



This month on **MONDAY, JULY 27**, our speaker **Richard M. Cahow** will present “*Letters of Sam Hodgeman, 7th Michigan Infantry*,” a program based on the letters sent home by Hodgeman to his family in Climax, Michigan. Hodgeman began his military career as First Sergeant of Company I of the 7th Michigan, a regiment mustered into service at Monroe on August 22, 1861.

The 7th saw action in the Peninsular Campaign, Second Manassas, Antietam, Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, and Gettysburg. Hodgeman also participated in putting down the New York City Draft Riots, leaving an excellent account of this event. Captain Hodgeman’s soldier career ended in March, 1864. During the war he wrote 96 letters home; the letters are currently in the archives and regional history collection at Western Michigan University.

Richard will also use quotes from the diary written by Sam’s brother, Frank, who remained home in Climax, preferring to pay the \$300 in order to avoid conscription. Frank’s diary reveals the fluctuating morals of the family members left at home while the North struggled to defeat the Confederates. The program will also include slides and photographs to enhance the presentation.

Richard, who teaches Advanced Placement History at Kalamazoo Central High School, holds a Bachelor’s and Master’s degree in history from Western Michigan University and has been teaching for more than thirty years. He also has an ancestor who served in the 1st Michigan Sharpshooters and another who died at Andersonville. This program comes highly recommended, and you may recall that Richard was to be our guest speaker in September 2008.

So mark your calendars now—**MONDAY, JULY 27**—it promises to be a good one.

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The MRRT wishes to thank last month’s speaker, **Jerry Maxwell**, for his program, “*Lincoln’s Cronies*.” The presentation included seven unique and interesting personalities (with slides) who knew and associated with President Lincoln. In case you weren’t there, the hilarious introduction by Weldon Petz absolutely stole the evening.

The **50TH ANNIVERSARY COMMITTEE** which has met judiciously each month for the past year **WILL NOT** meet this month! (If you show up an hour early, you did not read your newsletter.)

FALL FIELD TRIP: Forty-eight people have signed up to go on our Fredericksburg/Chancellorsville trip, the weekend of Saturday/Sunday, October 17-18. Thirty-eight of those who’ve signed up have paid their deposit. That means that 10 more have not paid the \$70 registration fee. This money **NEEDS TO BE PAID**, and since our trip chairman, Jerry Maxwell, will not be at this month’s meeting, you can mail him your check at: 1952 Tiley Cir. Commerce, MI 48382. Make sure the check is made out to either Carroll Tietz or Jerry.

Menu items, costs, etc., for the Saturday night dinner will be sent in the August newsletter. You will need to make your entrée choice and write another check to pay for your dinner.

QUIZ: Michigan Regiments and Personalities....

1. Who commanded the 1st Michigan Infantry, and who was its first volunteer from Farmington, the first soldier to enlist in the entire state of Michigan?
2. Which Michigan cavalry unit is credited with capturing Jefferson Davis near Irwinville, Georgia on May 10, 1865, and who commanded this regiment at the time?
3. Which Michigan infantry unit was often called “the most photographed regiment in the Union army,” and who was its first commander killed at Malvern Hill on July 1, 1862?



4. Which Michigan regiment helped to save the Federal army at Chickamauga, and who was its first commander, an ex-governor, from Pontiac?
5. Which Michigan soldier from which Michigan unit mortally wounded Jeb Stuart on May 11, 1864, at Yellow Tavern, Virginia?
6. Which Michigan regiment won more medals than all the other Michigan units, and what was the nickname given to this unit?
7. Which Michigan unit was the first to cross the Rappahannock River on pontoons preceding the Battle of Fredericksburg, and who led this group but was severely wounded in the lung?
8. Which Michigan regiment was involved in the early morning Confederate attack at Shiloh, and who was its commander that resigned four months later?
9. Which unit heroically battled the 26th North Carolina Infantry on the first day at Gettysburg, and who was its commander wounded on that day when a bullet creased his skull?
10. Which Michigan artillery unit was ordered to “hold its position at all costs” at Stone’s River, losing 22 of its men, and who commanded this group?

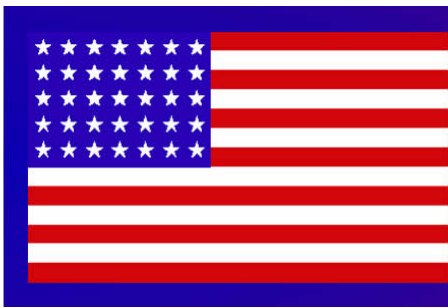
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Lucien B. Smith was a typical Michigan farm boy, growing up at the border of Lenawee and Washtenaw Counties. Born on February 23, 1843, Lucien was a freshman at Adrian College when the war broke out. At age nineteen Lucien dropped out of school and joined the 4th Michigan Cavalry, Company F, on August 6, 1862. This flashy unit of horsemen, under the command of Colonel Robert H.G. Minty, was officially mustered in at Detroit on August 29 and left for Louisville nearly a month later. Attached to General William Rosecrans’ Army of the Cumberland, the 4th proved its fighting capability on numerous occasions.

During the bloody Battle of Chickamauga, Lucien was captured on September 18, 1863, and along with other prisoners was placed aboard a train that traveled through Atlanta and the Carolinas to a stockade in Richmond, Virginia. Lucien’s stay in the Confederate capital was brief, and soon he was transferred on November 15, 1863, to a prison at Danville, Virginia. Located in the southwestern part of the state on the north bank of the Dan River, Danville was only a short distance from the North Carolina state line. Contracting a slight case of smallpox, Lucien was sent to the prison hospital, situated about a mile outside of Danville on the south bank of the Dan River. Here convalescing prisoners were assigned duties as nurses and orderlies, and within a week Lucien was performing these duties.

Five other prisoners were assigned to Lucien’s tent: W.H. Newlin of the 73rd Illinois Infantry; William Sutherland from near Lucien’s home at Dundee, Michigan of the 16th U.S. Infantry; Walton D. Trippe of the 15th U.S. Infantry; John F. Wood of the 26th Ohio Infantry; and Robert G. Taylor of the 2nd Massachusetts Cavalry. All of these men who worked in the prison hospital were allowed on occasion under casual guard to go into the nearby woods and gather persimmons. On the night of February 19, 1864, after hearing rumors that they were soon to be transferred to Andersonville, the six tent mates decided to escape. The men gathered up some food and clothing—Lucien was able to scrounge up a bed quilt for the cold weather ahead—the six left the hospital at 11:00 that night. Leaving two at a time, they rendezvoused in the woods. They decided to take a northwesterly route through the Blue Ridge Mountains and beyond into West Virginia.

Without maps or a compass they would head on a 400-mile trip to Union lines. Once after nearly stumbling into Confederate cavalry pickets, they decided to hide in day and travel at night. After merely three days they were running short of food, but luckily ran into some Negro woodcutters who gave them a ham, some corn meal, salt, and a few corndodgers. Eventually, Robert Taylor, who kept falling behind, collapsed. He agreed that the others would have to continue without him. They left him some provisions and wrapped him in an overcoat and blanket. It was the last time they saw Taylor; he undoubtedly perished.



By March 3 the party had crossed the Blue Ridge, averaging about 10-12 miles per night. Now they had to cross the Allegheny Mountains. At times they neared starvation but again lucked out when food was periodically provided from some families along the way. Walton Trippe was eventually recaptured and sent to Richmond. He was later exchanged and survived the war.

The other four finally reached Union lines. “*We felt,*” wrote Newlin, “*an indescribable but silent ecstasy of joy and thankfulness for our deliverance....But in the height and fullness of our heartfelt rapture, we did not forget Taylor and Trippe....*” By March 25 the surviving four were aboard a steamboat to Cincinnati. They had accomplished a remarkable feat. They had crossed the state of Virginia and part of West Virginia. The route had included some of the most rugged and difficult terrain in the eastern U.S. They had traveled 31 days in late winter through mountains without proper food and clothing. They trekked without guidance or direction except what was provided by the stars.

Lucien Smith, whose two brothers were killed while serving the Union army, later rejoined the 4th Michigan Cavalry and served the duration of the war. He returned to Michigan, settled in Dundee, Monroe County where he taught school and later opened a shoe store. He also enjoyed playing his fiddle at local square dances. In 1867 he married Amanda Densmore who was also a Dundee school teacher. He died at Dundee on September 18, 1917, at the age of 74. Prior to his death he was asked about his escape in 1864, to which he replied that “*he wouldn’t make that trip again for the whole state of Michigan.*” He then paused and reflected, “Unless, of course, I had to.”

QUIZ ANSWERS:

1. Col. Orlando Bolivar Wilcox and Andrew Crosby
2. 4th Michigan Cavalry and Lt. Col. Benjamin Dudley Pritchard of Allegan
3. 4th Michigan Infantry and Col. Dwight A. Woodbury of Adrian
4. 22nd Michigan Infantry and Col. Moses Wisner who died of disease at Lexington, Kentucky on January 4, 1863.
5. 5th Michigan Cavalry and John A. Huff of Armada
6. 17th Michigan Infantry and the “Stonewall Regiment”
7. 7th Michigan Infantry and Lt. Col. Henry Baxter of Jonesville
8. 12th Michigan Infantry and Col. Francis Quinn of Niles
9. 24th Michigan Infantry and Col. Henry A. Morrow of Detroit
10. Battery A of the Michigan Light Artillery and Capt. Cyrus O. Loomis of Coldwater

A last reminder for this month’s festivities....**MONDAY, JULY 27** for **Richard Cahow’s** presentation of “*Letters of Sam Hodgeman, 7th Michigan Infantry.*” The meeting will begin at 6:30 P.M. at the Farmington Public Library (Grand River and Farmington Road). Show up early and enjoy some fellowship.....

Also try our website: <http://www.farmlib.org/mrrt/>.