



Last month the Michigan Regimental lost a valued member as **Daniel Basinski** passed away at the age of ninety-eight. Daniel was a graduate of Emory University and during his working years, he had been a bio-chemist for Ford Hospital. Our condolences go out to his family.

The **Stuart Horse Artillery** produced an amazing array of leaders, spearheaded by its first commander John Pelham. Others, lesser known, may have exacted records nearly as equal. Robert Beckham, Roger Preston Chew, James Breathed, James Franklin Hart, Philip Preston Johnston, William McGregor, Mathis Winston Henry, Marcellus Moorman—names that do not literally jump out to the average Civil War reader, but names that were godlike to the men who served under them. James Breathed is a prime example of such heroics. Neither a born soldier nor a trained one, Breathed, a Marylander by birth, was a 22-year-old physician practicing in Missouri when the war broke out. Desiring to serve the Confederacy, he boarded a train for the East to offer his services. By chance Breathed sat next to an officer, Jeb Stuart, who also was on his way to Richmond. A quick friendship developed and Stuart convinced the young doctor to join the 1st Virginia Cavalry. Within a few months Stuart organized the famous Horse Artillery. Indications are that James Breathed was Jeb's first choice to lead the illustrious unit, even before John Pelham. Stuart's confidence in Breathed would show up numerous times in the war. The following is merely one illustration of Breathed's prowess under fire.

On May 11, 1864, at the Battle of Yellow Tavern (Stuart's last battle of the war), the Confederate cavalry began losing all semblance of order. In desperation Stuart shouted: "*Breathed! Take command of all the mounted men in the road and hold it against whatever comes. If this road is lost we are gone!*" Breathed saluted and immediately called for the men to follow him while charging against the Federal column. Far in advance of his troopers, Breathed was immediately surrounded and a hot saber fight ensued between himself and a swarm of Yankees. "*A saber blow nearly cut him out of the saddle, and he received a pistol shot in his side, but he cut down one Federal officer [and] killed another with his revolver.*" A nasty saber slash to the head that gushed blood and a glancing blow from a pistol knocked Breathed from the saddle. Eyeing a nearby mounted Federal officer, Breathed saw the substitute horse he needed. Catching the Union man by the leg, Breathed pulled him off the horse, mounted, and rode through enemy lines. Confederates, who had witnessed Breathed's disappearance, believed him dead. Soon, however, the intrepid officer with "*blood streaming down upon his shoulders*" rode out of the fracas. One of his gunners heard Breathed cry out, "*Boys, I'm not dead yet!*" as he galloped back to the safety of the Rebel lines. Confederate John Esten Cooke summed up Breathed's career when he penned: "*Napoleon would have made him a marshal.*"

On **MONDAY, JULY 26**, MRRT member **Ron Cleveland** will present: "*If It Could Only Talk.....#194: Discovering the History of a 3" Ordnance Rifle Identified to the Stuart Horse Artillery.*" This gun, originally owned by the Union forces, was captured by the Confederates, and later recaptured by the Federals at Tom's Brook on October 9, 1864. Ron will authenticate this weapon's association to George Custer, Stonewall Jackson, Jeb Stuart, John Pelham, Turner Ashby, Roger Chew, Tom Rosser, James Breathed, and Philip Preston Johnston. Not only does Ron own this treasured weapon, but he will be bringing it to the meeting for all to see! In March of 2004 you may remember that he not only gave the program "The Presentation Flag of Battery M, 1st Michigan Light Artillery," but displayed the original flag to our group. So if you like witnessing a rare, original Civil War item, and you like your programs filled with humor, interesting facts, and salesmanship....you'll want to be in attendance for this one.

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YEARLY DUES: July should not be the month to discuss our dues, but Treasurer Carroll Tietz reports that 14 members are delinquent in making their payment. So, if the Dreaded Red Dot appears beside your name on the mailing



envelope, you will need to make out a check to Carroll (his address is on the lower left of the envelope). Otherwise, this will be the last newsletter you will receive.

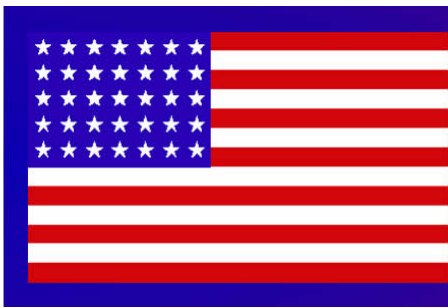
FALL FIELD TRIP: On the weekend of October 16-17, and for a minimal fee of \$80, you are entitled to traverse the battlefields of the Wilderness and Spotsylvania, led by the incomparable Frank O'Reilly. For those of you that have already signed up, this is **THE MONTH** that you will be held responsible for your bus deposit of \$80 in a check made out to Jerry Maxwell. Also, in your newsletter envelope you will find menus/prices for our Saturday night dinner. You may pay this as well at this month's meeting. Simply return the form with your payment.

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The MRRT wishes to express its thanks to last month's speaker, **Dr. Roger Rosentreter**, for his excellent program, "*We Have Had Perfect Success: Morgan, Sherman, and the Ninth Michigan Cavalry.*" Dr. Rosentreter's talk was followed by a lively session of questions.

QUIZ: Artillery

1. Which former U.S. naval officer and graduate of Annapolis helped plan the conversion of the *U.S.S. Merrimack* to the *C.S.S. Virginia* as well as inventing a highly touted artillery piece named after him? And, who was the Confederacy's Chief of Ordnance?
2. Which Federal cannoner, a West Point graduate of 1861, was killed on July 3 while defending Cemetery Ridge at Gettysburg with the 4th Artillery? And, what unusual projectile load were his men firing directly into the faces of the Confederates?
3. Which Union regiment took the heaviest losses at Petersburg and possibly the worst of the entire war? And, which elite Confederate artillery unit was organized in New Orleans and fought with the Army of Northern Virginia throughout its major campaigns?
4. Which Confederate artillerist replaced John Pelham as the commander of the Stuart Horse Artillery, and where was he (not Pelham) killed by a piece of boulder, splintered by an artillery shell, that hit the back of his head?
5. Which German-born Union gunner, commander of Battery I of the 1st Ohio Artillery, was awarded the Medal of Honor for his heroics at Chancellorsville? And, what was his nickname derived from his unusual apparel?
6. Which 19-year-old commander of Battery G of the 4th U.S. Artillery was wounded in the right leg at Gettysburg, stopped the bleeding with the use of his sash, proceeded to amputate the leg with his own knife, and died later that night? And, which young cannoner raised the 5th Ohio Independent Battery of Light Artillery and performed extraordinary service at Shiloh and Vicksburg?
7. Which Federal general did Confederate artillerist Robert Hardaway mortally wound from a distance of nearly three miles at the Battle of Fredericksburg? And, what was the cannon used in this miraculous shot?
8. Which Confederate artillerist successfully fought in both the Eastern and Western Theaters, was captured at Vicksburg, was later promoted to Lieutenant General, and after the war became the first president of the Mississippi Agricultural and Mechanical College, helped found the United Confederate Veterans, as well as promoting women's rights? And, which foundry was the Confederate's most valuable manufacturer of cannon?
9. Which Union officer, later a Major General, led a Battery at First Bull Run where he was wounded 4 times and captured, had 2 horses shot from under him at Antietam, and later served on the court-martial of Fitz John Porter? And, what was the nickname of the famous 17,000-pound mortar, used by the Union during the Petersburg campaign, that was mounted on a railroad flatcar and fired a 200-pound explosive shell?
10. Which 2 Confederate officers were mangled by the same artillery shell at the closing moments of the Battle of Brandy Station?



At precisely 4:30 A.M., Friday, April 12, 1861, a signal shot from a 10-inch mortar on Fort Johnson boomed, and a shell “*sped aloft, describing its peculiar arc of fire and, bursting over Fort Sumter, fell, with crashing noise, in the very center of the parade [grounds].*” More than a mile away stood 66-year-old Edmund Ruffin, gripping the lanyard of a 64-pound Columbiad on Morris Island. When he heard the signal shot, Ruffin yanked the lanyard and opened fire. Inside Fort Sumter and attempting to get some sleep on his cot, was Abner Doubleday. The shot from Ruffin’s cannon rumbled in and struck the magazine where Doubleday was dozing. Doubleday would later write that he was awakened abruptly. “[*The shell*] *seemed to bury itself in the masonry about a foot from my head, in very unpleasant proximity to my right ear. This is the one that probably came with Mr. Ruffin’s compliment.*”

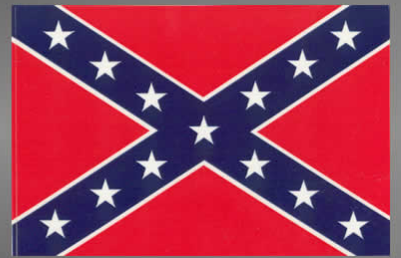
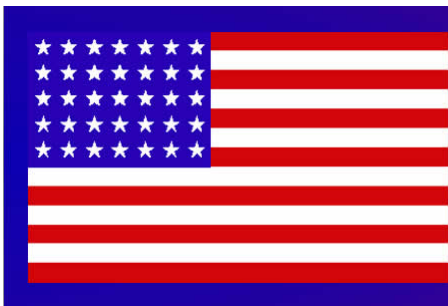
Now guns all along the shoreline opened up. Charleston’s 50,000 residents awakened and rushed to the waterfront. As one eyewitness stated of the old fortress, “[*Sumter stood*] *bold defiant....as quiet as death.*” The fort’s commander, Major Robert Anderson, calmly sat and finished his breakfast, consisting of fat-pork and water. For nearly three hours the fort’s guns did not answer. Finally, after 7:00 A.M. Abner Doubleday fired a 32-pound shell which hit a sloping roof at the battery at Cummings Point and caromed into the marsh. Eventually Doubleday sent a 42-pounder which scattered guests who were watching and eating from the roof of the exclusive Moultrie Hotel. When later asked why he aimed at the hotel, Doubleday muttered something about the poor service he had received there.

For thirty-six hours the Confederates fired 3341 shells without killing any of the 128 soldiers and workers inside. Sumter, however had taken much damage. Its gates were gone, its parapet a ruin, the parade ground a shambles, the officers’ quarters and barracks burned out skeletons with fire still blazing somewhere down in the depths, the whole giving an effect as if “*the hand of the destroying angel had swept ruthlessly by.*” Finally Anderson ordered a white flag sent up, signifying Fort Sumter’s surrender. Probably never before was a defeated enemy treated with greater courtesy. Brandy was brought from shore to the fort and medical help tendered.

Sunday, April 14, dawned clear and warm. Vessels of every description filled the harbor. At 2:00 P.M. a 100-gun salute would mark the official surrender of the fort. But at the 50th shot, the salute abruptly halted. Forgetting to swab out a cannon and then ramming a bag of gunpowder into the barrel, the blast blew off the right arm of Daniel Hough, killing him instantly. Fire dripping from the muzzle was caught by the breeze and carried to a pile of cartridges beside the gun, exploding them all and sending fragments of stone flying in all directions. Five other men were wounded, and the scene on the parapet took on an aspect of ghastly carnage unknown in the battle itself. Privates Edward Galloway and George Fielding were taken to a Charleston hospital, where Galloway died five days later and Fielding subsequently recovered. Meanwhile, a saddened Major Robert Anderson wrapped black crepe around his arm, folded up the shot-torn flag, and marched out of the fort. Drums solemnly throbbed as the band struck up “*Yankee Doodle.*”

QUIZ ANSWERS:

1. John Mercer Brooke and Josiah Gorgas
2. Alonzo Cushing and triple canister
3. 1st Maine Heavy Artillery and the Washington Artillery
4. Robert Franklin Beckham and Columbia, Tennessee
5. Captain Hubert Dilger and “Leather Britches”
6. Bayard Wilkeson and Andrew Hickenlooper
7. George Dashiell Bayard and a British breech-loading Whitworth
8. Stephen Dill Lee and Tredegar Iron Works in Richmond



9. James Brewerton Ricketts and “The Dictator”

10. Matthew Calbraith Butler lost his right foot but survived and Will Farley lost his left leg and bled to death

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