



MICHIGAN'S MESSENGER

BEYOND SHILOH: THE 12TH MICHIGAN AND REBEL PRISONS

Submitted by Brother Mark Hoffman, PCC – Camp 17 & Camp 444

Private David Whitmore of Company D, 12th Michigan Infantry died from scurvy on November 13, 1862, at the Portsmouth Grove military hospital in Rhode Island. Federal authorities later moved his and other bodies from the hospital cemetery to Cypress Hills National Cemetery in Brooklyn, New York. How the twenty-year old recruit from Calhoun County, Michigan died so far away from his regiment goes back to the morning of April 6, 1862, and the deadly journey ahead for Union soldiers captured at Shiloh.

Companies from the 12th Michigan and 25th Missouri fired some of the first shots at Shiloh while scouting for enemy troops in the woods bordering Union camps. Their exchange of gunfire with Mississippi sharpshooters provided a critical warning for several nearby Union units to assemble in their camps, but it soon proved to be a difficult day for the 12th. Col. Francis Quinn disgraced himself and many of his green troops fled. Eleven of the officers became casualties and the regiment lost much of its cohesion while falling back in the face of Confederate attacks among the Union camps. Eventually, what remained intact of the 12th surrendered with remnants of Gen. Benjamin Prentiss' delaying position at the "Hornet's Nest."

continued on page 2

141ST DEPARTMENT OF MICHIGAN ENCAMPMENT 29 MARCH 2025 - OKEMOS

The 141st Department Encampment will be held on Saturday, 29 March 2025 at the Okemos Events Center. The Encampment opens at 8:00AM. For more information on the Events Center address, hotel accommodations, Department Officer nominations, box lunch reservations, Encampment registration forms, etc., go to:

<https://suvcwmi.org/DeptEncampment/DEindex-141.php>

"TO HER MARTYRS &
HEROES WHO FOUGHT IN
DEFENCE OF LIBERTY AND
UNION"

TUEBOR



THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF MICHIGAN

SONS OF UNION VETERANS
OF THE CIVIL WAR

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BEYOND SHILOH CONT'D

Even after stragglers rejoined the regiment, the 12th lost 190 men, including at least eighty captured. These prisoners were among more than 2200 Union soldiers taken away by Confederate troops on their retreat from Shiloh. While attention on Civil War prisons focuses on later conditions at Belle Isle, Andersonville, Elmira and elsewhere, some of the worst conditions were in the improvised prisons operated in the Spring and Summer of 1862. Without a broad agreement on a formal system of parole and exchange, prisoners suffered in inadequate temporary prisons for months.

The Union prisoners marched under guard to Corinth, Mississippi and then travelled by rail -- west to Memphis, then south through Mississippi, and finally reached Mobile, Alabama on April 12. From there, steamers on the Alabama River carried the prisoners north to Selma, Talladega and Montgomery, Alabama, while some groups continued by rail to Atlanta and Macon, Georgia. At Selma, Confederates separated Prentiss and his senior officers from the rest. Eventually, the junior officers and enlisted men also split up, with the lieutenants confined in Montgomery, and later Madison, Georgia.

Confederates held the enlisted prisoners in several cities, moving them as needed, due in part to capacity issues as prisoners arrived from other operations. Seven men from the 12th Michigan died as prisoners in Atlanta's temporary facilities. Another ten succumbed to disease in Montgomery, living in open cotton sheds. Other prisoners went to Macon where the largest number of Shiloh prisoners would eventually gather and fourteen of the regiment's men would die.

In May 1862, Confederates attempted to send back the Shiloh privates held in Macon. The plan was to transport paroled prisoners north of Chattanooga and they would be "there turned loose to seek their homes." Union commanders, however, were unaware of the plan until the men started to trickle in at outlying positions which lacked the ability to care for them. They turned most of the men back and the prisoners eventually returned to Macon. At least seven from the 12th did successfully cross into friendly lines, but they were in bad shape. Two were immediately discharged by the surgeons and two others died soon after in hospitals. The other three eventually reached the regiment in west Tennessee, but only one was healthy enough to remain with it for long.

By mid-July, about twenty of the regiment's men had died in Confederate prison camps. Most of the surviving prisoners consolidated at Camp Oglethorpe in Macon, joining those from the regiment who had been there since May. Together, they would spend three more months confined at Macon, except for a few who remained hospitalized elsewhere. Oglethorpe was a converted training camp surrounded with a new palisade surrounding it. It was, at least on paper, better able to serve as a prison camp than many other locations in 1862. Officials planned for a capacity of one thousand men, but by late summer it held twice as many. The conditions were miserable, with shortages of clean drinking water, food, and clothing. Confederate authorities even had to solicit donations of supplies from local civilians. More than two hundred Union prisoners would die there during the six months it was operating in 1862.

continued on p. 3



BEYOND SHILOH CONT'D

By late summer, an overall agreement for handling prisoners of war was in place and Union and Confederate officials were finalizing details to parole and exchange all existing prisoners. The Shiloh prisoners and thousands of others would sign a parole that promised they would not take up arms again until properly exchanged. At that point authorities would release them to await formal exchange in the North. The men in the 12th and other paroled prisoners would be handed over in groups of several hundred at a time at Aiken's Landing, Virginia, located on the James River near Richmond.

The men were eager to get home. The journey, however, would be costly for the prisoners from the 12th Michigan, many already weakened by sickness and festering wounds. All prisoners deemed able to travel left Macon on October 8 and 9. Pvt. William Belcher was one of the sick who remained and died at Macon within days. The prisoners travelled by rail through Georgia, the Carolinas, and Virginia. One died of disease at Raleigh while enroute, and another in a Richmond prison hospital days after their arrival. On

October 19, most of the 12th Michigan prisoners were among a group of 640 paroled Union soldiers from Macon released at Aiken's Landing and transported by steamer to Fortress Monroe and then Washington, D.C. Army officials immediately forwarded 240 of them to Portsmouth Grove for treatment, including twenty-seven from the 12th. Whitmore died within two weeks of their November 1 arrival at Portsmouth, and surgeons discharged another in Rhode Island a month later. Some of the other paroled men from the 12th remained in District of Columbia and Maryland hospitals to recover, among them Corp. Jerome Lafferty who died in a Washington hospital on October 22 and Pvt. Francis Hurd at a hospital in Baltimore a few weeks later.

By early November, officials reported that the surviving Shiloh prisoners were all paroled and in Union hands. As they recovered sufficiently to travel, the paroled prisoners from the 12th travelled to Camp Chase near Columbus, Ohio to wait for formal exchange. Many were furloughed home in the interim and then these newly exchanged men received word in mid-January to report for duty with their regiment. In the end, however, only about half of those who survived the prison camps and exchange process were able to continue active service in the 12th. This included all four of the captured lieutenants, though two of them were gone within months.

The 12th paid a heavy price, with at least thirty-nine men dying in rebel hands or in Union hospitals awaiting exchange. This represented about half the men taken prisoner on April 6. It also compares with the forty- seven killed or mortally wounded in the fighting on April 6.

Most of the 12th Michigan's Shiloh prisoner dead are buried in national cemeteries, though the difficulty in confirming some of them points to the chaotic nature of 1862 temporary prisons, revolving locations, and inconsistent records. Locations with the largest number of 12th Michigan prisoner dead are Andersonville (the Macon dead) and Marietta (Atlanta dead). Less

continued on p. 4



BEYOND SHILOH CONT'D

is known about the ten who died in Montgomery. Their remains were likely among those of some two hundred Union prisoners initially buried at the prison. After the war, authorities moved them into the short-lived national cemetery at Montgomery, the majority unidentified. That cemetery closed in 1868, and its bodies sent to Marietta. The 12th Michigan's Montgomery dead probably rest among the Unknowns at Marietta. Two of the prisoners who died in Union hospitals waiting for exchange are buried in Michigan, at least three others are uncertain, and the balance lie in other national cemeteries ranging from Chattanooga to Long Island, New York.

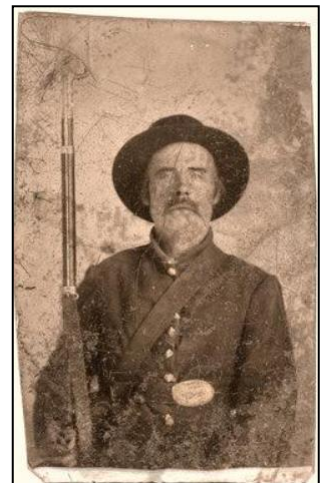
David Whitmore (1842-1862)

Private Whitmore of Company D survived six months in captivity before dying in a Union hospital in Rhode Island. His cause of death was scurvy, a disease that dated back to his imprisonment in Macon. (Source: Find a Grave #2600659)



Jacob P. Hibray (1838-1862)

Private Hibray of Company A died at Montgomery on May 1, 1862. He was among the first of the 12th Michigan's Shiloh prisoners to die in captivity and many more would follow. (Source: Find a Grave #116002122, referencing a cenotaph)



Samuel W. Grinnell (1823 -1883)

Sergeant Grinnell of Company G was a veteran of the War with Mexico before surviving and subsequent imprisonment at Montgomery and Macon. He was exchanged and served through his three-year term. GAR Post #283 organized in 1884, and charter members named it in his honor. Its historic 1899 hall in Sunfield is the meeting location for today's Curtenius Guard, Camp #17, SUVCW. (Source: Find a Grave #28805155)



CURTENIUS GUARD CAMP 17

Submitted by Brian Shumway, PDC, CoA



The 2025 Officer Corps for Curtenius Guard Camp 17 who were sworn into office at the meeting on January 28th. They are, left to right, Dave Bankhead, Jr Vice Commander and Camp Council; Steve Martin, PCC and Camp Council; J. Armstrong, Color Bearer; Harold Holcomb, Camp Secretary; Ron Shull, PCC, Guide, Camp Council and Eagle Scout Coordinator; Aaron Dickinson, Sr. Vice Commander; Steve Carr, Camp Commander; Cody Orr, Historian; Rob Payne, PDC, Patriotic Instructor and Camp Council; Brian Shumway, Guide; Dave Grimes, Memorials Officer; and Marvin Hanes, Chaplain. Mark Hoffman, GRO, and James B. Pahl, PCinC, Camp Treasurer; are not pictured.

G A R



GENERAL ORLANDO M. POE CAMP 444

Submitted by David S. Smith, LM, PDC – Camp 444 Commander

Wreaths Across America was held for the second year at Maple Hill Cemetery in Cadillac on Saturday, 14 December 2024. The Marie Therese Cadillac Chapter of the DAR organized the event, which saw a major increase in wreaths donated from the first year. Camp 444 was once again provided the honor of placing the wreaths at the Veterans' gravesites at Washington GAR Post 444 Plot. Upon completion of placing the wreaths at the GAR plot, the Brothers in attendance placed wreaths at other locations within the cemetery. The Marie Therese Cadillac DAR Chapter must be commended for their excellent work in organizing another successful event. Camp 444 looks forward to participating once again next year, and is excited to see the continued growth in honoring Cadillac's Veterans.



continued on p. 4

Washington GAR Post 444 Plot



ABOVE LEFT: WAA and DAR Banners on the perimeter front fencing of Maple Hill Cemetery in Cadillac



ABOVE CENTER: Opening placement of the wreaths representing each branch of service by Veterans. PCC Ron Shull of Camp 17 represented the SUVCW placing the U.S. Coast Guard wreath (Brother Shull is a USCG Veteran).



ABOVE RIGHT: Taps being rendered by Treasurer Rodney Welliver

continued on p. 7



GENERAL ORLANDO M. POE CAMP 444 CONT'D



ABOVE LEFT (L-R): Commander Smith, PCC Ron Shull of Camp 17, SVC/Sec. Dale Aurand, PDC, and Treas. Rodney Welliver. Missing from photo is Council Jeff Walker and Brother Quin Walker. (Photo courtesy of Sister Lisa Smith)

ABOVE RIGHT (L-R): PCC Ron Shull of Camp 17, SVC/Sec. Dale Aurand, Council Jeff Walker, and Brother Quin Walker placing wreaths at the Washington GAR Post 444 Plot. (Photo courtesy of Sister Lisa Smith)

LEFT: Veterans, Community Members, Members of Marie Therese Cadillac Daughters of the American Revolution Chapter, and Brothers of General Orlando M. Poe Camp 444 during opening ceremonies for the 2024 Wreaths Across America in Maple Hill Cemetery. (Photo courtesy of Sister Lisa Smith)

The fourth annual Camp 444 Christmas Campfire Luncheon was held on Saturday, 14 December 2024 after Wreaths Across America had concluded. This year saw the Campfire Luncheon held at a new location and weekend, but the camaraderie and fellowship were once again renewed during the Christmas season. The holiday event provided a chance to celebrate a successful campaign for the 2024 year. Camp members were joined by spouses (including Sisters of Auxiliary No. 9). In addition to the nice meal and lively conversation, a few awards were presented for the year. The first awards given out were for The Unsung Pioneer Certificate of Appreciation. Three Brothers of Camp 444 were most deserving of this award in 2024: Treasurer Rodney Welliver, Council/Chaplain Calvin Murphy, and Senior Vice Commander/Secretary Dale Aurand, PDC. All three Brothers stepped up behind the scenes to ensure that Camp operations, ceremonies, and external support of other Camps were accomplished in a professional and exemplary manner. The next award was The Engineer Award given to the Brother of the year for Camp 444. This year there were two Brothers that were most deserving of the award: Newsletter Senior Writer Mark Hoffman, PCC and Junior Vice Commander/Graves Registration Officer/Civil War Memorials Officer Kenny Jones. Both of these Brothers have worked tirelessly on one of the most important duties of the SUVCW - Graves Registration. These Brothers have been working tirelessly on corrections and additions on the SUVCW database, as well as the work for Find A Grave with regards to the SUVCW. This is in addition to the excellent work that they do with other Camp business throughout the year in so many facets. Note, Brother Jones has been bestowed The Engineer Award for three years in a row beginning with the inaugural one. No awards were presented for the Sarah Edmonds Award in 2024. Finally, the Camp's highest award was conferred on Captain of the Guard/Historian George Scheck. Brother Scheck received the award due to his lifelong efforts in promoting and teaching American History to young and old alike, and more specifically in the eras of the French & Indian War, the Revolutionary War, the Civil War, and World War II. Additionally, his high efforts in forming and educating the Camp 444 Honor Guard have been highly commendable and appreciated by the Brothers of the Camp. Those Brothers that were not able to attend the Campfire Luncheon will be presented with their awards at a later date.

continued on p. 8



GENERAL ORLANDO M. POE CAMP 444 CONT'D



ABOVE LEFT: Treasurer Rodney Welliver receiving The Unsung Pioneer Certificate of Appreciation from Commander Smith



ABOVE RIGHT: Senior Vice Commander/Secretary Dale Aurand, PDC receiving The Unsung Pioneer Certificate of Appreciation from Commander Smith.



ABOVE LEFT (clockwise from bottom left): Sister Lisa Smith, PAP, Sister Lorraine Aurand, AP, SVC/Sec. Dale Aurand, PDC, Camp 17 Br. Ron Shull, PCC, Council Jeff Walker, Brother Quin Walker, Treasurer Rodney Welliver, and Jodie Welliver.



ABOVE RIGHT (L-R): Camp 17 Brother Ron Shull, PCC, SVC/Sec. Dale Aurand, PDC, and Commander David Smith, PDC

CAMP NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS – J. RICHARD GREENE AWARD

Calling on all Camps that would like to be considered for the J. Richard Greene Award for the Most Outstanding Newsletter in the Department to submit them upon each publication to the J. Richard Greene Award Committee comprised of the Department Newsletter Editor (Chairman), Department Chaplain, and the Department Secretary. The e-mail addresses for those officers are as follows:

editor@suvcwmi.org
chaplain@suvcwmi.org
secretary@suvcwmi.org

All Camp newsletters will be collected and reviewed during the prescribed period before the Department Encampment.



EDUCATION: GAR POST OFFICER BADGES



**QUARTERMASTER
SERGEANT**



**SERGEANT
MAJOR**



CHAPLAIN



**OFFICER OF THE
GUARD**



QUARTERMASTER



ADJUTANT



**OFFICER OF THE
DAY**



SURGEON



**JUNIOR VICE
COMMANDER**



**SENIOR VICE
COMMANDER**



COMMANDER



PAST COMMANDER

NOTES:

- Post Officers' rank straps were in a blue enamel background. Their badge ribbon had a medium blue band on each side of the US colors.
- Rank straps were located at the top of the badge, indicating that they were active Post Officers.
- Comrades that were Past Officers had their past highest rank strap placed on the Post Officer's ribbon of the badge, with the standard eagle, crossed cannons and sabers with cannon balls at the top.



OFFICERS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF MICHIGAN

2024 – 2025

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SR. VICE DEPT. COMMANDER	David Kimble, PCC
JR. VICE DEPT. COMMANDER	Todd Cordill, CC
DEPT. SECRETARY	Richard Denney, PCC
DEPT. TREASURER	Bruce S. A. Gosling, PDC
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DEPT. COUNSELOR	James B. Pahl, PCinC
DEPT. CHAPLAIN	Charles Buckhahn, PCC
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DEPT. GUARD	Lloyd D. Lamphere, Sr., PCC
DEPT. GRAVES REGISTRATION OFFICER	Charles Worley, PDC
DEPT. CIVIL WAR MEMORIALS OFFICER	Leonard Sheaffer, CC
DEPT. EAGLE SCOUT COORDINATOR	Lloyd D. Lamphere, Sr., PCC
DEPT. CAMP-AT-LARGE COORDINATOR	L. Dean Lamphere, Jr., PDC
DEPT. CAMP ORGANIZER	David S. Smith, PDC
DEPT. MILITARY & VETERANS AFFAIRS OFFICER	Edgar J. Dowd, PCC
DEPT. AIDE DE CAMP	L. Dean Lamphere, Jr., PDC
DEPT. CEREMONIES & RITUALS OFFICER	L. Dean Lamphere, Jr., PDC

For contact information, see: suvcwmi.org/hq

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