Holland Land Office Museum
Quick Facts

Famous Batavians

George E. Ranney

George E. Ranney was born in Batavia, New York on June 13, 1839. He later moved to Michigan, where he entered into military service on September 9, 1861. Ranney, age 23, enlisted for 3 years of service as a private in the Second Cavalry at Grand Rapids. Ranney was honorably discharged at Cincinnati, Ohio on July 16, 1862, on account of a disability. On June 6, 1863, Ranney re-entered the service as Assistant Surgeon.

On September 20, 1863, Ranney was taken prisoner during the battle of Chickamauga. He was temporarily released to attend to federal troops in the field. Ranney was later sent as a hostage to Libby prison, where he was released on November 24, 1863. In December, Ranney went to Nashville, Tennessee where he organized medical management of "Convalescent Camp Smith." In April of 1864, he joined his regiment in the Atlanta Campaign. On November 15, 1864, he was commissioned as a Surgeon, tending to the 136th U.S. Colored Troops.

Ranney spent much of his time filling the joint role of Assistant Surgeon (May 9, 1864) and hospital steward. For his bravery and efficiency in action on the battlefield, he was made Brigade Surgeon by order of the Medical Director. Ranney worked dually as Brigade Surgeon and Surgeon of his Regiment in the midst of Sherman's Campaign Against Atlanta in summer of 1864. On November 15, 1864, Ranney was again promoted, this time becoming Surgeon, Second Cavalry. On February 27, 1865, Ranney was appointed Surgeon in charge of First Division Hospital of the Cavalry Corps, Military Division of the Mississippi. May 1, 1865, Ranney was appointed to oversee the consolidated Division Hospitals of the Corps.

Throughout his military career, George E. Ranney participated in the siege and capture of many towns in the southern states of Alabama, Georgia, Missouri and Tennessee. After the Civil War, Ranney returned to Michigan.

George E. Ranney was born in Batavia, New York on June 13, 1839. He moved to Michigan, where he enlisted in the Union Army at the age of 23. On July 16, 1882, after less than a year of service, Ranney was honorably discharged because of a disability.

Wanting to aid the Union cause, Ranney rejoined as Assistant Surgeon on June 6, 1863. In September, Ranney was taken hostage, sent to Libby prison and released on November 24, 1863.

Ranney was promoted numerous times throughout his military career. Titles held by Ranney included: surgeon, hospital steward, brigade surgeon and organizer/overseer of various hospitals. Ranney also participated in the siege and capture of many southern towns in the states of Alabama, Georgia, Missouri, and Tennessee.

Ranney received a Civil War medal of honor when he "at great personal risk, went to the aid of a wounded soldier, Pvt. Charles W. Baker, lying under heavy fire between the lines, and with the aid of an orderly carried him to a place of safety."