at the University's River Campus at Cool Spring Battlefield. The 195 acres, given to the University in 2013 by the Civil War Trust (now American Battlefield Trust), was once part of an approximately 1,100 acre plantation owned by Judge Richard Parker, best-known as the presiding judge in John Brown's trial. In addition to exploring the property's prewar history, it also interprets the Battle of Cool Spring, fought on July 18, 1864—the largest and costliest engagement fought in Clarke County, Virginia.

MCWI also maintains an archive consisting of documents largely related to the Civil War era in the Valley. For an inventory of some of MCWI's collections you can visit: <https://www.su.edu/mcwi/mccormick-civil-war-institute-archives/>.

Additionally, MCWI annually publishes *Journal of the Shenandoah Valley during the Civil War Era*. The publication, maintained by an editorial board of fifteen historians, offers a wide-array of essays exploring various aspects of the era in the Shenandoah Valley. MCWI is always interested in receiving submissions of original scholarship. Writers can reach out to MCWI's director and editor of the journal, Prof. Jonathan A. Noyalas, via email at jnoyalas01@su.edu.

Throughout the course of the year MCWI hosts various events, including an annual commemoration of the Battle of Cool Spring, slated for Saturday, July 17, and its annual fall seminar and tour, scheduled for Saturday, November 6.

To learn more about MCWI and its many offerings please visit www.su.edu/mcwi.

Research Requests

Horse Hair Needed.

SWCW organizational member **Pallas Athena Ladies Aid Society** requests assistance in obtaining horse hair for use in an exhibit of Civil War-era medical practices. The hair can be from the mane or tail, but should be at least ten to twelve inches in length – preferably twelve. It can be any color and washed or unwashed. Ten to twenty individual hairs are needed. Anyone who can assist by providing the hair is asked to kindly notify SWCW at swcw1865@gmail.com, ATTN: Research Requests.

The Calling Card accepts submissions.

We are eager 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, and please write 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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