

When Battery M of the 1st Michigan Light Artillery was being organized, local newspapers advertised for “**SEVENTY-FIVE ARTILLERYMEN**” with the words “*None but able-bodied men need apply. The officers of this regiment are all experienced and are bound to make it the **CRACK BATTERY OF THE STATE.***” Finally outfitted on June 30, 1863, Battery M totaled 145 officers and men on its rolls. Its officers included Capt. Edward G. Hillier of Detroit, 1st Lt. Charles D. Culver of Mount Clemens, 1st Lt. Augustus M. Emery of Detroit, 2nd Lt. George H. Moulton of Coldwater, and 2nd Lt. George A. Sheely of Detroit. Colt navy revolvers and regulation artillery sabers were issued to the men. Battery M was soon transferred to Dearborn for further organization and orders.

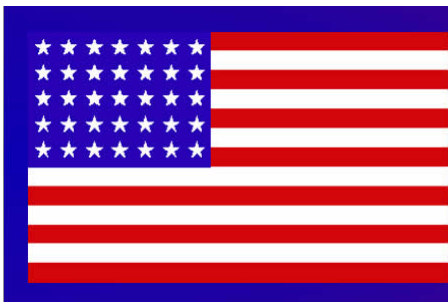
When John Hunt Morgan began his invasion of Indiana and Ohio in July of 1863, Battery M was called into action and arrived in Indianapolis on July 11. With recruitment still incomplete Battery M left Michigan with merely 79 of the 150 men required. Soon tragedy struck, but not on the battlefield. At 7:30 one evening as the Battery “*was coming down the street at a gallop*” in the heart of Indianapolis, a caisson violently exploded. Three men of the Battery were killed, along with a young boy who had come to watch them dash by. John Gunn and William Stacey, who were both sitting on the ammunition chest, were blown approximately 70-feet into the air, landing on the next street over.

Newspapers detailed the ghastly accident: “*The fragments of their limbs and the....lumps of flesh torn from their bodies [were] gathered up as completely as possible. We saw them as they lay in the wagon, and anything as horrible we never want to see again. The legs of both were torn off at the knees, the bones protruding six or eight inches, bloody but bare of flesh, and broken at the lower ends where the feet had been wrenched off. The head of one had apparently been struck by a fragment of shell which crushed clear through....smashing skull and features into a bloody pulp....Both seemed to have every bone in their bodies broken. Not a joint or limb was in its natural place. They looked as if some malignant giant had wrenched and jammed them out of all shape. Their faces were twisted around to their backs, their hips thrown up to their chests, their shoulders and arms turned around to their sides, a mass of almost obliterated humanity, which but a few minutes before had been full of hopeful life. The little boy, who was mortally wounded....was struck by a fragment of iron of the caisson on the head. He proved to be the son of a Mr. Simpkins....and was apparently about twelve years old. He was taken home, and the wailing and screaming of his mother and sisters....was even more terrible than the sight of the dead men who were all past suffering. He died a short time later.*”

The cause of the horrific explosion was determined in an account given by Henry B. Carrington. “*I learned the following morning that the projectiles had been primed, with caps on the ‘shell-nipples’ before starting for the depot, as if going directly into action. During the gallop from the camp to the cars, in crossing a gutter, the jolt was sufficient to toss the shells, thus primed, against the cover, and both men and horses, were victims of the disaster.*”

Battery M would proceed to Kentucky and eventually served under the command of General Orlando B. Willcox. In its entire service Battery M carried 297 officers and men on its rolls—losing 3 men killed-in-action and 13 dying of disease.

This month the MRRT proudly presents long-time member Ron Cleveland with a delightful program, “***The Presentation Flag of Battery M, 1st Michigan Light Artillery.***” Ron was raised in Farmington Hills, attended Farmington High School where his favorite subject was “always History.” After receiving a Business Degree from Michigan State University, Ron became president of Skyline Diamond Setters, a family-owned jewelry business in Troy. Ron refers to himself as an “*avocational archeologist*” because of his “love of hunting for Civil War artifacts.” His greatest discovery has been the original flag of Battery M. Come see it and hear the phenomenal story of how it was obtained along with a history of the Battery. This is one you cannot miss. Make a note of it—**MONDAY, MARCH 29TH.**



The MRRT expresses its thanks to last month's speaker, **John Renick**, for his program, "*Could the South Have Won the War?*" John assessed the relative strengths of both the North and South as the war began. He included military and civilian leadership as well as a few intangibles to determine his conclusion. A fine program.

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FALL FIELD TRIP: Last month the membership voted to go to the Chattanooga/Chickamauga battlefield sites in October. Historian Jim Ogden, the finest scholar of this area who led us ten years ago, has agreed to guide us on both days at Lookout Mountain/ Missionary Ridge and the bloody two-day struggle at Chickamauga. Come to this month's meeting for the exact weekend dates, motel accommodations, and eating arrangements.

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QUIZ: All questions pertain to MICHIGAN during the Civil War.....

1. The 4th Michigan Infantry was organized in Adrian and served until the end of the war. Which of its colonels was killed at Malvern Hill? And which heroic colonel was killed by a bayonet wound at Gettysburg after he took back the regimental flag, seized by a Confederate?
2. What is the claim-to-fame of the 4th Michigan Cavalry's Lt. Col. Benjamin D. Pritchard of Allegan? And, what was Orlando LaValley of the 23rd Michigan Infantry's claim-to-fame?
3. Which officer, Detroit-born and a graduate of West Point in 1839, led the Federal artillery at the Battle of Gettysburg? And, which New York-born, Michigan-raised general, now buried in Ypsilanti, was cashiered on January 28, 1863, "for neglect and violation of duty, to the prejudice of good order and military discipline"?
4. Who commanded the 24th Michigan Infantry of the famous Iron Brigade and was wounded and captured at Gettysburg? And, what distinct honor was given to the 24th Michigan at the war's end?
5. Captain Archibald P. Campbell of the 2nd Michigan Cavalry gave Phil Sheridan his famous steed that had been foaled in St. Clair County. Name the horse and where are its remains today?
6. Which famous Detroit, Lt. Col. of the 6th Michigan Cavalry and Colonel of the 5th Michigan Cavalry, was severely wounded at Boonsboro, Maryland? And, which important governmental post did he hold during the Spanish-American War?
7. Which doctor graduated from the University of Michigan's medical school in 1860, eventually became surgeon of the 5th Michigan Infantry, and after the war was a member of the Detroit Board of Education and a founder of Wayne State University? And, what famous song did his wife, Winifred Lee, write?
8. Which 1847 graduate of West Point was selected as colonel of the 1st Michigan Infantry (3-month volunteers) at the beginning of the war? And, who was Michigan's first official volunteer soldier?
9. What major event occurred, beginning on March 6, 1863, in Detroit and what precipitated it?
10. Which officer from Jackson served in the 17th Michigan Infantry and following the war was the executioner of the four Lincoln conspirators? And, which officer of the 7th Michigan Infantry, and a Medal of Honor winner from Galesburg, led the U.S. forces into Cuba as an overweight general during the Spanish-American War?

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Stories from Michigan in the Civil War.....

Allen Howard Zacharias of the 7th Michigan Infantry had a premonition that he would be killed at the Battle of Fair Oaks. Therefore, he placed a carefully-written note in his pocket-book, telling of his personal background. He was born May 15, 1833, in Washington County, Maryland, but moved with his family to Monroe County, Michigan in 1841. He graduated from the University of Michigan in 1860, went to Mississippi as a professor and later became a principal of the State Military Institute. He returned to Michigan in May of 1861 and entered the service becoming a captain. On the



opposite side of the paper, he wrote: “*Friend—If you find my body lifeless upon the field, bury it decently, mark the resting place, and inform my friends in the regiment and my father. Do this and you shall be liberally rewarded and have the gratitude of my friends.*” But, Captain Zacharias survived the battle and put the note among his belongings. Three months later his lifeless body was found on the battlefield at Antietam near the spot where he was born. Found in his hand was an envelope with these words written upon it:

To Peter K. Zacharias, Monroe, Michigan

Dear Parent, Brothers and Sisters—I am wounded mortally, I think. The fight rages around me. I have done my duty; this is my consolation. I hope to meet you all again. I left not the line until nearly all had fallen and [the] colors gone. I am getting weak; my arms are free, but below my chest all is numb. The enemy trotting over me, the numbness up to my heart. Good-bye, all Your Son, Allen

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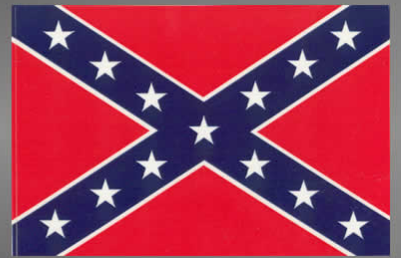
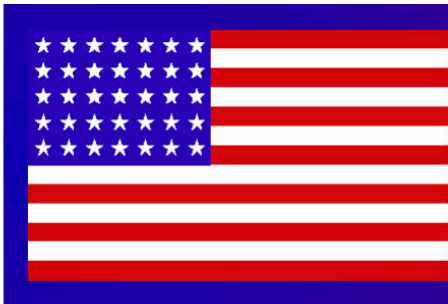
Put Detroit George R. Barse, a First Lieutenant in the 5th Michigan Cavalry, under the category of “*Why Bother.*” His record speaks for itself. He was taken prisoner at Buckland Mills, Virginia on October 19, 1863. He escaped the following May 7, 1864. He was recaptured on May 11, 1864, but escaped eleven days later on May 22. Barse was again captured on June 14, but escaped on June 29. Captured for the fourth time on July 3, 1864, he escaped a fourth time on November 23. But this time the indomitable Barse made good on his freedom by reaching the picket line of the Michigan Engineers and Mechanics on Sherman’s March to the Sea. Barse was honorably discharged for disability on March 22, 1865.

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While the 16th Michigan Infantry was engaged at Cold Harbor, a Maryland regiment broke while under fire, and when falling back was checked and held by the Michigan men. Meanwhile, the colonel of the Maryland soldiers struggled to rally his regiment without success. He hurried up to Colonel Benjamin F. Partridge of the 16th Michigan, and with tears streaming down his cheeks, exclaimed: “*Colonel, would to God that I commanded a Michigan regiment!*” He had hardly said these words when a rifle bullet passed through his body, killing him instantly.

QUIZ ANSWERS:

1. Dwight A. Woodbury and Harrison H. Jeffords
2. His unit captured Jefferson Davis at the end of the war and he was Michigan’s last surviving soldier, dying on April 19, 1948, five months to the day before his 100th birthday
3. Henry Jackson Hunt and Justus McKinstry
4. Henry A. Morrow and chosen as the Military Escort for Lincoln’s funeral procession as it passed through Springfield
5. Rienzi and stuffed in the Smithsonian Institute
6. Russell A. Alger and Secretary of War
7. Dr. Henry F. Lyster and “Michigan, My Michigan”
8. Orlando B. Willcox and Andrew J. Crosby of Farmington
9. Riot in which some Blacks were beaten and killed with the Negro section of the city burned. A Black man, William Faulkner, was falsely accused of raping a white child.
10. Christian Rath and William R. Shafter



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Make sure you're on hand for **Ron Cleveland's** program, "*The Presentation Flag of Battery M, 1st Michigan Light Artillery.*" The date again is **MONDAY, MARCH 29TH** at the Farmington Public Library (Grand River and Farmington Road). The meeting begins at 6:30 P.M. and it promises to be a great one. See you there....

And, don't forget to take a look at our website: <http://www.farmlib.org/mrrt/>