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## "BEST TROOPS IN THE WORLD": THE MICHIGAN TERRITORIAL MILITIA IN THE DETROIT RIVER THEATER DURING THE WAR OF 1812

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"Best troops in the world!" William Henry Harrison exclaimed to some Michigan men at Fort Meigs, Ohio, during 1813. [1] But when a comparison is made between "Old Tippecanoe's" evaluation of Michigan soldiers during the War of 1812 and those assessments of modern historians, it seems perfectly clear that General Harrison simply was playing to his audience and was being politic. Even though the Detroit River region was one of the major theaters of the War of 1812, modern historians consistently either ignore the military service of the people there or rate it as marginal at best.

John R. Elting in his recent book, Amateurs, To Arms! A Military History of the War of 1812, is typical. He states that the territory was "very thinly settled..." and those areas that were settled mainly consisted of "...French-Canadians and half-breeds, shiftless subsistence farmers and part-time hunters and trappers." [2] Elting considers them of no consequence to General William Hull in his disastrous 1812 campaign. "The Michigan Militia," he writes, "would not be of any appreciable use, its only reliable element being the 140-man Michigan Legionary Corps...." [3] After this point, Elting ignores Michigan soldiers.

J.C.A. Stagg also disregards the Michigan militia in his recent volume, Mr. Madison's War: Politics, Diplomacy, and Warfare in the Early Republic, 1783-1830. He does not consider their contributions significant, as the territory, in his view, "has scarcely been settled by Americans and.... There were, in fact, more settlers of French-Canadian origin than there were Americans." [4] Contrary to expectations. Michigan historians have done no better. Both Fred C. Hamill's Michigan in the War of 1812, a booklet published by the Michigan Historical Commission to commemorate the sesquicentennial of the war, and Willis Dunbar's thicker tome, Michigan: A History of the Wolverine State, give the reader the impression that Michigan's citizens were bystanders in the actions that encompassed their homeland. [5]

A close scrutiny of manuscripts and of literature published just after the conflict presents an impression different from that of modern histories. These sources tell a heroic story of the Michigan militia in the southeastern corner of the territory and from this evidence, the reasons for the obscurity of the militia's history become clear. [6]

Michigan Territory, established by an act of Congress in 1805, had three distinct population centers during the years before the war. The fort and fur trading center at Mackinac was the most northerly post. Detroit was the largest center. The town had more than 700 souls. But the Detroit settlement also included farms located on the north and west banks of the Detroit River, homesteads on the shores of Lake St. Clair and in the environs of the St. Clair River, and cabins on both banks of the River Rouge. At the western end of Lake Erie, 40 miles to

the south of Detroit, was the River Raisin country. This settlement, founded in the 1780s, was centered on the River Raisin, at the present site of Monroe, Mich. It also included two hamlets on creeks just north of the Raisin and five others hugging the shores of streams and of rivers as far south as the Maumee River. An 1811 census listed 4,762 residents in the territory. The enumerator counted 1,340 in the River Raisin country. The Detroit area boasted 2,807 inhabitants. There were 1,253 males of militia age — older than 16 — residing in the Detroit area and throughout the River Raisin country. [7]

Four-fifths of the territory's residents were of French Canadian descent. In the territory's southeastern corner, almost all of these were scions of long-established families who had arrived during the separate colonial rules of Great Britain and of France. Most of these *Canadiens* had ties to the Indian fur trade and if they spoke a second language it more than likely was an Indian tongue rather than English. Of the native English speakers, the largest number were holdovers from the British rule. Similar to the French, they were veterans of the Indian trade and intimately knew the Indian country and customs. Although Yankee settlers were arriving in greater numbers, these Americans were vastly outnumbered. [8]

During September, 1805, in one of his first acts as governor, William Hull developed regulations establishing the militia. The law created two regiments. The First Regiment was composed of men residing in the vicinity of Detroit and points north while men living in the River Raisin country formed the Second Regiment. The Legionary Corps, an elite unit of one company each of light infantry, riflemen, cavalry, and artillery, was recruited from within the jurisdiction of the First Regiment. On the eve of the war, the Second Regiment had seven companies and the First Regiment consisted of eight. The two militia companies at Mackinac and the two on the St. Clair River were detached from the First Regiment and were formed into an independent corps. [9]

Hull modeled his militia — uniforms and all — after the well-disciplined units he knew from his New England home. The territorial militia men fell far short of his expectations. Colonel John Anderson of the Second Regiment found it necessary to arrest most of his "French" officers to prod them into procuring uniforms. "The more I exercise [the soldiers]," he complained, "the less they learn." [10] During the years before the war, as the famous Shawnee prophet Tenskwatawa's Indian revival movement swept the frontier and heightened tensions, Hull wondered if his militiamen's familiarity with the Native people was more of a liability than an asset. Worrying especially about the French, Hull wrote to the secretary of war:

The French inhabitants who form much of the greater part of the settlements of this Territory appear friendly to our government. It is however necessary to consider their character and situation, to determine how they would act in the event of War with the Indians. From their infancy they have been in the habit of friendship with the Indians. A great part of them, indeed, are alied [sic] to them by blood. The greatest part of them speak their language, and in a variety of respects there is a great similarity and connection between them. The Indians are as familiar and as much at home, in the homes of these people, as the people themselves... The French people are indeed organized into a militi[a]... but considering their character and situation, I ask you what dependence could be placed on them, in the event of Indian War? [11]

Hull's second-in-command, Reuben Attwater, put it more bluntly. Writing to the secretary of war in January, 1812, he warned that in the event of war with the British and the Indians, most of the militiamen in the Michigan Territory "will prove to be British subjects." [12] This fear of the French and doubt about the loyalty of the English-speaking traders haunted the Michigan militia throughout the war.

After the Battle of Tippecanoe, concern turned to fear as Indians streamed through the region and the British made overt preparations for war. The 100 men garrisoned at Fort Detroit and the territorial militia were totally inadequate for this situation. Residents petitioned the federal government for reinforcements and Hull went to Washington, D.C., where he personally appealed for aid from the Madison administration. Just to secure the territory in its present state and to defend it in the event of war, Hull estimated that a military commander at Detroit would need more than 1,000 soldiers plus naval superiority on Lake Erie.

The gravity of the situation was obvious. The government commissioned Hull as military commander and authorized him to march north with 1,200 raw Ohio militiamen accompanied by 300 seasoned soldiers of the U.S. Fourth Infantry. [13] To handle the immediate crisis in the territory, the government gave authority to call four companies of Michigan militia — a total of 338 men — into federal service. Three companies, Captain Antoine Dequindre's riflemen, Captain Stephen Mack's artillery, and Captain Richard Smyth's cavalry were activated between late April and June from the Legionary Corps in Detroit and were placed under the command of Major James Witherell. In the River Raisin country, Colonel Anderson mustered the Second Regiment and called for 80 volunteers to serve one year in a company. In a ground swell of enthusiasm, "a great portion" of the regiment stepped forward and the company was selected by lot from among them. Electing Hubert LaCroix as their captain, they began serving May 18. An additional 20 men from the Raisin under the command of Ensign Isaac Lee volunteered and were attached to Captain Smyth's cavalry. [14]

The Legionary Corp units patrolled Detroit and the adjacent settlements. Smyth's cavalymen also escorted the mail. In the River Raisin country, Hubert LaCroix set his soldiers to strengthening the blockhouse in the existing stockade on the River Raisin and to constructing two stockades in more remote parts of the settlement. To prepare for the expected arrival of Hull's U.S. Infantry and Ohio militiamen, LaCroix diverted men to improving the vital supply road that ran the length of the River Raisin country between the Maumee and the Huron rivers.

The day Hull's army reached the River Raisin country — July 2 — he received notice of the declaration of war. [16] That day in Detroit, three additional companies, 152 men from Captains Jacques Campeau's, Whitmore Knaggs', and Solomon Sibley's units in the First Regiment, were mustered into service to help secure the town. On July 6, Hull's army arrived in Detroit and six days later he invaded Canada. Except for dispatching interpreters and guides for other brigades, the Michigan militia did not participate in the invasion of Canada. They could not be spared from the daunting task of protecting the dispersed settlements in their own territory. [17]

The test for Hull's Michigan militia came after the influential Wyandot cast their lot with the British late in July. [18] This cut off Hull's supply road since two of the Wyandot villages strategically straddled that route. These villages were at a point just across the river from Canadian Fort Malden. Captain LaCroix's men were the first to encounter this obstacle. He had to mount a large escort for the mail when his couriers returned to the Raisin following their discovery of two ambushed Ohioans, who had proceeded them along the route. [19] The situation deteriorated at the increasingly isolated Raisin. Explaining to Hull, "We are invaded on all sides," and the Indians are "skulking about," Colonel Anderson called all of the Second Regiment into service leaving in reserve only the company that resided on the Maumee. This amounted to an additional 207 men on duty from companies commanded by Jean Baptiste Couture, Dominique Drouillard, Joseph Jobin, Jean Baptiste Lasselle, Jacques Martin, Joseph Menard, and Daniel Muholland. [20]

It was imperative that Hull open the road to the Raisin as the Ohio militia escorting desperately needed supplies would go no further than the River Raisin. On August 5, Hull

dispatched Major Thomas Van Horne and about 200 Ohio militiamen to clear the road and to bring these supplies forward. During their march south, they were joined by 25 of Captain LaCroix's mounted militiamen under the command of Ensign Duncan Reid. The mounted men had been escorting the mail. As they approached Brownstown, one of the Wyandot villages south of Detroit, a small party of Indians ambushed Van Horne's detachment. Terrorized, the Americans bolted and ran back to Detroit. The Michigan militia troop dropped the mail and scattered, some of the militiamen returning to Detroit and others, including two wounded, going to their homes in the River Raisin country. [21]

Van Horne's failure underscored Hull's dilemma and forced the General to withdraw from all but a token post in Canada. Now Hull put all his efforts into opening his supply route. On August 6, he dispatched Lieutenant Colonel James Miller of the Fourth U.S. Infantry with another detachment. Miller's contingent consisted of approximately 600 men: 280 Regulars, a mixed troop of Ohio and Michigan cavalry under the command of an Ohio officer, several companies of Ohio infantry, and Captain Antoine Dequindre's company of Michigan riflemen. At the abandoned Indian village of Monguagon south of Detroit, a combined force of British and Indians ambushed Miller's men. Though caught by surprise, the Americans held their ground. The regulars in the center and Dequindre's soldiers on the left charged the enemy, sending them flying. On the right, the Ohio men faltered and Miller ordered Dequindre to wheel his detachment around to stiffen their line. While Miller's men decisively routed the British and Indians, they did not hold the field and thus the route to the Raisin remained closed. In his report, Miller lauded Dequindre's troops for their bravery in battle. [22]

After this battle, Hull sent another detachment by a back route in still one more unsuccessful attempt to link up with the men and the supplies at the Raisin. On August 16, before these men returned, the British and Indians boldly crossed the Detroit River to the American side and demanded that Hull surrender. Hull summarily refused. As the redcoats and Indians approached the fort and the town, Hull wavered. Seeing the enemy advance unopposed upon the fort, in turn, unnerved the Michigan militia assigned to defend that town's walls. One of their officers went to the fort and asked Hull if he intended for the militiamen to defend the town by themselves. [23] Hull did not respond for a brief moment before he gave the order to raise the white flag, thus surrendering all his forces in Detroit as well as those in the River Raisin country.

When a British officer brought Hull's order to surrender to the River Raisin two days later, both the Michigan and Ohio militia considered it a ruse. The situation at the Raisin then was desperate. Repeated alarms that Indians were coming prompted civilians to flock to the stockades "with their most valuable property for protection against the savage foe." [24] The Ohioans there feared the Michigan militiamen. As their commander, Captain Henry Brush, wrote, "The inhabitants here are principally Canadian French and little to be trusted. . . . They pretend fidelity while their actions indicate the contrary." [25] The French, in turn, feared the British and Indians would attack before any help could arrive. [26]

After several soldiers who had escaped from Detroit confirmed Hull's surrender, both the inhabitants and the Ohioans initially determined they would hold their position and would fight. However, they soon reconsidered and the Ohio militia and many of the River Raisin country's Yankee settlers fled to Ohio carrying what they could. The remaining Michigan militiamen paraded the next day and grounded their arms. [27] In accordance with Hull's terms of surrender, the River Raisin country militia who surrendered were declared prisoners of war on parole. This also had been the case with the Detroit units. This parole was provided so long as they swore not to fight Great Britain or her allies for the duration of the war or until they formally were exchanged.

The service of the Michigan militia during Hull's campaign, while not glorious, was honorable and certainly at least equaled that of the other units who participated. According to

the muster rolls, 697 Michigan militiamen saw duty during this campaign. [28]

Although Hull officially had surrendered everyone under his command, his capitulation actually did not mark the end of the militia's service. Twenty-two of Smyth's cavalymen — mostly his soldiers stationed at the River Raisin at the time of Hull's surrender — fled to Urbana, Ohio, where Major James V. Ball attached them to his squadron of the Second U.S. Regiment of Light Dragoons. During the Mississinewa campaign in December, they served with some distinction under the command of Cornet Isaac Lee. During this battle, several acted as guides and two of them were wounded in action. [29] They continued as the 12 Months Michigan Territory Volunteer Light Dragoons until their enlistments expired in May, 1813.

Redeeming the territory lost in Hull's surrender was a priority for the United States. In spite of the surrender, Michigan men continued to do all in their power to further the American effort. At the vanguard of this drive to recapture Michigan Territory was an army of Kentuckians led by General James Winchester. Eleven hundred of these soldiers advanced January 11, 1813, to the Rapids of the Maumee, just upstream from present-day Toledo, Ohio. Seeing their deliverance at hand, emissaries from the River Raisin begged the Kentuckians to push forward and to drive out the British and Indians stationed there.

Winchester succumbed to their pleas and on January 18, a detachment of slightly more than 660 Kentuckians faced about 60 Canadian militiamen, more than 200 braves, and a small fieldpiece positioned on the opposite bank of the River Raisin. Standing with the Kentuckians were as many as 100 territorial residents. Many had joined the ranks of the Kentuckians along the march from the Rapids, others fell into formation at the River Raisin. Only a handful of their names are known. In later years Ambrose C. Charland claimed he acted as captain. [30] In a burst of enthusiasm at the commencement of the action, some of these Michigan men sallied out between the Kentuckians and the enemy. Though this put them in a cross fire, they eagerly chased their hated foe from their homeland. The Americans handily won. While the Michigan men did not turn the tide of the battle, their prowess earned them admiration from their comrades in arms. [31]

The Kentuckians realized that the Michigan men who had joined them in combat had done more than just dodge bullets in battle. Most of these men still were on parole. Taking up arms as they had done was a flagrant parole violation and had made them liable to severe punishment from the British and answerable to the wrath of the Indians. As one Kentucky officer aptly put it, "the people, having taken an active part against the British, will be subjected to utter ruin — perhaps scalped." [32]

General Winchester reinforced his position on the River Raisin and by the morning of January 22, he had 934 men stationed there. In the predawn darkness that day, a larger force of British and Indians caught the Americans by surprise, sending nearly half of them into flight. The other half of the Americans doggedly held out and surrendered only after they were surrounded and nearly out of ammunition. Once again the local people had turned out and had fought valiantly. When the battle swung against the Americans, these Michigan fighters "took to their heels," lest they be caught in violation of parole. Two locals, Captain Jean Baptiste Couture and Henri Chauvin, died in the action. [33]

In the hopes that making examples of several people would prevent further parole violations, the British arrested Captain Hubert LaCroix, Captain Whitmore Knaggs, and Isaac Ruland and sent them to prison. [34] The Indians were not appeased so easily. The following day, they exacted vengeance on the Kentuckians by massacring 60 of their wounded who were left behind and they burned and pillaged numerous civilian homes to teach the inhabitants a lesson. [35]

Especially after this disastrous campaign it would have been expedient for the residents to heed the warnings and to comply with the British and Indians' solicitations to change allegiance and to fight alongside them. [36] In the wake of the battles and massacre of the River Raisin, the Michigan citizens' resolve was confirmed stronger than ever. During the months after these actions, significant numbers of them offered their services at Fort Meigs, General William Henry Harrison's new post on the Maumee. The status of these volunteers was ambiguous at best. Since most spoke French, Harrison referred them to his only French-speaking officer, Captain Charles Gratiot. Gratiot confessed, though, that he did not know if they were under his command or under his "protection." [37] During the spring and summer of 1813, the number of Michigan volunteers at Fort Meigs averaged from 20 to 30. Some of them later claimed they had formed a spy company and had chosen Antoine Couture as their captain. Harrison and other fort commanders did find their knowledge of the terrain and familiarity with Native people invaluable and they constantly utilized the Michigan men as guides, messengers, and scouts assigned to reconnoiter the British and the Indians. [38]

Michigan men did serve through the sieges of Fort Meigs during May and July, 1813. A skirmish they fought April 8, though, particularly distinguished them. Harrison's aide, Captain Gratiot, even described this action as "one of the best and hardest fights, and the most brilliant in the affairs of the campaign" at Fort Meigs. During this fight, 12 of the fort's Frenchmen shoved off in a canoe as they pursued Indians who had ambushed an American fatigue party. Several miles down the Maumee they engaged these Indians. It was a desperate fight on land and on water. By the time a militia detachment from the fort arrived to chase the remaining braves, seven of the French were wounded, two mortally. They, in turn, claimed they had shot eight of the Indians. [39]

Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry's victory on Lake Erie September 10, 1813, cleared the way for Harrison to move on Detroit and on Fort Malden. To speed the advance, most of Harrison's infantry boarded Perry's ships, while Colonel Richard M. Johnson's Kentucky mounted infantry took the land route north from Fort Meigs. As many as 19 soldiers in Captain John Reading's spy company of this "Kentucky" Regiment claimed Michigan as their home. With a good number more Michigan residents in the entourage, Johnson's mounted men arrived at the River Raisin on September 27. [40] Harrison's infantry liberated Detroit three days later.

Johnson's mounted troops took the lead as Harrison pursued the British and Tecumseh's Indians up the Thames River in Canada. During this advance, the Michigan men in Reading's company participated in a skirmish that drove the Indians from a vital bridge on October 4. [41] The next day Harrison's army caught up with the British and their allied warriors. With Johnson's mounted troops in the vanguard, the Americans handily routed the enemy. What part Reading's company and the Michigan men played during the Battle of the Thames is not certain. In later years, two of the Michigan men who were there, James Knaggs and Medard Labadie, swore that in the midst of the fray they came to the assistance of the wounded Colonel Johnson. They claimed that Johnson was located near the spot where they had seen Tecumseh's body. [42] Following the victory on the Thames, Colonel Johnson moved his regiment south and at Cincinnati on November 19, he discharged all his soldiers, including the Michigan men.

After the Battle of the Thames, the government appointed Lewis Cass territorial governor. Michigan still was a dangerous place. Until the war's end, Indians posed a threat on all sides and there were well-grounded concerns of British advances from Canada. The federal garrisons at Detroit and at the newly established post of Fort Gratiot at the base of Lake Huron chronically were undermanned. To supplement the regulars, in October Governor Cass activated Captain Isaac Lee's 433-man cavalry company. They stayed on duty for seven months. [43]

Their first crisis came in December when there was a resurgence of Indian hostilities. Detroit's garrison, then consisting of only 250 soldiers, was inadequate to handle the situation. To counter this threat, Cass asked permission from the secretary of war to establish a "secret service" of interpreters to be sent among the Native people to report their movements and to quell the "secret intrigues of the enemy." [44] Evidence is that the veteran Indian trader, Gabriel Godfroy, led this "service." [45] It is not known which men or how many men he recruited. To further supplement the federal garrison, Cass activated 200 Michigan militiamen. Among the militia activated, the only muster roll that exists is for Captain John McDonall's troop of 51 cavalrymen who served from mid-December until mid-March. [46]

In January, 1814, rumors circulated that British and Indians were massing at Chatham on the Thames River in Canada. Colonel Anthony Butler, the commandant of Fort Detroit, sent Isaac Lee's Michigan cavalry to reconnoiter. Lee found and scattered a small enemy force, capturing a militia colonel in the process. [47] Just after this, Colonel Butler dispatched Captain Andrew Holmes, of the 24th U.S. Infantry, with approximately 170 regulars and Michigan militia to discourage further British activity in this quarter of Canada. Their destination in Canada was Port Talbot on Lake Erie, but they pushed as far as Longwood where, on March 10, they repulsed a British counterattack. Captain Lee's soldiers again distinguished themselves in action. [48]

Throughout the spring of 1814, the Indians and the British in Canada remained a concern. To keep tabs on this situation, in May, Cass accepted the services of Andrew Westbrook's 26-man detachment of spies he had recruited from among fellow expatriate Canadians and Michigan residents. During June, still another alarm of Indians massing to attack prompted the commander at Detroit to activate for one month James Audrain's 133-man spy company and also to send Westbrook's men scouting in Canada. Westbrook reported some British activity. To counter this, during July, Cass detailed two small raiding parties to Port Talbot and to Oxford and then sent a third party to that same region in August. [49]

During September, there was yet another alarm in Detroit. This time it was a group of Indians gathering to the northwest of the town. Cass sent an urgent appeal to General Duncan McArthur for reinforcements from Ohio and from Kentucky. He also called for more Michigan militiamen and ordered them to chase any hostile braves they could find. [50] By the time McArthur and 600 reinforcements had arrived in Detroit during mid-October, this crisis had passed. Still determined to strike the enemy, McArthur surprised everyone by foraging deep into Canada. With him were some Michigan militia, probably all or part of Captain James Audrain's 99-man squad of rangers activated on October 22, the day before McArthur left. Completing a successful raid, they penetrated as far as Malcom's Mill near Brantford where they defeated a Canadian militia detachment. [51] McArthur's expedition was the last action of any consequence in the Detroit theater of the war. When word of the war's end reached the territory in February, 1815, the only Michigan unit on active duty was Captain Audrain's company of rangers.

While it cannot be claimed that the Michigan militia changed the course either of the war or of any particular battle, their service was exemplary. Their knowledge of the Indians and familiarity with the terrain proved invaluable. Contrary to fears, they were loyal, dependable, and stood as firm as any in battle. They enthusiastically lent their arms and repeatedly joined a fight even when discretion counseled otherwise. Their raw numbers alone speak volumes. A compilation of the names on muster rolls and on other documents lists approximately 1,040 individuals from the Detroit area and from the River Raisin country who served during the war. Of these men, 142 joined more than one unit. Figuring that the 1811 census enumerated 1,253 men older than 16 living there just before the war, this means 83 percent of the eligible men in the southeastern corner of the territory served during the war. This is an

exceptional figure considering that percentage is probably low — it does not account for the many men who served, but whose names were not recorded. [52]

During the war, many officers underrated or overlooked the Michigan militia. Also, historians, both past and present, consistently have ignored them. There are many reasons for this. Seldom did more than two companies serve together. In most actions where Michigan militia units served, they found themselves incorporated into larger brigades and placed under the command of officers from outside the territory. As a result, with the exception of Hull, who has an infamous reputation, their officers and units generally did not command recognition.

The Michigan Territory had an inordinately large number of men on the rolls of "Spy" companies. [53] Spy, in this case, meant scout or ranger. The nature of these companies and the duties they performed were not conducive to attention. Similarly, the most important duty of the other Michigan units, that of protecting the territory's homes, did not bring them to center stage.

In many of the actions when Michigan men did play key roles, their contributions went unnoticed because they served as individuals detached to other units or they were supernumeraries who, on their own accord, volunteered at key moments. Indeed, in a few instances they volunteered in such large numbers they formed ad hoc companies. Even in cases where there were records, documenting this type of service is extremely difficult. This kind of duty seldom was noted in official reports or rosters and in cases where there was a record, one must be familiar with individuals' names to recognize them as Michigan men. [54]

Illiteracy also explains why the contributions of many Michigan men were overlooked. An extraordinarily high number of men neither could read nor could write their names. [55] This especially was the case with the French who comprised four-fifths of the population. The result was that comparatively few men wrote accounts and when names appeared on rosters they usually were spelled phonetically. [56]

Michigan militiamen had an identity problem, too. A majority spoke only French and most spent their lives trading with both the British and the Indians. Even though almost all Michigan militiamen became citizens of this country when the British relinquished the territory in 1796, people then and historians since have doubted the Michigan militiamen really were Americans. [57]

When closely scrutinized, the documents that exist tell a story of the Michigan militia that demands rescue from obscurity. This is a history with few parallels in the story of this nation. It is one of the few instances of Americans fighting to liberate their homeland and to fend off a foreign army. The record of their conduct, when called to arms in this situation, does them credit. But, were they the "Best troops in the world"? When Harrison uttered those words, he probably knew he would be hard pressed to find troops who were better. [58]

#### NOTES

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2. John R. Elting, Amateurs, To Arms! A Military History of the War of 1812 (Chapel Hill: Algonquin Books, 1991), p. 24.

3. Ibid., p. 27.



4. J.C.A. Stagg, Mr. Madison's War: Politics, Diplomacy, and Warfare in the Early Republic, 1783-1830 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), p. 190.
5. Fred C. Hamil, Michigan in the War of 1812, 2nd ed. (Lansing: Michigan Historical Commission, 1967), passim; Willis Frederick Dunbar, Michigan: A History of the Wolverine State, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1970), pp. 201-223.
6. The history of the British-recruited militia from the Mackinac area, which is a quite different story, will not be told here. See Brian Leigh Dunnigan, "The Michigan Fencibles," Michigan History, LVII (Winter, 1973), 277-295.
7. "Census of Michigan Territory, 1811," in Michigan Pioneer and Historical Collections, Vol. 36 (Lansing: Wyncoop Hallenbeck Crawford Company, State Printers, 1908), p. 235.
8. Acting Governor Reuben Attwater to Secretary of War William Eustis, Detroit, January 21, 1812, in The Territory of Michigan, 1805-1820, The Territorial Papers of the United States, Vol. 10, gen. ed. Clarence Edwin Carter (Washington, DC.: United States Government Printing Office, 1942), pp. 376-378.
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10. Maria Campbell and James Freeman Clarke, Revolutionary Services and Civil Life of General William Hull: Together with the History of the Campaign of 1812, and the Surrender of the Post of Detroit (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1848), p. 322.
11. William Hull to Eustis, Detroit, July 20, 1810, (typescript in Ottawa file, Great Lakes-Ohio Valley Indian Archives Project, Glenn A. Black Laboratory of Archaeology, Indiana University).
12. Attwater to Eustis, Detroit, January 21, 1812, The Territory of Michigan, gen. ed. Carter, pp. 376-378.
13. Campbell and Clarke, Revolutionary Services, pp. 325-326 and 383; "Memorial to Congress by Citizens of Michigan Territory," Detroit, December 27, 1811, and Hull to Eustis, Washington, D.C., March 6, 1812, in Michigan Pioneer, Vol. 40 (1929), pp. 346-353 and 362-368; Solomon Sibley to [Senator Thomas Worthington], Detroit, February 26, 1812, in Document Transcriptions of the War of 1812 in the Northwest, ed. by Richard C. Knopf, 10 vols., (Columbus: The Ohio Historical Society, 1957), Vol. 3: Thomas Worthington and the War of 1812, pp. 63-67.
14. LeRoy Barnett and Roger Rosentreter, Michigan's Early Militia in Action: A Compilation of Michigan Men Who Served in Conflicts From the War of 1812 to the Mexican War, (manuscript being prepared for submission to the Michigan State University Press); Lossing, The Pictorial Field-Book, p. 278; U.S. Congress, House, Committee of Claims, Report on the Petition of Francis Lasselle et al., House Report 219, 23rd Cong., 1st sess., 1834, p. 2; John Anderson, George MacDougall, and Gabriel Godfroy to General Lewis Cass, Detroit, October 19, 1813, in Indiana Historical Collections, gen. eds. John Gibson and Thomas Posey (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Commission, 1922), Vol. 9, 2: Messages and Letters of William Henry Harrison, Vol. 2, ed. by Logan Esarey, pp. 586-588.

15. Captain Hubert LaCroix to Major James Witherell. River Raisin, June 15, 1812, Benjamin F.H. Witherell Papers, Burton Historical Collection, Detroit Public Library; Deposition of Ambrose C. Charland, Monroe, Mich., July 15, 1853, Gabriel Godfroy Papers, Burton Historical Collection, Detroit Public Library; LaCroix to Witherell, River Raisin, July 16, 1812, and LaCroix to Witherell, River Raisin, June 26, 1812, in Michigan Pioneer Vol. 8, 2nd ed. (1907), pp. 631 and 632.
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17. Campbell and Clarke, Revolutionary Services, p. 383.
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51. Gilpin, The War of 1812, pp. 255-256; MSS., Barnett and Rosentreter, Michigan's Early Militia.

52. "Census of Michigan Territory, 1811," in Michigan Pioneer, Vol. 36 (1908), p. 235; MSS., Barnett and Rosentreter, Michigan's Early Militia.

53. MSS., Barnett and Rosentreter, Michigan's Early Militia.

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55. F. Cleaver Bald, Detroit's First American Decade, 1796-1805 (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1948), pp. 88-95.

56. While the vast majority of the veterans did not write accounts detailing their service, many had depositions taken, thus documenting their service. These depositions can be found in the military, pension, and bounty land claims files in the National Archives. Other depositions are in the records of the Third Auditor of the United States which also are on deposit in the National Archives. These records deal with the numerous claims filed for private property destroyed during the war.

57. Hull to Eustis, Detroit, July 20, 1820, (typescript in Ottawa file, Great Lakes-Ohio Valley Indian Archives Project, Glenn A. Black Laboratory of Archaeology, Indiana University); Attwater to Eustis, Detroit, January 21, 1812, in The Territory of Michigan, gen. ed. Carter, pp. 376-378.

58. I wish to express my particular thanks to Dr. LeRoy Barnett and Dr. Roger Rosentreter of the Bureau of Michigan History for their permission to use their manuscript compilation of muster rolls of Michigan men who served during the War of 1812. The manuscript compilation is a part of their forthcoming book, Michigan's Early Militia in Action: A Compilation of Michigan Men Who Served in Conflicts From the War of 1812 to the Mexican War. This was a key source for this article.

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