

THE CALLING CARD – DECEMBER 15, 2021

## *The Calling Card*



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

<http://www.swcw.org>

**The Board of Directors  
wishes all of you the happiest of holidays!**



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## **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](http://www.SWCW.org)

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## Shenandoah Valley: Historical Site Spotlight

The McCormick Farm,  
Raphine, VA



photo courtesy of Trip Advisor

The McCormick Farm, which is preserved by the Virginia Agricultural Research and Extension Center, is the site of the invention of the McCormick Reaper, which started the mechanical revolution in agriculture. Visitors to the two-acre site can explore the gristmill, 1822

manor house, smokehouse, schoolroom, housekeeper's quarters, and blacksmith shop. The second floor of the blacksmith shop includes a small museum interpreting the reaper revolution. Admission to the McCormick Farm is free.

For more information, visit their website: [About the Center | Virginia Agricultural Research and Extension Centers | Virginia Tech \(vt.edu\)](#)

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## News of Note

### **Women's History Road Trips.**

Do you want to visit the places in the United States where women made history? The National Park Service's website, *Travel Where Women Made History*, is a great place to start planning your next road adventure: [Travel Where Women Made History \(U.S. National Park Service\) \(nps.gov\)](#)

Of particular interest is the *Women's Rights National Historical Park*, which tells the story of the first Women's Rights Convention held in Seneca Falls, NY on July 19-20, 1848. [Women's Rights National Historical Park \(U.S. National Park Service\) \(nps.gov\)](#)

Another fantastic road trip is following the *Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Byway*. The Tubman Byway is a self-guided driving tour that winds for more than 225 miles through the beautiful landscapes and waterscapes of Maryland and Delaware, and includes stops at 45 historically significant sites.

[Where Harriet Tubman's Journey Began - On Maryland's Eastern Shore  
\(harriettubmanbyway.org\)](http://harriettubmanbyway.org)

If you plan to be in Washington, DC, be sure to check out *Storied Women of the Civil War Era* at the National Portrait Gallery: [Storied Women of the Civil War Era | National Portrait Gallery \(si.edu\)](https://www.si.edu/explore/2019/09/storied-women-of-the-civil-war-era)



Kate Bateman, actress. Mathew Brady Studio. Modern albumen silver print from 1863 wet collodion negative. Image courtesy of the National Portrait Gallery.

### **Blogs of Note.**

*History Stories* at History.com features a fascinating look at the impact of the Civil War on the celebration of Christmas. [How the Civil War Changed](#)

## [Christmas in the United States - HISTORY](#)

*Stories* by the Atlanta History Center recently posted a biography of Carrie Steele Logan, founder of the nation's first orphanage for black children. [Carrie Steele Logan: A 'Mother' to Atlanta's Orphans | Atlanta History Center](#)

SWCW member Sarah Kay Bierle recently wrote about the plundering of Fredericksburg on the *Emerging Civil War* blog. [Stealing Books during the Battle of Fredericksburg | Emerging Civil War](#)

### **Research Resource:**

University Archives & Historical Collections  
of Michigan State University

[The American Civil War Exhibit | Home \(msu.edu\)](#)

A significant collection of Civil War materials relating to Michigan citizens - including correspondence, diaries, musters, reminiscences, and photographs -- is available for researchers. To get started using the collection, some of which has been digitized and made available online, use the wonderfully detailed [The Civil War - A Guide to the Resources in the Michigan State University Archives & Historical Collections \(msu.edu\)](#)

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Laura Keene, actress. Mathew Brady Studio. Modern albumen silver print from c. 1865 wet collodion negative. Image courtesy of the National Portrait Gallery.

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**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.

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Mrs. J.H. Allen, actress. Mathew Brady Studio. Modern albumen silver print from c. 1861 wet collodion negative. Image courtesy of the National Portrait Gallery.

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## Society Notices

*Spotsylvania County, A Civil War Romance* by SWCW member **Nikki Stoddard Schofield** has just been published, and is available at your favorite bookstore. Check out all of Nikki's Civil War romance novels here: [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)

### DONOR LIST

SWCW gratefully acknowledges the following individuals  
for their contributions:

Jim Knight

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.

### *Civilian Rules & Guidelines*

This invaluable resource for Civil War reenactors and living historians has been recently posted to the SWCW website. Written by Lisa Dixon Denton, Yulanda Burgess, and SWCW Board Member Laurel K. Scott, the guidelines include period-correct rules of deportment and attire, along with a plethora of contemporary photographs of men, women, and children from all walks of life.

### *Contributions by Women During the American Civil War*

Also available on the SWCW website is an illustrated and informative overview of the many roles and contributions of women during the great sectional conflict. Created by the Pallas Athena Ladies Aid Society, this document is the perfect introduction for individuals wanting to learn more about this area of women's history.

**Both of these resources are available here:**

[Educational Materials Intro - Society for Women and the Civil War](#)  
[\(swcw.org\)](#)

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

**Woman of the Month**

**Pauline Cushman**

actress and spy

Born June 10, 1833 in New Orleans, Louisiana

Died December 2, 1893 in San Francisco, California

Buried in the Officer's Circle at the Presidio  
in the San Francisco National Cemetery



Pauline was born Harriet Wood in New Orleans, but her family relocated to Grand Rapids, Michigan when she was still young, and established a trading post there with the indigenous peoples. Not much else is known of her childhood or family, although Pauline would later claim both French and Spanish ancestry. At the age of 17 or 18, she left Michigan with dreams of becoming an actress, and took the stage name Pauline Cushman. Pursuit of her acting career would take her to New Orleans and New York.

In 1853, Pauline married a musician named Charles Dickinson, and they had two children together. Again, very little is definitively known about their life together, except that at the start of the Civil War, they were living in Cleveland, Ohio, where Charles enlisted in the 41st Ohio Infantry. He died of disease in 1862. In order to support herself, she left her children with her in-laws in Cleveland, and traveled to Louisville, Kentucky to resume acting. It is reported that neither of her children survived to adulthood.

In April 1863, while performing in the play *The Seven Sisters* in Louisville, she was approached by two Confederate officers, offering her cash to give a toast to Jefferson Davis onstage, rather than the scripted toast to President Lincoln. Cushman reported the offer to Col. Orlando Hurley Moore, the U.S. Provost Marshal in Louisville. He advised her to accept the offer. When Cushman raised her toast to Davis the next night onstage, pandemonium ensued, Cushman was fired from the theater, and Moore gave her a new job as a Union spy.

Thus ingratiated into the Confederate community in Louisville, Cushman easily slipped into her new role of gathering intelligence. Because spies seldom leave paper trails, the specifics of her work are lacking, but given that Pauline was transferred to the Army of the Cumberland at Nashville, Tennessee within three months, to work directly for Major General Rosecrans, it is safe to assume that Union officials found her to be a valuable asset. Her handler, Col. William Truesdail, tasked her with infiltrating nearby Confederate camps to ascertain when and where they were building fortifications.

Posing as a Southern woman searching for her enlisted brother, Pauline befriended a Confederate soldier who was drawing maps of the fortifications of the Army of Tennessee. She successfully stole the maps, but was apprehended before she could reach the safety of Union lines. Gen. Braxton Bragg ordered

she be tried as a spy, and after being found guilty, was sentenced to hang. Incarcerated at Shelbyville, her life was spared, ironically, by contracting typhoid. Confederate officials postponed her death sentence waiting to see if she would succumb to the illness. Union forces overtook Shelbyville, and Pauline was liberated. She was sent to Nashville to recover.

In recognition of her services, President Lincoln made her an honorary Major, and when a healthy Pauline embarked upon an 1865 speaking tour recounting her adventures as a spy to rapt Northern audiences, she headlined under the moniker Miss Major Pauline Cushman. That same year, her friend Ferdinand Sarmiento published *The Life of Pauline Cushman*, an exaggerated biography focusing on her wartime exploits. Pauline capitalized on her fame in the post-war years with her one-woman show, billed as *The Spy of the Cumberland*, under the management of P.T. Barnum.

By the early 1870s, when public interest in war stories had waned, so too did Pauline's career, so she moved to California. She married a man named August Fichtner in 1872, but was widowed within a year. She then moved to Arizona, and met and married Jeremiah Fryer. The couple owned and operated a hotel in Casa Grande, and adopted a daughter, Emma. The little girl died of a seizure in 1888, and Pauline and Jeremiah separated in 1890.

By 1892, Pauline was living in El Paso, Texas, suffering poor health and crippling arthritis and rheumatism. She applied for a widow's pension based on the service of her first husband, and then moved back to California. Her final years were spent living in a San Francisco boarding house, working as a housecleaner when she was able, and addicted to the morphine which she began taking to ease the pain in her joints. She died of an overdose at the age of 60.

Pauline's funeral was arranged by the local chapter of the GAR, and they buried her with full military honors.



Photo courtesy of The National Park Service.

**Suggested Reading:**

to learn more, check out the meticulously researched book,

*Pauline Cushman: Spy of the Cumberland* (2006)

by long-time SWCW supporter William Christen.

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Pauline Cushman, actress and spy. Mathew Brady Studio. Modern albumen silver print from c. 1860-1870 wet collodion negative. Photo courtesy of the National Portrait Gallery.

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### ***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](mailto: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](#))



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