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Michigan Regimental Round Table Newsletter—Page 1

November 2025

### **NOVEMBER 24, 2025, ROUNDTABLE MEETING**

**Our November meeting will be on Monday, November 24, 2025, at 6:30 pm at the lower level of the Farmington Library, on the corner of Grand River and Farmington Road. Our guest speaker, Austin Ingall, a senior at Bedford High School and son of our long-time friend David Ingall, will begin around 7:00 pm, after our 6:30 pm business meeting.**

### **MEMBER RENEWAL**

The MRRT celebrates its 66th year in 2026 – and now is a wonderful time to show your support by renewing your membership! (Or become a new member!). Membership is \$25 a year – or \$5 for students. **Checks should be made out to the NEW TREASURER, Jim Burroughs** (the bank does not like checks made out to the RoundTable) and can be mailed to his home at **1632 North Silvery Lane, Dearborn, MI 48128.** We will gladly accept cash at our meetings. The dues are used to pay our expenses, mostly outside speaker-related, and contribute to battlefield preservation.

### **ROUNDTABLE WEBSITE**

**The Roundtable has a great website, created by our friend, Gerald Furi. We are no longer connected to the Farmington Library. The website is: <https://www.mrrt.us>** Please note that the s after http is necessary to get on the website. The website is well worth visiting.

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### **NOVEMBER SPEAKER – AUSTIN INGALL – TEMPERENCE, MI**

**The Roundtable is happy to introduce our November speaker, Austin Ingall, who will speak on “*Aaron Bromley, Monroe County, and the 102 United States Colored Troops*”.** The 102<sup>nd</sup> was the only recruited African American regiment from Michigan.

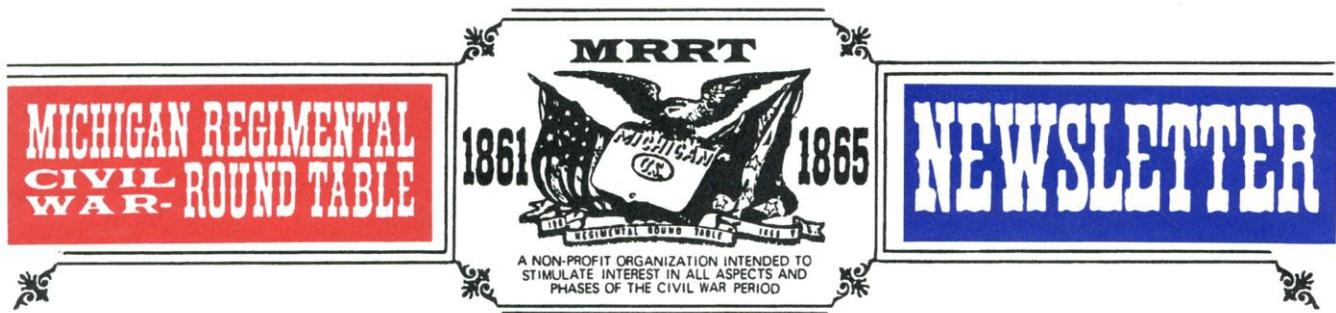
Austin is a Senior at Bedford High School in Temperence, MI. He is applying to attend the University of Michigan. For 2024-2025 he is a member of the American Battlefield Trust Youth Leadership Program, one of only ten students from across the USA. Congratulations, Austin! He was also a tour guide intern at the River Raisin National Battlefield in Monroe. Yes, his father is Dave Ingall, who has spoken to our group several times over the years.

**This will be a great presentation on the 102<sup>nd</sup> United States Colored Troops!**

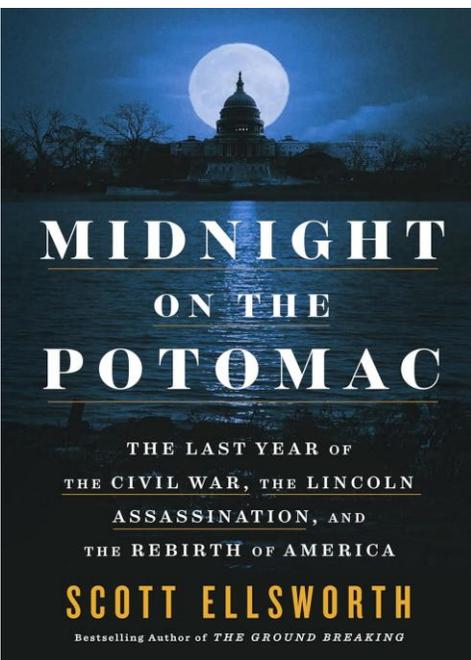
### **SEPTEMBER 2025 SPEAKER – DR. SCOTT ELLSWORTH SPOKE ON “MIDNIGHT ON THE POTOMAC – THE LAST YEAR OF THE CIVIL WAR, THE LINCOLN ASSASSINATION, AND THE REBIRTH OF AMERICAN”**

The Roundtable really enjoyed Dr. Scott Ellsworth’s presentation of his new book, “*Midnight on the Potomac.*” The book was first published in July 2025 and is now in its fourth edition.

The Civil War was both the most significant and the deadliest event in American history. One in fifty died in the War and one out of seven went from slavery to freedom. One out of every three hundred residents died during this period. The end of the War was never pre-ordained. “*The fate of the United States of America lay in the balance*” stated Dr. Ellsworth, as 1864’s campaign began.



The spring of 1864 began with a wave of optimism. The Army of the Potomac had 120,000 men, the largest in the Western Hemisphere. Its new commander, General Grant, who was a clerk in his father's store in Galena, IL, and read romantic novels while he was attending West Point.



**During May 1864, the Army crossed the Rapidan River and began the Overland Campaign. The Northern newspapers were expecting a quick end to the war.** Grant's men ran into a buzzsaw, as the battle in the Wilderness caused 17,000 casualties. The next major battle, Spotsylvania Court House, featured the largest infantry charge in North American. 18,000 casualties were incurred in 22 hours of intense fighting. **During these two battles, Grant lost one third of his men. Northern morale went down as it became obvious that the war would not end any time soon.**

Then Confederate General Jubal Early crossed the Potomac and traveled close to Washington. President Lincoln went to Fort Stevens to observe the fighting. The President was just two hundred yards away from Confederate sharpshooters. The Northern Peace Movement wanted to let the South leave the country.

The leaders of the Republican Party told the President in August 1864 that it was all over. He would not be reelected in November.

The Confederates remain persistent despite being unable to recover their significant losses. A terror campaign against Northern civilians began. The St. Albans, Vermont bank was attacked. A steamship was attacked on the Great Lakes. Confederates tried to create a smallpox epidemic in the North. Agents

traveled from Montreal to New York and set fires in New York.

There were several attempts to capture or kill the President. He would ride alone from the White House to the Soldier's Home alone. One visit the President's hat had a bullet hole in it.

Women and African Americans contributed to the Union war effort. Amanda Aiken was a New Yorker who volunteered as a nurse. She worked fifteen hours a day, sometimes playing music for the soldiers. Doctors told Louisa May Alcott to tell the wounded men that they were dying.

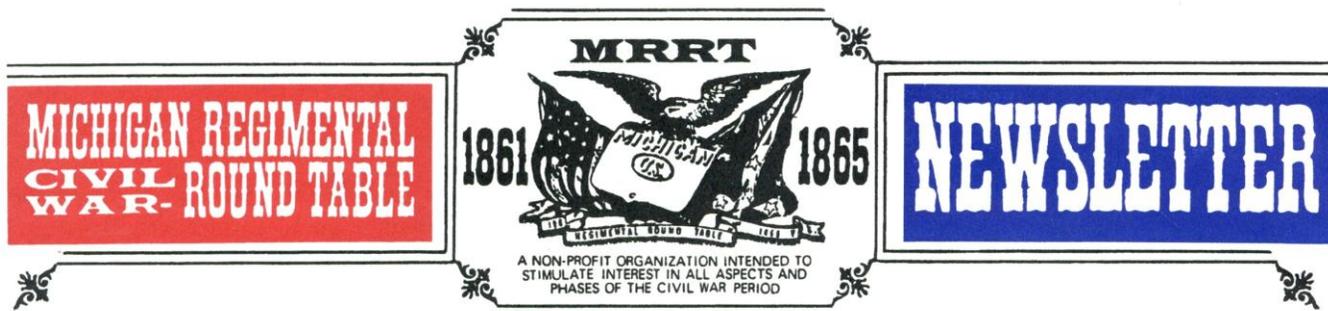
**Free African Americans moved to Washington. Abolitionists Sojourner Truth and Frederick Douglass met separately at the White House with the President.** They helped lay the support for the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment abolishing slavery.

**There were numerous Copperheads (who were the peace party) in the North and numerous Unionists in the South, Western North Carolina shot at the Confederates. There was no freedom of the Press.**

**Dr. Ellsworth's message to us that the Civil was "a conflict between armies and generals but a fight for the very soul of the nation."**

**The Roundtable thanks Dr. Ellsworth for his thought-provoking presentation!**

Memo: Dr. Ellsworth, an Oklahoma native, has spent many years investigating the 1921 Tulsa, Oklahoma race riot, where many African Americans were murdered. He wrote *The Groundbreaking*. Now he is finding the victim's graves.



**Gettysburg Trip – November 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2025**

Twenty-nine participants enjoyed our Gettysburg, PA weekend. The weather was excellent, high fifties with no rain, a little breezy on Saturday morning. Our Chris Army (his last name) was terrific. His knowledge of the Gettysburg battlefield was immense. He passed the toughest exam in history to become a licensed tour guide.

**Saturday, Nov. 1<sup>st</sup>**

Chris commenced our tour on Baltimore Pike and Taneytown Road. General Meade relied on the Baltimore Pike for supplies, and General Hancock's Second Corps moved via the Taneytown Road to Gettysburg. **Chris said that General Hancock would become the MVP of the Union victory. These were the only two roads controlled by the Union Army.**

**The Union Army supply trains were 100 miles long while the Confederate trains were “only” 60 miles long. During the campaign, the Confederates accumulated 4 ½ months’ worth of supplies, including 40,000 cattle. One reason is that General Lee went North to allow Virginian farmers to harvest their own crops. If the Confederates won a major victory, the Northern Peace Democrats would demand an end to the war.**

We stopped at Coon’s Farm in Maryland. This was General Meade’s headquarters on June 29<sup>th</sup>. June 30<sup>th</sup> was payday for the Union Army.



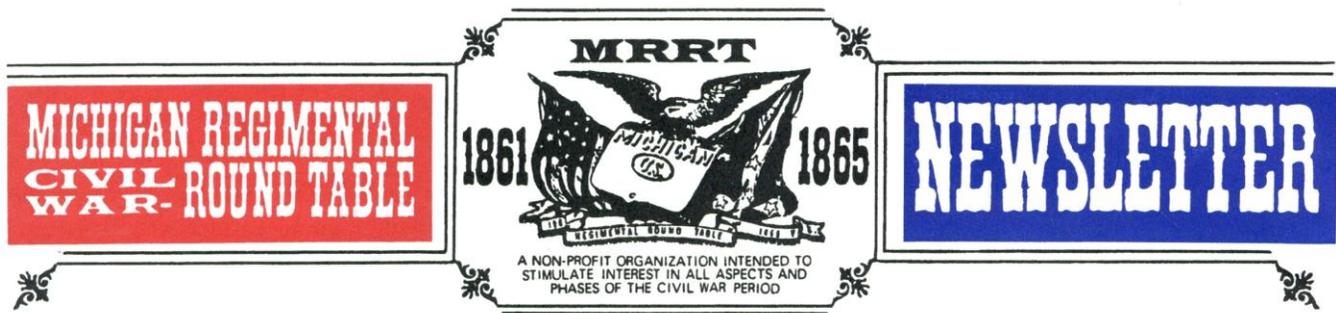
After lunch at the Visitor’s Center, we explored the fighting on July 1<sup>st</sup>, the first day of battle. Gettysburg civilians primarily hid in the basements of their homes. Jennie Wade was the only civilian killed during the battle, on July 3<sup>rd</sup>. There are 1,300 monuments on the battlefields, mostly regimental. Numerous monuments were built during the 1880’s. Union general John Reynolds was killed during the first fifteen minutes of battle. He was the highest-ranking general killed in the battle.

**We stopped at our favorite Michigan monument, for the 24<sup>th</sup> Michigan (group picture above).** The

regiment was heavily involved in the fighting of July 1<sup>st</sup>. The 24<sup>th</sup> lost more men killed and wounded than any other Federal regiment, 363 out of 496 officers and men. They fought with the Iron Brigade on Willoughby’s Run during the initial phases of the battle.

There were 13,000 casualties on the first day, one of the worst days of the war. Chris said that up to 1,000 bodies were still buried on the battlefield.

**We thank Linda for putting our trip together. Unfortunately, she could not come with us. One of the highlights was our Saturday night buffet at the Dobbins House in Gettysburg.** The food was of exceptional quality, with the gingerbread being particularly noteworthy. **People were still talking about dinner during Sunday’s tour.**



**Sunday, November 2<sup>nd</sup>**

Chris led us on a great tour of the fighting on July 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>. The highlight was standing on the ground that Pickett's Charge was trying to reach, the Copse of Trees. We had a great lunch at the Red Barn Restaurant. After lunch, we visited Michigan's General Custer at the Cavalry Battlefields.

A great trip! Chris said that there are numerous Gettysburg videos on YouTube.

**George Sharpe – Commander of the Bureau of Military Information, Union Army**

George Sharpe (1828-1900) (picture below) was born in Kingston, New York. He studied law at Yale and then worked in New York City and Vienna, Austria.



George, at the request of the Governor of New York, raised a new regiment and became a colonel in the Army of the Potomac. In 1863, General Hooker made one of his good moves when he selected Colonel

Sharpe to command the Bureau of Military Information (BMI). Colonel Sharpe served in this position until the end of the war, earning promotions to brevet major general.

Sharpe deployed scouts and civilian agents to report on activities behind Confederate lines. He and his staff interviewed prisoners, deserters, and refugees, and analyzed letters and newspapers.

**The BMI during the Gettysburg Campaign**

During May 1863, Colonel Sharpe reported to General Hooker's staff that the Confederate Army was under marching orders. *"An order from General Lee to his troops announcing a campaign of long marches & hard fighting in a part of the*

*country where they would have no railroad transportation"* This had to mean a march North. This was supported by an article in a Richmond newspaper.

Colonel Sharpe continued his diligence. On June 4<sup>th</sup>, he reported that *"There is a considerable movement of the enemy. Their camps are disappearing at some points."*

**The BMI was able to count the size of the Army of Northern Virginia on June 27<sup>th</sup>, from citizen-spies in Hagerstown, MD.** A careful count in Hagerstown concluded that there almost 80,000 men and 275 pieces of artillery. This turned out to be a remarkably accurate picture of the opposition. For example, the actual number of artillery pieces was 283, only eight more than the original estimate,

**July 2, 1863, Evening Meeting with General Meade**

The biggest event of the campaign was the evening on July 2<sup>nd</sup>. Colonel Sharpe was summoned to General Meade's headquarters where Generals Meade, Hancock, and Slocum waited to talk to him as they planned July 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Colonel Sharpe reported that 1,300 prisoners were being guarded, and interrogation showed that 100 Confederate regiments fought on July 1st and 2nd. Not one of these regiments was from Pickett's Division. *"Pickett's division has arrived, is bivouacked, and will be ready for action tomorrow morning."* Then Hancock turned to Meade, raised his fist, and said emphatically, *"General, we have got them nicked."*

Lee had committed his entire army while the Army of the Potomac had the large Sixth Corps now ready to participate where needed! Union Army intelligence was terrific during the Gettysburg campaign.