

Our Monday, June 26, 2017 meeting begins at 6:30 pm in the basement of the Farmington Library with returning speaker Dr. Roger Rosentreter discussing “Claude, Sophia & the Eighth Michigan Go To War”. Please visit our website at <http://www.farmlib.org/mrrt>

Our field trip to Shiloh and Corinth will be the weekend of October 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>. The trip is filling up rapidly – the 38 seat bus is almost filled. The hotel information is: Hampton Inn – Pickwick Dam at Shiloh Falls, TN. 90 Old South Road Counce, TN 38326 the telephone number to call for room reservations is 731-689-3031. For Friday and Saturday, there are 8 king rooms and 8 double rooms at \$115 per night. The Saturday banquet will be at the Hagys Catfish Hotel. Cost is estimated at \$35. Vegan and vegetarian options are available. We will probably picnic at Shiloh on Saturday and do fast food on Sunday. The trip cost will be discussed at the June meeting. To sign up, contact Mollie (313.530.8516), Linda (586.588.2712) or Jeanie (248.225.7596). They will answer any questions that you may have.

The Roundtable welcomes back Dr. Roger Rosentreter who will speak on “Claude, Sophia & the Eighth Michigan Go to War”. Dr. Rosentreter will share with us the story of the Eighth Michigan Infantry and a Grand Rapids couple, Claude and Sophia Buchanan. The Eighth earned the nickname the “**Wandering Regiment**” because it saw service throughout the South during the war. The Buchanan family went to war with the Eighth. **Claude led men into battle, while Sophia raised their young family in Grand Rapids. Both recorded their experiences and thoughts in letters to each other.** Dr. Rosentreter worked with our friend, Dr. Weldon Petz, on several Michigan Civil War projects. He teaches the Civil War, Michigan History, and Modern U.S. Military History at Michigan State. This past year, he led a seminar on “Michigan and the Civil Rights Movement”. Roger will be expanding to the American Revolution this fall. Dr. Rosentreter recently completed a manuscript on Grand Rapids in the Civil War. **This will be another great evening of learning about the personal side of the Civil War.**



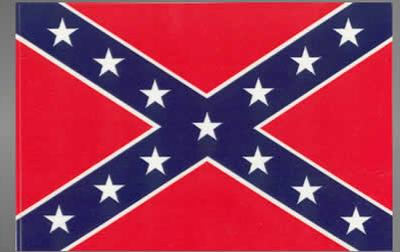
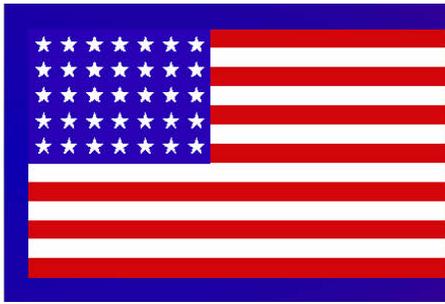
**The Roundtable thanks John Simmons for sharing with us the thought-provoking and educational story of “Gettysburg: The Civilian View Point – Part 2”**. Our Civil War reading rarely discusses the effect of the war on the civilians living on or near the battlegrounds. **Gettysburg citizens reacted quickly to rumors of an impending battle in their area.** Horses were taken to safety and merchants dispatched their goods out of town. Black residents moved north. There were several false alarms during June 1863 that the Rebels were coming to town.

**June 26, 1863 was “an ominous calm”**. General Early’s Rebels came into town and returned captured militia to their families. *“We are scared and wish them to go.”* The Confederates were very business-like toward the civilian inhabitants. **The Rebels captured and sent South 50 free blacks living in the Gettysburg area.**



**June 30, 1863 – Union cavalry General Buford and his 6,000 men arrived in Gettysburg.** The civilians felt much safer with these troopers protecting them as the cavalry did not put any restrictions on them.

**July 1, 1863 – Few residents dreamed that their quiet village would become the site of the greatest battle ever fought in North America. No one knew where to go or what to do. Sarah Brodhead started her baking.** Amelia Harmon, 16 years old, lived with her uncle. At 9 am there was an ominous boom of cannon. **Rooftops were covered**



with ladies and gentlemen watching the battle. Many watched from their attics. Interest in the New Testament increased significantly.

Most families spent July 1<sup>st</sup> in their cellars. The choices were either to go to the cellar or be killed. Amelia Harmon described their experience in the cellar. *“From our cellar prison we could hear the tumult above, the constant crack of rifles, the hurried orders, and outside the mingled roar of heavy musketry, galloping horses, yelling troops and the occasional boom of cannon to the westward.”*

She went on to describe their burning home, *“The barn was in flames and cast a lurid glare through the window. The house was filled with Rebels and they were deliberately firing it. ... We both jumped on the fire in the hope of extinguishing it, and plead with them in pity to spare our home. But there was no pity in those determined faces....”*

The Southern troops occupied Gettysburg. The streets were strewn with dead and soldiers, and debris. General Ewell and his staff took tea in one house. The house ladies told him that he and his staff were not welcome. General Lee's headquarters was at the Widow Thompson's home. She cooked dinner for him.

**July 2, 1863** – The citizens were allowed to go about town with certain restrictions. Townspeople were ordered to make coffee. Peas were picked so that the Rebels would not get them. The Rebels took the winter meat supply of cows and pigs. Large gardens were destroyed. Mr. Warfield, a black blacksmith, lost all of his equipment.

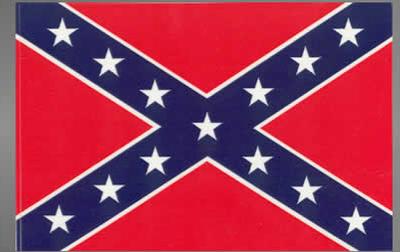
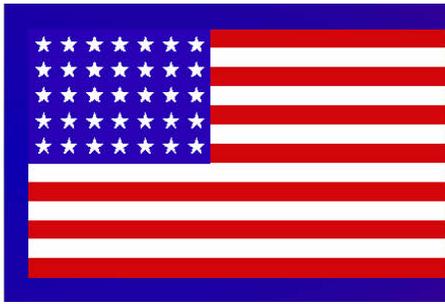
Rev. Sherify's Farm was located in the middle of the Peach Orchard. There was *“an awful thunder, the ground trembled”* during the battle. The Henry Spangler and McKnight farms were located on Culp's Hill.

**July 3, 1863** – The Spangler and Sherify farms were full of Union wounded. The farms were burning during Pickett's Charge. Sarah Brodhead believed that the Rebels had been defeated as there was no boasting in town.

**July 4, 1863** – The Glorious Fourth Citizens helped to round up Confederate stragglers. The stench was so bad that no one could open their windows. Wounded occupied all the beds in town. Every barn was converted into a hospital. Rebel dead were found among the rocks.

After the war, most families did not receive any money from the government for damage suffered during the battle.

**MRRT Minutes for May 22, 2017:** Call to Order 6:45 pm, about 30 present for business meeting **Pledge** Dedicated to Lt. Weston C. Lee, who was recently killed in Iraq. **Introduction of Guests and New Members** None **Secretary's Report** Accepted **Treasurer's Report** Our library room rental has increased, beginning in July, from \$300 to \$600 per year. Jeanine suggested we increase our yearly dues to \$25 next year to cover the increase. The Jerry Maxwell scholarship fund for North Farmington High School students was discussed. The Roundtable agreed to donate \$200 again to go with the copies of his book donated by his wife, Carlene. None of the present students knew Jerry, so it was decided to revisit the donation next year. New information – this year's winner's father was a student of Jerry's and the History Department leader was also Jerry's student. **Preservation** We renewed our \$75 membership with the Fort Wayne Coalition. Joe Epstein said that the Civil War Trust is attempting to save 480 acres at Trevilian Station, Virginia and Reams Station, Virginia. The Roundtable voted to donate \$100 to the cause. **Newsletters** Bob read from the Cincinnati Canister, Toledo Mini Bulletin, and Indianapolis Hardtack. **Website** No **Trip Report** Discussed on Page 1 of the newsletter. **Program** No **Items of Interest** a memorial service for long-time member, Guy Duffield, was held on May 25, 2017 at the Presbyterian Church in Pontiac. Mollie recommended an older book, Twenty Days-The Authoritative Account of Lincoln's Assassination, the Conspiracy and Aftermath, by Dorothy Meserve Kunhardt and Phillip B. Kunhardt, Jr. HBO presented a special about the book in 2016. Brian brought in some free books for the members and David Stoddard highly recommended the book, The Battle of Glorietta Pass. **New Business** None **Old Business** None

**Quiz Questions: This month's questions and answers pertain to Michigan in the Civil War.**

1. This former Michigan governor, U.S. Senator and Secretary of War has a monument to him in Grand Circus Park, Detroit?
2. What U.S. Senator from Detroit co-authored the 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, and 15<sup>th</sup> Amendments to the U.S. Constitution?
3. How many Confederate states did the Eighth Michigan serve in during the war?
4. Who was governor of Michigan during the Civil War?
5. Which Michigan unit raised the first American flag over Petersburg, Virginia after the Confederate evacuation?

**Civil War Essentials – Telegraph Samuel Morse (1791-1872) was a significant contributor to the invention of a single-wire telegraph system and the creation of the Morse code used with the system. Samuel resolved the issue of sending a telegraphic signal over more than a few hundred yards of wire.** Extra circuits or relays were installed at frequent intervals, allowing a message to be sent up to 10 miles. Eventually, Congress authorized an experimental 38 mile telegraph line between Washington, D.C. and Baltimore in 1838. On May 28, 1844 Morse successfully demonstrated the line by sending the words, “What hath God wrought”.

**All communication changed forever. During war, orders and reports that used to take hours, days or weeks now could be made into Morse code and sent by wire at the speed of light.**

**The telegraph became an important contributor to the Union victory as a tactical, operational, and strategic communication medium. The United States Military Telegraph Service (USMT) handled almost 6.5 million messages between May 1, 1861 and June 30, 1865, or 4,500 per day, at a total cost of only \$2,655,000 or about 41 cents per message. Over 15,000 miles of line were built, often under Confederate fire.** At the end of the war the telegraph network consisted of 8,000 miles of military telegraph line and an additional 5,000 miles of commercial lines operated by the military telegraphers. The USMT employed 1,200 operators and linemen during the war, of which 25 died in service, 8 by direct enemy action. Additionally, 175 were wounded or captured. Louisa Volker was the first woman employed as a military telegrapher.

**For the first time in the history of warfare, the telegraph enabled commanders to direct real-time battlefield actions and allowed senior generals to work together over large distances. The telegraph also ensured civilian control over the military.** The Union military telegraph network reported to Secretary of War Edwin Stanton and



President Lincoln, instead of the military leadership. President Lincoln spent numerous hours in the War Department's Telegraph Office, next door to Secretary Stanton's office.

**Significant examples of Union telegraph use included:**

General Grant wrote that he had “held frequent conversations over the wires” about strategy with Secretary Stanton during 1863, with some lasting two hours.

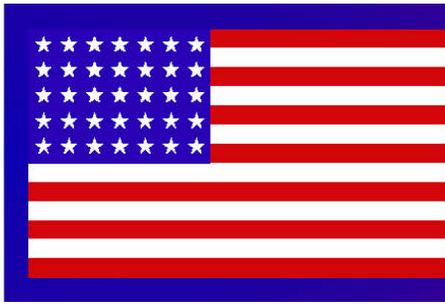
During July 1864 General Grant at Petersburg, Virginia was communicating with General Sherman advancing on Atlanta, with a Federal Army on the James River, General Sheridan in the Shenandoah Valley, and the War Department, all at the same time.

General McClellan used the telegraph to keep his troops at the Battle of

Antietam supplied with ammunition.

During the Battle of Chickamauga, the telegraph gave Union General Rosecrans “constant information on the way the battle was going.” Charles Dana was able to send 11 telegrams to Secretary Stanton during the battle.

**The Confederacy used the telegraph much less than the Union Army for several reasons.** Before the war began, several southern telegraph operators were northerners. Most northerners returned home after secession.



**The Confederacy’s last telegraph company, the Southern Telegraph Company, resisted cooperating with the military and civilian officials. The military commanders were often forced to place telegraph lines under martial law.**

During the war, crucial components such as wire, insulators, and battery acid became harder and harder to find. The advancement of the Union Army resulted in the Confederates losing control of telegraph and railroad lines.

**The telegraph created new problems. Soldiers were needed to protect the lines to keep them from being cut by the enemy. Each side was able to read the other sides’ messages. Cipher systems were created that sometimes resulted in messages that were difficult to decipher. The public became more informed about what was going but the generals on both sides had more difficulty keeping secrets.**

**Quiz Answers:**

1. Russell Alger
2. Senator Jacob Howard
3. **4 states.** South Carolina at the beginning of the war with General Sherman, Virginia with General Burnside’s 9<sup>th</sup> Corps, the Vicksburg campaign with General Grant, eastern Tennessee, and then back to Virginia for the Overland Campaign.
4. Governor Austin Blair – Republican. He was a staunch abolitionist and strong opponent of secession. Through his leadership Michigan far exceeded manpower requests from the Federal government.
5. During the early morning of April 3, 1865 the **First Michigan Sharpshooters** entered Petersburg and raised the first American flag over the captured city.

**George Root (1820-1895) was a music composer who created some of the best remembered Civil War songs. The Civil War time-period would generate 2,000 songs, more than any other major event in the nation’s history. Mr. Root composed some of the most remembered to this day.**

He played at least a dozen instruments as a child. George became a music teacher in Boston and New York. During the 1850’s he composed songs and assisted his brother Ebenezer with a Chicago music-publishing house.



**George was a devout Unionist who began creating music to support the cause when the war began. His most popular song, “The Battle Cry of Freedom” sold 350,000 copies in one year. The chorus was “While we rally ‘round the flag, boys, boys, rally once again / Shouting the battle cry of freedom!”**

**Other well-known songs included, “Just before the Battle, Mother”, “The Prisoner’s Hope”, and “The Vacant Chair”.**

George Root’s songs boosted Northern morale during the conflict.

A Confederate officer told Northerners after the war ended that, “Gentlemen, if we’d had your songs, we’d have whipped you out of your boots.”

