



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

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Michigan Remembers the Civil War -

I almost cannot believe I started working on this Civil War circular on May 3. It had been my plan to send this out that day in honor of Civil War nurse Annie Etheridge's birthdate. After missing that I set a new goal of May 27, the day Annie received her Kearny Cross from General David Birney.

It is now May 31 and since I strive to publish this monthly, I have until midnight to get this finished. Nothing like a [deadline](#).

Can you remember what you did on your 24th birthday? I know that question could evoke a number of responses ranging from yes, no or I don't want to remember.

On May 3, 1863, Annie Etheridge turned 24 years old. Learn how she "celebrated" her birthday later in this issue. Compare her story to what you remember on your twenty-fourth.

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It was also in May of 1863 that the U.S. War Department created the United States Colored Troops. By the end of the war, nearly 179,000 black men (10 percent of the Union Army) served in the U.S. Army and another 19,000 served in the U.S. Navy.

Traditional Memorial Day was yesterday and in Grand Rapids, we conducted two services. I've included the story and some photos.

Thank you for commemorating the 150th anniversary of the Civil War. Please feel free to use the Forwarding function at the bottom to share with others and encourage your friends to Subscribe using that feature as well.

Respectfully,

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

Annie Etheridge, Civil War nurse -

In the U.S. Army during the Civil War, men (soldiers) served in the role of a nurse. In most cases, little was written about them.

What we do know is that over 2,000 women volunteered to serve as nurses in the Civil War. A few of their names include Clara Barton, Cornelia Hancock, Dorothea Dix, and Mary Ann "Mother" Bickerdyke.

My wife Marcia and I have researched the life of Annie Etheridge for nearly sixteen years. It is



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the Civil War](#)

[iMichigan
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-

important to note that society, at the time, did not consider the role of an army nurse appropriate for a woman. However, the women who went against the social norms actually forged the way for women in the future. They helped dispel the idea that women were far inferior to men in holding positions of responsibility. Their presence in the field hospitals provided much needed aid which resulted in more men living and they also offered emotional support in times of suffering and death.

Annie's role throughout the war varied but she was more than a field nurse. She was on the battlefield providing immediate assistance and bringing the wounded to the field hospitals. This is not to minimize the dangers and trials of the hundreds of capable nurses in the field hospitals but rather to emphasize how much more danger surrounded Annie.

The link below offers a brief description of Annie's role and of how Annie spent her 24th birthday at the Battle of Chancellorsville (April 30-May 6, 1863).

[Annie at Chancellorsville](#)

United States Colored Troops -

Over 179,000 black men served in the Union Army and another 19,000 served in the U.S. Navy. Below is the order that created the Bureau of Colored Troops:

United States Colored Troops
WAR DEPARTMENT
Adjutant General's Office
Washington, May 22, 1863

GENERAL ORDERS, No. 143.

I. A Bureau is established in the Adjutant General's Office for the record of all matters relating to the organization of Colored Troops. An officer will be assigned to the charge of the Bureau, with such number of clerks as may be designated by the Adjutant General.

II. Three or more field officers will be detailed as Inspectors to supervise the organization of colored troops at such points as may be indicated by the War Department in the Northern and Western States.

III. Boards will be convened at such posts as may be decided upon by the War Department to examine applicants for commissions to command colored troops, who, on application to the Adjutant General, may receive authority to present themselves to the board for examination.

IV. No persons shall be allowed to recruit for colored troops except specially authorized by the War Department; and no such authority will be given to persons who have not been examined and passed by a board; nor will such authority be given any one person to raise more than one regiment.

V. The reports of Boards will specify the grade of commission for which each candidate is fit, and authority to recruit will be given in accordance. Commissions will be issued from the Adjutant General's Office when the prescribed number of men is ready for muster into service.

VI. Colored troops may be accepted by companies, to be afterwards consolidated in battalions and regiments by the Adjutant General. The regiments will be numbered

seriatim, in the order in which they are raised, the numbers to be determined by the Adjutant General. They will be designated: "-- Regiment of U.S. Colored Troops."

VII. Recruiting stations and depots will be established by the Adjutant General as circumstances shall require, and officers will be detailed to muster and inspect the troops.

VIII. The non-commissioned officers of colored troops may be selected and appointed from the best men of their number in the usual mode of appointing non-commissioned officers. Meritorious commissioned officers will be entitled to promotion to higher rank if they prove themselves equal to it.

IX. All personal applications for appointments in colored regiments, or for information concerning them, must be made to the Chief of the Bureau; all written communications should be addressed to the Chief of the Bureau, to the care of the Adjutant General.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF WAR:
E.D. Townsend, Assistant Adjutant General

Some great websites with more information -

[National Archives](#)

[Camp Nelson](#)

[USCT Overview](#)

Memorial Day in Grand Rapids -

Last evening (May 30) in Grand Rapids, I was interviewed by a reporter from WZZM TV13 who asked me, "Why are you conducting these Memorial Day services today when Memorial Day was last Monday? Please explain."

Sadly, I believe most Americans do not know what Memorial Day is or on what date it is or why we commemorate the day.

I'll share more next year, Lord willing, but for now, here are the three dates set aside as special days for honoring those currently serving, those who died and those who served and are with us today.

Armed Forces Day - the 3rd Saturday in May. This day allows us to thank those men and women currently serving in our military.

Memorial Day - May 30 as designated by General John A. Logan, Commander-in-Chief of the Grand Army of the Republic in 1868. Originally set aside to honor the Union dead of the Civil War, the day now remembers all those of our military that are no longer with us.

Initially conducted only by the G.A.R., communities soon embraced the day as Memorial Day until it became a national holiday. It was commemorated on May 30 until 1971 when Congress passed the National Holiday Act and moved the date to the last Monday of the month.

Veterans Day - November 11. Although we should thank a veteran at every opportunity, this day is set aside specifically for that purpose.

We can never thank a veteran enough for their service and we can never pay the debt we owe to those who gave their life defending our freedoms.

[WZZM TV13](#)

Upcoming Events -

To those of you who open this circular after Saturday, June 1, you will have missed the free Civil War concert. I apologize for the lateness of this notice.

June 1 -

Sesquicentennial Civil War Concert: (Michigan State Capital Lawn, Lansing, Michigan). 2:00 PM to 3:30 PM. FREE Concert will be held on the Michigan Capital Lawn. The concert performers will be 5th Michigan Regimental Band. This will be the third in a series of five concerts, one per year of the Sesquicentennial with each one tied to Civil War events that took place 150 years earlier. Sponsored by the Friends of Michigan History, Inc.

June 6 -

Presentation: Michigan and the Civil War (Marshall District Library, 124 W Green St, Marshall, Michigan). 6:30 PM -8:00 PM. The speaker will be Shirley Gage Hodges. This lecture discusses the role and importance of Michigan in the American Civil War, 1861-1865. The focus will be on the famous and not so famous Michiganders who lived and served during this period. Special emphasis will be on some of the battles the Michigan men participated in, as well as the tragedy of the Sultana, a ship transporting survivors from Andersonville Prison and other

places in the South back home. The Sultana exploded, killing most of its passengers. To honor our Civil War ancestors means more than recounting the battles and the bullets. We must search for their letters and diaries to tell their stories including how they were missed on the home front. Learn what prompted President Abraham Lincoln to remark Thank God for Michigan. The lecture is free but you still need to register. Registration begins May 23 for Marshall District Library cardholders and May 26 for all others. Contact Marshall District Library at mdlinfo@marshalldistrictlibrary.org

June 8 -

Program: Reenactment the 1863 burial of Colonel Harrison H. Jeffords (Forest Lawn Cemetery, 8000 Grand Street, Dexter, Michigan). 10:00 AM. In conjunction with Civil War Days at Gordon Hall, the Ann Arbor/Ypsilanti Carpenter-Welch Camp #180 of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War is planning on reenacting the 1863 burial of Colonel Harrison H. Jeffords, a local man, killed at Gettysburg, who was buried in the Dexter Cemetery on July 17, 1863. He was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for trying to save the flag of the 4th Michigan Infantry in the Wheat field at Gettysburg. The Camp is working with the Dexter Historical Society, Gordon Hall Commemorative organization, and the 4th Michigan Volunteer Infantry to accomplish this program. Contact: Bill McAfee, Camp #180 Chaplain, at thistleis@sprynet.com

There are a variety of events scheduled for June, including reenactments, living history events, speakers remembering Michigan in the Civil War and more.

Is your event listed?

[Calendar of Events](#)

Please remember to send your information via email to Keith Harrison who maintains our website and calendar:

pcinc@prodigy.net

Interesting Websites -

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

iMichigan Productions:

[American Civil War Years](#)

Detroit G.A.R. Building:

[The Restoration Continues](#)

Mississippi Officially Abolishes Slavery:

[Documents signed](#)

Sharpsburg, MD:

[Live Shell](#)

Hankering for History:

[Civil War Nicknames](#)

New Sesquicentennial Publication:

[Rhobie and Private Noah](#)

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