

# THE PETOSKEY RECORD

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## A DRUMMER BOY AT SHILOH.

The history of the great Civil War will never be complete until all of the incidents, pathetic and otherwise, which were witnessed by the private soldiers, have been reduced to print and thus preserved. With the passing of the old soldier very many things will be repeated, with a great deal added thereto, which will be handed down by tradition as things that occurred during the War of the Rebellion. This will, perhaps, be to some extent, pardonable because of the intense patriotism and heroism displayed by the men who fought the battles of the Union from '61 to '65.

The battle of Pittsburg Landing, commonly spoken of as the battle of Shiloh, has furnished many instances which have been told and re-told. Some of them have found their way into print. That great battle, perhaps the greatest fought by the Western army, was fought on the 6th and 7th days of April, 1862, under the command of Gen. Grant. Whether or not the Union army was surprised is a question that will probably be discussed for all time to come. It is well known, however, that on Sunday morning the enemy approached the Union lines in great force and all through that day drove the Federal troops back in the direction of the river or landing. I have been at the battle ground twice since the war and I am only astonished that Grant's army was not driven into the Tennessee river by the overwhelming force against them.

A comrade who was in the battle and who was wounded the first day related to me an incident which illustrates the patriotism of the young men of that day. This story, I am led to believe, is true.

Late in the afternoon on Sunday, this comrade was wounded and left upon the battle field. When the battle ceased at night he, with many others, were still lying where they had fallen, and it began to rain very hard. Along about midnight he heard a voice which sounded very much like the voice of a woman. It was raised in song and the person was singing the familiar hymn:

*"Oh sing to me of Heaven,  
When I am called to die;*

*Sing songs of holy ecstasy,  
To waft my soul on high."*

After singing that stanza, the comrade, who was listening, recognized it as the voice of a boy. Being near, he began to crawl to him on his hands and knees; thinking he might aid or comfort him some. As he approached him the boy continued singing:

*"Around my dying bed,  
Let one sweet song be given.  
Let music cheer me last on earth,  
And greet me first in Heaven."*

As this stanza was being sung the comrade continued to advance towards the boy. When very near to him a little ravine intervened, in which there was a stream of water. Here the comrade stopped to bathe his own fevered brow and again the voice arose in song:

*"Around my lifeless clay,  
Assemble those I love.  
And sing of Heaven, delightful Heaven,  
My glorious home above."*

By this time the comrade had reached the boy and placing his hand upon his heart found him still in death. His spirit had ascended to that home of which he had just been singing.

The patriotism of that day was the outgrowth of such teaching upon the part of the loyal, Christian mothers of the North. He, of whom this incident is related, was a drummer boy of an Ohio regiment, scarcely twelve years of age, who had been upon the battle field during the bloody struggle of that day.

When they gathered up the dead, his body was also found and buried with the rest. After the government took charge of the National Cemetery at that place and collected the bodies, the little boy was buried near the west gate. There under a little mound, his body lies and at the head of his grave has been erected a monument of cannon balls, as emblematic of his heroism and loyalty to the country for which he died. — Ram's Horn.



Three Drummer Boys  
From National Archives