



News from the Michigan Civil War Sesquicentennial History Partners

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History Remembered, Inc.
A Civil War History Partner

**Michigan Civil War
Sesquicentennial Circular**

March 2013

Volume 4, Issue No. 3

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Symposium**

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Michigan Remembers the Civil War -

We can blame Benjamin Franklin for that hour of sleep we lost this weekend. You'll be able to gain it back on November 3 of this year.

For many, turning the clock forward signals the coming of Spring and while many of you are anxious for warmer weather, keep in mind that an early Spring last year wasn't a good thing for Michigan's cherry and apple crops. Be careful what you wish for.

For some, it means it's time to get out the gear in preparation for another reenacting season. We are also in 1863 when it comes to commemorating the Civil War Sesquicentennial and as it was then, many events this year will mark the high point for some hobbyists.

I received a compliment from a recipient of the

History Partners

[Keith Harrison](#)
Chair

*The Military Order
of the Loyal Legion
of the United States,
Michigan Commandery*

*Sons of
Union Veterans
of the Civil War,
Department of Michigan*

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Reenactors

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February circular for the various subjects I share especially the racial struggles and the fact that many African-Americans today are unaware of the service and sacrifice their ancestors gave in the Civil War.

In this issue, there are several stories regarding the race riots in Detroit in 1863. There is also a piece of how the war tragically affected women on the home front in the South.

If you have suggestions or comments about this publication, I'd like to hear from you.

Thank you for commemorating the 150th anniversary of the Civil War.

Respectfully,

Bruce B. Butgereit, Executive Director
History Remembered, Inc.
Grand Rapids, MI

A Civil War Symposium -

April 6, 2013
Saturday, 9 AM to 4 PM
Michigan Historical Center
Lansing, MI

Cost is \$20

You are invited to spend part of your Saturday learning more about *Michigan in the Civil War, Geography of the Civil War, Politics of the Civil War, Blacks in the Civil War, International Repercussions, Cultural and Technological*

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[Restoration:
Detroit GAR
Building](#)

Advancements, Social Results of the Civil War.

Need another good reason to attend?

Historically, Saturday, April 6 in Lansing, Michigan has an average temperature between 36-50 degrees and a 56% chance that it will rain at some point that day making it a perfect day to stay dry and hang out with some friends.

Sponsored by the **Friends of Michigan History**, the event is \$20 and includes registration, a box lunch and free parking. For more information, contact Larry Griffin at griflar2@aol.com

My wife Marcia and daughter Cally will join me in presenting *In Their Words: The Story of Annie Etheridge, Civil War Nurse*.

One of the most well-known Civil War women was Annie Etheridge, a Michigan resident. Once of newspaper renown, few today know the story of this remarkable woman, who, at age twenty-one, volunteered to serve her country from 1861-1865 as a nurse. While other famous women of the Civil War, such as Louisa May Alcott, Cornelia Hancock, and Sarah Emma Edmonds published their memoirs, Annie's story was left to be told by newspapers, her contemporaries and those who knew her best - the soldiers in the Army of the Potomac. This presentation illuminates the life of this remarkable young woman who served four years with Michigan troops in the role of what today would be called a combat medic.

Race Riots in Detroit, 1863 -

Race, Slavery, Freedom, Equality - all words that were common during the Civil War and still resonate with us today.

Most adults over the age of fifty are aware of the race riots that occurred in the United States during the 1960s. Some older folks may remember the race riots of the 1940s.

Even today, the spark that can ignite such events can be clouded behind miscommunication, intolerance, or perceived hatred.

On March 6, 1863 in Detroit, there was an outbreak of violence that rivaled the riots of New York City.

The website encyclopedia.com states the following -

Riots in Detroit have occurred over particular issues of justice, economics, and race. The city's first major riot, which took place in March 1863, stemmed from the trial of a black man for rape and was fueled by the local press. The violence resulted in the killing of one black and the burning of thirty homes and buildings. For a long time afterwards, Detroit avoided major civil violence, even into the period following World War I, when riots broke out in many other major cities. Detroit's avoidance of mass social upheaval lasted until June 1943, when poor housing conditions, racial tensions, and a heat wave contributed to making a riot in that city the worst of the year.

Politics and competing newspapers. I could be talking about events of today but for this story, I am talking about 1863. The following is a lengthy story about the race riots and the *Detroit Free Press* vs. the *Detroit Advertiser and Tribune*. (I highly recommend downloading the file to your computer for reading versus printing.)

[Racial Rhetoric:](#)

The *Detroit Free Press* and
Its Part in the Detroit Race Riot of 1863

[Source](#)

Another interesting, but equally lengthy story is:

[A Thrilling Narrative](#)

from the Lips of the Sufferers
of the Late Detroit Riot, March 6, 1863, with the
Hair Breadth Escapes of Men, Women and
Children, and Destruction of Colored Men's
Proptery, Not Less Than \$15,000.

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University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and
used with permission. Since this story is on a
website, I recommend saving as a Favorite versus
printing the article.

Explosion in Richmond -

Have you ever given thought to who was
working in the factories during the Civil War? If
so, you've probably realized that in both the
North and South, many women took the ranks of
the men who had gone off to war.

Nearly any student of the Civil War knows about
the devastation wreaked upon the civilian
population's homes, crops, and livestock. But
other tragedies also caused death and anguish.

One such event was an explosion at the
Confederate Ordnance Laboratory in Richmond,
Virginia on March 14, 1863.

The *Richmond Examiner* stated:

TERRIBLE LABORATORY EXPLOSION ON BROWN'S ISLAND - BETWEEN FORTY AND FIFTY PERSONS KILLED AND WOUNDED - HORRIBLE SCENES - The week ended to-day, fruitful in a great calamity by fire, was rendered mournfully memorable yesterday by a more frightful calamity by the same agent, involving scores of human lives and limbs. Between eleven and twelve o'clock yesterday morning - some fix the time at exactly twenty minutes past eleven o'clock - a dull, prolonged roar in the direction of Brown's Island, across the James river from the foot of Seventh street, startled that portion of the city and directed attention to the island, on which is located the Confederate Laboratory works, for the manufacture of percussion caps and gun cartridges. - But similar sounding explosions, arising from the trial of ordnance at the Tredegar Iron Works, had been daily heard in that neighborhood, and it was some minutes before a dense smoke arising from the island apprised the citizens of the true cause of the explosion, and that arose from the blowing up of a portion of the Laboratory, in all the departments of which were employed from three to four hundred females, of all ages, ranging from twelve to twenty years...

For more stories about this tragedy, visit:

[Civil War Richmond](#)

This website has transcribed the newspaper articles and is a great resource.

Click [here](#) for a PDF copy of the actual newspaper article. (View at 200% in Adobe Reader.)

Corps Badges and Daniel Butterfield -

With morale of the Union Army at an all-time low, Major General Joseph Hooker assigned his Chief-of-Staff, Daniel Butterfield to create a series of symbols and insignia that the men could adopt as a source of pride in esprit de corps.

The idea of adopting a colored badge to be worn on the uniform of both officers and enlisted men was not new. In 1862, Major General Philip Kearny had created the "Kearny Patch," a red lozenge (diamond)-shaped piece of cloth to help identify the men in his Corps.

From this, Butterfield designed the badge for 25 Corps.

For more on this and Butterfield, see the [Interesting Website](#) section below.

Upcoming Events -

Howell
March 14, 2013
FREE Presentation: General Custer at Gettysburg

Howell Carnegie District Library
314 W. Grand River,
Howell, Michigan
7:00-8:30 PM

The Michigan Cavalry Brigade, under the command of Brigadier General George A. Custer, was engaged in constant and severe fighting during the Gettysburg Campaign. In this presentation, renowned Civil War historian David Finney, will provide insight concerning the leadership qualities of young Custer during

his command of the Wolverines. Website:
<http://www.howelllibrary.org>. Contact:
Margaret Bigham at margaretbigham@gmail.com
or by telephone at 517-546-0720.

Kalamazoo
March 16-17, 2013
38th Annual Kalamazoo Living History (Black
Powder) Gun Show

[Kalamazoo Living History Show](#)

Since the February circular, we've gone from 89
scheduled events for this year to 102.

Please remember to send your information to:

[Keith G. Harrison](#)

Interesting Websites -

History Remembered is not responsible
for any additional content (advertisements/videos)
shown on the following pages.

Union College Notables:

[Daniel Butterfield](#)

Civil War Trust:

[Philip Kearny](#)

Wikipedia:

[Corps Badges](#)

Global Security.org:

	<p>Corps Badges</p> <p>Smithsonian:</p> <p>Photo Interactive</p> <p>Civil War Armies:</p> <p>Organization of the Armies</p>
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