

Our Monday, June 27, 2016 meeting begins at 6:30 pm in the basement of the Farmington Library. Please visit our website at <http://www.farmlib.org/mrrt>

George needs assistance with the monthly coffee preparation. Jeanie will no longer be able to assist him because of her responsibilities as Treasurer of the Roundtable.

Our trip committee is collecting money for the October 8th and 9th trip to Antietam. The cost is \$145 for our tour guide Scott Patchen, the bus, and all park entrance fees. Saturday night’s dinner at the Old South Mountain Inn is optional, with an additional cost of \$45. Tour participants may write one check for \$190 or separate checks for the tour and dinner. Please make your checks out to Jeanie Graham, who is now our Treasurer. You can give the check to her at our meeting or mail it to her at: Jeanie Graham, 29835 Northbrook, Farmington Hills MI 48334-2326.

Please advise the trip committee of your choice for Saturday’s banquet: Prime Rib, Salmon, or Vegetarian.

The trip committee must have your money by the August 29, 2016 Roundtable meeting.

Each participant can make their hotel reservations at the Hampton Inn – Frederick, Maryland, telephone number 301-696-1565. Request the MCR block rate (good until September 7, 2016), or you can choose another hotel. The pre-tour meeting will be held at the Hampton Inn on Friday, October 7, 2016 at 7:30 pm.

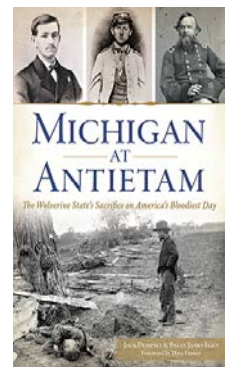
Questions? Call Mollie (313.530.8516), Linda (586.588.2712), or Jeanie (248.225.7596).

Participants must provide their own transportation from Michigan to Frederick and back home again.

The Roundtable thanks Don Kadar for his outstanding efforts as our Treasurer.

The Roundtable welcomes long-time friends of the Roundtable, Jack Dempsey and Brian James Egen, who will present “Michigan at Antietam, The Wolverine State’s Sacrifice on America’s Bloodiest Day”.

Jack and Brian have combined to write a book detailing Michigan’s role in the Battle of Antietam. Michigan soldiers’ heroics resulted in suffering extraordinary losses, including one regiment losing half its members. Several Michigan officers played key roles in the battle. Jack and Brian have spearheaded the effort to erect a long overdue Michigan monument on the battlefield. **Proceeds from the sale of the book at our meeting will go toward funding the Michigan monument.** Jack is president of the Michigan Historical Commission and a board member of the Michigan History Foundation. He previously spoke to our group on his book, Michigan in the Civil War: A Great and Bloody Sacrifice.



Brian Egen has also spoken to our group previously, on his role in the *Gettysburg* movie. Brian is executive producer at the Henry Ford in Dearborn. He organizes the “Old-Fashioned Baseball” each summer at Greenfield Village. He is chairman of the Michigan Civil War Sesquicentennial Committee. Brian’s wife also spoke to the Roundtable.

The MRRT would like to thank John Simmons for his informative and thought-provoking presentation on



“Gettysburg: The Civilian Viewpoint”. John relied on preserved Gettysburg oral history from children living in town that survived the battle. He shared with us the stories of numerous survivors.

On July 1st, the townspeople provided water for thousands of thirsty soldiers. The order was given that the women and children were to go to cellars because the Rebels were going to shell



the town. The alternative was to take the family to the rear. All of the local churches were used to care for the wounded during and after the battle.

There were numerous individual stories that John shared with us. He had pictures of most of the people involved. Abraham Brien was an African-American who fled north to avoid being sent back into slavery. Basil Biggs was an African-American farmer who escaped on July 1st. Mrs. Chambers was an escaped slave who had been kidnapped in Philadelphia and had escaped again. She was in Gettysburg on June 30th.

John Burns was a veteran of the War of 1812. He became a legend after being wounded participating in the July 1st fighting. He was able to make it home safely after going through the Confederate lines.

Dan Skelly returned home from West Point. He provided General Howard with the lay of the land from a building's roof.

George Sandoe was the first Union soldier to die in the battle of Gettysburg. He died on his third day in the Army, only two miles from home.

Elizabeth Thorn was the caretaker of the Evergreen Cemetery, living in the gate house. She cooked a late dinner for the Union generals on July 1st. Then, her family moved into the cellar and left for the Musser farm on July 2nd.

Nathaniel Lightner moved 9 miles from Gettysburg after his farm was destroyed during the battle.

Josephine Rogers, covered with blood, brought wounded soldiers into her cellar. She baked bread and carried water for the wounded of both armies. She cared for the wounded even during Pickett's Charge.

The two most famous Gettysburg residents were probably Virginia "Ginne" Wade and John Wesley Culp. She was the only civilian killed during the battle as a sharpshooter's bullet went through 2 doors in her family's house, killing her instantly. John Wesley Culp was the 2nd Virginia Infantry's only casualty on his family's farm land, Culp's Hill. Various legends developed on where he was buried.

MRRT Minutes for May 23, 2016: The **Call to Order** 6:35 pm, with 30 people present for the business meeting **Pledge** Dedicated to Mollie's uncle, Jay Campbell, a combat wounded member of Merrill's Marauders **Introduction of Guests and New Members** guest Suzanne Clinton from the Abraham Lincoln Roundtable **Secretary's Report** Approved **Newsletters** Bob Newill read from the Indianapolis Hardtack, Cincinnati Canister, and NYC Dispatch **Trip Report** Trip details are covered on Page 1 of the Newsletter **Preservation** A recently discovered 700 feet section of Confederate trenches in Marietta, GA were protected as a 3 acre park within a senior residential facility. A temporary fence will protect the area during construction. The Franklin Charge is embarking on a plan to preserve the Carter outbuildings-the farm office, smokehouse and slave cabins. The buildings will continue to deteriorate unless something is done, and the slave cabin needs to be moved to a more historically accurate location. They are attempting to raise \$150,000 for the project. **Website** Gerry Furi continues to do a great job updating the website for us every month **Program** Our June speakers will be Jack Dempsey and Brian Egen, speaking on *Michigan at Antietam*. **Items of Interest** None **Old Business** None **New Business** Preservation money was approved for the Michigan Monument at Antietam (the subject of June's presentation), \$300, and Franklin's Charge, \$150.

Quiz Questions: This month's questions and answers pertain to "Michigan at Antietam".

1. What was Brigadier General Alpheus Williams, from Detroit, role in General Lee's Lost Order #191?
2. How many Michigan regiments and other units were involved at the Battle of Antietam?
3. Which Michigan regiment earned the title of "Stonewall Regiment"?
4. What was Captain George Custer's (Michigan's hero) role during the Battle of Antietam?
5. What was Major General Isreal Richardson's distinction as a result of the Battle of Antietam?



Civil War Essentials – Yanks in Gray, “South’ns” in Blue – Part 2

David G. Farragut – born in eastern Tennessee in 1801, he was the son of a US naval officer during the Revolutionary War. In 1805, the family moved to New Orleans. After his mother died in 1808, he went to live with another naval officer, David Porter. Farragut served as a midshipman in the 1812 War. After the war, he saw action against pirates in the West Indies and did routine patrol duty during the war with Mexico. He set up the Mare Island naval yard near San Francisco in the 1850’s and then returned to Norfolk, Virginia. Prior to the attack on Fort Sumter, he relocated to New York State.



Farragut offered his services to the Union navy immediately but there were doubts about his loyalty until David D. Porter, a fellow officer and son of Farragut’s foster parent, vouched for him. He received command of the Gulf Blockading Squadron and was ordered to attack the vital port of New Orleans. His skillful grasp of command, and obvious enthusiasm for the undertaking, erased fears that he was too old or inflexible to succeed. After a mortar bombardment of the two forts guarding the lower Mississippi, he led his fleet past the forts and captured the city. He was less successful in later attacks at Island No. 10 and Vicksburg where his wooden vessels could not close with the elevated guns protecting that city. In August 1864 he won another great victory at the battle of Mobile Bay. His courageous order for his ships to continue on despite the loss of the monitor Tecumseh to a mine saved the day and ensured that another key port was lost to the Confederacy.

He died as a full admiral in 1870.

Mansfield Lovell – born in the District of Columbia, Lovell was the son of a former US Surgeon General and grandson of a Revolutionary War Boston patriot. Lovell graduated from West Point in 1842 and served bravely in the war with Mexico. In 1854, he left the army moving to New York City where he engaged in business and became deputy street commissioner.

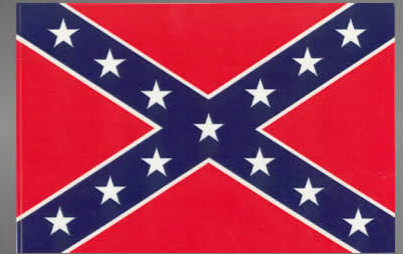
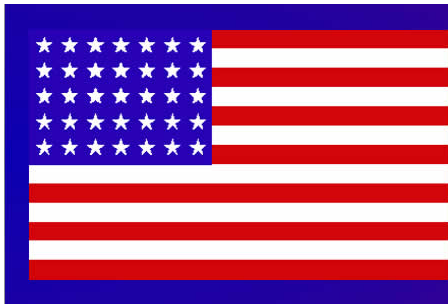
At the war’s outbreak, he enlisted in the Confederate army. In October 1861, he took command at New Orleans, facing a cool welcome from the citizens who had hoped Beauregard would receive the post.

Realizing the city’s scant defenses would not stop a determined Union attack, he did all he could to strengthen them. He repeatedly requested added troops and arms but Richmond had other, higher priorities and actually ordered some units out of the city’s defenses. When word reached New Orleans that Farragut was coming, many residents were convinced that this Yankee had deliberately denuded the city of troops to guarantee a Union victory. After the fleet passed the forts downstream, Lovell could do nothing against Farragut and Butler and withdrew from the city. Lovell was relieved of his division command under Van Dorn after the 2nd Corinth battle because of his “failure” at New Orleans. A court of inquiry declared him innocent of charges of incompetence in 1863, but he received no further commands in the war. After failing at farming in Georgia, Lovell returned to New York City where he died in 1884.



Conclusions – the keys to being accepted by your adopted side in the war proved to be simple - - - be lucky enough to be in the right situation and then be successful! Thomas and Farragut were and Pemberton and Lovell were not.

The Battle of Antietam in the D.R. Miller Cornfield - Perhaps no other single spot on any battlefield in American history epitomized the inglorious futility of warfare as did the struggle at the D.R. Miller cornfield. Here men fought for four hours with a loss of 12,000 in an area of little more than 30 acres as the cornfield exchanged hands six times.



Words could scarcely describe the awful carnage, but **soldiers who survived this holocaust later penned their thoughts on the horror they had witnessed that morning.** Wrote one: *“The last of the charging lines....was sweeping majestically into the jaws of death when the mass seemed to halt, while from the front line spouted forth a long angry sheet of flame from innumerable gun-barrels. Men were falling fast now, as unseen batteries were pelting the lines with an iron storm....It was pitiful to see the men drop, at times in groups, knocked over by solid shot, or riddled with musket and rifle balls or bits of shell or case or canister.”* Rufus Dawes of the 6th Wisconsin remembered, *“There was....great hysterical excitement, eagerness to go forward, and a reckless disregard of life, of everything but victory....The men are loading and firing with demoniacal fury and shouting and laughing hysterically.”* Young Edward Walker of the 1st Minnesota stated: *“Our men and Secesh lay as they fell, many begging us for a drink of water, others telling us not to tread on them and it was difficult to march over the ground without stepping on some man....the dead lay in rows in a line as they fell. I never could have believed [it] had I not seen it.”* Another simply lamented, *“Whoever stood in front of the corn field at Antietam needs no praise.”*

Artillery fire from the two opposing armies had caused much of the damage as the projectiles literally ripped human bodies apart. Confederate Sam Buck of the 13th Virginia noted, *“I saw more men torn to pieces in that battle than any other during the war.”* Artillerist Stephen Dill Lee concurred, simply labeling it, *“Artillery Hell.”* Indeed, it was the strategically positioned batteries of 24-year-old John Pelham atop Nicodemus Heights, overlooking the Miller cornfield, which staggered the nearly three corps of Federal infantry attempting to crush Stonewall Jackson’s outmanned troops on the Confederate left. Federal success on this flank would undoubtedly have yielded a Confederate defeat, but the stellar performance by Pelham’s gunners saved the day. No wonder the normally laconic Stonewall Jackson issued his ultimate praise: *“With a Pelham on each flank, I believe I could whip the world.”*

This article on the Battle of Antietam originally appeared in the May 2002 Roundtable newsletter.

“Michigan at Antietam” Quiz Answers

1. General Williams’ Adjutant General, Lieutenant Samuel Pittman, recognized R. H. Chilton’s (General Lee’s Chief of Staff) handwriting. Chilton had served as Army paymaster in Detroit before the war. General Williams sent the lost order to General McClellan at once with a note saying that it was indeed genuine.
2. 6 infantry regiments (the 1st, 4th, 7th, 8th, 16th and 17th). The 1st Michigan Cavalry and Brady’s Company of Michigan Sharpshooters.
3. The 17th Michigan Infantry was very inexperienced at the Battle of South Mountain on September 14, 1862. The regiment’s assault helped capture South Mountain. The 17th won more Medals of Honor (8) than any other Michigan regiment during the war.
4. Aide-de-camp for Army commander, General George B. McClellan.
5. General Richardson was the highest ranking Michigan general to die during the war. He was mortally wounded during the fighting for the Bloody Lane. He died from infection in November 1862 and was buried at Oak Hill Cemetery in Pontiac, Michigan.