

Sheridan's Dispatch

*Phil Sheridan Camp 4
Department of California & Pacific
Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War*

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FAMILY DONATES TO RESTORE FLAG

Immigrant Ancestor carried the banner during the Civil War for a Wisconsin regiment.

By Susan Lampert Smith
Submitted by Camp SVC Robert J. Kadlec
Reprinted from the *Wisconsin State Journal*, Nov. 11, 2001

Jenny Wahlin of Stoughton remembers hearing her grandma talk about how her ancestor's Civil War flag was hanging at the Capitol.

She listened to be polite, she says, but never paid much attention. Then, in 1998, her 90-year-old grandmother fell down and broke her leg.

"We used that flag as a carrot to help her get better," Wahlin remembers. "We'd say, you have to get stronger, because we have an appointment to go down to the Veterans Museum to see it."

Sadly, Ruth Stauff-Kadlec died before she saw her grandfather's flag. So the family decided that, as a memorial to Ruth and her grandfather, Civil War Veteran Jacob Stauff, they would donate money to the Wisconsin Veterans Museum to restore the flag.

A week ago, they saw what their \$4,000 donation and several years of work had wrought. The few scraps of silk and fringe left after veterans had taken pieces as souvenirs had been stitched to a background cloth, and the emblem of the proud

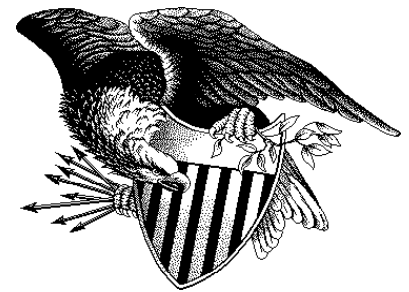
26th Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry had been repainted by an artist.

And not only was the flag made whole. So, too, was the family's understanding of Jacob Stauff, and his part in the Civil War. Thanks to research done by Wahlin's uncle Robert Kadlec, of San Jose, Calif., the 485 descendants know a lot more about the immigrant boy from Germany who seized the fallen flag in battle and carried it forward.

His is a distinctly Wisconsin story:

Jacob Stauff was born in a village in Hesse-Darmstadt, Germany, in 1843, and, after his father died, his mother packed up her children, and immigrated to Wisconsin. The family eventually settled in Milwaukee, where Jacob's mother opened a notions store.

He would have been 18 years old when General Franz Sigel came to town, to recruit German-speaking residents to make up what was known as Sigel's regiment, the completely German-speaking Wisconsin 26th. Stauff trained at Madison's Camp Randall before boarding the train for the East.



The regiment suffered heavy losses at Gettysburg, said Wisconsin Veterans Museum director Richard Zeitlin.

"They covered the retreat of the Iron Brigade, and actually took higher casualties at Gettysburg than the Iron Brigade," Zeitlin said. The regiment's first flag was destroyed at Gettysburg, and all its color guards killed. The regiment had its second flag by the time the 26th joined General Sherman's "March to the Sea."

It was at Resaca, Ga., that the regiment's flag fell to the ground after another color bearer was shot.

"Jacob Stauff rushed up the hill and took the flag," said Kadlec, who has visited the battle site in Georgia, where his ancestor charged up the hill. The Union won that battle and went on to take Atlanta and win the war. Jacob Stauff was still carrying the flag when the Union Army marching in the victorious "Grand Review" in Washington D.C.

Jacob Stauff went home to Milwaukee, married, had 12 children and made a living in the poultry business. He died in 1910 at age 67.

After being displayed (and snipped) at veteran's reunions, the flag became the property of the state in 1889, and spent many years rolled on its staff in the attic museum at the Capitol. It isn't the only flag in bad shape.

"The regiments that saw the most action have flags that are in the worst shape," said Zeitlin. "They've been shot to smithereens."

The Veterans Museum has about 200 Civil War flags, and about 110 of them have been restored, some by families like the descendants of Jacob Stauff.

"Several families have donated money to have the flags of their ancestor's regiments restored," Zeitlin said. "What makes the Kadlec[sic]

family unusual is that we actually have the flag he carried.

Another Civil War descendant promised to restore a flag if Zeitlin could track down what happened to his relative in the war. Zeitlin did, and although the story was less than a profile in courage — the man was smashed by a runaway barrel of pork fat — the family was pleased to know, and put up the money for a flag.

For the descendants of Jacob Stauff, restoring the flag has given them a sense of their place in Wisconsin history. Wahlin said that while she attended school at UW-Madison, she never thought of Camp Randall as anything more than a football stadium.

Now, she said, "it's weird to think that his great-great-great granddaughter's graduation was in the same spot where he may have pitched his tent."

Wahlin's three children have been to see the flag, although they're much too young to understand much about it.

"I hope eventually they'll be able to look at the pictures and understand," she said, "And then we'll tell them the story."



Some of Jacob Stauff's 485 descendants got a chance to see the battle flag their ancestor through battles and the Grand Review.

For more on the 26th Wisconsin Infantry, see:
<http://www.agro.agri.umn.edu/~lmedg/wis26/26pgmain.htm>

For more on the Wisconsin Veterans Museum see:
<http://museum.dva.state.wi.us/>

**Would you like to see your ancestor's story in
Sheridan's Dispatch?**

**Please send all articles for publication to
Newsletter Editor Tad Campbell.**

From the Commander's Desk

By Camp Commander Tad D. Campbell

CAMP ACTIVITIES

3rd Annual Lincoln Day Dinner — Saturday, February 9, 2002 at 6 pm

Carrows Restaurant, 7505 Dublin Blvd., Dublin, Calif. Sponsored by the Gen. Alfred Pleasonton Camp 24 of Castro Valley. Speakers will include Abraham Lincoln (portrayed by Michael "Abe" Ray) and Nora Whitley who will give a talk on Women in the Civil War.

In an effort to make more Camp activities accessible to more of the membership, we are attempting to vary the days of the week and times at which activities are held. Here are some examples:

Graves Registration Project - Sunday, February 24, 2002 at 2 pm

Oak Hill Memorial Park, San José, Calif. We will be expanding our accounting of Civil War veterans buried at Oak Hill to include those interred outside the G.A.R. plot. This will be an ongoing project.

Next Camp Meeting - Monday, March 11, 2002 at 7 pm

At the home of Bro. Don Pray, 10852 Alderwood Lane (near Bollinger & Miller), Cupertino, Calif. This is a departure from our normal midday Saturday meetings. There will be a special election at this meeting to fill the two vacant positions on the Camp Council.

School Presentation - April 2002

We have been asked by John F. Kennedy Middle School in Mountain View, Calif. to do a presentation on the Civil War. This will take place on a weekday in the first or second week of April, although the exact date has not been set. If you are interested in helping out, please advise one of you Camp Officers.

If you have suggestions about how to increase participation in Camp activities, whether it is the date, time, or place, please let me know!

Department Encampment and JVC Candidacy

I have recently announced my candidacy for the position of Department Junior Vice-Commander. Nominations and elections will take place at the **Department Encampment at San Luis Obispo, Calif. on March 16, 2002**. I encourage all Brothers to come to the Encampment. Those that attend always enjoy themselves.

Distinguished guests this year will include our Commander-in-Chief George L. Powell, Women's Relief Corps National President Janiece Jelatis, Sons of Confederate Veterans California Division Commander Barron Smith, SUVCW Auxiliary Past National President Betty Woerner. Our speaker will be Becki Redwine, a descendant of Confederate General Stand Waite (1806-1871) who was a half-blood Cherokee Indian. Ms. Redwine will portray Mrs. Watie.

If you are interested in attending, please let me know so as soon as possible so that I may appoint you as a Delegate and Camp Secretary-Treasurer Dan Earl can issue you Delegate credentials.

Q: What Union officer was reportedly denied a promotion to general because nobody could pronounce his name?

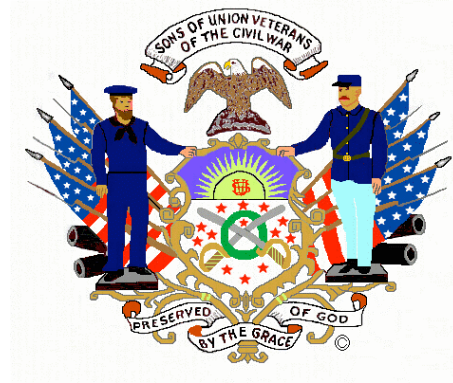
A: Colonel Wladimir Krzyzanowski, a Polish immigrant who commanded New York troops, reportedly failed to get confirmation as general from the U.S. Senate because lawmakers could not pronounce his name.

Camp Officers 2001-2002:

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Position #3 is Vacant
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- *Newsletter Editor* Tad D. Campbell
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Next Meeting: Monday, March 11, 2002, 7 pm
Home of Bro. Pray, 10852 Alderbrook Lane, Cupertino, CA



Camp Web Site:

<http://home.inreach.com/tadcamp/sheridan4.html>

Department Web Site:

<http://home.inreach.com/tadcamp/deptca.html>

National Web Site:

<http://www.suvcw.org>

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Membership Eligibility:

A male descendant, whether through lineal or collateral line and not less than 14 years of age (6 to 14 years for Juniors), who: (1) is a blood relative of a Soldier, Sailor, Marine or member of the Revenue Cutter Service, who was regularly mustered and served honorably in, was honorably discharged from or died in the service of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps or Revenue Cutter Service of the United States of America or in such state regiments called to active service and was subject to orders of United States general officers, between April 12, 1861 and April 9, 1865; (2) has never been convicted of any infamous or heinous crime and (3) has, or whose ancestor through whom membership is claimed has, never voluntarily borne arms against the government of the United States. Associate memberships are available for those supporters who are not of lineal descent.

Q: How long did it take Abraham Lincoln to deliver his famous Gettysburg Address?

A: Five minutes.