



The 7<sup>th</sup> Michigan Infantry was mustered into service at Monroe on August 22, 1861, with an enrollment of 884 officers and men. It included companies from Port Huron, Mason, Jonesville, Monroe, Tuscola, Farmington, Lapeer, Pontiac, Prairieville, and Burr Oak. Commanded by Col. Ira B. Grosvenor, the regiment left Michigan for the Eastern Theater on September 5. The 7<sup>th</sup> Michigan accumulated a glorious record throughout the remainder of the war as it participated in virtually all the campaigns until the ultimate surrender of the Confederate forces at Appomattox. Perhaps its most glowing accomplishment occurred at Fredericksburg when it was chosen to spearhead the crossing of the Rappahannock River on pontoon bridges while under direct fire from William Barksdale's Mississippi sharpshooters hidden in the town. One correspondent described the scene:

**At 10 o'clock General Burnside gives the order: 'Concentrate the fire of all your guns on the city and batter it down!'....In a few moments 35 batteries, 179 guns, opened on the doomed city. It lasted for upwards of an hour without intermission, 50 rounds being fired from each gun....Fredericksburg was in conflagration. Tremendous though this fire had been and terrific though its effect....it had not accomplished the object intended....During the thick of the bombardment a fresh attempt had been made to complete the bridge. It failed, and evidently nothing could be done till a party could be thrown over to clean out rebels, and cover the bridge head. For this mission General Burnside called for volunteers and Col. [Norman] Hall immediately responded that he had a brigade that would do the business. Accordingly the 7<sup>th</sup> Michigan and 19<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts....numbering in all about 400 men, were selected for the purpose.**

The plan was, that they should take the pontoon boats of the first bridge, of which there were ten lying on the bank of the river, waiting to be added to the half finished bridge, cross over in them, and landing, drive out the rebels. Nothing could be more admirable or more gallant than the execution of this daring feat. Rushing down the steep banks of the river, the party found temporary shelter behind the pontoon boats lying scattered on the bank....In this situation they acted some 15 or 20 minutes as sharpshooters....In the meantime new and vigorous artillery firing was commenced on our part, and just as soon as this was fairly developed, the 7<sup>th</sup> Michigan rose from their crouching places, rushed for the pontoon boats, and pushing them into the water, rapidly filled them with 25 or 30 [men] each. The first boat pushes off. Now, if ever, is the rebels' opportunity. Crack! Crack! Crack! from 50 lurking places go rebel rifles at the gallant fellows, who, stooping low in the boat, seek to avoid the fire. The murderous work was well done. Lustily, however, pull the oarsmen. Having passed the middle of the stream, the boat and its gallant freight come under cover of the opposite bluffs.

Another and another boat follows....The rebels pop up by the hundred, like so many rats, from every cellar, rifle pit, and stone wall, and scamper off up the streets of the town....With incredible rapidity the Michigan and Massachusetts boys sweep up the hill, making a rush for the lurking places occupied by the rebels, and gaining them, each man capturing his two or three prisoners.

Major Thomas H. Hunt of the 7<sup>th</sup> later stated: *"It was said by the many thousands who witnessed this feat that it was the most gallant of the war, and I feel that our State should have the credit due her."*

On **MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, Richard M. Cahow** will present *"Letters of Sam Hodgeman, 7<sup>th</sup> Michigan Infantry,"* a program based primarily on the 96 letters sent home by Hodgeman to his family in Climax, Michigan. Hodgeman fought in numerous battles with his regiment and helped put down the New York Draft Riots in 1863. Mr. Cahow, a



long-time teacher of Advanced Placement U.S. History at Kalamazoo Central High School, will include a variety of slides and photos to enhance his presentation. Make sure you join us for this most interesting program!

The MRRT expresses its thanks to last month’s speaker, Bill Christen, for his excellent description of “The 17<sup>th</sup> Michigan at South Mountain.” Bill displayed a fine array of photographs and maps, and his explanation cleared up many of the difficulties of this campaign.

**FALL FIELD TRIP:** This is our last meeting before we embark on the October 11-12 trip to Vicksburg, Mississippi. Thirty-four have signed up (and paid the bus fees, etc.), but six have not indicated their preferences for lunch/dinner, nor have they paid. **THIS MUST BE TAKEN CARE OF AT THIS MONTH’S MEETING**, since all orders and selections for food will be called in to the restaurants. [A polite notice has been added to those folks’ newsletters. If no notification appears, you are all set. If you receive a statement, please handle the payment accordingly.]

**50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY COMMITTEE:** We will meet in the same room in the Farmington Public Library as our normal meeting, but simply an hour earlier (5:30 P.M.). Please be on time.

**QUIZ: All questions pertain to the month of September.....**

1. September 22, 1861: Which infamous Kansan led his Jayhawkers on a raid into Missouri? And, which town did he attack?
2. September 2, 1862: Which general did President Lincoln restore to command in the East? And, which 2 cabinet members opposed the selection the strongest?
3. September 14, 1862: Which Federal and Confederate generals were mortally wounded during the fighting at South Mountain?
4. September 15, 1862: Where did Stonewall Jackson capture 11,000 Federals? And which Federal officer was killed during the surrender?
5. September 17, 1862: Which *New York Tribune* reporter, watching the Battle of Antietam too closely, had two horses shot from under him? And, the following day, where did Robert E. Lee’s Army of Northern Virginia cross the Potomac to escape from Maryland? [Extra Credit: Give another name for this crossing site.]
6. September 27, 1862: The First Regiment Louisiana Native Guards were mustered in at New Orleans. What was significant about this group, and what nickname did these men select for their unit?
7. September 19, 1863: At Chickamauga Confederate and Federal forces began the fighting in the morning between which bridge and which road? And, what does the word Chickamauga literally mean?
8. September 28, 1863: Which two Federal generals, leaders of the XX and XXI Corps at Chickamauga, were relieved of command by General William Rosecrans?
9. September 19, 1864: On this day the Third Battle of Winchester began. What was another name for this battle, and which Confederate general was killed here?
10. September 23, 1864: Which Postmaster General did President Lincoln ask to resign on this date? And, on the following day, which Ohio Governor did Lincoln select as his replacement?

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Captain Allen H. Zacharias of the 7<sup>th</sup> Michigan Infantry was mortally wounded on September 17, 1862, at Antietam. A note found in his pocket, dated Fair Oaks, June 28 1862, read as follows:

**Allen Howard Zacharias was born May 15, 1833, in Clear Spring, Washington County, Maryland, and removed with his father to Monroe County, Michigan, in 1841. Graduated A.B. from the University of**



Michigan, June, 1860. Went to Mississippi in September, and became a professor, and in February, 1861, principal of the State Military Institute, at Brandon, in that State. Resigned his position in May and returned to Michigan, when, from a solemn sense of duty, he enlisted as a corporal, and was promoted first lieutenant June 25<sup>th</sup>, and to a captaincy March 10<sup>th</sup>, 1862, and was with the regiment at Yorktown, West Point, and Fair Oaks, May 31<sup>st</sup> and June 1<sup>st</sup>.

Upon the other side of the paper was written:

**FRIEND:** If you find my body lifeless upon the field, bury it decently, mark the resting place, and inform my friends in the regiment and my father. Do this and you shall be liberally rewarded and have the gratitude of my friends.

A.H. Zacharias  
Captain Company K, 7<sup>th</sup> Michigan

His lifeless body was not found on the battlefields of the Peninsula. Zacharias passed through numerous battles on the Peninsula unhurt, but fell in Maryland, his native state, quite near the spot where he was born. When found on that bloody field, he held in his hand an envelope, on which the following was written:

To Peter K. Zacharias, Monroe, Michigan

Dear Parent, Brothers, and Sisters—I am wounded mortally, I think. The fight rages around me. I have done my duty; this is my consolation. I hope to meet you all again. I left not the line until nearly all had fallen and colors gone. I am getting weak; my arms are free, but below my chest all is numb. The enemy trotting over me, the numbness up to my heart. Good-bye, all.

Your Son, Allen

## QUIZ ANSWERS:

1. James Lane and Osceola, Missouri
2. George McClellan and Edwin Stanton/Salmon Chase
3. Jesse Reno and Samuel Garland
4. Harpers Ferry and Col. Dixon Miles
5. George Smalley and Blackford's Ford [Extra Credit: Boteler's Ford]
6. First regiment of free Negroes and "*Chasseurs d'Afrique*"
7. Reed's Bridge and La Fayette Road and "River of Blood"
8. Alexander McCook and Thomas Crittenden
9. Opequon Creek and Robert Rodes
10. Montgomery Blair and William Dennison

A last reminder for this month's meeting—**MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 29**—as guest speaker **Richard M. Cahow** will present, "*Letters of Sam Hodgeman, 7<sup>th</sup> Michigan Infantry.*" We will be back to our old haunts, the Farmington Public Library (Grand River and Farmington Road). Gavel time is 6:30 P.M. See you there.....

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