

**7TH MICHIGAN CAVALRY
MORNING REPORT
Headquarters: Bay City, Michigan**

2009 - 2010 Speaker's Schedule

The schedule of speakers for this year is on page 3. Hope you like it.

Don't Forget . . .

. . . the River of Time on Saturday, September 26 and Sunday, September 27. (Friday is reserved for school groups.)

His courage was not in doubt:

Archibald L. McCormick

When Archibald McCormick was born on Oct. 31, 1832 near the Flint River, he became the first white male child born north of Grand Blanc and south of the Straits of Mackinaw.

Shortly afterward, his family moved to the tiny village of Portsmouth, located at what is now the intersection of Lafayette and Water streets in Bay City. His family once owned the Trombley house in which he lived for a time.

When the Civil War began in 1861, he was working in Chicago and, with some other Michigan men, enlisted in the 51st Illinois Infantry as an orderly sergeant.

In the spring of 1862, his regiment worked its way south along the Mississippi River where it fought in the battle for Island Number 10. Either at Island Number 10 or somewhere nearby, he was captured and is said to have later escaped.

The regiment then moved into middle Tennessee where it and he participated in the Battle of Stones River starting on December 30, 1862 and as part of General Phillip Sheridan's Division.

On May 1, 1863, he was promoted to 2nd lieutenant.

In the fall of 1863, his regiment fought in the battles of Chickamauga, Chattanooga, and Knoxville. In May of 1864, it fought its way south with General Sherman's army on its campaign to Atlanta, Georgia.

On the way to Atlanta, his regiment fought in the Battle of Kennesaw Mountain on May 27, 1864. Its brigade was assigned the task of capturing Cheatham Hill, atop of which were the entrenched Confederates.

As McCormick's regiment fought its way up the steep hill, its brigade commander, General Charles Harker, a rising young star and a hero at Stones River and Chickamauga, was shot from his horse and mortally wounded.

Undaunted by Harker's wounding, Lt. McCormick led his men upward. Reaching the enemy breastwork,

he climbed up and started over it. Simultaneously, he was struck by seven bullets and killed instantly. **



Archibald's goal?

Where Archibald McCormick is buried is unclear. There is a new government tombstone (which recently exactly replaced a worn original) on the edge of his family's burial plot in Pine Ridge Cemetery. But that may not be where he is buried as the marker seems too close to the roadway for a grave to exist there.

Additionally, the Union didn't take possession of the position where he was killed until long afterward and his body would have been difficult if not impossible to recover. Thus, although his family had the financial means to bring him home, they may have had to settle for just the tombstone.

There is a large Union cemetery at Kennesaw Mountain. When this author visited there some years ago and inquired if Archibald was interred there; the caretaker said it is unknown who is buried in any of the thousands of Union graves.

The original grave markers there were made of wood and neglect caused high weeds to grow up between them. A fire destroyed them all and no written records exist as to who was buried there.

There is no known photograph of Archibald McCormick. His tombstone is all that remains to remind us of one of Bay County's first residents and a brave soldier.

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His final resting place?

[The various biographies of him in Bay County histories seem to stem from one written in 1883 from the bad memory of his brother William. These biographies have him a captain in Co B, 52nd Ill and captured at Vicksburg. But the Soldiers and Sailors Index on the internet lists his highest rank as a 1st Lieutenant and him always in the 51st Ill. Dyer's Compendium records neither regiment was anywhere

near Vicksburg at any time and thus his brother's claim he was captured there is in error.

All doubt about his regiment and rank is erased, however, by online Illinois Civil War records, which reference Archibald L. McCormick as follows:

Co E, 51st Ill. Inf., enlisted in Blue Grass, Vermilion County, Ill. and mustered Dec. 24, 1861, Age: 28, Height: 5'7", Hair: black, Eyes: gray, Complexion: light, Marital status: married, Occupation: merchant, Nativity: Michigan, Ranks held: Mustered as Sergeant, 2nd Lt (as of May 1, 1863), 1st Lt (as of May 15, 1864); Remarks: "Killed in the Battle of Kenesaw Mountain, Ga. May 27, 1864".

Likely, his military and pension records (which probably exist because he was married) would reveal more.]

** Somewhat uniquely, the area in the military park where his brigade charged up the hill has part of it made into a cemented pathway. Along the path and on either side of it are markers naming the individual Union soldiers who were killed at those exact locations. Apparently, their comrades returned after the war and marked the places. How they knew the exact locations is unknown.

Whether Archibald's place of death is also marked is unknown as I didn't get to the breastworks. Fainting a fear of lightning, my limited exploration time was cut short by a vexing rain which caused the unenthusiastic younger family members with me to demand we seek shelter in our car.

Perhaps the next of us to reach the breastworks could investigate, take some pictures, and report back their findings.

7th Michigan Cavalry Round Table of Bay County, Michigan

2009 – 2010 Monthly Speaker Schedule

- Wednesday, October 14, 2009

"Crazy Bet", a Union Spy in Richmond - The Betty Van Lew Story

Presented by Liz Stringer, President of the Abraham Lincoln CWRT
located in Plymouth, Michigan

- Wednesday, November 11, 2008

Confederates Strike From Below the Waves

– The Story of the CSS Hunley

Presented by Gary Wlosinski, Vice President and Program Director of
the Ann Arbor CWRT

- Wednesday, December 9, 2009

The Traveling Civil War – The War in Mississippi

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Presented by David Ingall, Assistant Director of the Monroe County
Historical Museum

- Wednesday, January 13, 2010

Elmer Ellsworth and the Cult of the Zouaves

Presented by John Gibney, Director of the Monroe County Historical
Museum

- Wednesday, February 10, 2010

John Brown, the Antislavery Movement, and the Harper's Ferry Raid

Presented by Professor Paul Teed, of the Saginaw Valley University
History Department

- Wednesday, March 10, 2010

Civil War Artifacts and Memorabilia located at the
Bay County Historical Museum

Presented by Curator Ron Bloomfield

[Meeting will be at the Museum, 321 Washington Ave, Bay City]

- Wednesday, April 14, 2010 (or other date as may be determined)

Annual Dinner

All meetings are at 7 PM in the Edelweiss Room at the Stein Haus Restaurant,
1108 N. Water St, Bay City, Michigan except the March 10, 2010 meeting at the
Bay County Historical Museum