



THE FEDERALIST

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Compatriot Danny Crock presents “Last Great Encampment” at Civil War Roundtable

On June 19, 2019, SAR and GSW 1812 member Danny Crock, wearing the hat of the G.A.R. (Grand Army of the Republic) gave an historical talk on the "Last Great Encampment" of 1922 held in Des Moines, Iowa.

The presentation was filled with not only great historical information but was also intertwined with wonderful music, photos and videos of the era.

The talk was part of the Des Moines Civil War Roundtable's monthly forum of programs and was attended by their members and guests (crowd of over 60 people).

Quarterly Meeting Date Changed to July 30

The quarterly meeting of the IASSAR, GSW1812 in Iowa, and SUVCW Dodge Camp will be held on **Tuesday, July 30th, 7:00PM, at the Urbandale Library.**



IASSAR, GSW 1812-Iowa Honor Veterans in Missing in Iowa Project

The Iowa SAR and Iowa Society of the War of 1812 color Guard units joined with hundreds of others on Friday June 28, 2019 for interment services of five veterans and one spouse of a veteran.

Their interment was the result of the action of many including Hamilton's Funeral home and members of the Missing in America project.

<https://www.miap.us/>

The purpose of the MIA Project is to locate, identify and inter the unclaimed cremated remains of American veterans through the joint efforts of private, state and federal organizations. To provide honor and respect to those who have served this country by securing a final resting place for these forgotten heroes.

It is estimated that there may be nearly 1000 unclaimed remains of veterans in Iowa alone.

The line of cars in the procession from the funeral home to the Iowa Veteran's Cemetery was estimated to be over a mile long.

Hamilton's Funeral Home, in partnership with the Missing in America Project, formally invites you to help honor and recognize five veterans, and one spouse, whose cremated remains are unclaimed.

We strive to provide honor and respect to those who have served this country by securing a final resting place for these heroes. A memorial service will be held at 9:30 a.m. Friday, June 28, 2019 at Hamilton's on Westown Parkway, 3601 Westown Parkway, West Des Moines, Iowa. A procession will follow the service to Iowa Veterans Cemetery.

Verl Anderson was born on December 11, 1923. He served in the Navy during WWII, and died on March 25, 2002 at the age of 78. Verl worked for the U.S. Post Office.

Howard Duncan was born on December 21, 1921 in Bagley, Iowa. He served in the United States Army during WWII and was awarded the Purple Heart. He died on December 15, 2005 at the age of 84 at the VA hospital in Jacksonville, TN. He was employed by Iowa Prosthetics and most recently, Western International as a forklift operator. Howard had a great love for sports, which included coaching baseball and playing pool.

Larry Gardner was born on December 22, 1962 in Des Moines, Iowa. He served in the United States Army. He passed away at the age of 40, on December 18, 2003. Larry worked for the United States Post Office.

John "Jack" Thiel was born on December 20, 1933 in Nebraska. He served in the United States Army during the Korean War. He excelled in basketball, baseball, and track. He worked for the United States Post Office, and after retirement was a greens keeper at Des Moines Golf and Country Club. He died on January 3, 2002.

Victor Sundberg was born on August 4, 1921 in Sioux City, Iowa. He served in the United States Air Force during the Korean War. Victor worked with the Railroad. Victor passed away June 30, 2018 at the age of 86.

Nettie Hines was born on February 7, 1909. She was married to Raymond Hines, who proudly served his country in the United States Army. Nettie died away on May 3, 2000 at the age of 91. She will be laid to rest next to her husband.

You are not forgotten.

--contributed by Compatriot Mike Rowley

Revolution, 1812 Compatriots March on Urbandale!



The Forgotten Battle: The 1814 Battle of Credit Island, Iowa and Illinois

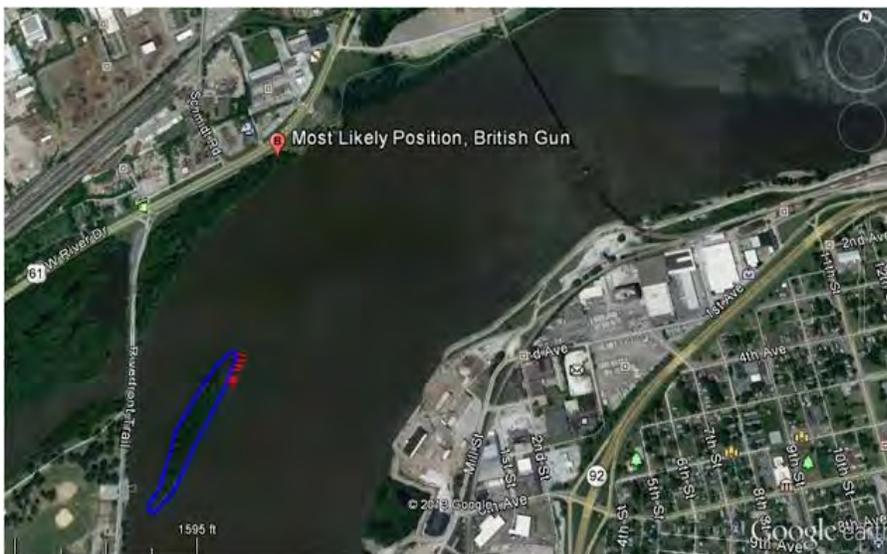
Welcome to the first in several posts about a different sort of War of 1812 battle. The Battle of Credit Island was fought September 4 and 5, 1814, on the Mississippi River near the present-day Davenport, Iowa. The battle was noteworthy for a number of reasons:

- The defeated Americans were led by Zachary Taylor, the future president, and the Native American forces included Chief Black Hawk (Black Hawk's autobiography is available as a free ebook).



- The 800-1200 Native American combatants far outnumbered the 334 Americans and the 20-30 British. Unlike battles on the eastern seaboard, there was a heavy involvement by Native Americans at Credit Island.
- It was one of very few battles on the Upper Mississippi, and featured eight reinforced river boats (see the current issue of the Midcontinental Journal of Archaeology)

- The weather was a major determinant in the outcome of the battle.
- Three artillerists with a brass 3-pounder and two swivel guns (probably 1-pounders) caused most of the damage and forced the American retreat.
- The battle marked the last effort in the war by the Americans to wrest control of the Upper Mississippi from the British.
- The victory helped cement the relationship between the British and the local tribes.



Despite these interesting aspects, the Battle of Credit Island is not well-known to the general public. It is a forgotten battle, and was not included in the national survey of War of 1812/Revolutionary War Battlefields.

The only public signage about the battle is located away from the core battlefield - in fact, it faces away from the battlefield, and includes questionable information.

In an effort to better understand and interpret The Battle of Credit Island, the City of Davenport applied for and won a 2012 grant from the American Battlefield Preservation Program.

The City owns much of the property in the core battlefield. The research was conducted by Commonwealth Cultural Resources Group of Jackson, Michigan.

Before talking about the present project, let's consider a brief summary of the battle:

The Battle of Credit Island occurred on September 4 and 5, 1814, as American troops tried to take control of the Upper Mississippi away from the British and the British-allied Native American tribes. For the Americans, Zachary Taylor led 334 men in eight gunboats. The American force hoped to destroy the Native American village and crops on the Rock River, upstream from its confluence with the Mississippi River. When Taylor realized his artillery would not be effective from the gun boats and the large number of Native American warriors present would not permit him to disembark his guns, Taylor decided to feint movement upstream, as if his target was the British fort at Prairie du Chen, Wisconsin. The Americans had just begun this upstream move on the afternoon of September 4, when a strong storm blowing downstream forced the Americans to stop for the night at Pelican Island. At least two of the American boats had poor anchors, and these boats tied off to the island.



At first light on September 5, a number of Native Americans had waded to Pelican Island from Credit Island, and an American sentry was shot and killed. The Americans disembarked a force and cleared the Native Americans from Pelican Island. At about this same time, the few British with a 3-pounder and two swivel guns abandoned their position watching the Rock Island rapids, and moved downstream to the western bank of the Mississippi, where they had a clear view of the American boats.

Taylor had one of his boats drop downstream to cover the channel between Credit and Pelican Islands, to keep the Native Americans from returning to Pelican Island. Shortly thereafter, the British began an artillery barrage, inflicting serious damage to the American boats. By one account, 51 of the 54 shots hit American boats. The barrage continued only 45-60 minutes, before Taylor recognized the need to retreat from his untenable position. The Americans retreated downstream. The Native American forces and the British were low on ammunition and supplies, and did not pursue the Americans.

This research – conducted by Commonwealth Cultural Resources Group -- was sponsored by the American Battlefield Preservation Program and the City of Davenport, Iowa. This material is based upon work assisted by a grant from the Department of the Interior, National Park Service. Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of the Interior.

Twice denied the freedom he'd earned, black Revolutionary War hero from Maryland to be honored at last

MSN News, June 21, 2019

He fought with distinction, historians say, in two of this country's formative wars. He was given a medal for valor by one of the world's great generals. He met a president and at least one president-to-be.

Yet James Robinson, who was born into slavery in Maryland in the mid-18th century, was denied his liberty for most of his life, and he never got the military honors he'd earned.

That is to change this weekend.

Robinson, an Eastern Shore native whose 1868 obituary described him as "loved by all and venerated by all," will be given a military funeral Saturday in his adopted hometown of Detroit.

Sponsored by two military legacy organizations, the event at Historic Elmwood Cemetery will include an honor guard, a flag presentation, speeches, a 21-gun salute and the dedication of two bronze emblems representing the conflicts in which he fought: the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812.



A handful of surviving references to Robinson point to him as a hero's hero: the Marquis de Lafayette pinned a gold French military medal of honor on him for his exploits at the Battle of Yorktown in 1781, and he was in the thick of the combat that helped Gen. Andrew Jackson rout the British at the Battle of New Orleans in 1814.

But as one of the more than 5,000 black people who fought in the War for Independence, and several thousand who took up arms for the U.S. in the War of 1812, his deeds were mostly lost to history, as records on African American soldiers were spottily kept.

Worse, he fought in both wars on the understanding that afterward, he'd be given the opportunity to live as a free American citizen. Instead, he returned home each time only to be sent back into the "most grievous bitter bondage" - slavery - in which he spent at least 77 of his 115 years.

One historian who helped unearth Robinson's story says it epitomizes the plight of thousands of black troops who fought for the U.S. in two centuries' worth of wars, only to return to a land that denied them the freedoms they had secured for the nation.

"What more can you do to serve your country and to secure your rights, to secure equal citizenship, than that man did?" asks Maurice Barboza, the founding director of the National Mall Liberty Fund D.C., a nonprofit group that aims to build a monument in Washington to black veterans of the Revolutionary War.

It was two years ago that Barboza met Elijah Shalis, an official with the Michigan Society of the Sons of the American Revolution and the organizer of Saturday's event.

The two have drawn on sources - census reports, news items, a Boys' Life magazine article, a history of Elmwood, even a newly rediscovered 64-page memoir Robinson narrated in 1858 - to construct a portrait of a man who fought bravely, who became embittered at the treatment he received, and who retained a craving for freedom throughout an incredibly long life.

Details about his Maryland origins are sketchy. His narrative says he was owned by a man named Francis de Shields - or Francis Shiel, according to a different source - a colonel in Gen. George Washington's Continental Army who brought Robinson into the service with him.

Owen Lourie, a historian with the Maryland State Archives, said he could find no mention of Robinson or De Shields in the archives, but the enlistment scenario was plausible.

"We know that soldiers brought their slaves with them, and a well-off gentleman would never be seen without his body servant," Lourie said.

A private in a Maryland light infantry regiment, Robinson would have been one of about 755 black soldiers - and 95 black Marylanders - historians say served in the Continental Army.

His narrative - authored with a ghost writer and under the name James Roberts - describes Robinson scalping Indians and taking part in skirmishes on the Eastern Shore. Other accounts suggest he fought at the Battle of Brandywine in 1777 and at Yorktown, where the British surrendered in 1781.

At Yorktown, he's said to have charged up a British rampart and killed three men in hand-to-hand combat en route to overtaking the emplacement. The victorious allied leader, Lafayette, pinned on Robinson a gold medal of valor by virtue of his authority as a French nobleman.

"That was extraordinary, because very few medals were given for service in the Revolutionary War," Shalis said, adding that the moment showed "the French, even then, were more tolerant of minorities." De Shields had promised he would free Robinson after the war, but he died soon afterward.

His heirs sold the married war veteran to Calvin Smith, whose plantation was either in Louisiana or Mississippi. Robinson described Smith's place as "a slaughter-house of human beings" and recalled being whipped so badly he "could not keep the vermin out of my flesh for weeks at a time."

"I will now confess that, could I have foreseen what heart-sickening ills awaited me in the future, I should have been strongly tempted to make my way to Canada," he added.

Robinson was still Smith's property in 1813 when Jackson swept through the area to enlist men of every background - slaves, free black men, privateers, Choctaw Indians - in advance of the British attack on New Orleans.

In Robinson's words, "Jackson came into the field, chose out the ones he wanted, and then addressed us thus: 'Had you not as soon go into the battle and fight, as to stay here in the cotton-field, dying and never die? If you will go, and the battle is fought and the victory gained on Israel's side, you shall be free.' This short speech seemed to us like divine revelation, and it filled our souls with buoyant expectations."

Robinson, then 61, went into battle, and he describes losing his left index finger - and reacting by "taking the heads off" six redcoats - as part of a victory in which "sixty or seventy or more of the colored men" were killed.

Afterward, he recalls, he requested his reward from Jackson.

"Before a slave of mine should go free, I would put him in a barn and burn him alive," he quoted the future president as saying before returning him to Smith.

Robinson somehow obtained his freedom in the 1830s; the 1840 census lists him as a free man in Ohio. He later became a Methodist minister and married a woman named Curtilda. In Detroit, the couple lived on Lafayette Street. They had two sons, one of whom fought for the Union in the Civil War.

His last known descendant, a granddaughter named Gertrude Robinson, died in Ohio in 1983.

Robinson's memoir also has him traveling to Washington in 1856, at 103, seeking a military pension. According to the narrative, he met with President Franklin Pierce.

"He told me that I was nothing but goods and chattels, like a horse or a sheep," Robinson wrote, "that my master had got the pension, and was still receiving it, or his heirs. He said it would be a disgrace to take it from the white man and give it to the negro ☹ 'When you fought that battle, you was your master's property.'"

Lourie advises that the narratives of former slaves, while valuable sources, "need to be read cautiously," as the accounts often come filtered through those who arranged for their publication, usually abolitionists with "their own points to make."

But to those who might find it hard to believe that a former slave could have met such influential figures, Barboza and Shalis say it's likely that Robinson did, in fact, know Lafayette - one Robinson obituary says the pair met again in 1824 - and that would have opened doors for the veteran.

Shalis assembled much of the timeline of Robinson's life as part of confirming his eligibility for membership in the Sons of the American Revolution and the Michigan Society of the War of 1812, the groups sponsoring Saturday's ceremony.

Doing that research was a bittersweet experience, he says, in that a great American came into view, one who never lost his determination to be free, no matter how cruelly the country he served treated him for most of his life.

Shalis believes that 151 years after Robinson's death, his tale has as much resonance as ever.

"If someone like Robinson, as a minority, was able to accomplish all he did in the early days of our country," he says, "it shows there's no reason people should ever have been held back by prejudices. Those barriers need to come down."

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Registrar / *Federalist*: Doug Frazer

