

HSGL Newsletter

Official Publication of the
Historical Society of Greater Lansing November 1993

Historic Lansing . . . The Civil War and Numismatics

Lansing became the "City of Lansing" by a Legislative act on February 15, 1859. Two years and two months later the State Republican reported the beginning of the Civil War.



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With the outbreak of the Civil War in April of 1861, the hoarding of gold, silver and even copper coins caused a severe shortage of metallic currency in commerce. In order to reduce this shortage, die sinkers in Ohio and New York produced copper tokens the size of the standard cent circulating at the time.



The idea of the Civil War Token was carried across the north by traveling salesmen, who were trying to make a decent living during those difficult times. Civil War tokens are grouped into two categories.

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INSIDE:

**Ideas for Christmas . . .
Books and HSGL Membership**

The *HSGL Newsletter* is published bimonthly from September through May. Articles and news of historical interest may be sent to the Historical Society of Greater Lansing, P.O. Box 12095, Lansing, MI 48901. Linda Peckham, President. Tel: 517/372-3385.

ries: Patriotic Tokens, which carried current slogans such as "UNION FOR EVER" and "NOT ONE CENT"; and Store Cards, which were issued by merchants to promote their business.

A traveling salesman, who's name is unknown, reached Lansing by rail during 1863 with his line of wares including the Civil War Token. Two Lansing merchants, David Ekstein and A.J. Viele took advantage of the idea and placed an order with the salesman.

David Ekstein's store card lists him as being a dealer in Groceries and Provisions. The token also gives the city and state of his business, Lansing, Michigan.

A.J. Viele's, "City Book Store" was located on the American State Savings bank corner with his business advertised on the token as Books, Stationery, Pianos and Sewing Machines.

Lansing historians and collectors are very fortunate that two merchants issued tokens during the beginning years of Lansing and the Civil War. Today these small pieces of copper are very popular and seldom available.

The Perfect Gift . . . Local History

Bookshelf Suggestions*

*Books marked with a '★' will be available for purchase at the November meeting of the Society.

1878 Lansing City Directory

★ Under the auspices of the Historical Society of Greater Lansing, board member Dave Caterino has reprinted and cross referenced Mudge's 1878 Lansing City Directory. The directory is indexed alphabetically by business and street. The reprint with index is 200+ pages. Available at \$15.00 (Add \$2.00 postage if ordered by mail).

Behind the Badge: The History of the Lansing Police Department

By Pat Heyden

★ This 256 page book features 85 photographs and illustrations, bibliography, glossary, index and a library binding. "Takes us on a historical walk through a century of police organization and development from its primitive beginnings to its current professional and technical excellence" - Noel Bufe, Director of the Northwestern University Traffic Institute. Available at \$22.98 (Add \$2.50 if ordered by mail).

Postmarked:

Michigan, Mich. 1847-1848

By Craig A. Whitford and David L. Mackey
★ This 27 page history documents the background, founding and brief existence of the town of Michigan, Mich. before being renamed Lansing. Among the illustrations featured in this monograph are several examples of MICHIGAN Mic. postmarked envelopes. Available for \$6.00. (Add \$1.00 for postage if ordered by mail). A portion of the purchase price is donated to the Society.

Michigan Montage

Portraits of a Picturesque Past

By Duane Ernest Miller

This work presents several historical portraits. Included are Stouthearted Men of Orchard Lake, *Noted Alumni of the Michigan Military Academy*; The Enemy Helped With Our Harvest, *POWs on Michigan farms during World War II*; War Bonds Launch a Fighting Ship, *Lansing and Ingham County sponsor a warship* and much more! Additional information and pricing may be obtained by writing Berlin Green Press, P.O. Box 18042, Lansing, MI 48901.

BLASTS From The Past

The following 'news' items have all been taken out of issues of the **Lansing Republican Weekly**, written in the style of the time.

D. Edward's horse, attached to a top buggy loaded with crockery ware, made a lively run on Friday from the rear of the store to Grand street, thence to Cherry, and up Cherry to Main street, where he turned and ran to his stable. No damage to horse and carriage, but the crockery was very evenly distributed along the route, and there are more "pieces" in the sets than usual. *LRW 5/19/1880.*

Dearly beloved, isn't it about time to call a halt in the ceaseless march of progress while a patent is secured on some sort of an invention that will enable our wives and sweethearts to pass over a muddy crossing without plunging insanely forward on their heels and clawing the air convulsively with their hands in a hopeless, despairing way. *LRW 5/14/1884.*

The small boy is now exceedingly numerous on skates, and occasionally one of them may be seen wending his way homeward, skates in hand, the lower half of his pant legs resembling stove-pipe lengths adorned with crystal pendants, while the gurgling sound which cometh from his boots excites a strong suspicion that he will pull at the straps until his fingers are sore and kick a couple dozen dents in the wood-work around the kitchen, before he gets into them in the morning. *LRW 12/24/1879.*

The Historical Society seeks donations of local historical materials, such as papers or photos, especially of those related to our programs. **This month we are interested in obtaining photographs of Lansing businesses and events which occurred during World War II** which will be made available to the public in the Local History Room at the Lansing Public Library. Please contact the Historical Society at 372-3385.

Board Meetings are held on the third Wednesdays of October, February, and April. Any business may be addressed to the Board before or at the meetings. All are invited.

Who do you know who should belong to the Historical Society? Send in your membership, and recruit a member.

Give a Gift that Gives All Year . . .

Membership in the Historical Society of Greater Lansing

Membership Application

*Historical Society
of Greater Lansing*

P.O. Box 12095
Lansing, MI 48901

Annual membership in the Historical Society of Greater Lansing is due by October 1, 1993 for the 1993-1994 program year. Please clip and return this coupon with payment.

New **Renewal**

Enclosed: \$10 Individual \$15 Family \$150 Life Gift

Name _____

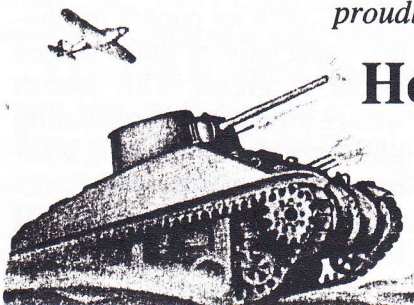
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The *Historical Society of Greater Lansing* is a non-profit corporation, and we appreciate your support.

Historical Society of Greater Lansing

proudly presents



Homefront Lansing: World War II

By
Michael Unsworth

Michael Unsworth will discuss activities in Lansing during the Second World War and show the effects of the War on Lansing.

7:30 P.M.

Wednesday, November 17, 1993

**Friends Auditorium
Lansing Public Library**

The Public Is Invited

If this box is checked . . . **It's Time To Renew your membership in the Society. A membership application is enclosed.**

*Historical Society
of Greater Lansing*
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