

Vol LXII, #9

Michigan Regimental Round Table Newsletter—Page 1

September 2022

Our September meeting will be on Monday, September 26, 2022, at 6:30 pm in the basement of the Farmington Library – corner of Grand River and Farmington Road. **Our speaker, Tom Nanzig**, will begin around 7:00 pm after a 6:30 pm business meeting. We must be finished by 8:45 pm.

The Roundtable is proud to welcome back Tom Nanzig of Ann Arbor as our September speaker. Tom will speak on “How West Virginia Became a State!”. Tom will discuss another great subject off the beaten path of Civil War literature. He has spoken to our group on several topics over the years. His most recent presentations were on “*Ten More True Tales . . . With a Twist*”. For more than 25 years he has been writing an “*Ask the Colonel*” column for the Ann Arbor Roundtable. Tom has written or edited three Civil War books and has served as an officer for Roundtables in Michigan, Pennsylvania, and Virginia. He looked for relics when he lived near several Virginia battlefields. **This will be another great educational and entertaining presentation!**

October 14th to 16th Field Trip to Culpepper, Virginia

Yes, we are almost ready for our October trip to Culpepper, Virginia, where we will tour the Brandy Station Battlefield and other area Civil War sites! We already have 25-30 signed-up and paid \$250 (September) for the field trip! A very good turnout for our first trip in three years.

The tour dates are Friday evening, October 14th through Sunday afternoon, October 16th.

Our tour guide will be Chris Army – with assistance from Susan Ralston and Chuck Laudner. Chris and Susan operate the new “Culpepper Battlefield Tours”. Their website is <https://www.culpepperbattlefields.org/>

The tour cost (excluding hotel expenses and travel to Virginia and back home) is \$250. Please bring a check to our September meeting or send it to Jeanie at her home. Her address is: 29835 Northbrook, Farmington Hills, MI 48335-2326. Make your check out to Jeanie. The bank does not like checks made out to the Roundtable. Thank you!

Hotel – Best Western Culpepper (block of rooms has been reserved at \$119.99 per night plus taxes). **To reserve a room (Block under MRRT Bus Tour), call 540.825.1253**

Tour:

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2022

7:30 pm to 8:30 pm Meet and greet with guides at the hotel to discuss the tour.

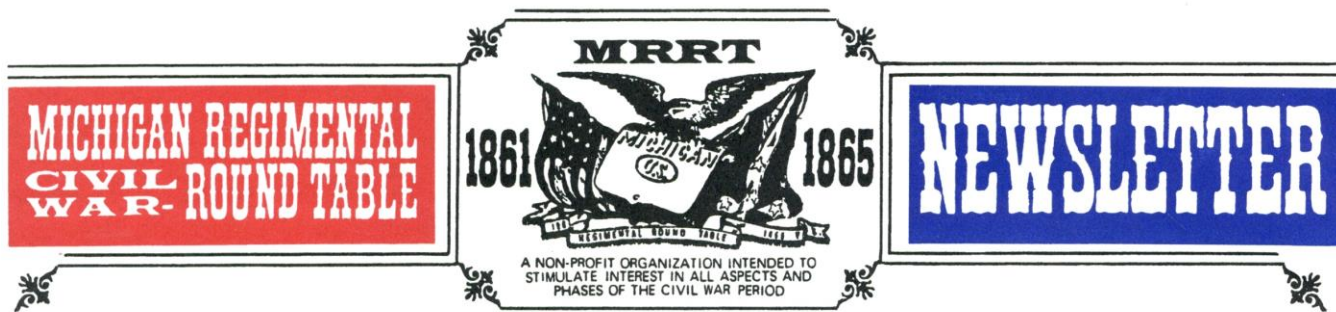
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2022

8:30 am to 6:00 pm

- Campaign Plan and Opening Shots of the Brandy Station battle
- Buford’s Knoll (approximately one mile each way) and Fleetwood Hill
- **Banquet Style Lunch at Green Ribbon at Old House Vineyards in Culpepper.** A choice of 1 of 3 pub-style sandwiches, salad or a side, dessert, and soft drink. Vegetarian and dairy-free options will be available. **This replaces the “traditional” evening banquet.**
- Stevensburg Action and Hansbrough’s Ridge

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2022

- Sites of the Federal Winter Encampment and Culpepper National Cemetery
- Clark’s Mountain (provisional)



- Lunch – Linn Park (Stevensburg) – box lunch delivered by Subway. Club, turkey, or vegetarian on wheat with chips, cookie, and drink.
- Continued sites of Winter Encampment and USCT Monument (dedicated November 2021)
- Visit/hike to Germanna Ford

If you want to sign up or have question(s) please contact Jeanie Graham at grahamjeanie@hotmail.com, 248.225.7596, or Linda Gerhardt at lindagerhardt@comcast.net 586.588.2712. We will send via e-mail or with the monthly mailing any updates to the trip.

Please note that each participant must provide their own transportation to and from Culpepper, VA, as in prior years.

Wearing a mask during our meeting is a personal decision. Masks will be available for your personal use.

August 2022 Speaker – Jack Dempsey

The MRRT was once again pleased to welcome back **Jack Dempsey** for another insightful presentation – *Life in Tatters* – **Eunice Hunt Tripler** recounting the experiences of an army medical officer and his wife. Jack has written this book about the Triplers which will be available in October. Jack noted that the MRRT is the *first* group to hear a precis of the upcoming book to be published by Mission Point Press. The proceeds of the book sale will go toward funding the proposed Michigan statute at Antietam.

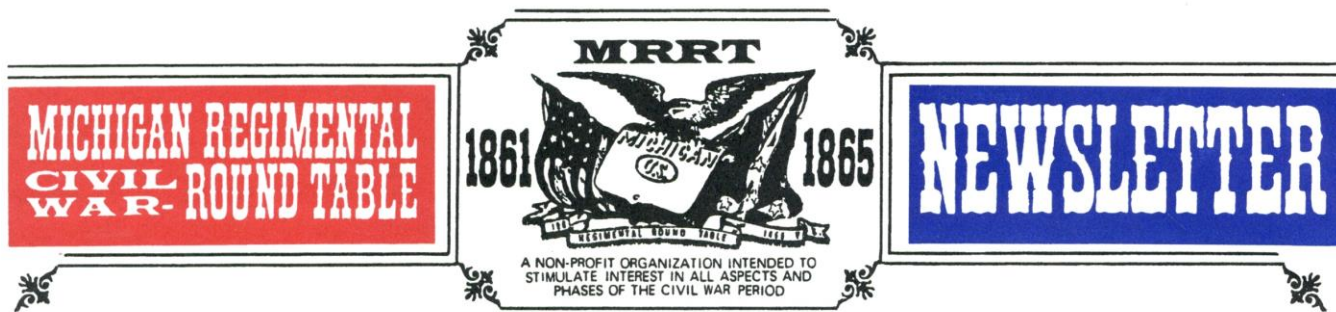
Eunice Hunt (picture below) was born in 1822 and lived to 1910. Henry Hunt of Civil War artillery fame was her cousin. She grew up in Washington and met many of the famous political figures of the 1st half of the 19th Century. She moved to Detroit in 1836.



The man she would marry was Charles S. Tripler who was born in 1806. In 1827 he was granted a degree from Columbia's College of Physicians & Surgeons. He then studied at West Point but was not an enrolled cadet. In 1830, he was commissioned as an army assistant Surgeon. **This would be the beginning of an army career spanning 36 years** including a stint in Detroit which began in 1840. **Charles and Eunice met there and were married in 1841.** Nine children were born to them but not all survived to adulthood. Tripler served in the Seminole War. During the war with Mexico, Tripler was the medical director of the army's hospital which had been set up in Mexico City after its capture by Scott's army. During a trip across Panama, Tripler saw the shortcomings of contemporary medicine in combatting malaria, Yellow Fever, and other diseases. In the late 1850s, he wrote

several books on military medicine which became standard army references.

At the outbreak of the Civil War, Charles Tripler was ordered to Washington and soon became McClellan's Army of the Potomac Medical Director. He and his wife were avid supporters of preserving the union, but Eunice was not an abolitionist. Although Tripler was credited with the development of the army ambulance, US Sanitary Commission critics forced him out of the AP Medical Director position in favor of Jonathan Letterman. Tripler was moved to the post of Chief Surgeon of the Lakes. Among other achievements, **he started Harper Hospital.** He remained in this position until he died in 1866 of a form of glandular cancer. Tripler was promoted to brevet Brigadier General posthumously. He was buried in Elmwood Cemetery. Eunice would be buried beside him when she died in 1910.



After his death, his wife wanted the compensation he had received from the government for his medical books to continue. This battle would continue until 1900 when Congress passed a private bill awarding Eunice \$3000. **In 1920, the Fort Shafter Medical Center in Hawaii was renamed The Tripler Army Medical Center.**

In the meantime, **Eunice's son-in-law recorded her recollections of her life as an army officer's wife and had them published after her death.** In it, her assistance to her husband in handling his army paperwork during the war was revealed. This remains one of the few books about northern women in the period of the Civil War. Jack Dempsey's book is largely based on this collection.

After his presentation, Jack said he hoped to produce additional books to help fund the Antietam statue. He noted that a book sold **directly**, such as at our meeting, netted far more of the retail price for the statue fund than if sold through a bookstore. At present, about \$40,000 of the \$300,000 needed has been raised.

We thank Jack for his presentation!

Civil War Essentials - Ulric Dahlgren –Young Fallen Union Soldier

Ulric Dahlgren was born to the future Admiral John Dahlgren and his wife, Mary, on April 3, 1842, near Philadelphia. The well-off family moved to Washington, D.C., where John Dahlgren worked at the Washington Naval Yard. During his school years the young Ulric learned about power, influence, politics, and intrigue from the prominent friends of his father. Ulric learned about civil engineering at the Naval Yard under the direction of his father, the inventor of the bottle-shaped Dahlgren cannon.

Ulric moved to Natchez, Mississippi in 1858, where he lived at his uncle's mansion while studying surveying. His Uncle Charles had strong opinions regarding States' Rights and slavery. One of the Dahlgren's family biographers wrote, "[they] were virile and impetuous glory seekers who played dangerous games for the sport". **Ulric returned to Washington, D.C. where he became an aide to his father when the war broke out in 1861. Together they went to the White House and War Department, where they met President Lincoln and Secretary of War Stanton. John Dahlgren and President Lincoln were good friends.**



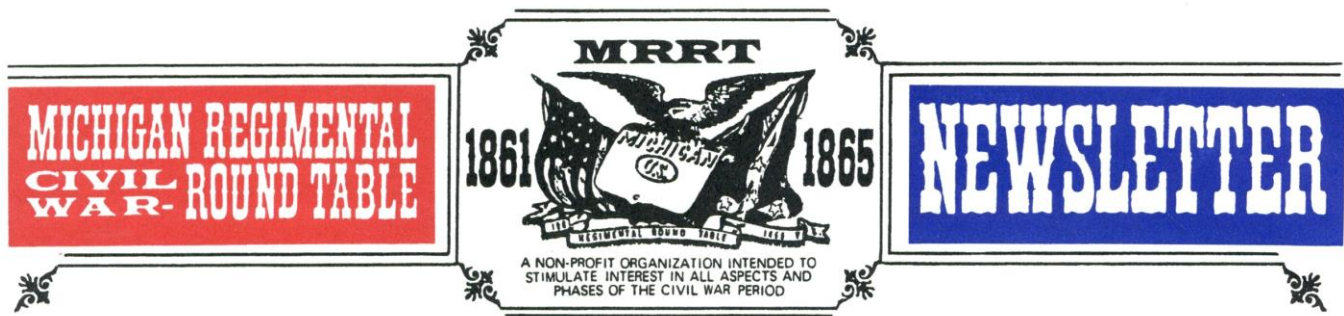
Secretary of War Stanton gave the young Ulric, then only 19, a captain's commission and a position with Major General Franz Sigel's staff in the Shenandoah Valley. This was after Captain Dahlgren helped place Dahlgren guns of the Naval Battery on Maryland Heights to protect Harpers' Ferry. He became the *de facto* artillery chief of the 11th Corps at the Battle of Second Bull Run.

Captain Dahlgren led a successful cavalry raid on November 9, 1862, across the Rappahannock River to determine Confederate strength in Fredericksburg, Virginia. Shortly thereafter, in February 1863, he was appointed aide-de-camp to General Hooker, new commander of the Army of the Potomac. Captain Dahlgren was still only 21 years old. Ulric accompanied General John Buford's cavalry column to assist in the surprise assault on General J.E.B. Stuart's Confederate cavalry on June 9,

1863, during the Battle of Brandy Station. He nearly escaped capture when his horse was shot from under him.

Dahlgren Loses A Leg at Gettysburg

During the Battle of Gettysburg, on July 2, 1863, he and his small cavalry patrol captured a message from President Davis to General Lee stating that no reinforcements would be coming from Richmond to Pennsylvania. Shortly thereafter, Captain Dahlgren was wounded in the right foot and lower leg during a cavalry skirmish in



Hagerstown, Maryland on July 6, 1863. Unfortunately, his right leg had to be amputated. He survived his wound and fitted with an artificial leg.

On February 12, 1864, General Kilpatrick (nicknamed Kill-cavalry) met with President Lincoln to discuss a proposed cavalry raid on Richmond. One of General Meade's staff officers wrote, a "*Secret expedition with us is got up like a picnic, with everybody blabbing and yelping*".

Richmond Raid

By February 19, 1864, Colonel Ulric Dahlgren was on a train to Brandy Station. Soon, General Kilpatrick selected him as second in command with a pivotal role in the raid. Dahlgren would lead five hundred troopers to cross the James River west of Richmond and go to Belle Isle, a 45-acre island close to Richmond and release the Union soldiers imprisoned there. Then, his command would go back to Richmond and meet with General Kilpatrick's 3,500-man column. Kilpatrick would also go to Libby Prison to release Union officers held there. What a plan!



The raid was a failure for many reasons. Dahlgren's column could not cross the James River because of a persistent freezing rain. Dahlgren then gave up on capturing Belle Isle. Moving into Richmond proper his column met determined Confederate resistance which forced him to turn northeast to reunite with Kilpatrick's army. However, Kilpatrick had already fled to General Butler's lines near Williamsburg without communicating with Colonel Dahlgren. Colonel Dahlgren's 100 remaining troopers were ambushed near Walkerton, Virginia. (Picture left) Dahlgren was instantly killed by several Confederate shots.

After the Raid

The Confederates captured most of the Union troopers engaged in the raid. They found on Dahlgren's body his watch, cigars, his memorandum book, and other papers. These papers included orders written on Third Cavalry stationery that "*Jeff Davis and the Cabinet must be killed on the spot*" and Richmond destroyed. The Confederate government made copies of the orders and sent them through the lines demanding to know if the orders were sanctioned by the Federal government. Union leadership denied that thus making Dahlgren the scapegoat for the disastrous raid.

The Richmond newspapers vilified Dahlgren. The *Richmon Whig* declared, "*Henceforth the name of Dahlgren is linked with eternal infamy. And in the years to come defenseless women and children will peruse, with a sense of shrinking horror, the story of Richmond's rescue from the midnight sack and ravage led by Dahlgren.*" He was called Ulric the Hun. His wooden leg was displayed in front of a Richmond store as a trophy.

Ulric's body was secretly buried in Richmond's Oakwood Cemetery. When the Confederate government approved Admiral Dahlgren's request to remove the casket and move it to Philadelphia, it was gone! Union spy Elizabeth Van Lew had secretly moved the casket to another location in the Richmond area. When Richmond fell, the Admiral was able to retrieve his son's remains and rebury them in Philadelphia's Laurel Hill Cemetery, where they are today.