

THE CALLING CARD - NOVEMBER 15, 2021

The Calling Card



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

<http://www.swcw.org>

**The 2022 Conference on
Women and the Civil War**

Hotel Madison & Shenandoah Conference Center
Harrisonburg, Virginia
July 22-24, 2022



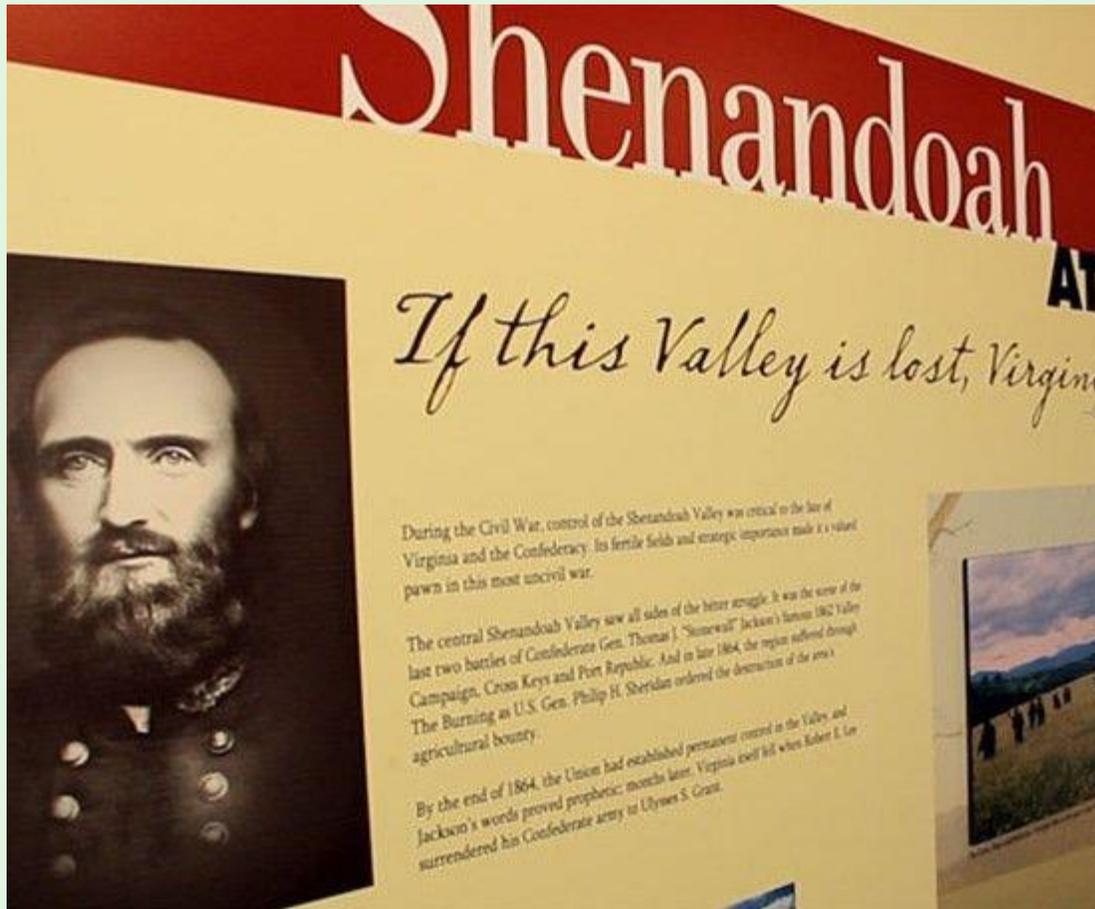
Image courtesy of The Valentine

**Outstanding Speakers and a Fascinating Field Trip
are now being planned, as well as the
Welcome Reception, Banquet, Scholarship-Benefit Auction,
and More!**

**Watch for upcoming announcements of the full conference
details
in future issues of *The Calling Card* and on our
website, www.SWCW.org**

Shenandoah Valley: Historical Site Spotlight

Civil War Orientation Center
212 S. Main Street
Harrisonburg, VA 22801



Learn about the Civil War history of the Shenandoah Valley – and the unique history of this area, from the dramatic battles of Cross Keys, Port Republic, and Piedmont to the heartbreak of The Burning. Most importantly, the staff at the Hardesty-Higgins House Visitor Center Harrisonburg can assist you in your travels as you visit historic sites, museums, and other locations where the experience and the story is revealed today.

[Civil War Orientation Center - Visit Harrisonburg Virginia in the Shenandoah Valley \(visitharrisonburgva.com\)](http://visitharrisonburgva.com)

News of Note

African American History Resource.

Not Your Momma's History consults with and aids museums, historical sites, historical societies, and private businesses in developing specialized programming about slavery and the African experience within 18th and 19th century America. NYMH also trains staff from all backgrounds on how to talk about slavery with diverse audiences. Cheyney McKnight is the founder and owner of Not Your Momma's History. She acts as an interpreter advocate for interpreters of color at historical sites up and down the east Coast, providing them with much needed on call support. She uses her clothing and primary sources to make connections between past and present events through performance art pieces. See all that NYMH has to offer at [Not Your Momma's History \(notyourmommashistory.com\)](http://notyourmommashistory.com)



MCWI's Spring 2022 Conference.

The McCormick Civil War Institute's spring 2022 conference, *"Beyond the Mere Routine of Everyday Life': Encounters & Experiences During the Civil War*, is scheduled for Saturday, April 2, 2022, on the main campus of Shenandoah University in Winchester, Virginia. Registration for this conference is now open at <https://www.su.edu/mcwi/upcoming-mccormick-civil-war-institute-events/mccormick-civil-war-institute-spring-conference/>.

MCWI is a proud Organizational Partner of SWCW.

Civil War Nurse Gains Historical Marker.

Due to the efforts of Pat Whitman and SWCW Board Member Susan Youhn, a Pennsylvania historical marker was placed on October 7, 2021 in front of the Montgomery County home of Anna Morris Holstein, who was a nurse, historic preservationist, and author.



Photo courtesy of Pat Whitman.

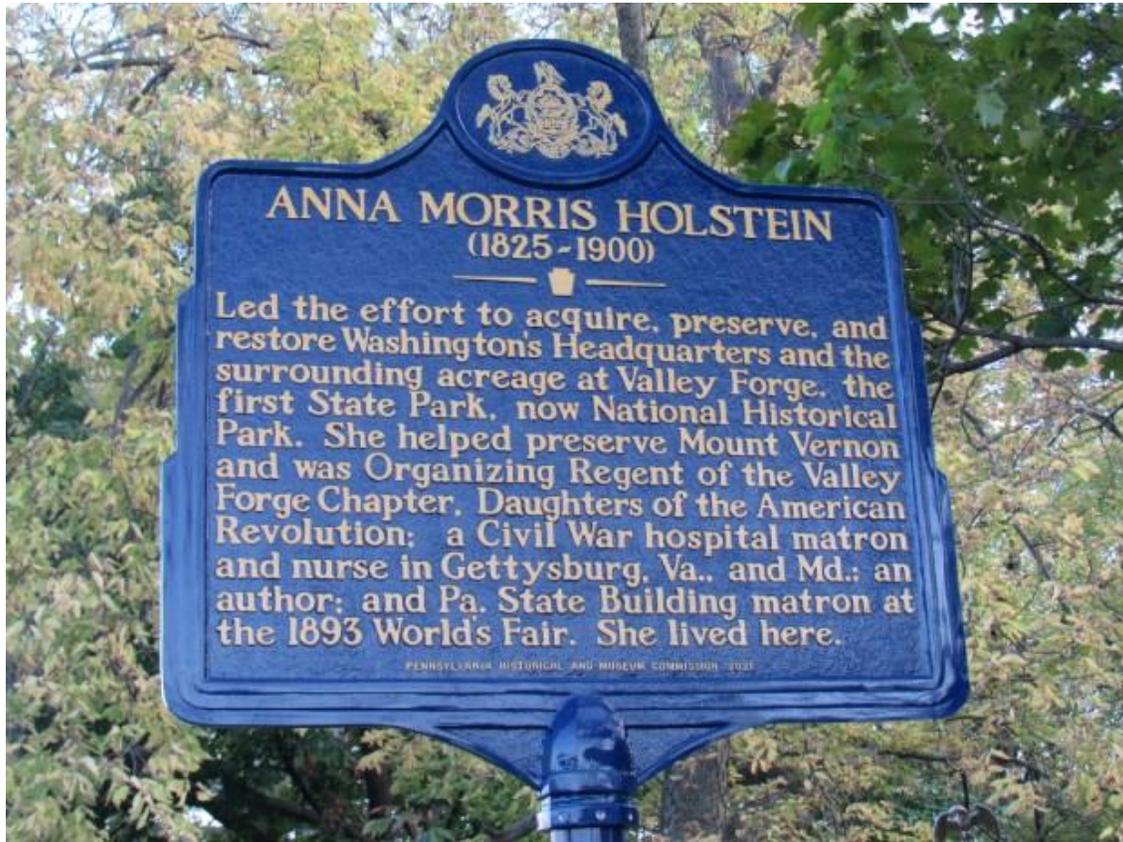


Photo courtesy of Russell Rubert.

Why We Serve: Native Americans in the United States Armed Forces.

The National Museum of the American Indian, part of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, DC, has launched this online exhibit documenting Native American participation in the military from the Revolution to the present. View it here: [Why We Serve \(si.edu\)](https://www.si.edu/whywewe)

Cherokee Women and the American Civil War.

Cherokee citizen and Oklahoma Historical Society Director, David Fowler, discusses the various experiences and roles of Cherokee women

during the war through historical documents and letters. Watch it on YouTube: [Cherokee Women and the American Civil War - YouTube](#)

Research Resource:

The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History

The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History was founded in 1994 by Richard Gilder and Lewis E. Lehrman, visionaries and lifelong supporters of American history education. The Institute is the leading 501(c)3 nonprofit organization dedicated to K–12 history education while also serving the general public. Its mission is to promote the knowledge and understanding of American history through educational programs and resources. The Institute is headquartered in New York City.



Archives: [The Gilder Lehrman Collection | Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History](#) The Gilder Lehrman Collection comprises more than 70,000 items documenting 500 years of American history, from the Pre-Columbian era to the present. Some of these items may be viewed online, while others are on display on the ground floor of the New York Historical Society.

Online Journal: [History Now | Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History](#) *History Now* features essays by top historians, providing the latest in scholarship for students, teachers, and the general public.

Self-Paced Courses: [Self-Paced Courses | Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History](#) Graduate-level instruction in a vast array of American history subjects taught by leading historians.

The Gilder Lehrman Institute offers additional resources, programs, online exhibits, and events tailored to all ages. To learn more, visit their website:

[Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History |](#)

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](#)

[\(swcw.org\)](#)

Membership year runs from January - December.

Society Notices

SWCW Scholarship Program

SWCW is accepting essay submissions for the **2022 Marge Estilow** and **Florence Williams Scholarships**. The Florence Williams Scholarship will be awarded to a current high school student while the Marge Estilow Scholarship will be awarded to a current college student.

The theme of the essay is Women in the Civil War, and scholarship winners receive \$250 and publication of their essay in our quarterly journal, *At Home and in the Field*.

All submissions for this year must be RECEIVED by **April 1, 2022**.

Information about selection criteria and how to apply are found on our website: [Scholarship Program - Society for Women and the Civil War \(swcw.org\)](https://www.swcw.org)

DONOR LIST

SWCW gratefully acknowledges the following individuals
for their contributions:

J. White

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 **Sarah Kay Bierles**' C-Span presentation on Confederate artillery commander Major John Pelham, part of Emerging Civil War's *Fallen Leaders* series, may be found at <https://www.c-span.org/video/?513972-3/fallen-leaders-confederate-officer-john-pelham>.

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

Woman of the Month

Albert D.J. Cashier
(born Jennie Hodgers)

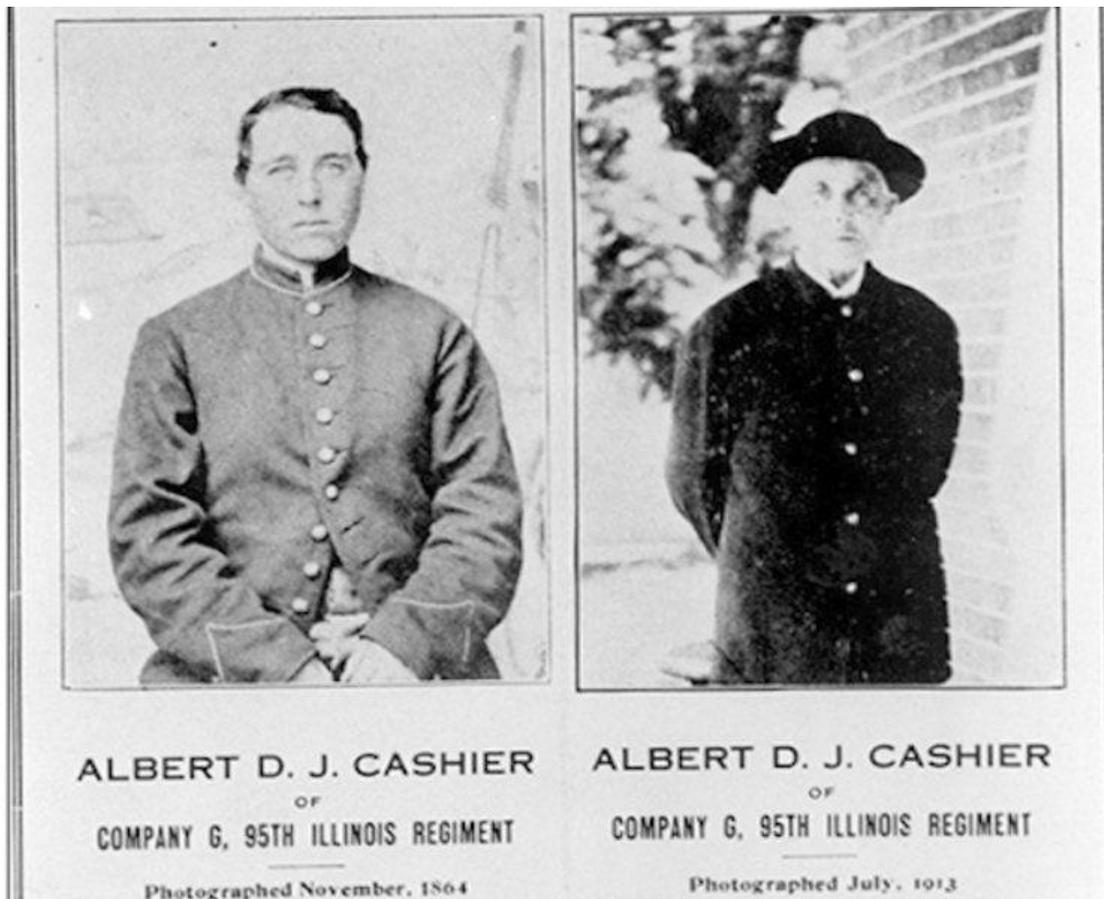


Image courtesy of the Illinois Historical Society

Born December 25, 1843 in Clogherhead, Ireland

Died October 10, 1915 in Watertown, Illinois

Buried at the Sunnyslope Cemetery in Saunemin, Illinois

Jennie Hodgers was born on Christmas Day in Clogherhead. Nothing is known of her childhood, nor is there any reliable information about when she immigrated to the United States. What is known is that, by 1860, she had made her way to Illinois, had assumed the male identity of Albert D.J. Cashier, and was working as a farmhand.

On August 3, 1862, at the age of 19, Cashier enlisted in the 95th Illinois Infantry. Cashier stood 5'4", and was described as "a short well built man." With his light complexion, blue eyes, and auburn hair, he resembled the many other Irish-Americans serving in the Union Army. But unlike many of his peers, Cashier was illiterate. He could not read, and he signed his enlistment papers with an X. During his service, Cashier was present at approximately 40 battles and skirmishes. He was held in esteem by the men in his company, and maintained a reputation as a reliable soldier. He was a hardy soldier as well, and made it through the war without illness or injury, except for the ever-present chronic diarrhea that plagued nearly every combatant. Cashier mustered out with his regiment on August 17, 1865, having served his full three-year commitment.

After the war, Cashier settled in Saunemin, Illinois. He held a variety of jobs over the next forty years, including farmhand, handyman, day laborer, child sitter, janitor, property caretaker, and town lamplighter. He never married. His social life largely revolved around the local chapter of the GAR, in which he was a long standing member. From all accounts, Cashier was well-liked by his neighbors and employers. In 1890, with the help of a local attorney, Cashier applied for and received a veteran's pension.

In early 1911, while doing odd jobs for Illinois State Senator Ira Lish, Cashier's leg was fractured when Lish accidentally backed over him with his automobile. This marked a turning point in Cashier's life. Although treated by a local physician, the leg never properly healed, and Cashier was permanently disabled at the age of 66. The local physician also discovered Albert's biological sex, and divulged the information to Senator Lish. They agreed to keep quiet their knowledge, and carefully selected two others with whom to discuss the situation – two sisters who employed Cashier, and who agreed to care for him during his convalescence. All four individuals believed that Cashier should

continue living his life as he always had, and they had no wish to violate his privacy.

When it became apparent that Cashier would never work again, Senator Lish arranged for Cashier's entrance into the Soldiers' and Sailors' Home at Quincy. As a disabled veteran of the Union Army, Cashier qualified to live at the Home, but it was certainly due to the influence of the Senator that the Superintendent of the Home agreed to take a woman soldier and keep the secret. Doctors and nurses employed at the Home were also informed of Cashier's sex, and also sworn to secrecy. Again, those involved in Cashier's care seemed committed to allowing him to live as he always had. Although bedridden some of the time, Cashier reportedly enjoyed the nearly three years he lived at the Home, as he was amongst his peers and friends. Sadly, in 1913, the physicians at the Home concurred that Cashier was showing signs of senility.

By 1914, nearly a dozen people knew that Cashier was a biological woman, and it was perhaps inevitable that someone talked. It is unclear who initially broke the vow of silence, but sensationalized newspaper stories about Albert Cashier hit the stands. The other residents of the Home, the people of Saunemin, the veterans of the 95th Illinois Infantry, and indeed, the rest of the nation read all about Cashier's "deception" in local, state, and national papers. When word reached the Pension Bureau, they appointed a Special Examiner to investigate the case, convinced that Cashier had defrauded the government for the past 24 years. As news of Cashier's sex reached his friends and comrades, he received more frequent visitors. Some went of their own volition, and others were sent at the behest of the Pension Bureau. Newspaper reporters also descended on him. Cashier had no idea that his life story was available for public consumption, and the realization that everyone knew his secret made him

feel vulnerable and afraid.

Meanwhile, the Illinois Soldiers' and Sailors' Home was not equipped to care for soldiers with dementia, and on March 27, 1914, in the Adams County Court, Albert Cashier and seven other veterans were judged "distracted" and insane, and committed to the Watertown State Hospital. No mention of Cashier's biological sex was made during the hearing. But officials at the Hospital were well aware of Cashier's sex, and when he arrived at the facility, he was separated from the other veterans, placed in the women's wing, and forced to wear women's clothing. Wearing long skirts had tragic consequences for Cashier. He was a frail 70 year old who did not know how to walk in such apparel. He tripped, fell, broke his hip, and spent the rest of his life confined to his bed.

The actions of hospital personnel greatly incensed Cashier's fellow veterans, who protested the treatment he received. As far as the veterans of the 95th Illinois Infantry were concerned, Cashier's sex was not important. After the shock of learning that Cashier was a woman, they became protective and solicitous. Cashier was one of their own, and sexual identity and gender propriety paled in comparison to their fellowship, to the permanent bonds they had forged in war.

While Cashier languished in the asylum, the Pension Bureau continued its investigation, with the Special Examiner contacting former employers, neighbors in Saunemin, and veterans of Cashier's regiment. The Examiner especially wanted to know if the old soldiers of the 95th Illinois could positively identify the old woman at the hospital as being the same young person who enlisted in 1862. The universal response was yes. Those men deposed by the Examiner also consistently praised Cashier's performance as a soldier, and swore that no

one ever knew he was a woman during or after the war. The investigation ultimately determined, in February 1915, that “the evidence secured in this case shows beyond any possible doubt that the pensioner is the person who rendered the service.... Identity may be accepted.”

Eight months later, Cashier died. The local chapter of the GAR arranged the funeral. Cashier was buried with full military honors, and was dressed in his uniform. His grave was marked with the standard government headstone provided to those who had served their country.

On Memorial Day 1977, the citizens of Saunemin held a ceremony at Cashier’s grave, and unveiled a second headstone, one that includes his birth name. More recently, Cashier’s modest cabin has been restored and opened as a museum.



Largely due to the efforts of the Pension Bureau, Albert Cashier's adult life in the United States is very well documented. What is not truly known, however, are his motivations and inner thoughts. Why did Jennie Hodgers become Albert Cashier? We will never truly know. By the time individuals began interviewing Cashier and pressing him for answers, he was already suffering from dementia. He gave different stories to different people, and some sensed he was just trying to tell them what he thought they wanted to hear. Thus, the historical record gives us no definitive answers.



Albert Cashier's pension application file has been digitized in full
and is available online:

[Approved Pension File for Private Albert D. J. Cashier, Company G, 95th
Illinois Infantry Regiment \(XC-2573248\) \(archives.gov\)](#)

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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