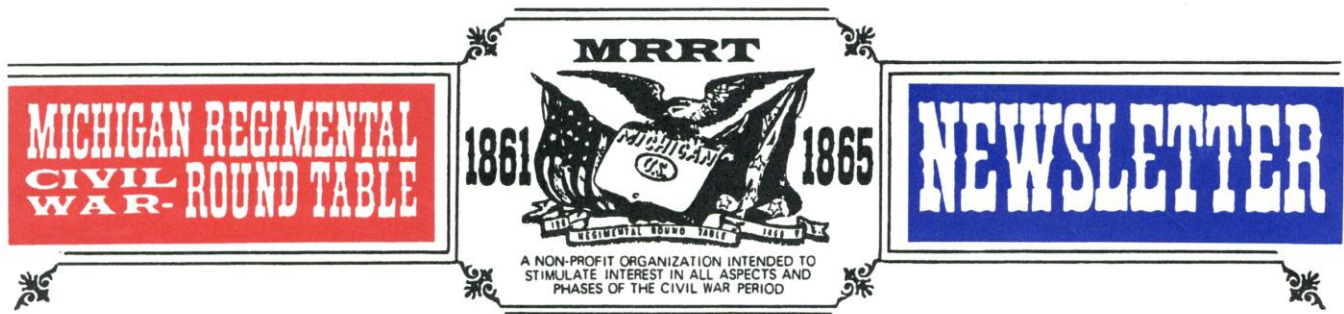




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Michigan Regimental Round Table Newsletter—Page 1

August 2026

MONDAY, AUGUST 31, 2026, ROUNDTABLE MEETING

Our August 2026 meeting will be on Monday, August 31, 2026, at 6:30 pm at the lower level of the Farmington Library, on the corner of Grand River and Farmington Road. Our guest speaker, Steven J. Ramold, PhD, History Professor at Eastern Michigan University, will speak on “It is all hardships and troubles: Discipline and ill-discipline in the Confederate Army.”

Last living son of Union veteran died in June 2026.

William Pool, recognized as the last living son of a Union veteran of the Civil War, died on June 7, 2026, at the age of 101. His father served in the 6th West Virginia Volunteer Infantry. During the war, he was wounded in the left leg resulting in an amputation above the knee. In 1915, at the age of seventy-one, he married Clara Bell Straw, only 27 years old. Together they raised five children!

Also, his mother lived to the age of 101 and was the last Civil War widow in Missouri to receive a pension, Bill served in the European Theater during World War 2.

OUR 2026 FIELD TRIP – DESTINATION: WINCHESTER, VA

Our trip will be on the weekend of October 17th and 18th. We are expecting twenty-four participants. We may still sign up for the trip. You may call Linda at 586.588.2172 or e-mail her at lindagerhardt99@gmail.com.

Tour Cost

\$320 per person, based on twenty-four participants. Please write your check out to Jim Burroughs (the bank does not like checks made out to the MRRT). Jim’s mailing address is: 1632 North Silvery Lane, Dearborn, MI 48128-1081. We may also bring our checks to the meeting. This includes the tour guide fee and tip, and motor coach transportation around the Winchester area. The fee also includes Saturday buffet lunch north of Winchester, Saturday evening banquet in the historic district of Winchester and Sunday sit-down lunch at the Edinburgh Mill near Strasburg, VA. Also, water and snacks on the bus.

Tour Guide: Scott Patchen, who has served as our guide on previous trips. **Tour Dates:** October 17–18. **Hotel:** Hampton Inn – Winchester. A block of rooms will be available for \$139 per night. To reserve, call 540.678.4000. The Hampton Inn is located at 1204 Berryville Avenue, Winchester. Rooms are reserved under MRRT 2026 Tour. Hot breakfast each morning. **Tour Bus:** Varsity Travel-Winchester.

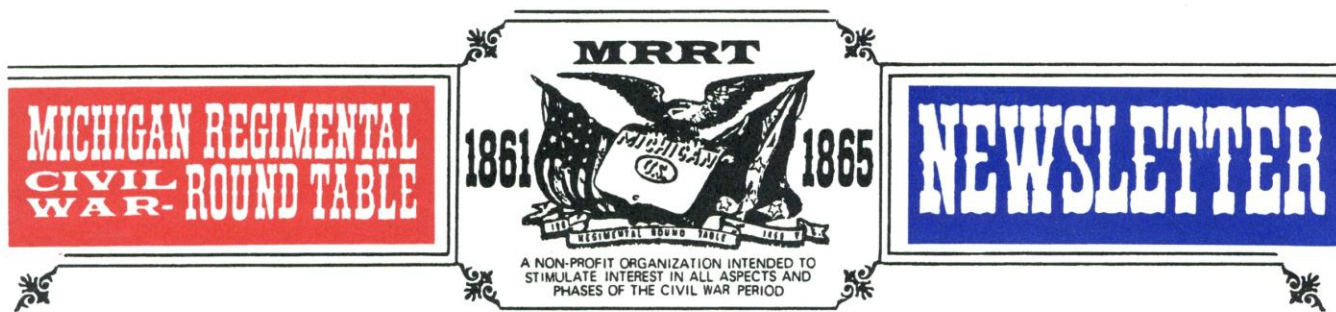
Itinerary: Saturday – 1862 Stonewall Jackson-Sandy Ridge 1864 Jubal Early-Prichard Farm and Third Battle of Winchester

Sunday – Fisher’s Hill Battlefield, Cedar Creek Battlefield, Frederick County Courthouse Museum – Winchester

Please note that each participant must provide his/her own transportation to and from Winchester, Virginia.

ROUNDTABLE WEBSITE The Roundtable has a great website, well-managed by our friend, Gerald Furi. The website is: <https://www.mrrt.us>

August 2026 Speaker – Dr. Steven J. Ramold, PhD, History Professor at Eastern Michigan University, will share with us the story of “It is all hardships and troubles: Discipline and ill-discipline in the Confederate Army.” A Nebraska native, Steven has earned three degrees, including a PhD from the University of Nebraska. He worked as an



archivist at the Nebraska State Historical Society and taught at the University of Nebraska, Doane College, and Virginia State University before joining Eastern Michigan University in 2005. He is a Professor of American History. Professor Ramold is the author of three books, *Slaves, Sailors, Citizens: African Americans in the Union Navy*, *Baring the Iron Hand: Discipline in the Union Army*, and *Across the Divide: Union Soldiers View the Northern Home Front*. Steve discussed *Baring the Iron Hand: Discipline in the Union Army* in his previous visit with us.

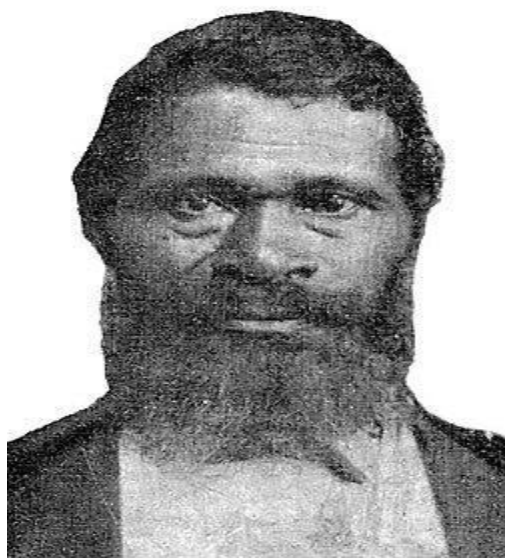
This will be a great presentation!

July 2026, Speaker – Dr. Roy Finkenbine, “Searching for Jordan Anderson”

The MRRT was once again educated and entertained by a talk by Dr. Roy Finkenbine; this time he presented *Searching for Jordan Anderson*. While not addressing the war directly, it dealt with the overarching issue of slavery, the real cause of the war. He did so by focusing on a man named Jordan Anderson who was born into slavery but succeeded in escaping during the war. **Roy said he chose the subject:**

- **as an example of “contrabands,”** that is, slaves who had escaped or been liberated by Union forces,
- because Jordan and his descendants were examples of **former slaves who overcame all obstacles and became real successes in freedom,**
- And because, once free, **he publicly declared that his former master should compensate him for his time working as his slave, i.e., reparations.**

Jordan Anderson (photo), born in 1825, was unique in that he had a first and last name; many slaves were referred to only by their (first) name. He was also fortunate that his family was never broken up as tragically happened all too often.



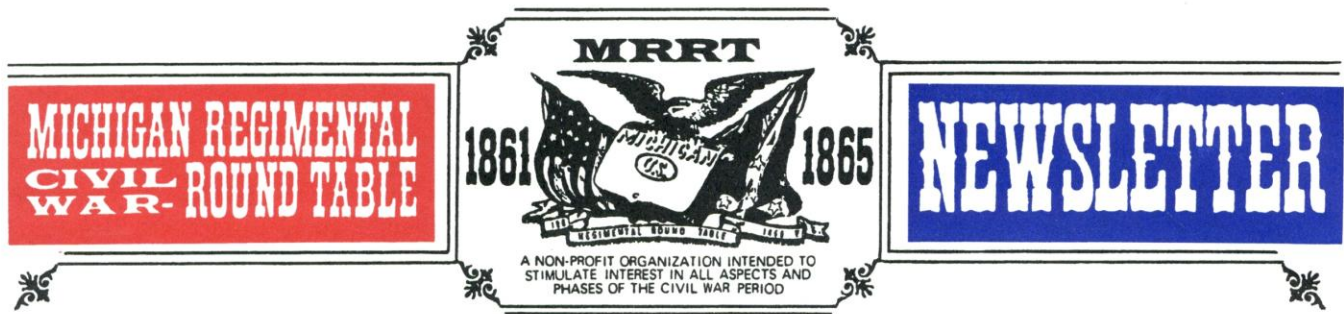
He was born on a 1000-acre plantation called Big Spring northeast of Nashville, Tn. No cotton was grown this far north, instead the land was used for other crops plus timber. The owner was named Anderson – hence the source of Jordan’s last name.

A DNA analysis of his descendants shows that he had some Native American and European ancestry. Jordan was passed from the owner to his son, P. H. Anderson, at age six. As he matured, he grew proficient in several skills, particularly in the care of horses. His master also employed him in a store he owned.

In 1847, Jordan was married to a slave named Amanda who had arrived at the plantation as property of Jordan’s master’s new wife. **This slave marriage was unusual because a white minister officiated and two witnesses were also white.** The couple had three children while still in slavery.

Jordan Family Escapes Slavery to Nashville

The Civil War had negligible impact on Big Spring and its slaves at first. A Union foraging raid in 1862 did discover and seize several hams which Jordan’s master had attempted to conceal! Because the area was under Union control, the



Emancipation Proclamation provisions would not apply, but **shortly after the raid, Jordan and his family escaped and went to Nashville.**

Jordan worked as a security guard and as an orderly at a military field hospital. There **Jordan met a doctor, Clarke McDermont**; the doctor set up a literacy school which Amanda (but not Jordan) attended and became literate. McDermont (surgeon of an Ohio regiment) then sent the family to his hometown, Dayton.

Although an arduous and exhausting journey (Amanda was expecting), **they were greeted by Valentine Winters, an ardent abolitionist, upon their arrival.** Jordan quickly found work as a wagon/carriage driver for Winter's family and eventually became their butler.

Jordan Requests Reparations from his previous owner for work as a slave.

After being established in Dayton, **Jordan decided to contact his old master, to insist that he and his wife were owed compensation for the work they were forced to do as slaves on his plantation.** His former master had fallen into deep debt through unwise real estate purchases so there was no chance he could pay them what they claimed they were owed. **The letter was made public, however, and was reprinted in newspapers in the North.** Mr. Anderson was forced to sell his plantation and died not long afterward.

Jordan and Amanda had five more children.

Jordan and Amanda had five more children; these born into freedom. **Their children, like their parents, proved to be successful in their lives, proving that they could be capable and useful members of society.** Jordan was active in the community, leading the celebration of the 15th Amendment in Dayton. Winters' will provide a pension for Jordan who died in 1905 and was buried near Valentine Winters' grave.

We thank Dr. Finkenbine for another informative presentation.

Civil War Essentials – Union Officers Court-Martial

Charged Union Officer – Colonel John F. Ballier

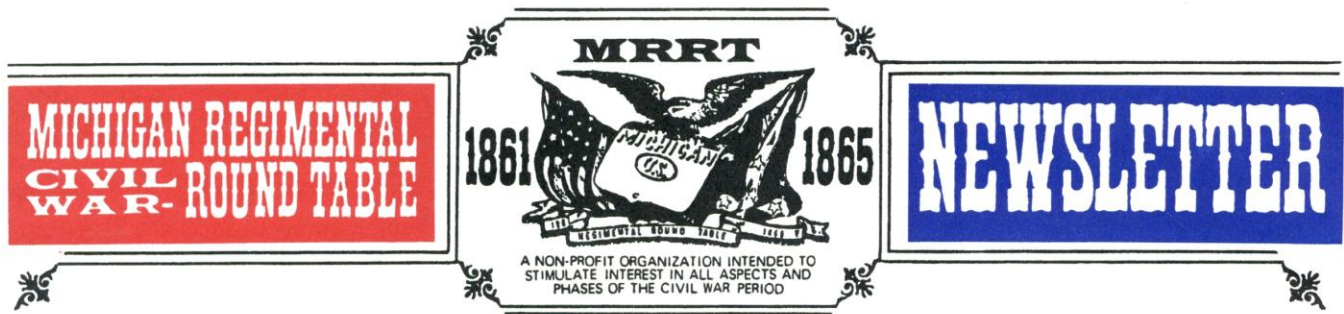
Offense – Misbehavior Before the Enemy

Colonel John F. Ballier began the Civil War commanding the 21st Pennsylvania Volunteers, a three-month regiment. After considerable service they were mustered out. Colonel Ballier then assumed command of the 98th Pennsylvania Volunteers. This regiment joined General McClellan's Peninsula Campaign. The regiment fought in several battles from Yorktown to the Seven Days. It was at Malvern Hill, that Colonel Ballier met General Phil Kearney.

The court-martial that resulted from their meeting occurred on July 24, 1862. The charge was "***misbehavior before the enemy.***" Allegedly, Colonel Ballier, "***without authority, retire with a portion of the regiment under his command, from his brigade, and being afterwards ordered by . . . Brigadier General Phillip Kearny, to join his brigade, did fail to do until after the action.***"

Colonel Ballier pleaded Not Guilty

The 98th Pennsylvania fought throughout the day at Malvern Hill despite going twenty-four hours without water. The regiment had also received new patent cartridges that proved seriously defective. Colonel Ballier rallied his thirsty, weaponless men, who were willing to fight if they had water. Three officers ordered the regiment to get back in line. One officer, Lieutenant Burt, pointed a cocked pistol at the Colonel's head and threatened to shoot anyone who went for water. General Kearney said at the court-martial that Colonel Ballier refused to order his regiment forward. General Kearney said at the court-martial that this was "***mutinous conduct.***"



Lieutenant F. Prurien testified, *"I saw General Kearney ride up and say, 'Where is that damned old scoundrel? Arrest him, and buck and gag him.'"*

Another witness, Captain N. Voltaire, said that *"the men were willing to obey Colonel Bailers' orders, but the falling and exploding shells were scattering them."*

The Verdict The court found Colonel Ballier **NOT GUILTY on all charges.**

Colonel Ballier returned to duty afterwards. He was severely wounded in the foot at Salem Church, VA, during the Chancellorsville campaign in May 1863. He was promoted to Brigadier General in July 1866.

Charged Union Officer – Colonel Emil von Schoenig.

Offense – Arrested on Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, D.C. for not having the proper passes.

Colonel Emil von Schoenig of the German Rangers and his brother Oscar mustered into the Union Army and arrived in Washington, D.C., in the fall of 1861. While walking along Pennsylvania Avenue as tourists, the provost guard arrested them for not having required passes. The brothers' defense was that they knew nothing of General Porter's order requiring passes.

The court acquitted the brothers because, under the circumstances, no criminal liability was found. However, the colonel's troubles were not over. On November 13, 1861, the Rangers were posted to Alexandria, Virginia to help defend the capital. The ground was swampy; the air was cold and damp. Soon, he had malaria, his right leg was crippled with rheumatism, and an ear infection that left him deaf on one side. His physical condition led to a court of inquiry.

Major Charles Freidenburg was a witness. "He is a weak character, speaks poor language, and is a mere tool in the hands of a clique of the lowest orders of society." The Major went on, "The colonel pockets the money that is intended to feed the recruits and is so notorious in this New York City that the German Society has disowned him He is a fraud."

General Oliver Howard, who was at Chancellorsville and Gettysburg in 1863 as commander of the XI Corps, summarized the court's findings in January 1862. ***"Colonel von Schoenig's deficient knowledge of tactics and his lack of grasp of English language unfit for command of a regiment.... We recommend that he be mustered out as incompetent."***

Emil went home sick, corrupt, and incompetent. His brother Oscar resigned in March 1862.

Emil received a pension in 1882; his doctor noted that he suffered from malaria every spring.

Confederate Inflation

The South Carolina newspaper *Camden Confederate* reported the theft of two bags of coffee, three large chests of tea, and two boxes of soap from the Sisters of Mercy, valued at between five and six thousand dollars. This reflected the level of Confederate inflation.

Confederate Taxes

The Confederate Congress imposed a nation-wide tax of \$0.50 per \$100 of valuation, including slaves. The tax was widely evaded by the population as actual revenue was not close to the expected \$12 million a year (\$500 million today),