

History of the 4th Michigan Infantry Regiment

"Grand Army of the Potomac"

1861-1864

I have secured 9 collections of written documents, diaries, letters and eye-witness accounts of the campaigns and battles of the 4th Michigan Infantry. Watch for updates to this history

This is the History of the 4th Michigan Infantry as seen through the eyes of those who served in the 4th Michigan Volunteer Infantry Troops. I have reproduced the history as close to their own words as possible. I have used other resources when needed to fill in the blanks. I will make adjustments to this history as they are revealed to me.

The 4th Michigan Infantry was one of the must feared and respected Union regiments who fought in the Civil War. They served in the Grand Army of the Potomac from 1861 to 1864. The 4th Mustered into service on June 20, 1861 at Adrian, Michigan. They mustered out of service on June 29, 1864 at Detroit, Michigan. The 4th was reorganized and sent to the Western theater that same year. They were mustered out of service in Houston, Texas in 1866. This is the history of the original 4th Michigan Volunteer Infantry from 1861 to 1864.

Uniforms of the 4th Michigan Infantry



1862



1864

The Harrison Daniels diary has been moved to its' own page

Flags of the 4th Michigan Volunteer Infantry





4th Michigan Final 1864-1866

picture provided by Lowe Hayes

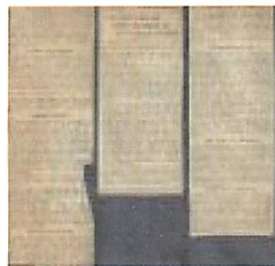


Original Id. tag of Andrew Kaizer of the 4th Michigan Company C from the George Wilkinson collection



General George Spaulding at the 50th Anniversary of Gettysburg from the David Prince Collection

Spaulding, George W. (Veteran) Monroe, Enlisted in Company A, Fourth Infantry as first Sergeant, June 20, 1861, at Adrian, for 3 years, age 24. Mustered June 20, 1861. Commissioned First Lieutenant company B, Aug. 5, 1861. Commissioned Captain Jan. 13, 1862. **Wounded in action July 1, 1862. Resigned July 18, 1862. Re-entered service as Lieutenant Colonel, Eighteenth Infantry at organization. Commissioned July 18, 1862. Mustered Sept. 2, 1862. Provost Marshal from June 14, 1863, to Jan 1864. Resigned to accept promotion Feb 21, 1864. Colonel Twelfth Tennessee Cavalry, Feb. 21, 1864. Brevet Brigadier General U.S. Volunteers, March 21, 1865, for valuable services in battle of Nashville, Tenn. Honorably discharged Oct. 24, 1865.**



Newspaper articles from 50th Anniversary of Gettysburg from the David Prince Collection 1861

The fourth Michigan was mustered into service on June 20, 1861. The 4th was organized by Colonel Dwight A. Woodbury. The 4th was assembled and trained at Adrian College in Adrian Michigan. There were 1025 officers and men in the regiment at the time it was mustered into service. These men were enlisted into service for a period of three years. The 4th Michigan was sent to Washington D.C. to join "The Grand Army of the Potomac" under the command of General "Little Mac" McClellan. The 4th Michigan was assigned to Porter's Corps, Morrell's Division, Griffin's Brigade.

The Companies of the 4th Michigan were as follows :

- Peninsular Guard (Sturgis, Mi.)
- Barry Guard (Ann Arbor, Mi.)
- Smith Guard (Monroe, Mi.)
- Trenton Volunteers (Trenton, Mi.)
- Dexter Union Guard (Dexter, Mi.)
- Hudson Volunteers (Hillsdale, Mi.)
- Tecumseh Volunteers (Tecumseh, Mi.)
- Grosvenor Union Guard (Jonesville, Mi.)



Mathew Brady's Photos of the 4th Michigan (Washington, D.C. - 1861) The 4th hadn't seen the elephant yet.



(from Library of Congress collection)

Please check out the updated **photos** page for additional photographs from the 1860's
Minor's Hill, Virginia

The 4th Michigan infantry winter camped here during the winter of 1861-62

A quick look at the camp life of the 4th Michigan Infantry early in the war.

In 1861 the 4th Michigan infantry carried the buck and ball musket. They were supposed to be replaced by Enfield rifled muskets in the winter of 1861 - 1862. Upon delivery it was discovered that the new muskets were the same as the old. Here's what transpired during this event:

"For Fun & Frolic"

"We were armed with the old Buck & Ball musket which we were to exchange for the Enfield rifles. Word was given to the different companies to send details for guns. The company B detail was dispatched. Soon the boxes were brought and

opened. Behold a mistake had been made, and the boys thought on purpose. Instead of the Enfield, the boxes contained the same kind of guns we already had. The men were indignant, and refused to accept them, but finally concluded to use them awhile, as they were new and bright. The guns were distributed, and boxes ordered back, a procession formed a la funeral. An escort, with reversed guns, and music, and every conceivable thing that any noise could be got out of, followed to Quarter-master's depot. A volley was fired over the boxes, and the procession returned to quarters. Soon a racket was heard in vicinity of company B. Every other man had a gun sling around his body, and was down on all-fours. The other fellows had a gun thrust between the gun-sling and along the man's spine, firing blank cartridges. As soon as the gun was fired, the man on the ground would assume a sitting posture, with the muzzle up. Then the gunner would ram cartridge, and the gun would immediately assume horizontal, again to fired. There were some 40 of the company engaged in this. That night, after the racket, the 14th New York's Sutler lost a barrel of whiskey, rolled out from under his tent early in the evening, while the proprietor was engaged in front with a special delegation sent to occupy him and his assistants, while the feat was being performed. It was never found, but you could buy a canteen-full for \$5.00 of one who knew where it was. Details were made to hunt for it, but it was never brought to view, but some of the detail were quite drunk when they returned. "

Excerpts from "Reminiscences, Incidents, Battles, Marches and Camp Life of the Old 4th Michigan Infantry in the War of Rebellion 1861 to 1864"

by Orvey S. Barrett,

Lieutenant 4th Michigan Infantry Co. B

published 1888

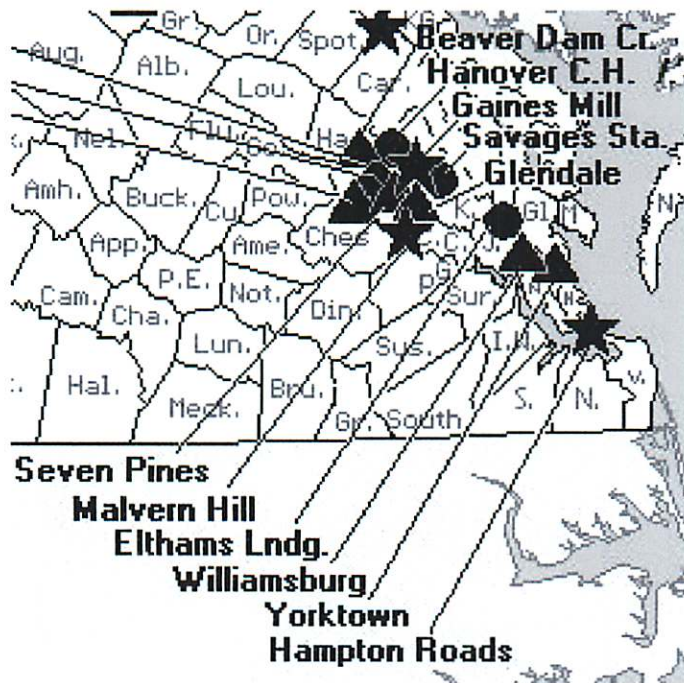
Barrett, Orvey S., Lenawee County. Enlisted in company B Fourth Michigan Infantry, as Sergeant, June 20, 1861 for 3 years, age 26. Mustered June 20, 1861. First Sergeant. Second Lieutenant Sept 1, 1862. Mustered Feb. 28, 1863. Wounded in action at Gettysburg, Pa. July 2, 1863. Commanding company Feb., 1864. Discharged for disability May 23, 1864, on account of wounds received in action.

1862

“McClellan’s vice.... was always waiting to have everything just as he wanted before he would attack, and before he could get things arranged as he wanted them, the enemy pounced on him.”

General George G. Meade - 1863

Seeing the Elephant



The Peninsula Campaign 1862

The Peninsula Campaign

In 1862 the Michigan 4th participated in the Peninsula campaign under the command of George B McClellan . It was

present at the Siege of Yorktown, Williamsburg, and Newbridge. The 4th fought valiantly at Hanover Court House, Mechanicsville, and Gaines' Mills. The 4th sustained heavy loss at the battles of Turkey Bend, and White Oak Swamp.

The elephant had arrived!

The battle of New Bridge - The 4th Michigan attacks in the advance the Louisiana Tigers defeating them handily. They are the first Union Regiment to defeat the Tigers in battle. The 4th was out numbered almost five to one. They capture 38 tigers, two artillery pieces, and killed or wound over 123 others.

Mechanicsville - The 4th was part of Griffin's Brigade at Mechanicsville. The 4th fought along side the 14th New York, and repelled Archer's and Field's Brigades as they attempted an assault of the right center of the Union line. The 4th entered the battle at approximately 4:00pm. They were supported by Battery B Pennsylvania Light Artillery (2 sections), 1 section of Battery K U.S. 5th Artillery, and 1 section of Battery G 1st Pennsylvania Artillery. The Northerners set up a twisted maze of fallen trees in front of their works. As the Confederates worked their way across this, the two regiments and artillery batteries laid down a hellish fuselage of lead. Archer's Brigades' attack broke 40 yards in front of the Union battle line. Archer's Brigade consisted of the 1st, 7th, & 14th Tennessee Regiments, the 19th Georgia Regiment, and the 5th Alabama Battalion. Archer's Brigade was part of A. P. Hill's Light Division. This was Lee's baptism of fire as commander of the Army of Northern Virginia. It was also his first defeat.

Gaines Mill - The 4th Michigan again fought next to the 14th New York on this day. They were defending the left center of the Union Line. The 4th Michigan was supported by the cannons of Battery C 1st Rhode Island Artillery. A. P. Hill sent Anderson's Brigade consisting of the 14th, 35th, 45th, & 49th Georgia Regiments, and the 3rd Louisiana Battalion against the 4th Michigan's and 14th New York's works. The 35th & 45th Georgia attacking on the 4th Michigan's front. The 4th had fought for over 2 hours repelling three attacks on their front. The 4th had expended all of it's ammunition. After Anderson's final assault the 4th was relieved of it's position on Union line by Newton's Brigade the 1st, 2nd & 3rd New Jersey.

Near twilight Stonewall Jackson's Division arrived on the field advancing into the attack. The 4th Michiganders were again moved into their former position in the Union works. The 4th now fought along side Newton's Brigade. Trimble's Brigade attacked with a veracity that none of the prior confederate regiments had shown. The onslaught was too much ! Wave after wave of Confederate soldiers attacked. The ammunition of the 5th Corps. was exhausted. Many of the Union troops gave ground for want of ammunition. On the 4th Michigan's left the 4th New Jersey was surrounded and surrendered in mass to Trimble's advancing Brigade. The 11th Pennsylvania who were fighting next to the 4th New Jersey came under the threat of a flanking movement by the Confederate advance and retired from the field. This forced the 4th Michigan and the rest of Newton's Brigade to retire across the Chickahominy River to fight another day.

After fighting the Confederate Army all day long at Gaines Mills, General McClellan tells Colonel Woodbury that, "the 4th Michigan Infantry has again," Covered itself in Glory", the greatest honor a commander can bestow upon his troops.

Major General Fritz John Porter

Commander of the 5th Corp during the "Battle of the Seven Days"

(under which the 4th Michigan Infantry severed)



It was observed by several of the Confederate Generals who fought against Fritz John Porter at Gaines Mill, that, Porter's defense at Gaines Mill was the best strategically fought battle by a Union General during the Civil War. Oh for want of ammunition! The result could have been very different.

Some very important incites into the battle of Gaines Mill. Fritz John Porter held off the main body of the Army of Northern Virginia for almost a whole day. He did this with the 5th Corps and portions of Franklin's Corp approximately 38,000 men of which 10,000 didn't arrive on the field until after the battle was over (Irish Brigade). Porter fought Longstreet's Division, A. P. Hill's Light Division, and Jackson's Army of the Valley over 60,000 men. It was an amazing feat to defend the Union works against overwhelming odds. Fritz John Porters skills as an engineer and artillerist were displayed at their highest levels during Gaines Mill. If he hadn't held off the Confederate attack the Grand Army of the Potomac would have been flanked and destroyed. This expertise would be surpassed in the following days at the battle of Malvern Hill, a Confederate defeat.

Gaines's Mill, Va. - 15 killed, 41, wounded, and 32 missing

Total Casualties: 88

The Battle of Malvern Hill - was one the 4th Michigan's finest moments in history. The regiment lay on the ground to avoid the iron curtain of shot from the Confederate attack. Colonel Woodbury had commanded the 4th to lay down to conserve it's strength for the moment it would be needed to repel the Confederate attack. As the 4th was

waiting to engage, Union infantrymen started retreating through the 4th's position. Upon seeing this Colonel Woodbury forsaking his own safety gallantly stood up to rally these troops shouting "We can hold them men!". In that moment the able commander of the 4th Michigan was struck down by a minnie ball. He was fatally wounded in the head. The 4th Michigan would miss its most capable commander throughout the rest of the war.

Major General Fritz John Porter to the 4th, "You have again covered yourselves in Glory! Today the 4th Michigan has saved the Army of the Potomac!"

Malvern Hill, Va. - 41 killed, 100 wounded, and 23 missing

Total Casualties: 164

4th Michigan Casualties during the Peninsula Campaign

Hall's Hill, Va. - 1

Yorktown, Va. - 2

Newbridge, Va. - 3

Mechanicsville, Va. - 4

Gaines's Mill, Va. - 15 killed, 41, wounded, and 32 missing

Malvern Hill, Va. - 41 killed, 100 wounded, and 23 missing

Turkey Creek, Va. - 1

Total casualties: 263

Latest update!

Henry Seage's Diary of the Peninsula Campaign

The following is Henry Seage's experiences during the Peninsula Campaign of 1862. It is being published to provide insight into a 4th Michigan volunteers day to day life during the fight for the Peninsula. This part of the diary also offers a view into the everyday routine of a regiment in the Grand Army of the Potomac. **(It is presented here by permission of Steve Roberts any further publication is prohibited without his consent. Violators will be prosecuted to fullest extent of the law.)**

Thur Mar 20 1862 T. Tarsne & I went down to the Tents. Rained all day.
Recd letters from Home and Fidelia.

Fri Mar 21 1862 Packed up & went to Alexandria 4 miles
and went on Board the Flag Steamer Danl Webster at 2 P.M.

Sat Mar 22 1862 Started down the River at 10 o'clock
a.m. Saw Several Rebel Batteries. Was joined by the Gun
Boats. Wrote to Fidelia

Sun Mar 23 1862 9 o'clock a.m. out of sight of land in
Chesapeake Bay. Landed at Fortress Monroe at 3 o'clock P.M.
Went about 3 miles and camped.

Mon Mar 24 1862 Fair. No drill Amon got some Oysters.

Tues Mar 25 1862 Packed up & went about two miles &
camped. Put up Brush Shanty.

Wed Mar 26 1862 No drill Out of Crackers Lieut Parsons
bot box for us also some Tobacco & Emery paper. Recd letter
Perry.

Thur Mar 27 1862 Rose at roll & marched to Big Bethel &
back 24 miles

Fri Mar 28 1862 Jim Tarsney pulled off his stripes because Boys called him Thief. Went on Guard mounting for H Hartson

Sat Mar 29 1862 Rained hard. Wrote to Emory. Sutler came up got \$1.00 in Tickets Comp drill.

Sun Mar 30 1862 Went on Picket Stationed at Burnt Bridge. Reinforcements came out Charley came along on 3rd relief.

Mon Mar 31 1862 Was relieved at 10 by the 9th Mass (or NY or Mays) Dress Parade Cleaned Gun with sand Paper.

Tues Apr 1 1862 Attended Court Marshall in Comp B. Bat drill did not drill

Wed Apr 2 1862 Comp Drill Adjutant arrived Orders came to be ready to leave in the morn.

Thur Apr 3 1862 Large detail from the Compy for picket. Compy drill Inspection. Wrote Home

Fri Apr 4 1862 Rose at 3 oclock am & Started for Yorktown took two prisoners Camped at Cockletown at night Molasses had to suffer (or supper?).

Sat Apr 5 1862 Started and marched 3 mile came on to the Fortifications of Yorktown. Give & recd shell. on Guard

Sun Apr 6 1862 Secesh threw the first Shell to day Little fireing on either side. 9th & 62nd threw up brestwork after dark. Inspection arms

Mon Apr 7 1862 Wrote to Ed. Not much fireing on either side. fixed our U.S. blankets into a "poncho" tent" Rain Charley on Guard

Tues Apr 8 1862 Rain. Very little fireing Went after Rations with Dick

Wed Apr 9 1862 Packed up and moved back a little out of sight to the Peach orchard Recd two letters from Home. Emory & West Troy

Thur Apr 10 1862 Recd New Poncho Tents. Inspection arms

Fri Apr 11 1862 Wrote Home

Sat Apr 12 1862 Regt on Picket Our comp y did not go. 24 detailed for Camp Guard was on No Hard Bread for dinner

Sun Apr 13 1862 Am, Dick & I went down to the Niggers & got 1 gal of oysters. Inspection arms

Mon Apr 14 1862 Recd a letter from Em. On Guard. Boys went down to work on Dock

Tues Apr 15 1862 off Duty Inspection & Parade Comp drill. Gun Boats fired on the Rebels.

Wed Apr 16 1862 Was detailed to work on Road by the Bridge. Heavy cannonading all day on our left Wing Arch Gilchreist & Allen came to camp from the Fort.

Thur Apr 17 1862 Canonading on our left this morn Compy drill. Inspection Dress Parade.

Fri Apr 18 1862 Went on Picket at 4 am Was on Reserve untill 12 at night then went on Post

Sat Apr 19 1862 Was Relieved by the 18th Mass Regt about 6 oclock a.m. Cap Wood (Comp. C) was killed. Inspection arms. Recd two letters from home! Wrote to Fidelia.

Sun Apr 20 1862 David Worden died Am. Mark & I were detailed as an escort.

Mon Apr 21 1862 Did nothing of importance today

Tues Apr 22 1862 Was detailed to work on the Brestworks went out 5 am Rained hard in afternoon got wet through Rained all night Captain & John Stevens arrived

Wed Apr 23 1862 Rain. Cleaned gun & dried clothes Dick wrote Home. Was detailed for fatigue duty to hold myself in readiness at any moment. Inspection & dress Parade did not go

Thur Apr 24 1862 Went to work on Road Meat brought out at noon. Charley bought 1 qt of Lasses.

Fri Apr 25 1862 Rose at 3 am & went to work on Road came in at noon went out again at night but came back did not work. Rain Mark got some Rice & cooked it for supper

Sat Apr 26 1862 Wrote to Ed. Rain all day & night. No drill.

Sun Apr 27 1862 Rose at 3½ oclock & went on Picket did not Stand Post. The Rebels shelled us hurt no one Cap fell in the mud.

Mon Apr 28 1862 Fixed up the Tent. Signed Payroll & Was Paid off \$26.00. Came in from Picket about 6 oclock a.m. Inspection

Tues Apr 29 1862 Recd letter from Home Was on detail to work on Trenches. The Rebels shelled us all day Kill one in the 44th N.Y.

Wed Apr 30 1862 A part of Regt was mustered for pay. The rest was mustered this P.M. Rain.

Thur May 1 1862 Regt went out to work. I was excused by the doctor Recd letter from Emory.

Fri May 2 1862 Heavy firing by the Rebels Wrote to Em. One Shell passed over the camp.

Sat May 3 1862 Recd letter from Home & Paper from Emory. Canonading all day.

Sun May 4 1862 500 detailed for Fatigue duty found the Rebels had evacuated their works. Came in camp again & Packed up. Recd New Blouse coat. Went out & formed line in front of Rebel works to stop all persons going up.

Mon May 5 1862 Rain. Wrote Home. Packed Knapsacks. Recd letter from Fidelia

Tues May 6 1862 Compy Drill. Dress Parade with music the first time Since Left Hampton. Bat Drill

Wed May 7 1862 Nothing of importance today

Thur May 8 1862 Packed & went on Board the Vanderbilt & went up to West Point Stayed all night on Boat.

Fri May 9 1862 Landed in Pontoon Boats from the steamer. Went about ½ mile & camped.

Sat May 10 1862 Went on Picket. Wrote Home. Came in about 3 P.M.

Sun May 11 1862 Nothing of importance today

Mon May 12 1862 Laid around camp all day. Bought Picture of Woodbury & Morell

Tues May 13 1862 Started for New Kent Court House at 4 am arrived at C.H. in the P.M. had to fall out

Wed May 14 1862 On Guard Rain did not stand a Trick. Troops turned out & Seward came by

Thur May 15 1862 Rain Packed up. Recd ration of Whiskey Rain all day. Put up Tents again. Did not go. Recd another ration Whiskey Chauncey Brown & Seth put their Tents with ours

Fri May 16 1862 Packed up & went to White House 6 miles. Marched all day to get there. Put up Tent at night after dark

Sat May 17 1862 Cleaned Gun & had it stole when moved tents on a line. A lot of the compy went down & had a Swim in River. Inspection arms Found Gun in Co. G. Recd letter from Emory. Dr Strong arrived

Sun May 18 1862 Wrote to Em. Went to Church orders read that we were put on reserve & Morell com Division & Col McQuade com Brigade.

Mon May 19 1862 Packed up things & Went to Turnstalls Station distance of 6 miles arrived in Afternoon.

Tues May 20 1862 Comp drill in manual Dress parade.

Wrote Home.

Wed May 21 1862 Packed & went about 6 miles farther. arrived this P.M. Dress Parade & Inspection

Thur May 22 1862 Packed up & went about 6 or 8 miles. Rain part of the march. Dick felt Sick.

Fri May 23 1862 Fine. Inspection & Dress Parade Washed Clothes.

Sat May 24 1862 Rose at 4 a.m. to go reconnoitering Came on to Rebel Pickets about 10 am 1200 Strong at the Chickahominy River & licked them out Our Regt & 41 Cavalry was our force. 117 Killed & Several wounded of the Rebs & 2 Killed (Piper Co B) & a few wounded. Recd letter from home. McClellan met us & said Boys you done nobly to day.

Sun May 25 1862 Fine. Wrote Home. Brigade turned out to the Funeral Inspection & dress Parade Threw away old Cartridges & recd new ones. This camp was named "Camp Michigan" in honor of the victory of the 4th yesterday.

Mon May 26 1862 Rose at 3 a.m. Started at 4 & went about 3 miles & Camped. Rained a little Recd letter from Fidelia.

Tues May 27 1862 Rose at 3. Started at 4 in light marching order & went out to Hanover. Run on the Rebels & had a fight. Rebels run & came in again in our rear Licked them again. Rain in the morn. Slept in the Wheat Field at night. Col Lee & 1000 men taken Prisoners

Wed May 28 1862 200 or 300 more prisoners came in this morn. Bot a Hen gave .50 for it. 8 men & a Corporal from our compy for Picket took the wrong road & camped for the night in woods. J Hewett & I slept together

Thur May 29 1862 Had bully breakfast of Chicken Came in from picket about sun rise. Packed up. Arrived in camp at 1 oclock at night

Fri May 30 1862 Washed. Hard hail storm Lightning struck to Com Tent of the 44th N.Y. wounded several.

Sat May 31 1862 Wrote to Fidelia Wrote Home Rain this P.M.

Sun June 1 1862 Packed light marching orders two days rations. Went as far as Dr Gains house & came back.

Mon June 2 1862 Went on Picket near New Bridge Wrote to Ed. Capt Depuy shot Toms Dog. Bot comb (25). Rain at night

Tues June 3 1862 Was relieved by the 44th N.Y. about 12. Came in had orders to pack & leave at any moment. Inspection

Wed June 4 1862 Rain. Laid around Camp all day
Wrote to Uncle Wm. Inspection

Thurs June 5 1862 Signed payroll. Was paid off.

Fri June 6 1862 First Mich came & took the place of the
25 N.Y. in Gen Martindales Brig. Recd letters from Em & Home

Sat June 7 1862 On Guard Rain in a.m. Nothing of
importance today Wrote to Emory

Sun June 8 1862 Regt went to Guard Bridge did not go.
Wrote Home

Mon June 9 1862 Boys came in this A.M. Turned out for
review. Spanish Genl Prim reviewed us. Inspection

Tues June 10 1862 Nothing of importance today

Wed June 11 1862 Am. Mark & I were detailed to guard
Gen Pettigrew at Dr Gaines. Took Gen to White House
Landing

Thur June 12 1862 Was relieved about 9 a.m. by 62nd
Penn. Genl advance of artillery today Went to Mill Pond to
Swim

Fri June 13 1862 Went on Picket this 2 P.M. Was on line
of communication Stood 4 hours trick.

Sat June 14 1862 Cooks brot out rations. Went on post
at 3 P.M. again. Mule came into our lines marked C.S. Was in
speaking distance of Rebel Pickets.

Sun June 15 1862 Came in this morn nothing of interest
occurring today

Mon June 16 1862 Graded street & pulled down Tents to
dry out the ground put boughs in Tent. Wrote Ed

Tues June 17 1862 Went out to work on long Bridge
relieved Duryeas Regt in the afternoon came in at 6 P.M.
Wrote Home Recd ration Whiskey

Wed June 18 1862 Bat Drill before breakfast Nothing
more of interest

Thur June 19 1862 John Hewitt & I built brush Arbor in
front of Tent Inspection & Bat Drill this 6 oclock P.M.

Fri June 20 1862 Felt unwell Lame shoulder Knapsack
drill for lot of Boy's for not being out Roll Call Brigade drill this
5 oclock P.M.

Sat June 21 1862 Am. Mark & I on Guard. Heavy firing
on our left. Comp drill

Sun June 22 1862 Off duty Regt went on Picket Recd
letter from Father Am & I helped carry out veg. soup to the
Boy's Fixed Tent Wrote Home

Mon June 23 1862 Went on Guard again Regt came in Rain. Finished Tent.

Tues June 24 1862 off duty Put bunks in Tent Rain Recd letter from Em. Inspection

Wed June 25 1862 Hot. Charley & I went to wash clothes. Wrote to Emory. Brigade drill Mr Barrett Allotment Commissioner from Mich spoke to us.

Thur June 26 1862 No firing today on front or left but heavy on our Right. Ordered to pack Knapsacks & be ready to leave at a moments notice Went on left & had a fight laid on arms all night This was battle of Mechanicsville

Fri June 27 1862 Packed Knapsacks & fell back fighting commenced about 1 oclock had to fall back Am Wounded in leg. Lost Knapsacks we were routed & retreated bad order Battle of Gaines Mill

Sat June 28 1862 Came across the River with Gen Moore. Found the Regt Started for James River went about 34 miles & camped Rain at night.

Sun June 29 1862 Started again this morn. Recd rations. Went about 6 miles Slept in Woods

Mon June 30 1862 Started again & arrived at the James about noon. Were ordered to fall out at 4 P.M. went out to fight. Rebels opened on our left Gun Boats drove them back. Slept on Field all night.

Tues July 1 1862 No firing this morn on front or right. Went out on Field & waited for Rebels. They came about 5 P.M. fought till dark & was relieved Dick Slightly wounded in Head was left at Hospital Slept at night with H. Hartson. Battle of Malvern Hill

Wed July 2 1862 Fell back to rear on River found the Regt in afternoon Colonel was killed yesterday laid in mud about 6 inches deep. Genl Shields to day Reinforced us

Thur July 3 1862 Rebels Shelled us again this morn. Regt went out to front. T. Tarsney, H & C. Hartson & I started after Breakfast for the Regt got off track stopped in woods & had dinner. Arrived at the Regt at dark went into Tent with Barker & Best & Brown

Fri July 4 1862 Fired the National Salute. Had review. Brigade went out but came in again was not reviewed. Wrote Home. Cleaned Gun

Sat July 5 1862 Wrote to Carrie Moore. Had inspection arms. Recd letters from Home & Carrie.

Sun July 6 1862 Went down to creek & washed clothes. Wrote to Emory.

Mon July 7 1862 Recd letters from Home & Fidelia
Wrote Home. Inspection Dress Parade.

Tues July 8 1862 Barker & I recd a pass from Parson &
went down to landing. Inspect arms. Turned out at 7 P.M. & at
9 P.M. President Lincoln Reviewed us. Came in & went to
eating beans Ben had cooked while we were out.

Wed July 9 1862 Hot. Wrote to Fidelia Inspection Arms.

Thur July 10 1862 Fixed tent. Heavy fireing down River.
Rain this P.M.

Fri July 11 1862 Barker & I were on Guard to Genl
Morells. Recd new Blouse & Knapsacks & Shirt

Sat July 12 1862 Raised tent from Ground Inspection
arms

Sun July 13 1862 Nothing of importance to day. Gus
went to landing & got some soft Bread. Inspection

Mon July 14 1862 Wrote Ed & Em. Compy drill at 6 A.M.
Inspection arms. Doc Chamberlain arrived told me Dick was
down at the landing on Board Vanderbilt

July 15 1862 Went down to landing this morn at six.
Dick came up to camp with Em. Cooked dinner for us. After
dinner we went back to the Boats. I went aboard the Vanderbilt
with Dick Came back to camp & got Arch's Chauncey's &
Franks descriptive list & sent them back with Pease with Dicks.
Were mustered for Pay this P.M. Bout can of Sardines .60 &
had good Supper. Rain hard this eve Dress Parade Bot P.
Folio & Paper & Pencil

Wed July 16 1862 Regt went on Fatigue to cover up the
dead cattle around the Butcher Shop's. Ben & I went & cut Bark
for Bunk. Rain at Night

Thur July 17 1862 Comp drill in Bay- Exercise Went after
Poles put up Bunk. Cleaned Gun Ham for supper. Rain all
night.

Fri July 18 1862 Wrote Home. Recd letter from Home
No drill Inspection arms & Dress Parade

Sat July 19 1862 Recd new Leggins & Caps did not take
cap. Inspection arms & Dress parade

Sun July 20 1862 Inspection Knapsacks. Recd
Haversack's Wrote letter for Barker. Charlie went down to
Landing to See Am. Recd letter from Emory. Dress parade

Mon July 21 1862 One year ago to day was the Battle of
Bull Run. Moved Camp down nearer the River in open Field
Recd A. Tents.

Tues July 22 1862 Went down to River & washed Graded
street. No Dress Parade

Wed July 23 1862 Recd letter for Dick. Compy drill. Battalion drill & Dress parade.

Thur July 24 1862 Was detailed as orderly for Col. Review of Division did not go out

Fri July 25 1862 Review 7½ oclock off duty did not go out. Inspection.

Sat July 26 1862 Thompson & I were excused from drill to go after Boughs wrote Em.

Sun July 27 1862 Washed Clothes Inspection & Dress Parade. B. Merritt arrived.

Mon July 28 1862 Comp Drill Went to landing Recd letter from Home

Tues July 29 1862 Co Drill. Wrote Home. Inspection

Wed July 30 1862 Bot Bread & Butter. Recd letter from Home Inspection & Dress Parade

Thur July 31 1862 Recd letter from Home Wrote to Ed Rain. The Rebels planted Guns on other side river & shelled our camp about one oclock at night. Sent Dick Picture

Fri Aug 1 1862 Wrote Home Co Drill in Manual Genl Inspection. Dress Parade. Colonel Childs arrived

Sat Aug 2 1862 Had orders to be ready to cross the River at 7½ oclock Stayed all day. Took one Prisoner. Went out scouting & run onto Co. A. & was fired into by Co. A. went out with a Flag of Truce. Recd letter from Emory.

Sun Aug 3 1862 Gave Tom Shirt to wash Rain almost all day

Mon Aug 4 1862 On Guard. Signed payroll Recd Pay. Recd letter from Dick

Tues Aug 5 1862 Wrote to Dick & Home. Sent home \$16. dollars in allotment Inspection Battalion drill & Dress Parade

Wed Aug 6 1862 Cleaned Gun. Bot Shirt of Bill Thiel (\$2.00) Inspection

Thur Aug 7 1862 Nothing of importance.

Fri Aug 8 1862 Recd letter from Dick. Co Drill Inspection & Dress Parade Charley went Home

Sat Aug 9 1862 Wrote Dick. Co Drill. Sold Lemonade. Inspection & Dress Parade Recd a letter from Home

Sun Aug 10 1862 Inspection Knapsacks Were ordered to pack up & send Knapsacks in Waggon. Rain One of the 9th came to the Tent (tight) at night & woke us up was put in guard House. Rain

Mon Aug 11 1862 Was ordered to be ready to go at 2 p.m. Did not go. Rain in Afternoon

Tues Aug 12 1862 Brown & I bot box of dates (1.00) Went to River & washed. Gale of Wind & Slight Rain.

Wed Aug 13 1862 On Guard 3rd relief. Co drill Inspection & Dress parade

Thur Aug 14 1862 Was ordered to pack & be ready to go went about midnight Recd letter from Home

Fri Aug 15 1862 Went down the river passed Chas City Court House about 12 M. Had to fall out Burt, Weaver & I slept together 4 miles from Chick River

Sat Aug 16 1862 Got chicken & eggs this morn & started on Stopped to roast corn about 10 a.m. Found the Regt at Burts Ferry at the junction of the James & Chick. Moved on again & went to Williamsburgh Jim Harroun & I bunked on Sidewalk.

Sun Aug 17 1862 Jim & I went a cross the road & got Biscuits for Breakfast. Bot .50 worth Peaches Started for the Regt but it had gone on Felt sick Went as far as Yorktown The 7th Mass. Bat- Boys gave us our Supper Beef Coffee. Stayed near the Bat- all night. Learned the Regt was on the old camp Peach orchard. Our troops were mounting guns on the Rebel Fortifications

Mon Aug 18 1862 Rose early & went on to find the Regt but it had gone Dugan, Ed Taylor & I were together today. Caught Hughs Merritt & Fletcher. Stopped & bot Pies (.05). Dugan & Taylor went on at Big Bethel. Stopped all night at Porters old headquarters

Tues Aug 19 1862 Started on & met the Regt going to New Port News. Stopped at Nigs for Breakfast. Arrived at N. Port News about noon. Had good Swim Saw the Cumberland & congress Sticking out of the water. Went on Board the Belvidere at 3 P.M.

The Fourth entered the Pope Campaign, taking part in the engagements at Gainsville, Manassas.

The Antietam Campaign / Maryland Campaign

Antietam

The 4th Michigan was held in reserve along with the 5th Corps at Antietam. Their primary purpose was to protect McClellan's 20 pound parrot guns. Members of the 4th observed and heard the noise's of the Civil War's most bloodiest day but they were not an active participant in this horrific event.

Shepardstown Ford

The 5th corps under Major General Fitz John Porter is given the order to pursue the confederate rearguard and attack and harass it as it retreats from Antietam. The rear guard of the Army of Northern Virginia is under the command of Major General A. P. Hill and Brigadier General Pendleton.

The 4th Michigan is given orders to cross the river and capture the confederate artillery that is

harassing the 5th Corps. The Volunteers step off and ford the river. At the point the 4th crosses it is almost 60 rods wide. As they proceed to the opposite shore they are harassed by enemy fire. As at New Bridge it sounds like 1000's of bees are buzzing around their heads. Miraculously like New Bridge no one is being hit and the shower of lead passes harmlessly over their heads. As the 4th clears the shoreline they are opposed by 4 regiments. The 4th Michigan attacks and captures four confederate brass 12 pd. artillery pieces. The confederate infantry is vanquished. The 4th couldn't continue the attack, darkness had set in. The 4th Michigan Infantry returns to the opposite shore with the successful completion of their orders. The 4th again crossed the river early the next morning capturing confederate stragglers. They ford back to their lines and return again to their camp.

The next morning the 118th Pennsylvania is ordered across the ford. The 4th Michigan shows them where they crossed the day before. The 118th crosses the river. After reaching the opposite shore the 118th moves in land at this moment confederate Major General A. P. Hill launches a counter attack. The rebels take the 118th Pennsylvania by complete surprise. In the battle that ensues the 118th takes 269 casualties and is almost annihilated. The Pennsylvania men retreat across the ford. Immediately the 4th Michigan is called to arms and moves to the ford. This prevents A. P. Hill's confederates from crossing the river to continue their attack. Thus ends the pursuit of the Confederate troops after the battle of Antietam. After the battle of Shepardstown the 118th Pennsylvania will become known as the "Corn Exchange Regiment"

(This history of the Battle of Shepardstown can be verified in the Letters of Sgt. Edward Taylor of the 4th Michigan Co. A, letters of Pvt. Silas Sadler 4th Mi. Co. G and the diary of Lt. John Bancroft 4th Michigan Infantry. (Provided by George Wilkinson and the Bentley Library))

Sadler, Silas W., Lenawee County. Enlisted in company G, Fourth Michigan Infantry, June 20, 1861, at Adrian, for 3 years age 18. Mustered June 20, 1861. Mustered out at expiration of term of service at Detroit, Mich., June 30, 1864.

Bancroft, John H., Wayne County. Enlisted in Company I Fourth Michigan Infantry, as Sergeant, June 20, 1861, at Adrian, for 3 years age 18. Mustered June 20, 1861. First Sergeant July 1, 1862. Discharged to accept promotion Sept. 28, 1862. Reported Second Lieutenant, company C, July, 1862. Commissioned First Lieutenant, company K. Sept. 3, 1862. Mustered Sept 28, 1862. Transferred to company H, March 12, 1863. Commanding company H, from July 2, 1863, to Nov., 1863. Commanding company B from May 10 1864. Mustered out at expiration of term of service at Detroit, Mich., June 30, 1864

The Fredericksburg Campaign

Fredericksburg



5th Corps Monument
at Fredericksburg Va.

BATTLE OF FREDERICKSBURG

speech by Henry Seage

March 2, 1899

Companions:

At the close of the disastrous and bloody battle of Groveton, or as we call it, "The Second Bull Run," McClellan was called to supersede Pope in command of the Army of the Potomac, and under his lead the army marched into Maryland, and there met the same old enemy, Lee, on the battlefield of

Antietam. I will not dwell here but ask you to cross the Potomac with me in pursuit of Lee's retreating hosts. Down the Valley we go by easy marches, gradually pushing our enemy back until Warrenton, Va., is reached. Here the Army comes to a halt and takes a rest.

On the 10th of November, 1862, we receive orders for a Review by Corps, and we begin the preparation for a general "clean-up." Guns and bayonets are cleaned, brasses polished, army shoes "shined" by the application of a pork rind, a strong requisition is made on the Company barber, who armed with an empty cracker box as a chair and a razor that has long outlived its usefulness takes position in the Company street and awaits the coming of his victims. "None but the brave deserve a shave" is his motto, and brave they must be who voluntarily face such a torture. But the skinning process is at an end, guns and bayonets glisten in the sunlight as we take position, while the bugle sounds the assembly.

Out in front of the little village of Warrenton, on the crest of a range of hills, we take our position in the Corps. Down the pike is seen a cloud of dust and shortly after "Little Mac" (as he is called by the boys) accompanied by a full staff halts to the front and right of the corps, and as he passes, in company with our "Fitz John," each Brigade massed in close column gives them a cheer.

After the review there is read to each regiment Little Mac's "farewell of the Army," and we return with sad faces and hearts to our camps to speculate as to who will succeed to the command. But at parade we are relieved from further speculation by the reading of general order of Gen. Burnside, who "with doubts and misgivings assumed command" by order of the President. Under our new commander we break camp on the 16th of November, 1862, and continue our march southward and on the night of the 23rd, in a drenching rain, we halt near Falmouth. Here we remain till December 11th, when at 4 A.M. we break camp and head for the River and Fredericksburg.

What a train of thought does the mention of Fredericksburg bring to each of us! As we file out of camp we hear the signal gun and then follows a heavy cannonade. Then we realize in part what is in store for us. Arriving at the River opposite the town, we halt and learn that the pontoon bridges have not been laid. But first the pickets and sharpshooters who have taken refuge in the houses along the bank must be dislodged. So thirty pieces of heavy artillery are placed in position and hurl their deadly missiles upon the city; the lighter batteries join in the fearful din and uproar and for a time all other sounds are lost in their thundering reverberations.

The fire slackens and the engineers attempt to lay the bridges, but in vain. Back they come, leaving their dead and dying. Then all the available batteries are brought up and join the thirty great guns and begin their work of destruction. The roar is indescribably awful, the city walls of brick hurl back a thousand echoes which beat up against the bluff and roll back again, convulsing the earth as though the heavens were rent asunder.

Once more the fire ceases and silence succeeds the fearful din of battle. Slowly the cloud of smoke rolls back and there stands the city in utter desolation. A huge column of black smoke towers above the city, while livid flames leap and hiss with fiery tongues from roof to roof.

But still the pits are held by the "Johnnies," and it is apparent that the artillery cannot dislodge them and the bridges cannot be laid unless the Rebs are driven out by a bold dash. Volunteers are called for to cross in boats and the 7th Michigan Infantry offers its services and is soon on its way, while the enemy rain upon them a storm of leaden hail. Unflinchingly the old 7th presses forward and, gaining the opposite shore sweep the rifle pits and houses and capture several prisoners. The bridges are then laid and the Army crosses and takes position in the streets of the city. But to the old 7th Michigan Infantry belongs the glory of opening up a highway for the army and making victory possible and retreat sure. The occupation of the city having been accomplished, the next move is to drive the Rebels from their stronghold in the rear of the city. The Rebel lines extend from the River, six miles above the city, in the form of a semi-circle to Port Royal below, and occupy a very strong position, guarded by a range of low hills. Immediately in the rear and only about half a mile from the city was the center of the Rebel line of battle and was known as "Marye's Hill." On the crest of this, Lee had planted several guns and at its foot was a heavy stone wall, behind which the Rebel Infantry was posted. About one hundred yards in front of this stone wall was a deep ditch, which had been filled with water by tapping Hazel Creek.

General Sumner commanded the right, Hooker the center and Franklin the left of our line, my regiment, the 4th Michigan Infantry, being in the center under Hooker. The disposition of the troops occupied the entire day and night of the 12th; and dawn of the 13th of December found us in line and ready for the signal. This was to be given by Franklin, who was to push the Rebels on the left flank, in the hope that Lee would take troops from our right and center and so weaken it that Hooker and Sumner could break through and gain Lee's rear and communications and force a surrender. My

recital must now be confined to the part of the line in which our regiment bore a conspicuous part. Our Corps filled the streets of the city, except those leading out to the Rebel's position. Not a house escapes the prying eyes of our soldiers. Costly pianos were used to cook our coffee. Beautiful oil paintings were hung on the line of stacked arms. Captain Parsons' darkey, boots and all, had found a resting place on a satin covered sofa, while here and there soldiers could be seen, taking solid comfort in beautifully upholstered furniture, studying and reading the many books taken from the deserted houses of the first families and so we put in the time, waiting for the signal gun.

About nine A.M. we hear the roar of battle, away off to our left, and we know that Franklin has crossed and is seeking to turn Stonewall Jackson, and about ten A.M. word comes that he has driven the Rebel line back nearly a mile. Then the order comes for us to advance – we fall in, “take arms,” right face, and at a double quick we turn the streets to the right, leading out to the Rebs' position.

As the column comes into view the Rebs greet us with shot and shell and grape, but on we go at a double quick and are soon outside the city; swinging into close column by divisions the Corps moves on over the gradual slope up to the Rebel's line. We are left in front and the 3rd Division is in the advance, followed closely by the 2nd. Soon we reach a little ravine or depression and we halt in support of the two divisions ahead. These are now fairly within the “horse-shoe” with Marye's Hill the objective point. The Rebel artillery is concentrated and rain upon them a perfect storm of grape and canister. No troops can withstand such a tempest of ruin and the head gives way and falls back on the 2nd Division, and that, too, is thrown into disorder. Back these come on our division, will the first division catch the panic and it, too, fall back? Griffin, realizing the critical moment, orders: “Lie still, boys, and let them pass through.”

Soon the fleeing ones are jumping over us, but assured by Griffin's words we lie flat and let them pass, when word comes, “Forward First Division” and away we go to the front on a double quick. Soon we are passing over ground just abandoned by the 3rd Division, and what a sight! Over the bodies of headless, armless, legless, disfigured men we pass. To the right and to the left are the lifeless forms of the slain. Oh! What a sacrifice, for what: History has yet to record how far that “slaughter pen” tended to bring to a close the war. But on we go, with a yell. Up to this time we have been sheltered in a measure by the smoke, but as we pass on and near the hill the smoke is above our heads and seeing a fresh column close to their works, the Rebels redouble their fire and add to the storm of grape the Infantry fire from the stone wall, for we are now within musket range.

Before this terrible storm our boys go down in hundreds, but we press on, so close to the hill that we are soon out of the range of the cannon in front. But from the right and left our Division is plowed by the Rebel cannon.

Reaching the old R.R. or ditch embankment, we discover a new enemy – the ditch with water neck deep. One thought seems to move the whole Division, for we are now without general orders, and instead of attempting the passage of the ditch we lie down and refuse to make a further useless effort. If we succeed in crossing the ditch, then the stone wall must be scaled, then the batteries above taken at the point of the bayonet. All this flashes through our minds and we know that with our terribly thinned ranks and without support this is impossible. So we flatten ourselves on the ground and return the fire of the Rebs.

Shortly after taking position we hear the yell of the Irish Brigade on our right and witness that splendid charge of the 69th, 63rd, and 88th New York, 28th Massachusetts and 116th Pennsylvania, five regiments composing this Brigade. With wonderful courage did these brave men charge against that stronghold, until two-thirds of their number strewed the ground. Never in the history of the Army of the Potomac was there such a pitiless, useless, hopeless slaughter. Never did men fight better, or die, alas, more fruitlessly than those thrown against these heights and stone walls, bristling with an hundred cannon. Night only put an end to the slaughter. About midnight we were recalled and we again stack arms in the streets of Fredericksburg; but now there are but a few. Thousands of brave men who, only a few hours before, had marched along these streets, had reveled in the luxuries of these deserted houses of the proud and aristocratic Virginians now lie dead only a few steps away.

It would seem incredible that on the very heel of this horrible carnage, Burnside should decide to renew the attack on Marye's Hill the next day. But such was the case. But thanks to Hooker and Sumner, who refused to be a party to it, the orders were not issued.

So we remain in the city during the 14th and 15th and on the night of the 15th our Corps, the last to leave, was withdrawn and re-crossed the River and into its old camps it went, but with only a little over half the men that moved out of these camps on the morning of the 11th of December.

The next day (December 16th) the Rebels again occupied the town and thenceforth the Pickets

fired across the stream with as business-like an air as though the Rappahannock had always been the boundary line of two hostile empires over which no armed force had ever ventured.

H.S. Seage

Color Serg't 4th Reg. Mich. Infantry

Company E

Detroit, Mich., March 2, 1899.

Footnote:

from: Michigan Commandery Loyal Legion, Vernor Building, Detroit, Mich.

Copied by: The Works Progress Administration, June 8, 1937

now in: Michigan Historical Collections, The University of Michigan, Bentley Historical Library,
Ann Arbor, Mich.

(This narrative is posted here with the permission of Steve Roberts descendant of Henry Seage. It is posted for it's scholastic value and is not for commercial use without permission from the owners and heirs there in:)

Seage, Henry S., Hillsdale County. Enlisted in company E, Fourth Michigan Infantry, Sept. 27, 1861, at Hudson, for three years. Mustered Oct. 8, 1861. On detached service with Company K, First Infantry, by order, July 6, 1864, Petersburg, Va., Sargent. Discharged at expiration of term of service near Petersburg Va., Sept. 10, 1864. Was in the following battles: New Bridge, Siege of Yorktown, Mechanicsville, Gaines' Mill, Hanover Court House, Malvern Hill, Second Bull Run, Antietam, Shepardstown Ford, Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, Gettysburg, Rappahannock, Mine Run, Wilderness, Laurel Hill, Spottsylvania Court House, and North Anna River

4th Michigan casualties at Fredericksburg

Fredericksburg, Va. - 14

1863

The Chancellorsville Campaign

Kelly's Ford - Early spring in 1863 prior to the advance to Gettysburg the 4th guarded the Kelly's Ford protecting it from incursions by the confederate cavalry. As had been the 4th's responsibility in 1862 it protected the flank of the Grand Army of the Potomac.

Chancellorsville

May 2nd Arrived at Chancellorsville build breastworks. General Griffin arrives with the rest of the Division. The battle has started in the right center of the Union lines. The 4th is under arms for the whole night.

May 3, 1863 the 5th Corp is ordered forward stem the tide of the Stonewall Jackson's advance. The 11th Corp has completely collapsed in front of Stone Jackson's Division's attack. The 11th Corp is retreating through the 5th Corps lines. General Meade commands General Griffin to choose two Regiments to advance forward to a rise in the ground and Form a battle line to stop the confederate advance. Griffin chooses the 4th & 16th Michigan Infantry Regiments. They double quick to the high ground. Once there they deploy into a battle line of over 1000 rifles. The 4th is on the left flank and the 16th is on the right. They are deployed and ready to address the advancing confederate division. Griffin's Battery is deployed on the rise. They are to the left of the 4th. Griffin's battery contains 12 artillery pieces.

Here's their conversation waiting for the confederate's attack:

Gen. Meade: "Have you placed your regiments in position general?"

General Griffin: "I have!"

Gen. Meade: "But are they troops on whom you can depend?"

Gen. Griffin: "General they are Michigan Men!"

Gen. Meade: "But will they hold their ground?"

Gen Griffin: “Yes General!, *THEY WILL HOLD IT AGAINST HELL!*”

Stonewall Jackson's troops advance through the trees. Griffin's batteries fire. They throw solid shot and canister into the rebel battle lines. The Michigan Troops give a loud Wolverine yell! Jackson's troops attack. As they approach the 4th's & 16th's battle line the Michigan troops show extreme patience. The Wolverines wait until the confederates are within 150 yards of their line before they fire a volley from over 1000 rifles. Jackson's troops suffer huge casualties and retreat back to the tree line. They attack six more times and are repulsed in the same manner. The Wolverines have held allowing the remnants of the 11th Corp to retreat safely behind the 5th Corps works. The right side of the tree line erupts in flame. The 4th can hear the yells of the wounded as they are engulfed in the flames.

THEY HELD IT AGAINST HELL!

After the battle the 4th Michigan is ordered into the 5th Corp's Earthworks. The 4th moves to right and is positioned behind the 16th Michigan who are manning the works. The confederates have dug in behind in the tree line. They snipe at the 4th Michigan as they rest behind the works. No one can raise their head for fear of being shot by the confederate sharpshooters. A confederate battery had been moved forward and lobbed shells at the 5th's Corps works. Most of these fall behind the 4th where the 11th corps is recovering. Some of these hit the trees above the 4th raining debris on the soldiers. Two fourth Michigan boys are killed by falling shrapnel. A member of company G is killed by a sharpshooter as he tries to hide from the debilitating sun.

Through out the day different parts of the line erupt into exchanges of fire with the confederates. Tiring of the confederate shelling the Irish Brigade is ordered forward to silence the confederate cannon. The Irish jump off at 3:00 pm. they run across the field under heavy rebel fire. The Irish Brigade move into the confederate works. The hand to hand combat is fierce. Again fire erupts in the woods. The wounded are again heard screaming as the blaze in gulfs them. Within 10 minutes the Irish Brigade retreats to the safety of the Union works. As they return the numbers are reduced by 25%.

May 4th - The rebels press their last attack at noon. The attack is broken by Griffin's battery. The word comes from General Hooker that the 5th corps is to press into the wood and clear them of rebels. The 4th Michigan moves to the front of the breastworks and steps off deploying as skirmishers in the advance of the attack. As the Michigan men move forward they give a Wolverine yell firing and reloading as they advance across the field. The grotesque and deformed bodies from previous attacks lie everywhere. Some burned so severely you can't tell if their Union or Confederate, black or white.

The fourth pushes in the rebel skirmish line. Rebel soldiers fall back to the safety of their works. The 4th Michigan gets within 20 to 30 rods of the confederate earthworks when the rebels batteries open up with grape and canister shot. The 4th moves into shallow dip in the ground. They hug the ground to avoid being hit by buzzing rebel projectiles. Firing from the hollow they exchange fire with the confederates for several minutes. The order is given to withdraw to their works. As they return to their lines they bust the rifles that are laying on the ground against several trees. This insures that these rifles can't be used by rebels at future time. 30 men are killed or wounded during this action. It starts to rain. This signals the end of the battle of Chancellorsville. The rain is so heavy it is useless continue the fight. The Army of the Potomac starts to move out toward U.S. Ford at 10 o'clock that evening.

(This history of the 4th Michigan at Chancellorsville can be verified in the Pvt. James Houghton diary Pvt. in the 4th Michigan Infantry.)

Houghton, James, Drafted Feb. 10, 1863, for 9 months, from Cohoctah. Mustered April 7, 1863. Assigned to company K Fourth Infantry. Joined regiment April 19, 1863. Discharged at expiration of term of service at Bealton, Va. Nov. 11, 1863.

Chancellorsville, Va. - 30 +

The Gettysburg Campaign





*"Saving the Flag" - Don Troiani artist
Wheatfield - The Battle of Gettysburg
July 2, 1863*

" You are now standing on free soil once more and now give three cheers for the free states!"

- Harrison Jeffords

as the 4th Michigan Regiment stepped the soil of the state Pennsylvania.

The 4th was moving towards the Battle of Gettysburg. The men gave a deafening Wolverine cheer

Gettysburg - The 4th's moment in time: the "Wheat field "July 2, 1863 Gettysburg, Pa.. After being pushed to limit by the confederate onslaught. The 4th Michigan regiment secured the "Wheatfield ". During this time there was major action on Stony Hill. The Union forces under Zook were overrun by Confederate troops. This left the Michigan 4th's flank unprotected. As the 4th Michigan advanced the color bearer shouts out "Colonel I'll be damned if I don't think we are faced in the wrong way! The rebs are up there in the woods behind us, on the right!" The Confederate infantry attacked. The 4th Michigan pivoted rearward folding on it's center to address this new threat. The 4th Michigan upon having to defend itself on two fronts had to retreat. As they were leaving the field the color bearer dropped the colors and ran from the field. The 4th Michigan's standard was captured. Colonel Harrison Jeffords seeing this rallied his remaining troops and rushed to save the colors. Colonel Jeffords was bayoneted by a Confederate infantryman as he reclaimed the 4th's flag. Colonel Harrison Jeffords died of his wound on July 3, 1863. Colonel Jeffords, a 26 year old attorney from Dexter, Michigan, was the only officer to be bayoneted on either side during the Civil War. His words as he was bayoneted were " Mother, Mother, Mother". After fierce fighting the 4th lost it's colors. This valiant attempt to save the flag stemmed the tide of the Confederate attack allowing the Union forces to effect a solid defense behind the "Wheatfield." This saved the day for the Army of the Potomac. **(hurrah!, hurrah!, hurrah!)**



Colonel Harrison Jeffords

(from Monroe Historical Museum collection)

4th Michigan casualties at Gettysburg (Wheatfield)

Wheatfield - 25 killed, 64 wounded, and 76 missing

Total casualties: 165

Houghton, James, Drafted Feb. 10, 1863, for 9 months, from Cohoctah. Mustered April 7, 1863. Assigned to company K Fourth Infantry. Joined regiment April 19, 1863. Discharged at expiration of term of service at Bealton, Va. Nov. 11, 1863.

Seage, Henry S., Hillsdale County. Enlisted in company E, Fourth Michigan Infantry, Sept. 27, 1861, at Hudson, for three years. Mustered Oct. 8, 1861. On detached service with Company K, First Infantry, by order, July 6, 1864, Petersburg, Va., Sargent. Discharged at expiration of term of service near Petersburg Va., Sept. 10, 1864. [Was in the following battles: New Bridge, Siege of Yorktown, Mechanicsville, Gaines' Mill, Hanover Court House, Malvern Hill, Second Bull Run, Antietam, Shepardstown Ford, Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, Gettysburg, Rappahannock, Mine Run, Wilderness, Laurel Hill, Spottsylvania Court House, and North Anna River](#)

photo of the Wheatfield after the battle
(may they rest in peace)

map by John Heiser
from the book
“ the 4th Michigan Volunteer Infantry at Gettysburg”
“The Battle of the Wheatfield”

The 4th Michigan Monument
in the “Wheat Field”



Gettysburg National Military Battlefield

Gettysburg, Pa.

Books I Recommend on the 4th Michigan Infantry

“ the 4th Michigan Volunteer Infantry at Gettysburg”

“The Battle of the Wheatfield”

by Martin Bertera & Ken Oberholtzer

Marty has written a new book about the 4th called:

“The 4th Michigan Infantry at The Battle of New Bridge, Virginia”

by Martin Bertera

If you wish to purchase these outstanding books e-mail Martin Bertera at:

@ berteramarty@netscape.net

**4th Michigan Soldiers buried in National Cemetery at
Gettysburg**

**Number of Michigan Men in the National Cemetery at Gettysburg
(coins are for safe passage)**

1864

The Wilderness Campaign

Spotsylvania Court House

May 10th 1864 the battle of Spotsylvania Court House General Warren commander of the 5th corps orders the 1st Division 2nd Brigade to advance on Anderson's Confederate works on Laurel Hill. They are to probe for weaknesses in Porter Alexander's works. If a weakness can be detected he will advance the 5th Corp through it and take the works.

Warren orders an artillery barrage of Anderson's works. Although it appeared that nothing could stand through the Union fuselage Porter Anderson had used the lull to strengthen his earthworks. The works remained as strong as ever. At dawn the 4th Michigan Infantry and 22nd Massachusetts Infantry are deployed as skirmishers and advance down the Brock road. Parker's artillery begins to fire canister and explosive shot into them. Undaunted the 4th and 22nd continue forward. Behind Log breastworks Kershaw's & Field's infantry fire wall of lead into the skirmishers. Caught in a crossfire the skirmishers retreat to their works.

During this time Sgt. Moses A. Luce tumbled into a ditch. He lay prostrate. This is his account of what happened. "Listening to the whiz of the balls over my head and the cries of the wounded and yells of the enemy with all the speed I had I ran down the hillside and across the valley under the fire of the enemy, and succeeded in reaching the first rifle pit of our pickets and leaped into it." Learning a fellow officer lay wounded between the lines he crawled back towards the Confederate works. The officer's leg had shattered by a ball. Not being able to lift him Sgt Luce knelt so the officer could climb on his back. "Then rising and in a stooping position I carried him rapidly to the rear of our Line." For this Sgt Moses A. Luce of Co E was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor.

United States Army Official Record

The Congressional medal of Honor

LUCE, MOSES A.

Rank and organization: Sergeant, Company E, 4th Michigan Infantry. **Place and date:** At Laurel Hill, Va., 10 May 1864. **Entered service at:** Hillsdale, Mich. **Born:** 14 May 1842, Payson, Adams County, Ill. **Date of issue:** 7 February 1895. **Citation:** Voluntarily returned in the face of the advancing enemy to the assistance of a wounded and helpless comrade, and carried him, at imminent peril, to a place of safety.

Luce, Moses A., McDonough, III. Enlisted in company E, Fourth Michigan Infantry June 20, 1861, at Adrian, for 3 years, age 22. Mustered June 20, 1861. Sergeant Jan. 1, 1863. **Won Congressional Medal of Honor for valor at Spotsylvania Court House May 10, 1863.** Mustered out at expiration of term of service at Detroit, Mich., June 28, 1864

Wilderness & Spotsylvania Court House - 10 killed, 62 wounded, & 8 missing

total casualties: 80

Siege of Petersburg

4th Michigan casualties for the Wilderness Campaign and the siege of Petersburg

North Anna, Va. - 2

Totopotomoy, Va. - 2

Bethesda Church, Va. - 6

Petersburg, Va. - 4

Pickett, Va. - 1

Total casualties: 15

1865

4th Michigan is reorganized and sent to the Western theater

Patriotic Cover From Michigan

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