

Our next meeting will be Monday, July 29, 2019. We meet in the basement of the Farmington Library (corner of Grand River Avenue and Farmington Road) at 6:30 pm. Yes, our speaker will be President Abraham Lincoln (Fred Priebe), discussing his tough 1864 reelection campaign!

Please visit our website at <http://www.farmlib.org/mrrt>

The Roundtable will be visiting Savannah, Georgia this fall during the weekend of November 9th and 10th! The tour cost, including bus rental for the tours, venue fees, Saturday and Sunday lunches at two interesting seafood restaurants, and meals/gratuities for the bus driver, will be \$200 per person, based on 30 participants.

We will be staying at the Hampton Inn & Suites – Savannah/Midtown, which is 4 miles from the historic district. The nightly rate is \$129. The telephone number is 912.721.3700. Our group code is C-MRR. Rooms are available from Thursday night through Sunday night.

The Saturday banquet will be at Vic's on the River. The cost is \$55 per person, including gratuity.

- **Friday, November 8th – Optional Savannah Riverboat Cruise** – Narrated 90-minute Harbor Sightseeing Cruise at 1:00 pm at a cost of \$24.95 per person (www.savannahriverboat.com). **Please make your own reservations.**
- **Saturday, November 9th – Guided trolley tour through Savannah's 270 year history.** Old Fort Jackson Civil War Militia Program with Cannon Demonstration. Fort Pulaski Visitor's Center and Ranger Tour
- **Sunday, November 10th – Guided Civil War Walking Tour through Savannah Historic District.** Fort McAllister's Visitor Center and Guided Tour

If you want to sign-up or have questions, please call Jeanie (248.225.7596), Linda (586.588.2712) or Mollie (313.530.8516)

A reminder: Each participant must provide their own transportation to and from Savannah.

We welcome the return visit of President Abraham Lincoln to our Roundtable. President Lincoln will be portrayed by well-known Abraham Lincoln first-person actor, Fred Priebe. **The President will discuss a unique event in American and World history, his attempt to be reelected during a bloody Civil War. He knew that this would not be easy as the President prepared a memorandum on August 23, 1864 stating *"This morning, as for some days past, it seems exceedingly probable that this Administration will not be reelected..."***

Fred Priebe has been doing President Lincoln first-person presentations since 1996 when a Civil War reenactor at Greenfield Village suggested that he do Lincoln after watching one of Fred's role-playing activities. Fred has interacted with a variety of audiences in several states and four countries. He won the award for *"Best Abraham Lincoln of 2006"*.

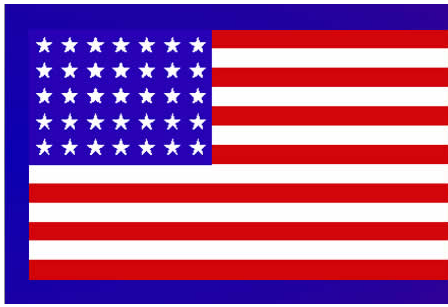


The Roundtable thanks Dr. Roger Rosentreter, PhD, for his informative and entertaining presentation on "Michigan at Shiloh". His slides helped bring the "Michigan at Shiloh" story to life for us.

Dr. Rosentreter discussed the Michigan units that participated in the Battle of Shiloh.

The 12th Michigan Infantry

The 12th Michigan Infantry was formed at Camp Baker in Niles. Most of the 900 volunteers, who enlisted in December, 1861, were from Albion, Berrien Springs, and Lansing. Colonel Francis Quinn, 34, raised and commanded the regiment. He was an active businessman with no military experience. Lieutenant Colonel William Graves, 26, was second in command. The two men despised each other.



Colonel Quinn did not get off to a good start commanding the regiment. He put restrictions on the chaplain and employed a personal cook. The commissary officer was forced to resign.

The regiment left Niles on March 19, 1862, only two weeks before the Battle of Shiloh. After a 24 hour train ride to St. Louis and six days on a boat the regiment put up tents at Pittsburg Landing. This was the first time the men had done this. The regiment was assigned to Colonel Peabody's brigade in General Benjamin Prentiss' Division, Army of the Tennessee. During the 1st day of battle the 12th suffered heavy losses while fighting in the Hornet's Nest along the "Sunken Road". The Sunken Road did not receive that name until 1881 as the "road" was minor farm land with ruts. The diligence of the 12th may have helped saved the Federal Army from complete disaster.

Major controversy resulted from the Battle of Shiloh. Lieutenant Colonel Graves helped save several men during the battle while no one knew where Colonel Quinn was during the heavy fighting in the Hornet's Nest. Their battle reports created controversy all the way back to Michigan. Both Quinn and Graves wrote letters to Michigan Governor Austin Blair, denouncing the other's behavior, using the word cowardice frequently. The Governor finally asked for Quinn's resignation and wrote to Secretary of War Edwin Stanton describing Quinn as the "*worst colonel I ever saw (who) has made more trouble than all of the rest put together*". The 12th officers filed eight charges against Colonel Quinn. The 12th spent most of the war after the Battle of Shiloh serving in Arkansas where several men died of disease. After the war, Colonel Quinn was not invited to any regimental reunions. He moved to Chicago, Illinois from Niles. No picture of Colonel Francis Quinn exists.

Battery B – 1st Michigan Artillery

Battery B of the 1st Michigan Artillery was from Grand Rapids. There was a great amount of sickness as ½ the men had diarrhea. The battery was one mile southwest of Pittsburg Landing, near what became the Hornet's Nest.

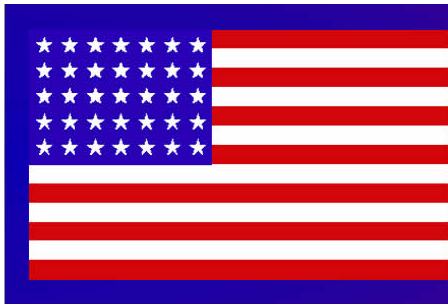
During the battle "*the terrific havoc of war became reality to us*". The battery supported the Union soldiers in the Hornet's Nest until they were captured. Battery B had 49 men and 3 officers captured at the Hornet's Nest with no one killed. The captives were forced to walk to Corinth, Mississippi.

The 15th Michigan Infantry

The 15th Michigan was recruited from Detroit, Grand Rapids, and Monroe, with Colonel John Oliver commanding. The regiment arrived at Pittsburg Landing on April 2, 1862. The men had no ammunition as they were unable to procure any traveling to the front. During the battle, the regiment absorbed several Confederate volleys before it went back to the Landing. Then, receiving ammunition, the men were able to fire at the enemy. The regiment was the only Michigan unit active on April 7th, the second day of the battle. Returning to their encampment, they realized that the Confederates had taken everything away. The regiment was lauded for "*acted with conspicuous bravery.*"



The Michigan Legislature unanimously approved spending \$4,500 in 1916-1917 to build a Michigan monument at Shiloh (picture to the right). The monument was built by Detroit Granite and dedicated on Memorial Day in 1919.

**Quiz Questions: This month's questions and answers pertain to the Presidential Election of 1864:**

1. Who was President Lincoln's Vice President during his first term? Why was he replaced by Andrew Johnson of Tennessee?
2. What military event ensured President Lincoln's reelection?
3. What percentage of Union soldiers voted for President Lincoln? Which states did Democrat George McClellan win?
4. Which Lincoln Cabinet member clandestinely campaigned for the Presidential nomination in 1864 and offered his resignation when his interest became public?
5. What was the official declaration of the Michigan Republican Party platform in 1864? A) A Vote Against Lincoln is a Disloyal Vote B) Down With the Confederacy By Any Means Possible C) Unconditional Surrender is the Only Terms to Armed Traitors

Civil War Essentials - 1863 New York Draft Riots

Involuntary military service has rarely been docilely accepted by those conscripted in the United States. This was certainly true during the Civil War – the first time the “draft” was used by the national government in the U.S. Both the Confederacy and the Union were compelled to adopt conscription to fill up their armies' ranks after the flow of volunteers thinned out and early short term enlistment expired. **Both met resistance from individuals who felt other segments of their societies were being sheltered from the hardships and dangers of war that they would face.**

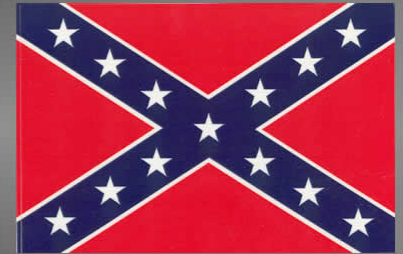
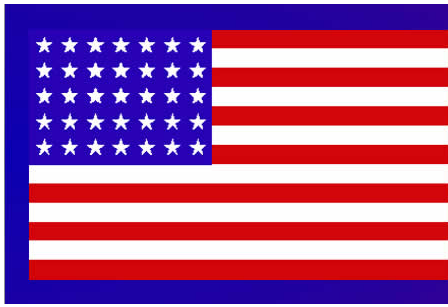
While there was some justification for this view, both Lincoln and Davis argued that conscription by its very nature was fair by putting all able bodied men at risk of being selected.

The April 1862 Confederate law involuntarily extended original enlistments. The law initially allowed wealthy men to hire “substitutes” to take their places – this was revoked in late 1863. An owner of 20 or more slaves (or, alternatively, his overseer) was made exempt by a later law. The upper and lower age limits were extended as the war went on. **The Union law of March 1863 allowed anyone with enough money to either pay \$300 or hire a substitute to avoid service.** The \$300 commutation fee (then a large sum) was highly unpopular and was later revoked. In both the Union and Confederacy, numerous individuals were granted exemptions. In the Confederacy it was mostly because of their civilian employment in manufacturing and mining, railroading, teaching, printing, etc. The Federal draft primarily exempted men who were physically unfit or were the sole support of parents or were single parents of minor children. Both made some provision for conscientious objectors such as Quakers.

For these reasons, the conscription laws of both sides appeared to target small farmers, immigrants, and unskilled workers. **The war was often viewed by those who could not qualify for exemption or hire a substitute as “a rich man's war, but a poor man's fight”.**



The militant Union response to Confederate secession was not shared by everyone in New York City. **Although New York City supplied substantial manpower and war material to the Union effort, there was also an undercurrent of resistance, if not treason, in the city throughout the war.** Much of the city's pre-war trade had been with the southern states – 40% of all goods shipped out had been southern cotton – so the blockade caused considerable harm to its economy. Abolition of slavery was not supported by many of its citizens, especially the poor. Some newspapers and politicians promoted race hatred and anti-war sentiments.



Many of the poor unskilled workers in New York were recent immigrants, mostly from Ireland. The Irish had arrived in large numbers as a result of the terrible Irish “potato famine” of the late 1840s. **They had not been welcomed by the established society and were routinely discriminated against in housing and employment** – help wanted signs of the time often carried the tag line “no Irish need apply”! When the March law followed close on the heels of the Emancipation Proclamation, many of these immigrants felt their dream of a better life in America was being deliberately crushed. **They feared that they would be sent to fight and die while large numbers of freed slaves would come north to compete for available work.**

The draft process in the city started on July 11, 1863. **Things were peaceful until the morning of July 13 when the riot started in Manhattan**, possibly because the name of a popular Irish fireman was called. Initially the principal targets were the lottery officials and police (militia sent in small numbers could not or would not control the mobs). Government buildings were the first attacked. **As the riot grew, blacks and those individuals, and buildings such as protestant churches, identified with the city’s elite also became targets of the mob’s fury. Anyone thought to be a Republican, an abolitionist, or supporter of the war was attacked.** Among other acts, the rioters looted and burned down the Colored Orphan Asylum although allegedly not attacking the children themselves. **Black men and policemen were murdered without mercy when they were encountered.** Businesses and housing which catered to blacks were destroyed. The violence raged through the next day although dampened somewhat by rain, and on July 15 disorder was reported in Brooklyn and Staten Island.

Local government response to the riots was mixed. NY Democratic Governor Seymour, who was openly anti-war and had criticized the conscription law, made no visible effort to end the riot. **Mayor George Opdyke, seeing his city being destroyed, telegraphed the War Department for Federal troops.** This force totaling about 4000, including the 26th Michigan Infantry, eventually quelled the violence. [The Federal Navy never fired on the mob as depicted in the 2002 movie *Gangs of New York*.] **Given the evident scope of the violence, the published death toll estimates of 105 to 119 may be understated;** some scholars believe many more died. Perhaps 3000 or more were injured. In addition to casualties, the riot caused massive economic damage and a loss of self-confidence in the city. **Many black residents became homeless and fled the city** so that the black population declined 20% by war’s end. The draft was resumed later without incident. Smaller scale resistance also occurred in several other cities and locales in the North.

The number of drafted men who actually served in the North proved to be less than had been originally projected. Although sources don’t entirely agree, probably fewer than 50,000 draftees actually served. Many whose names were called were able to provide a substitute. Some men fled to Canada or the West. Other factors were also at work. A surprising percentage of the original 1861 3-year enlistees reenlisted in 1864. Regiments of black soldiers were raised. Cash bounties for voluntary enlistments were established or increased after the draft law’s passage in various Northern states. Rather than wait to possibly be drafted, men sometimes enlisted to receive these bounties and to have some control over which unit they would serve in.

Quiz Answers:

1. President Lincoln’s first Vice President was Hannibal Hamlin of Maine. President Lincoln believed a War Democrat such as Andrew Johnson of Tennessee would help him win a close election. During his term in office, Vice President Hamlin had become a Radical Republican.
2. General Sherman’s capture of Atlanta
3. 78% of Union soldiers voted for President Lincoln. George McClellan won Delaware, Kentucky, and his home state of New Jersey.
4. Secretary of the Treasury Salmon Chase. President Lincoln appointed him Chief Justice of the Supreme Court in December 1864 after Chief Justice Roger Taney died.
5. C) “Unconditional Surrender is the Only Terms to Armed Traitors”