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THE OAKLAND COUNTY PIONEER & HISTORICAL SOCIETY
405 Cesar E. Chavez Avenue Pontiac, Michigan 48342

April 2011

LETTER FROM MIKE WEST, PRESIDENT



Each time I drive onto our Pine Grove campus it strikes me as to what a unique place we have, this island of history in the midst of busy Oakland County. The setting with its trees and collection of historic buildings immediately “downloads” you into another era. Newcomers to

Pine Grove, also, marvel at our treasure: The almost pristine Wisner House; the restored School House with its collection of McGuffey readers; and the rebuilt Carriage House with its library and museum. It is not by coincidence how all this came to be.

Equally impressive is the ongoing story of how Pine Grove has evolved and its preservation—all accomplished through the effort and involvement of members past and members present. If you come to the Carriage House on any given Tuesday or Wednesday it is impressive to see the many activities being orchestrated by members and visitors. We are very involved with the Sesquicentennials of the Civil War and the City of Pontiac which entail a host of activities and are bringing many visitors to us. We are “showing” OCPHS at local events and have been invited by other organizations to speak about our Society. We have had some excellent Small Talks and four more are on the agenda. The Summer Social Committee has started up and is working hard to bring us another super event. New materials have been donated and are in the accessioning process. The Wisner House Committee is endeavoring to ensure its preservation and you will be pleased to see the results during your next visit. All this is possible because of our dedicated volunteers, but we have many new members joining in. We invite you to visit and “get caught up” on all that is happening.

It is reassuring to know that members present are carrying on the work of members past. Most vital to all this is the Wisner House Roof Replacement Project. This is not a “maybe” or “what if” project; we must launch our roof contractor this June. The Funding Committee is vigorously pursuing avenues to get us to our goal, which is now \$52,000. Each member recently received an Annual Giving letter which included a request for the Roof Project. So, I have to remind you, if you have not already done so, please help with your contribution. Sincerely, Mike

CALL FOR OCPHS BOARD CANDIDATES: APPLICATION DEADLINE MAY 10

We invite OCPHS members interested in serving on the board of directors to contact the office for an information packet detailing requirements and a survey to complete and return by Tuesday, May 10.

A slate of candidates will be presented at our Annual Meeting and Election on Saturday, May 21 at 2 p.m. at Pine Grove. Board members serve three-year terms; officers are elected annually. Our success depends upon the hard work of members willing to serve. If you would like to explore this possibility, please let us know.

THANK YOU, DONORS!

By Anne Liimatta

Thank you to everyone who has responded so quickly to Mike West’s recent fund raising letter. We realize it takes a special sacrifice today to participate. Thank you for opening your hearts to Pine Grove at this challenging time in our history. Your generous gifts have been coming in each day, making going to the mailbox a real joy! At this writing, we have raised \$4,275 for the Wisner House Roof Replacement/ Restoration Fund (to be matched by our principal donor), and \$2,880 for Annual Giving (for general operating costs). Thank you for your loyal support of our mission and of this historic place.

PINE GROVE PART OF BLUE STAR PROGRAM: FREE ADMISSION TO MILITARY PERSONNEL

We are proud to be among the many museums nationwide participating in the Blue Star program,



offering free admission to active duty military service personnel and their immediate family members. The official program runs from Memorial Day to Labor Day, but in recognition of their service and sacrifice, we will waive admission for active duty service people and their immediate families throughout 2011.

SUMMER SOCIAL NEWS

By Mary Connell

Our Summer Social Planning Committee is in full swing getting ready for the big day, Saturday, July 30 from noon – 5 p.m. Our theme is “*Rally Round the Flag.*” We need assistance in many areas. If you could help we will surely appreciate it. Specifically:

- Vintage cars or trucks to display around the Grove. Do you have one or do you know someone who would like to display theirs?
- Donate items for White Elephant sale. Begin collecting now; ask your family and friends to donate also. We can store these for you—no need for you to hang onto them until July.
- We’d like to display vintage flags. If you have any to lend, please let us know.
- We would like to have a golf cart that day, to transport handicapped individuals and also for transporting items in the Grove.
- Our flag pole broke during a storm last year and it would be wonderful if someone has one to donate. A Civil War Commemoration just isn’t the same without Old Glory flying.

If you could help with any of these items, please call the office. Further needs will be communicated by email or our next Gazette. Thanks to all of you for your support of OCPHS.

SUMMER SOCIAL SEEKS WHITE ELEPHANTS!



Last year’s White Elephant sale at the Summer Social was a big success, but White Elephant Chairman Fred Liimatta has even bigger plans this year! He’s collecting donations of usable “stuff” between now and mid-July for the sale on July 30. If you have items you don’t want but someone else might, we’ll accept them at OCPHS. Drop them off on Tuesdays or Wednesdays between 11 – 3, or for large items or loads, call Fred at 248-931-3583 to arrange a time for pick up or delivery.

MEMBERS IN MOTION

By Anne Liimatta, Membership Co-chair

Are you retired and looking for a place to make a difference? OCPHS is the place for you! Come spend some time with member mentors Mary and Anne. Together, we’ll look for a match for your talents and interests. How about working on exhibits, or the antique clothing collection, or event plans? Creating advertising, repairing furniture, doing yard work, or learning to be a tour guide?

Your friendship and enthusiasm will make a big difference. We’ll welcome your phone call or message at 248-338-6732. Here are some examples of recent Members in Motion:

- Guy & Nancy Duffield and Bob Nelson donated a combined \$3,000 to start the Annual Giving and Roof Replacement drives
- Bill Powers planned interesting Small Talks
- Cheryl Cross wrote a new publicity brochure
- Jackie Tobbe kept the membership rolls up-to-date while waiting for gardening season
- New member Dee Nance staffed our booth at the Waterford Expo

Thanks to everyone for volunteering your time and energy to OCPHS/Pine Grove!

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

The following new members have joined since the last issue of the *Gazette*. They include folks from around the corner and around the world:

Butcher & Baecker Const.Co.	Rochester Hills
Clink, William	Rochester Hills
Craft, James	Royal Oak
DeWeese, Pamela	Birmingham
Gordon, Eugene	Scotland
Holmes, Daniel	Highland
Living, Judy	Waterford
Machnee, Dody	Sterling Heights
Porter, Linda	Pontiac
Randall, Lou	Australia
Stenke, Barbara	Utica
Stone, Katie	Bloomfield Hills
Wilde, Wayne	Waterford

Remember our matching campaign continues, too. Dues from new memberships will be matched by a generous donor, doubling the financial support that dues provide. Give a gift membership or encourage a friend to join. Everyone with an interest in county history or in Pine Grove’s preservation is welcome. Dues received now are good to July 1, 2012.

CHARLES PIQUETTE: DETROIT SILVERSMITH

By Ray Henry

One of Pine Grove's many treasures lies hidden away in a closet. This artifact of a patrician life style is never on display, and the mansion's visitors have never seen it. But once it was the pride of the tea table—a symbol of refinement and good manners. A pair of silver sugar tongs would have indicated to visitors who came to call that the lady of the house valued both conversation and style. Tea was a very popular drink in the early days of Oakland County, and Pontiac could boast several purveyors of tea on Saginaw Street.

General Anthony Wayne



Made by Detroit silversmith Charles Piquette sometime around 1840, these tongs form a link with the past. Charles Piquette was the youngest son of Jean-Baptiste Piquette, a silversmith who arrived in Detroit from Montréal in 1803. Baptized at Notre-Dame de Montréal on January 21, 1779, Jean-Baptiste was the son of Charles Amable Piquette and

Marie-Joseph LeDuc. He apprenticed with a silversmith in Montréal and, arriving in Detroit, formed a partnership with Pierre-Jean Desnoyers, a silversmith born in Paris in 1772. Desnoyers had arrived in Detroit, by way of Pittsburg, on June 1, 1796, accompanying General Anthony Wayne's army then on its way to the Northwest Territory. He was 24 years old, and was immediately commissioned by Col. Jean-François Hamtramck as armorer, a position he held until 1803.¹ The firm of Piquette & Desnoyers

¹ Jean-François Hamtramck (1756-1803) was a French Canadian from Québec who joined the Continental Army during the Revolutionary War and became a decorated officer. After the war, he was made commander of Vincennes where in 1787 he negotiated a peace treaty with local Native American tribes.

In 1793 Hamtramck was named lieutenant colonel in the Legion of the United States led by General Anthony Wayne to secure the Northwest Territory. Hamtramck was cited for bravery at the Battle of Fallen Timbers in 1794. Col. Hamtramck was appointed the first commandant of Fort Wayne [Indiana]. In 1796 he led the garrison to secure Fort Maumee. Then, on July 11, 1796 he raised the American flag at Fort Lernoult (later renamed Fort Shelby). He remained commandant of Detroit until his death on April 11, 1803, living in a house on land near the present bridge to Belle Isle. He was buried at the church of Ste. Anne de Detroit, his body being moved in 1817 to the new Saint Anne's, then in 1866 to Mount Elliot Cemetery.

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jean_François_Hamtramck

did a successful business until the great fire of 1805, "which occasioned the loss of most of their entire stock, and the firm dissolved."

Pierre-Jean Desnoyers, now Peter J. Desnoyers, purchased a lot on the corner of Jefferson and Bates where he built a small building with two wings. On one side of the building he opened a general store, and on the other he continued his business as a silversmith. In 1822, he abandoned his silversmith trade, concentrating on his mercantile business. Desnoyers went on to hold a number of public offices. He was one of the first trustees of the University of Michigan, an alderman for the city of Detroit, and the director and later president of the Bank of Detroit. Peter J. Desnoyers died in 1846 at his residence on Griswold Street. He left a large estate.

Colonel Jean-Francois Hamtramck



In the fire of June of 1805 Jean-Baptiste Piquette lost both his business and his house. Like other Detroiters, he rebuilt and formed his own silversmith business. In 1806 he acquired an apprentice, Jean-Louis Monet, but the contract was aborted after three years. In 1809 Piquette married Éléonore Descomps dit Labadie. They had two sons Jean-Baptiste (1809-1851) and Charles (1813-1859). Both sons chose the same profession as their father. In 1812 Jean-Baptiste Piquette was among a number of Detroit citizens of French Canadian origin who helped to purchase canon powder for the American cause. Jean-Baptiste Piquette died in Detroit on April 24, 1813. He was only thirty-four years old. He was buried at Sainte Anne's and his business most likely went to his elder son, Jean-Baptiste, *fils*.

Jean-Baptiste's other son, Charles Piquette, probably apprenticed with Levi Brown, a Detroit jeweler and silversmith who made fancy engraved watch cases

and imported the movements from England. Brown was in business with his brother-in-law, Chauncery Payne. In 1836 Levi Brown started making gold pens. He made the pens, which were a novelty at the time, the same way he made watch cases, one by one and with great care. He charged \$5 for each gold nib, which was very expensive at the time, but his Detroit customers thought it cheap, considering that they would never again need to cure and trim a goose quill. In the late 1830s, Brown moved his business from Detroit to New York, concentrating on his gold pen business. Today he is remembered as the pioneer of the gold pen industry.

When Levi Brown left Detroit he sold his workshop to his employee, Charles Piquette. Charles turned the business into the Piquette Pen Company of Detroit. In addition, Charles continued to work as a silversmith. By 1837 Piquette's shop was located at 97 Jefferson Ave., on the northwest corner of Griswold and Jefferson. The building was a two-story frame building on a stone foundation. It had a basement that was used as a saloon or refreshment room, operated by William Carson, Sr. as the "American Coffee House" until sometime around 1851. In the early days, these "refreshment" rooms were frequently referred to as "retreats" or "shades." The "Piquette" jewelry store was on the ground floor.

Charles Piquette Sugar Tongs



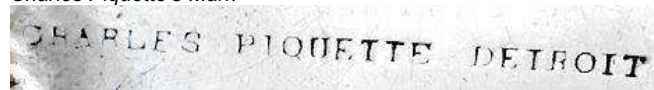
In the Collection of the Oakland Co. Pioneer and Historical Society

The coin silver sugar tongs in the Oakland County Pioneer and Historical Society collection were most likely made in the Piquette workshop on Jefferson Avenue. They were the property of Roxanna Sherwood Rice, the wife of Charles H. Rice. Roxanna and Charles were married in Pontiac on September, 6, 1841. Their marriage certificate, which is really a letter validating their marriage is in our manuscript collection. The sugar tongs, possibly a wedding gift, the marriage certificate, and Roxanna's black lace wedding veil were donated to OCPHS in 1945 by Isabel N. Snyder, the daughter of Roxanna and Charles Rice.

Charles H. Rice, a tailor, enlisted as a private in Company C of the Michigan 23rd Infantry Regiment on July 25, 1862 in Flint, Michigan. Two years later, on April 4, 1864, he died at Richmond, Virginia, prisoner at Confederate Libby Prison. He was 46

years old and the father of four children. A small number of his letters written during the Civil War are also in the OCPHS manuscript collection.

Charles Piquette's Mark



The silver objects made by Charles Piquette are prized by collectors and museums. A single coin silver teaspoon made by Charles Piquette is part of the Henry Birks Collection of Canadian Silver at the Musée des beaux-arts du Canada, which also owns a cup attributed to Piquette with a monogram "J.T.". A bowl and a tablespoon bearing the Piquette mark are in the collection of the Detroit Institute of Arts. In addition to the sugar tongs belonging to the widow of Charles H. Rice, OCPHS owns five coin silver teaspoons made by Charles Piquette. These teaspoons are engraved with the initials "M. W." and were donated to the Society in 1990 by Rex Lamoreaux.

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Burton, Clarence M. *The City of Detroit, Michigan, 1701-1922*. Ann Arbor, Mich.: University of Michigan Library. pg. 1464.

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Detroit Institute of Arts. *Quebec and Related Silver at the Detroit Institute of Arts*. Published for Founders Society, Detroit Institute of Arts by Wayne State University Press, 1978. pgs. 114-118.

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IN REMEMBRANCE

Vernon Kath: On March 20 OCPHS lost one of the few people who could claim to have had the privilege of living in the Wisner House, OCPHS member Vernon Kath. Mr. Kath, 91, son of former resident caretakers Walter and Carrie Kath, held a life-long regard for the Society and for the Wisner property. He was preceded in death by his wife June.

Vera Mallonen: Member and volunteer Donna Mallonen lost her mother, Pontiac resident Vera Mallonen, in March at age 90. Mrs. Mallonen served as an army nurse during WWII and later worked at Pontiac General Hospital. She raised four children with her husband, Edward.

We extend our condolences to the Kath and Mallonen families.

TEENAGE VOLUNTEERS SHINE!

We recently enjoyed the help of an enthusiastic group of high school students who spent two days visiting and working at Pine Grove. The students volunteer for BuildOn.org, an organization providing high schoolers with opportunities for volunteer service within the community. On their first visit last February, docents Rodger Zeller and Ryan Johnson took the students on an introductory tour of Pine Grove. After that, they worked diligently in the Carriage House, dusting, polishing, vacuuming, and mopping our office, library, and Pioneer Museum, and helping to assemble docent notebooks and tour flyers. They were cheerful, hard workers throughout the afternoon. BuildOn leader Sarah Westerman explained that many of these teens volunteer multiple times during their winter and spring breaks.



We benefitted again when the young people returned in April to refresh our Root Cellar. Under the direction of our own Anne Liimatta and Mary Connell, and BuildOn.org coordinators Sarah and Diana, the teens put in a full day cleaning, sorting, and reorganizing the displays, hauling away accumulated debris and generally perking up the cellar in time for spring tour season. We look forward to having the group return in July to help during the Summer Social. This is a great partnership between students and volunteers. Thank you, Build On.

GARDENING INVITATION

By Anne Liimatta

Welcome to Springtime at Pine Grove - there are lots of bulbs emerging in the gardens!

During the month of May, active member Jackie Tobbe, a Master Gardener, will spend Tuesdays from 2 – 4 p.m. out on the grounds making the Wisner Home look even prettier with clean and attractive flower beds. Volunteers will be welcomed with open

arms for taming shrubs, raking twigs, removing some leaves and scrub trees and possibly planting annuals and perennials.

Are you in the mood for a little laughter, fresh air and exercise? If so, please call Jackie at 248-770-8758 on any Monday evening in May so she can expect you as help the next afternoon. If you really like to garden or just want to get out and enjoy a fun spring activity, put Tuesdays in May from 2 – 4 p.m. on your calendar. Should Tuesday be rainy, the work will be moved to Thursday same time. Thank you, Jackie, for heading up this refreshing outdoor activity.

WE LOVE A PARADE

By Anne Liimatta

Come with us to the Waterford Memorial Day Parade beginning at 10 a.m. on Monday May 30, sponsored annually by Heart of the Lakes VFW Post #1008.

This year don't just watch, *WALK* with OCPHS in the parade down Dixie Highway from Sashabaw Road to Drayton Plains Cemetery on Williams Lake Road. *DRESS* in period costumes from Pine Grove's docent collection, give out candy and distribute flyers inviting the public to our July 30th Summer Ice Cream Social!

Guy Duffield will accompany us in his 1975 Chevy Caprice Convertible! Don't miss this chance to participate in a unique publicity event for OCPHS. We'd love to have at least 15 participants, but the more the merrier. Please join in the fun and contact us for more details as Memorial Day approaches!

QUILTERS IN STITCHES AT PINE GROVE



Several gals have begun creating an army Civil War cot quilt, to be raffled at the Summer Social on July 30.

This group meets in the Carriage House on selected Tuesday afternoons and has a good time working and smiling. If you would like to join them, please give us a call. Your sewing will benefit the Society and introduce you to new friends in the process!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Be sure to save the following dates for fun and informative events and programs. Also check our website, ocphs.org, for further details and updates.

Small Talks

Small Talks are engaging presentations on topics of local history, beginning at 2 p.m. in the Carriage House. The atmosphere is informal and light refreshments are served. There is an admission charge of \$5 for the talk, \$5 for the optional Pine Grove tour following the talk, or FREE to those joining or renewing on the day of the event.

Saturday May 14: Rich Stamps
Ice House Archeological Dig at Pine Grove



Students uncovering artifacts at the ice house dig at Pine Grove

Sunday June 12: Ron Campbell
*Myth Busting, The Future of the Past:
Myths creating barriers to preservation*

Sunday September 11: Rochelle Danquah
Underground Railroad in Oakland County

Sunday November 6: Ron Campbell & Jackie Hoist
*Lighthouses Along the Rivers of Steel:
Michigan's Train Depots*

Annual Events

Annual Meeting & Election
Saturday May 21, 2 p.m. at Pine Grove
Topic: Preserving the Wisner House
Free admission; public welcome

Summer Social
Saturday July 30, 12 – 5 p.m.
Tours, entertainment, refreshments, old time fun
\$5 or \$10 for family up to 5 people

Victorian Open House
Saturday December 10, 12 – 4 p.m.
Tours, entertainment, refreshments, holiday festivities
\$5 or \$10 for family up to 5 people

OCPHS OUTREACH

We recognize that events and programs bring visitors to Pine Grove, spread the word about what we offer, and foster collaboration with others who share the desire to preserve and promote history. Some recent and upcoming outreach activities:

Small Talks: Ann Johnson and Dave Jamroz presented interesting programs in March and April. [See column at left for upcoming Small Talks]

Historical Society of Michigan's Local History Conference in Troy, March 25-26: Bill Powers and Mary Connell provided display materials which brought new visitors to our April Small Talks.

Howell Home Show, March 31: Ann Johnson added OCPHS materials to her display at this event, expanding our typical geographic reach.

Waterford Chamber of Commerce Expo, March 31: Amy Annett, Mary Connell, Dee Nance and Mike West enjoyed a first foray at this well-attended venue.

Historical Roundtable, April 2: Local historical societies discussed membership issues. Fran Wilson hosted and Brian Golden moderated this collaborative exchange of ideas and support.

Oakland County Historical Commission Workshop, The Civil War and Oakland County, April 16 at O.U.: We co-sponsored this event, featuring sessions with members Melissa Luginski, Rochelle Danquah, and an appearance by Moses Wisner [aka Brian Golden].

Clinton Valley Chapter of Michigan Archeological Society, April 16: Charlie Martinez presented a program about Chief Pontiac for chapter members.

Royal Oak Masons, May 9: Mike West will speak about OCPHS and Moses Wisner in Royal Oak.

Oakland Township Historical Society, June 1: Bruce Annett discusses his book, *Asylum: Pontiac's Grand Monument from the Gilded Age*, 8 p.m.

Pontiac Rotary Club Bicycle Tour, June 18 will ride to Pine Grove as part of this event; details to come.

Waterford Historical Society Log Cabin Days, June 25-26: Don't miss this annual festival, including booths staffed by OCPHS and other local societies. Fish Hatchery Park, Waterford, 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Creative Arts Center Bus Tour, July 23: This community event will feature historic homes, including the Wisner House. Details to come.

TINDERBOX: FLASHPOINT AT CHARLESTOWN

By Charles H. Martinez

Firing on Fort Sumter, Courtesy Harper's Weekly



Confederate battery on Cummings Point in Charleston Harbor firing on Fort Sumter April 12, 1861. The siege lasted 34 hours before U.S. Major Robert Anderson surrendered to Brigadier General Pierre G. T. Beauregard, CSA

Confederate Captain George S. James stared intently at his pocket watch. A fine mist had descended upon Charleston harbor, South Carolina. A chill seemed to penetrate the bones of every gunner stationed around its shores that early Friday morning. A few feet in front of the Captain stood Lieutenant Henry S. Farley positioned behind a yawning mortar whose mouth was aimed at the shadowy shape of a federal fortress known as Sumter.

At 4:30 a.m. James issued the terse command, "Fire." Farley pulled the mortar's lanyard. There was a roar as the mortar shell rose heavenward. Its fiery trail could be easily traced as it arched across the sky to burst above Sumter's ramparts. Another nearby battery fired. This time it was a more lethal message that followed the course of its illuminated predecessor. The second shot crashed into the fort's parade ground, sending missiles of brick and stone in all directions.¹ A mighty rebel yell went forth from the

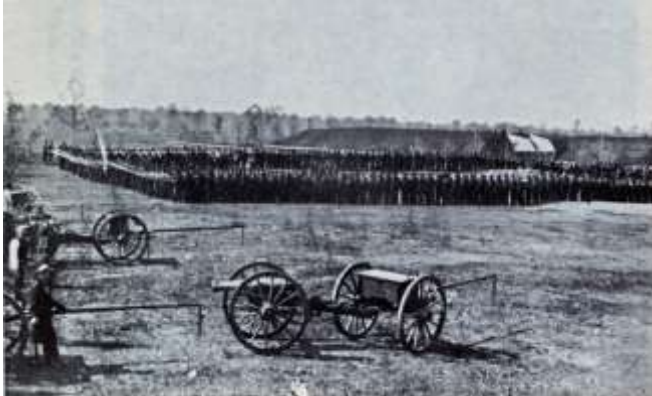
surrounding forts and battery positions to be joined by the cheers of thousands of civilians gathered along Charleston's harbor front.

And so in the early hours of April 12, 1861 the Civil War began. Before a stillness at Appomattox four years later, the greatest carnage ever inflicted upon this nation would occur. Today its reverberations can still be felt as we pause to remember that fateful dawn one hundred fifty years ago.

News of the attack on Fort Sumter and its surrender 34 hours later spread quickly over telegraph lines to the nation's newspapers and their readers. In Michigan the early word was carried on April 13, 1861 by *The Detroit Free Press* whose headline screamed "The Blow at Last Fallen. War! War! The Confederate Batteries Open on Sumter Yesterday Morning"²

A few days later the Pontiac court house “was filled with an earnest audience comprising men of all parties,” according to the *Detroit Daily Advertiser*.³ Former Governor Moses Wisner offered a resolution to those present that, “Oakland County pledge herself in case of an emergency, to raise, arm and equip at her own expense, a full Regiment, on three day’s call. It carried with an enthusiastic ‘aye.’”⁴ Similar patriotic gatherings were held at Birmingham, Farmington and Royal Oak in following days.

1st Michigan Infantry, Fort Wayne Detroit, Courtesy Michigan Historical Commission



1st Michigan infantry served for 3 months during the Civil War. Here it is shown drawn up in “Napoleonic Square” formation outside the ramparts of Detroit’s Fort Wayne

President Lincoln’s proclamation on April 15, 1861 declared that an insurrection existed and called upon loyal states to supply 75,000 troops for a time of service set at three months. The War Department advised Governor Blair that Michigan’s quota would be one infantry regiment. The next day the Governor declared the State’s Adjutant General, John Robertson, authorized to accept the services of 10 companies of infantry, to be mustered into service for three months (unless sooner disbanded).⁵ Uniformed militia were given preference in this call. Ten such groups responded.

The organization of the First Regimental Infantry was complete by April 19, 1861 and mustered into service on May 1st with 798 men.⁶ Twelve days later the unit received orders to depart its base at Fort Wayne in Detroit and proceed to Washington, D.C. The First Michigan left by train and reached the nation’s capitol on May 16 where bands played and crowds cheered. President Lincoln praised them for their department and promptness as the first western regiment to arrive in Washington

Its baptism of fire was administered at Bull Run (Manassas), Virginia. There, Union forces were soundly defeated but the ninety-day Michigan men fought stubbornly and bravely in their advance on Confederate positions. Dispatches noted their “dead

were found nearest the enemy works.”⁷ The exhausted regiment mustered out at the end of its three months’ stint on August 7, 1861. Nine days later it was reorganized as a three years’ regiment and returned to the Army of the Potomac.⁸ The First Michigan was bloody but unbowed.

As for Fort Sumter, the tinderbox, its condition on April 13th was pitiful. For 34 hours Confederate batteries ringing Charleston harbor had pummeled their target. The fort’s outer wall surfaces were extensively pockmarked, and in some areas, reduced to rubble. Fires continued to rage among the exposed wooden structures on the parade ground. The heat threatened Sumter’s powder magazine.

Major Robert Anderson, the fort’s commandant, had virtually no options left. His ammunition and food were nearly exhausted; hope of reinforcement nil. So, that Saturday afternoon, having previously met with Southern military emissaries, Anderson agreed to surrender terms. It was his only humane recourse. Nevertheless the Major felt a victim of a paradox. His surrender was made to aides of Confederate Brigadier General G.T. Beauregard. This officer was one of his West Point Academy students years ago to whom he taught the rudiments of artillery firepower. Today in Charleston harbor Anderson believed it was the pupil who taught the teacher a lesson.

On Sunday, April 14th Charleston was in a festive mood celebrating “A Day of National Fasting, Thanksgiving and Prayer.”⁹ The harbor was crowded with little boats vying for the best view that afternoon of the fort where the American flag would be lowered and the Confederate and South Carolina banners raised.

Fort Sumter Flag, Courtesy National Park Service



Stars and Stripes that flew over Fort Sumter before its formal surrender to Confederate forces on April 14, 1861

Around 2:30 everything was in readiness. General Beauregard had permitted the Union garrison to salute its flag with cannon fire before departing the fort. On the forty-seventh firing one of the cannons

exploded, killing a gun crew member outright and mortally wounding another. This event marked the first two military deaths after hostilities began in the Civil War.

Four years to the day Robert Anderson, now a Major General, returned to Sumter to raise the same flag he had taken down at the time of the fort's ceremonial surrender. The crowd was large and jubilant. Holding the halyards near the flagpole base he said to them, "I thank God that I have lived to see this day...glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will to men."¹⁰

Later that evening at the Charleston Hotel Anderson proposed a toast to the health of President Lincoln. At that very moment some five hundred and fifty miles away John Wilkes Booth quietly entered the Presidential box at Ford's Theater and aimed a small pistol. That explosion, like the one at Fort Sumter, would once more alter the course of American history.

Notes

1. David Detzer, *Allegiance: Fort Sumter, Charleston and the Beginning of the Civil War* (New York: Harcourt, Inc. 2001), 268-70.
2. Frederick D. Williams, *Michigan Soldiers in the Civil War* (Lansing: Bureau of History, Michigan Department of State, 1988), 1
3. *Detroit Daily Advertiser*, 19 April 1861, 2.
4. Ibid.
5. The author believes this parenthetical remark reveals the supreme over-confidence of Northern state and federal authorities in the supremacy of Union forces. This attitude will be soon dispelled at the first Battle of Bull Run (Manassas), Virginia on July 21, 1861.
6. John Robertson, Adjutant General, (compiler), *Michigan In the War*, rev. ed. Lansing, 1882, 165-66.
7. Samuel Durant, ed. *History of Oakland County, Michigan 1817-1877* (Philadelphia: L.H. Evert & Co., 1877), v.
8. Ibid.
9. Detzer, 306.
10. Ibid, 319.

Acknowledgements

In preparing this article the writer expresses his deep appreciation to the following: Pine Grove's Sherlock Holmes of the Internet, Dave Walls, who always solves history's mysteries; Mike and Chris Martinez who respectively contributed details on Civil War weaponry and logistics; the Adult Services Department of the Bloomfield Township Library for always quickly steering the patron to the definitive source; and to Kathryn Daggy, typist, whose unflagging spirit has been able to turn the author's musings into concise, cohesive prose.

Membership Application

Oakland County Pioneer and Historical Society

Memberships extend until July 1, 2012

Name

Address

City/State/Zip

Phone

Email

Already belong? Consider giving a gift membership or inviting a friend to join, too! Everyone is welcome.

Check if a Gift Membership

From:

What prompted you to join? (Optional)
(Check all that apply)

- Interest in History
- Invited/Introduced by Member/Friend
- Copy of Gazette
- Attended Event or Tour
- Research Library
- Newspaper/Magazine Article
- Volunteer Opportunities
- Website
- Other

Membership Categories:

- \$15 Student
- \$20 Individual
- \$20 Non-Profit Organization
- \$35 Family (2 adults & minor children)
- \$100 Patron
- \$200 Benefactor
- \$500 Friends of OCPHS
- \$500 Corporate Sponsor
- \$Additional Donation Enclosed: \$ ____

Please make checks payable to OCPHS and mail with a copy of this form to:

OCPHS
405 Cesar E. Chavez Ave
Pontiac, MI 48342

For your convenience you may also join or renew on-line via credit card or Pay Pal at www.ocphs.org. Thank you for your support!

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Oakland County Pioneer and Historical Society
405 Cesar E. Chavez Ave.
Pontiac, MI 48342

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Information, story ideas, or comments are welcome.

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Editor: Amy Annett
Contributors: Mike West, Anne Liimatta, Mary Connell,
Karen West, Ray Henry, Carol Egbo,
Charles Martinez, Dave Walls

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