

7TH MICHIGAN CAVALRY MORNING REPORT

Headquarters: Bay City, Michigan

Two Local Journalists Speak

Two longtime historical interest writers for *The Bay City Times* spoke at our November and December meetings:

Tim Younkman gave us a well researched talk in November about the inadequacies of the Civil War prison systems that killed thousands of soldiers from both the north and the south.

Andersonville prison in Georgia was not the only hell-hole of the south as dozens of others existed including Salisbury, North Carolina were nearly as many Union soldiers died as in Andersonville.

In the north, southern prisoners found life in its many prisons just as deadly.

Tim still writes articles for the *Times* on a variety of local historical and non-historical topics. He recently wrote a historically based novel set in the 1930's based on Adolph Hitler's relationship with his niece who was found dead under mysterious circumstances in an apartment he shared with her.

Dave Rogers is also a retired newspaper writer for *The Bay City Times* and has written several books about Bay County history that have been and are being sold in the Bay County Historical Society gift shop.

His current but not yet completed book, entitled "*Apostles of Equality*", was the basis for his December talk about the accomplishments of abolitionist James G. Birney II, one of Bay County's most famous residents, and his greater family.

Dave offered that few families in the 19th century had more members working to abolish slavery and that other persons who joined the cause later received credit for the legal and moral arguments against slavery that James Birney had constructed years earlier.

Trivia Question:

What was (or is) Michigania?

- The name of the Michigan Goddess of War.
- A parade ground at Ft. Wayne in Detroit where new regiments camped while they received their uniforms and equipment.
- The name of the live wolverine mascot of the Michigan Cavalry Brigade.
- The nick-name of a famous Michigan artillery battery that mustered at Albion.

Answer on page 3.

Johnny Clem: Drummer Boy of Shiloh?

One of the most frequent questions I get about the Civil War is: Do you know who Johnny Clem was?

Yup, and it seems most everyone else does too. He was one of about 10,000 boys near his age who served with the Union army during the war. But, he seems to have gotten all the publicity, as inaccurate as it sometimes was.

He was born in Newark, Ohio on August 13, 1851 and in 1862, unhappy at home, he ran away and tried to join the 3rd Ohio Infantry. He was rejected due to his age and then tried to join the 22nd Michigan Infantry but was again rejected for the same reason.



Johnny Clem in 1863

Johnny then "hung around" the 22nd's camp and became a sort of regimental mascot. His name appears on the original muster role of the regiment dated August 29, 1862 as a recruit and being 13 years of age.

He was with the regiment until 1864 when he was mustered out for reasons unknown.

Somewhere along the way, the northern press decided he was a good story and started writing about him – some of which was true, and some of which was

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fabrication. Stories about him even became children's books. (continued on next page)

He originally was called the "Drummer Boy of Shiloh" because it was claimed that while with the 22nd in the battle that his drum was hit by some shrapnel that nearly wounded him.

The trouble with that is 22nd didn't exist in April of 1862 when the battle of Shiloh occurred - and Clem never claimed to be part of any other regiment.

He was also heralded as the "Drummer Boy of Chickamauga", a battle in which the 22nd Michigan did participate in September of 1863. The press claimed he shot and killed a Confederate colonel there, but no evidence exists that a Confederate colonel was killed anywhere near where Johnny Clem might have been.

Actually, in that battle, the 22nd suffered a disaster that caused it to hardly survive as a regiment.

On the second day of the battle, some confusion in orders caused a gap in the Union line which the Confederates just then happened to charge through.

Thrown into confusion, the Federals were pushed back to Snodgrass Hill and Horseshoe Ridge where some of their forces, including the 22nd, made a stand until darkness started to descend.

Orders were given to the imperiled regiments to silently fall back in the deepening twilight and let their positions fall into Confederate hands.



General John L. Clem in Later Life

The trouble for the 22nd was the orders to retreat, either by design or error, never reached them. Most

all in the regiment were captured and spent the remaining 18 months of the war in notorious Confederate prison camps such as Andersonville, where the death rate was higher than being in a deadly battle.

There seems to have been no thought of why Johnny didn't suffer the same fate.

However, in fairness to him, he never made any of the claims that were dreamed up by the press. But, after the war, he did capitalize on them.

Having failed the exam to enter West Point in 1871, he appealed to then President U.S. Grant, who immediately commissioned him a second lieutenant in the regular army.

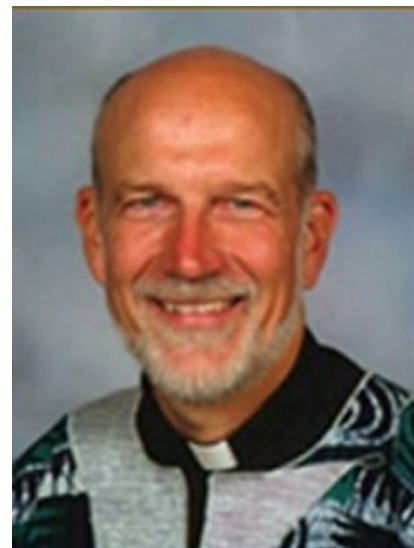
Serving mostly in the quartermaster corps, he advanced in rank until in 1916 when he was the last Civil War veteran on active duty and retired as a major general.

January's Speaker

Religion was important to the people of the 19th century and played a major role in the events prior to and during the Civil War.

Individual soldiers found their strength to continue on in their religion when death seemed only seconds away.

Father Robert J. Miller of Chicago has researched these topics and written a book about them entitled "*They Both Prayed to the Same God: Religion and Faith in the American Civil War*".



Father Robert Miller

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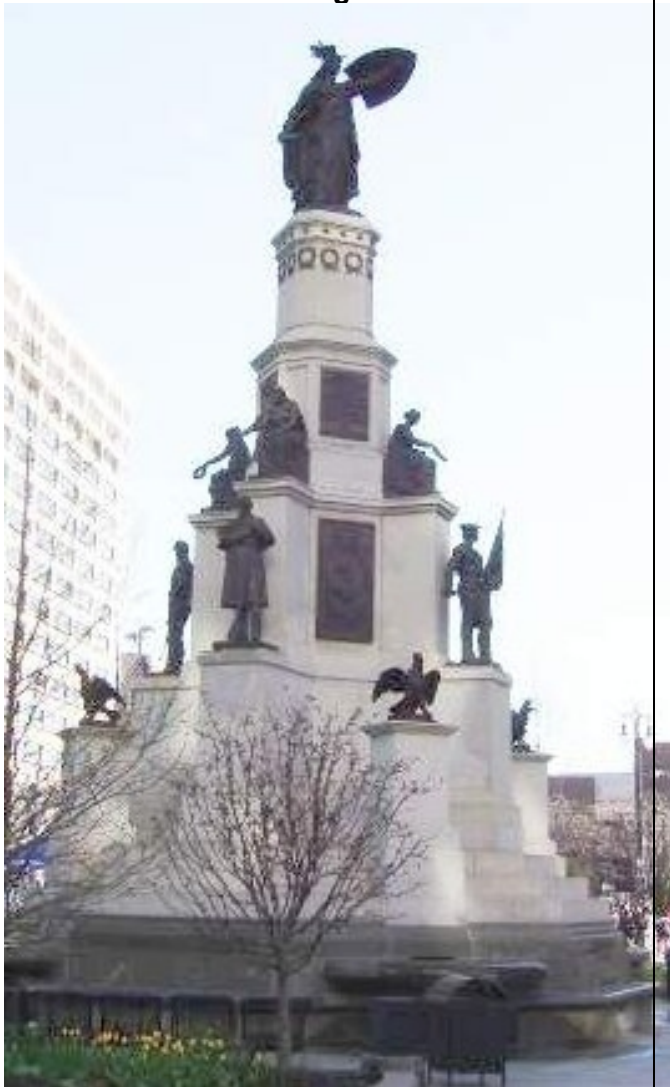
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He will brave the winter roads and travel here on January 12th to fill us in on his findings.

Answer to Trivia Question:

Atop the 65 foot high Soldiers and Sailor's Civil War Memorial at the intersection of Woodward Avenue and Cadillac Square in Detroit stands Michigan's Goddess of War -

Michigania



It was from this spot, the Campus Martius Park, that Detroit regiments assembled for ceremonies just before marching to trains headed for the war.

The monument was erected by the state in 1872 and depicts the 15' high statute of Michigania as an Amazon warrior pointing to the south toward the

enemy – either the Confederate States of America or Ohio, depending on your point of view.

Information Needed

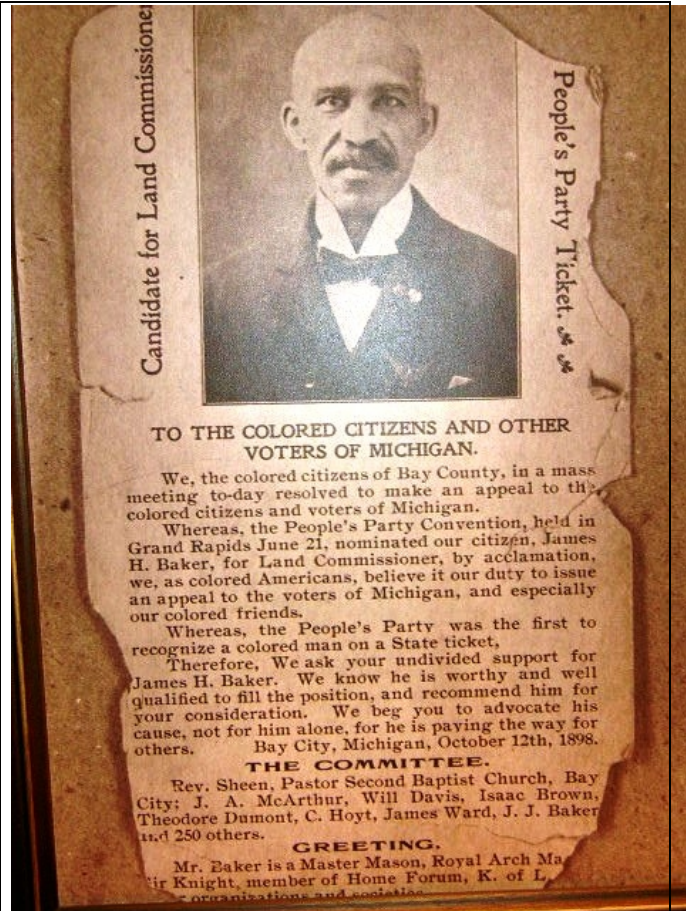
Shortly after the Civil War, James H. Baker came to Bay City. A person of color, he successfully made his way in a white society and counted among his heirs are a son who was the first black attorney in Michigan and two grandsons who followed in that profession.

An older county history book reports him as a Rhode Island regiment veteran of the Petersburg crater debacle and survivor of the Fort Pillow massacre.

But, his military records cannot be located. That is not an unusual event as sometimes the records of entire regiments have fallen into as yet unexcavated crevices.

Dave Rogers is investigating the life of James H. Baker and would appreciate and information or leads to any information our readers may have on his military service.

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Newspaper ad urging voter support of James Baker as Land Commissioner on the "People's Party Ticket"