

# SONS OF UNION VETERANS OF THE CIVIL WAR

COL. HANS C. HEG CAMP #15

WIND LAKE, WIS.

NOVEMBER 2021

Winner of the Abraham Lincoln Commander-in-Chief Award - Best Camp in the Country



## **After 157 Years, an “Abolition Regiment” Soldier Gets a New Tombstone**

Brother Bob Koenecke on Oct. 11<sup>th</sup>, setting a new tombstone for Private Darius T. Allen. Helping are Brothers Gerry Drought, David K. Miller and Jerry Coveney.

Buried in 1864 after dying in the Civil War, Private Darius T. Allen has rested peacefully in an out-of-the-way country cemetery near Pell Lake, Wis. for more than 150 years now. But a good part of that time, Private Allen’s grave was lost after the stone marker toppled over flat on the ground and, over the years, dirt and grass slowly buried the tombstone.

In the mid-1990s, Brother Bob Koenecke found the grave - and with Jerry Coveney and Camp #15, erected a new tombstone Oct. 11th to ensure Allen is remembered. *(next page)*

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Chaplain Jerry Coveney leading the prayer service at Darius T. Allen's grave.



## CAMP #15 REMEMBERS A CIVIL WAR SOLDIER WHOSE GRAVE WAS LOST



Private Allen's toppled tombstone with the flag chiseled at the top indicating a soldier's grave.

Darius T. Allen was 30 years old, married with three children when, in January 1864, he volunteered for the 22<sup>nd</sup> Wisconsin Infantry. A farmer living in the Town of Bloomfield northeast of Pell Lake, Wis., Allen did not have to enlist - with a wife and children, he was safe from the draft then scouring the North for men to serve in the Union Army.

But two of his brothers-in-law - husbands of his wife's sisters - had already enlisted in the 22<sup>nd</sup> Wisconsin. "I have been thinking that it is my duty to enlist," he quietly told his wife, Ruth Hatch Allen.

Leaving a crying wife and three children behind, Allen went off to fight the Rebels. He never saw his family again, dying in a military hospital of dysentery in faraway Indiana ten months *(continued page 4)*

## A Pair of “Guardian Angels” for Civil War Private Darius T. Allen



**Brother Bob Koenecke (above) with the home-made probe he has used to find dozens of buried tombstones over the years, including that of Private Darius T. Allen**

**Jerry Coveney (below in blue), Camp #15’s chaplain, arranged with the VA for a new tombstone for Private Allen.**



One of Brother Bob Koenecke’s hobbies is walking old rural cemeteries, searching out the graves of Civil War soldiers. Twenty-five years ago Brother Bob walked the obscure Bloomfield-Pioneer Cemetery northeast of Pell Lake, Wis., and located only five miles from Brother Bob’s farm in Wheatland Township.

It was a propitious moment. During the walk, Bob noticed a depression in the ground along a line of tombstones. Using a step-probe he made himself, Bob sunk the probe into the depression. Sure enough, Bob heard the distinctive clink indicating he had hit a stone. Digging down through six inches of grass and dirt, Bob found a stone marker with a waving flag decoration at the top – a certain sign it was a veteran’s gravestone.

When Bob cleared away the grass and dirt, the tombstone marker for Private Darius T. Allen, buried 130 years earlier, stared up at him. Allen, a private in Co. C, 22<sup>nd</sup> Wisconsin Infantry, died in 1864 and his gravestone presumably toppled over at some point after that and dirt and grass slowly buried the marker.

This summer, Camp #15’s chaplain, Jerry Coveney, contacted the Walworth County Veterans Service Officer and jumped through the bureaucratic hoops needed to get a new tombstone from the federal Veterans Administration.

The new stone arrived in early October. Chaplain Coveney took delivery at the farm across from our Lafayette Church. On Oct. 11<sup>th</sup>, Brothers Bob and Jerry, assisted by three other Camp #15 brothers, installed the new stone and held a prayer ceremony at Private Allen’s grave. The last resting place of Private Allen was no longer “lost.”

*(continued from page 2)* later.

Private Darius T. Allen's journey to a soldier's grave in a quiet country cemetery north-east of Pell Lake, Wis., was long and arduous. He was born in 1833 in Hume, New York, a small town in Allegany County thirty miles southeast of Buffalo in upstate New York. In the early 1840s, Samuel T. Hatch, a prosperous farmer living near Hume (and Allen's future father-in-law) emigrated with his family to the West seeking new land and new opportunities. Hatch and his wife Caroline eventually settled in southeastern Wisconsin on what grew to be a 240-acre farm in the Town of Bloomfield in Walworth County.

Darius T. Allen and a dozen others from Hume, New York also emigrated West, following Hatch's footsteps. By November 1856 Darius, too, was in Wisconsin and married to Ruth Cass Hatch, one of Samuel T. and Caroline Hatch's three daughters. After they married, Darius and Ruth lived on Samuel Hatch's large farm, two doors away from Ruth's parents, where Darius worked as a farmer, harness maker and part-time schoolteacher.

Three children came to the couple in quick succession - boys in 1858 and 1859 and a girl in 1860. In 1861, the Civil War erupted, sending ripples through Wisconsin. The husband of one of Ruth's sisters, John W. Clark, another native of Hume, New York, enlisted in Company C of the newly-formed 22<sup>nd</sup> Wisconsin Infantry Regiment. Darius, too, thought of enlisting - but he had Ruth and their three small children to consider.

By 1864, the start of the fourth year of the war, Darius felt he could no longer sit on the sidelines. On Jan. 14, 1864, Darius T. Allen enlisted in Company C, 22<sup>nd</sup> Wisconsin - the same company as his brother-in-law, John W. Clark. Joining Darius that same day was Charles C. Clark, John W's brother, and married to another sister of Darius' wife, Ruth.

The muster roll listed Darius as five feet eight inches tall, dark hair, grey eyes and light complexion. Darius and Charles C. Clark went off to join John W. Clark in the 22<sup>nd</sup> Wisconsin, fighting in the battles of Resaca and Kennesaw Mountain in northern Georgia in the summer of 1864. By late July, though, Darius was in an Army hospital, down with dysentery. He died three months later on Nov. 8, 1864. Darius T. Allen's war was over.

The family brought Darius home, burying him in a corner of his father-in-law's large farm where two country roads intersect. That corner became the Bloomfield-Pioneer Cemetery.



The middle photo shows Darius Allen's tombstone in 2013. The photo on right shows the same stone in 2021, the inscription all but eroded from lying flat on the ground.



# A Letter from a Soldier's Widow to the President



**Amanda Hatch Clark, sister to  
Darius T. Allen's wife Ruth.**

A quarter century after the Civil War, the widow of Wisconsin soldier Darius T. Allen was desperate. Ruth Hatch Allen was ill, all but broke and caring for five orphaned children of a sister. She took up her pen and in 1889 scratched out a plaintive plea to the President of the United States.

If her widow's pension could only be increased by a few more dollars, Ruth wrote, she could get treatment for the bronchial disease that was slowly killing her.

"My husband gave his life in the defense of his country," Ruth wrote. "Well do I remember the morning we parted never to meet again in this world and those parting words of his - "God will bless and care for you."

Her husband, Darius T. Allen, a farmer, harness maker and

part-time schoolteacher, volunteered for the 22<sup>nd</sup> Wisconsin Infantry in January 1864 even though, married with three children, he almost certainly never would have been drafted.

Ruth Hatch Allen poured out her heart in the letter. "Oh, it seems to me but yesterday that he was here, with our three little ones clinging around his knees," she wrote. "Had I clung to him and said, no - no - don't go, he would never have lain in a soldier's grave."

Ruth had long feared Darius would enlist. The husbands of two of her sisters in the Town of Bloomfield in Walworth County, Wisconsin had already enlisted. "Oh, those terrible days of suspense and horror," she wrote the president. "One day he said to me just what I knew would come, and was hourly expecting. "I have been thinking that it is my duty to enlist." How I shuddered. How noble, grand and dear, he seemed to me at that moment. I could not speak but passed into my sisters room throwing myself on the couch - weeping..."

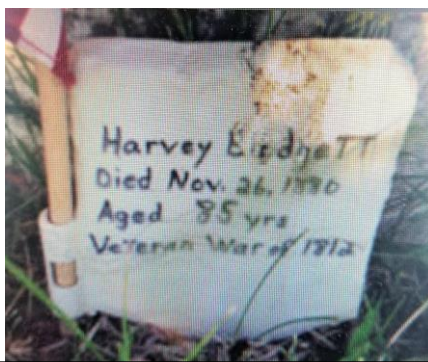
"And the Lord did help me through all those trying scenes of the war. But the country has been very unjust to the widows whose husbands gave their precious lives to save the country."

Ruth then apologized for her strong words to the president. "You may think me bold but this has been tremblingly written," she ended her letter. "I hopefully await something encouraging." She signed the letter "A Soldier's widow - Ruth C. Allen."

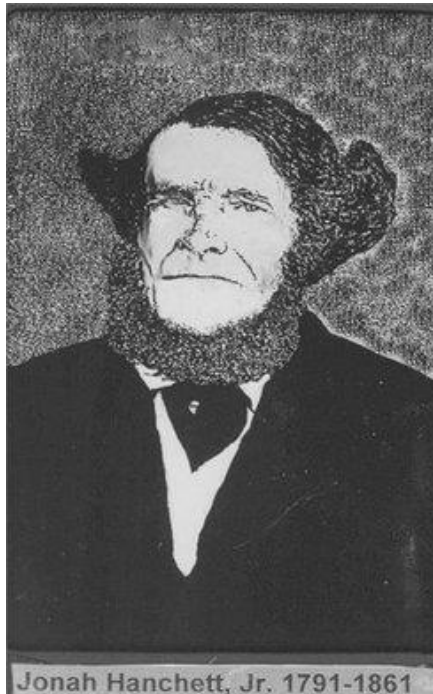
At the time, Ruth's widows's pension was \$14 a month, a little more than \$400 in today's dollars. Her letter was forwarded to the federal government's pension office but there is no indication her pension amount was increased. Ruth Hatch Allen died in 1898 at age 60.



The grave of Harvey Blodgett, a soldier in the War of 1812 buried in Bloomfield Cemetery.



At one point, this small marker identifying Blodgett as a "Veteran War of 1812" stood in front of his large tombstone. The marker is now gone, like so many markers in this cemetery.



Jonah Hanchett, Jr. 1791-1861

## Bloomfield-Pioneer Cemetery – Resting Place of Two Soldiers Who Fought in the War of 1812

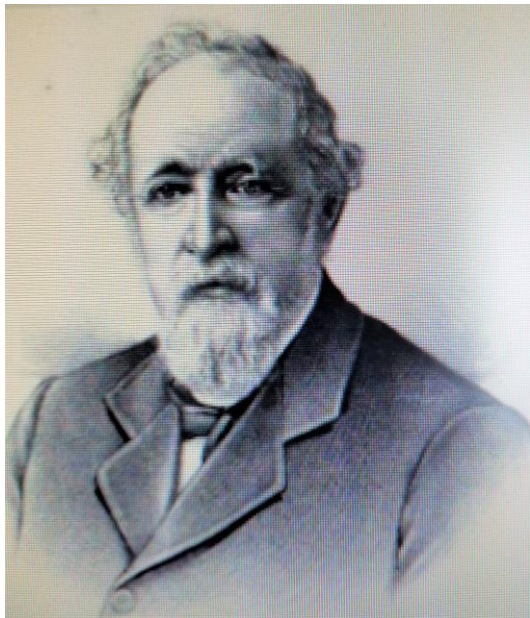
While installing a new tombstone in the Bloomfield-Pioneer Cemetery for Civil War soldier Darius T. Allen, the brothers in Camp #15 noticed small U.S. flags planted on another grave. That grave turned out to be the last resting place of Harvey Blodgett, a soldier in the War of 1812 who died in 1880 at the age of 86.

Blodgett, a Vermont native, was twenty years old when he took part in the battle of Plattsburgh in upstate New York in 1814. In that battle, Blodgett's Vermont militia company was part of American forces that skirmished with a British army invading down from Canada.

The War of 1812 was a short one, begun in June that year over Britain's impressing American seamen into the British Navy and Britain's support of hostile Indian tribes along the Great Lakes frontier. The clash at Plattsburgh in 1814 and the U.S. Navy's decisive defeat of British naval forces on nearby Lake Champlain ended the war with the British army retreating back to Canada.

At some point, Blodgett emigrated West. By 1850, he and his family were living on a farm north of the Bloomfield area in what is now the Town of Lyons. Blodgett's wife Orrie is also buried in the Bloomfield Cemetery and two of their infant children are also believed buried there.

Another soldier in the War of 1812 is buried as well in the cemetery - Jonah H. Hanchett, Jr., who served in a New York militia regiment in that war. Hanchett's 80-acre farm was just across the road west of the cemetery. Hanchett's tombstone is now lost and is likely buried under grass and dirt after falling over - exactly what happened to the grave marker for Darius T. Allen. The tombstone of his wife, Anna, is now flat on the ground. Presumably, Jonah's buried marker is close by.



**William L. Utley, the anti-slavery state legislator who led Wisconsin's famous "Abolition Regiment."**

The 22<sup>nd</sup> Wisconsin was led by Col. William L. Utley, a Racine newspaper editor, state legislator and hotelkeeper who raised the regiment with men from Racine, Rock, Green and Walworth counties in Wisconsin. The 22<sup>nd</sup> had a strong New England and abolitionist flavor, and Utley, born in Massachusetts, was himself a teetotaling Methodist fiercely opposed to slavery.

After the war, Utley published the *Racine Journal*, served as postmaster of Racine for two terms and in 1878 began publishing the *New Deal*, a newspaper supporting the Greenback party, an anti-monopoly group favoring a currency that helped farmers with better prices.

Utley died in 1887 at the age of 72 at his home in Racine, Wis.

## **Wisconsin's "Abolition Regiment" Earns Its Nickname**

When Darius T. Allen enlisted in the 22<sup>nd</sup> Wisconsin Infantry Regiment in January 1864 as a private, Allen was joining a unit that was already famous - not for battlefield heroics but for shielding runaway slaves as the regiment moved through the South. The "Abolition Regiment," the 22<sup>nd</sup> Wisconsin came to be called.

In Kentucky in November 1862, a runaway slave, wearing a heavy iron collar and bearing the scars of repeated beatings, passed into the 22<sup>nd</sup> regiment's lines, begging for sanctuary. The men in the regiment took the runaway in. Kentucky was a slave state but had not seceded from the Union with states further South. And Union Army commanders had orders to return runaways to their owners as a way to placate Union-supporting Kentuckians who owned slaves.

But the 22<sup>nd</sup> regiment's commander, Col. William T. Utley, damned damned those orders. Utley had the slave's iron collar stuck off and gave him refuge in the camp. Two days later, the runaway's owner, George Robertson, a prominent judge, showed up demanding the return of "his boy." Robertson was not your typical Southern slave-owner. A former chief justice of the Kentucky Supreme Court, Robertson supported the Union and was an acquaintance of President Lincoln.

That did not impress Utley, and he was none too polite. The judge was dreaming, Utley told Robertson, if he thought Utley would deliver the runaway "to an inhuman aristocratic bloat, who had grown fat on the labors and sweat he had robbed from [slaves]."

Utley's refusal to turn over the runaway brought uproarious cheers from the 22<sup>nd</sup> Wisconsin soldiers list-

*(continued next page)*

ening to the exchange. With the taunts and cheers of the men in the regiment ringing in his ears, an angry George Robertson, empty-handed, left the 22<sup>nd</sup> Wisconsin's camp.

But Robertson was not done. He then appealed to Col. Utley's commander who urged Utley to turn the runaway over to Robertson. Utley still refused. "God almighty has put heads on both ends of the bolts that hold me together," Utley told his commanding officer, "which slavery can never draw out so long as soul and body hang together."

Rebuffed again, Robertson filed criminal and civil actions against Utley and got the governor of Kentucky to convene a day-long meeting with top state officials to resolve the matter. Then Robertson wrote President Lincoln. Lincoln was in a quandry. Despite issuing his Emancipation Proclamation in 1863, Lincoln believed he had no civil authority to free anyone in the slave states and feared a court challenge to his "war powers" might be successful before a hostile U.S. Supreme Court. Lincoln compromised, offering his own personal funds to buy the runaway from Robertson. Robertson said no and carried on a long battle in the courts that only ended in 1871 when he won a \$906 judgement against Utley - a ruling reversed two years later by the Republicans in Congress who had Utley reimbursed.

Note: this article is largely based on a Marquette Law Review paper, "Colonel Utley's Emancipation - or, How Lincoln Offered to Buy a Slave," by Jerrica A. Giles and Allen C. Guelzo published summer 2010.



## Lafayette Church Library Open for Business

The books from the Glenn Reinders military history collection are now up on the shelves in the Lafayette Church library. Brother Bob Koenecke generously donated two metal shelves to complete the shelving. Sign-out sheets are hanging on both the Civil War and general military history shelves for member check-outs. There is a small table of free books for anyone to take.



## Last Soldier Update - Two More Counties Done

Wisconsin Department Commander John Decker completed Last Soldier marker dedications in Rusk and Polk counties Oct. 30<sup>th</sup>. In Rusk County, the honor guard included the county veterans service officer along with the local posts of the American Legion, VFW and Disabled American Veterans, and Iraq and Afghan war veterans. In Polk County, a joint American Legion-VFW honor guard took part along with four descendants of the Last Soldier honored. We are now 98 percent done in Wisconsin, only three counties left to do, reports Brother Brian McManus.

## Veterans Day Nov.

### 11<sup>th</sup>

Veterans posts in Burlington are hosting a ceremony honoring veterans on Veterans Day, Nov. 11<sup>th</sup>, at Veterans Terrace in Burlington at 10:30 a.m. Camp #15 members are cordially invited.

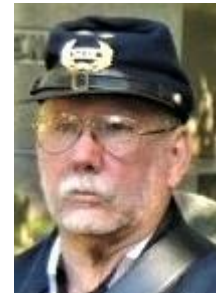
## Brother Kallan – Making the Sons Proud

Brother Rich Kallan was doing the work of the Sons on Oct. 9th, helping Camp #15 respectfully dispose of old U.S. flags at a Flag Disposal Ceremony at the Old Muskego Settlement grounds. Then Brother Rich was off the last week in October, touring Civil War battlefields at Shiloh, Corinth and Vicksburg. Below left, Brother Rich is with Fred Rahm of the Muskego American Legion post, properly disposing an American flag. Brother Rich took three old flags supplied by Camp #15 members to the ceremony. Below right, touring the battlefield at Fort Donelson, Tenn., where Gen. Grant won one of his first major victories in 1862. Brother Rich will have more pictures and an article on that tour, hosted by the Civil War Time Travelers group, for camp members to enjoy in the December newsletter.



# Camp #15 Notes

by Newsletter Editor Dave Daley



On a crisp fall day last week, Brother Bob Koenecke and I climbed into Bob's pick-up and drove into the past - back 177 years to 1864 when a Civil War soldier was being laid to rest in a little country cemetery just northeast of Pell Lake, Wisconsin. The soldier was Darius T. Allen - a 31-year-old farmer, harness maker and part-time school-teacher who fought in Sherman's army in the battles of Resaca and Kennesaw Mountain in northern Georgia in the summer of 1864. Like so many Civil War soldiers, Allen survived the battlefield only to die of disease - dysentery - in a military hospital.

That fall day, Bob and I walked the Bloomfield-Pioneer Cemetery where Allen is buried. The cemetery is small, half an acre at the most, tucked away at a country cross-roads where North Bloomfield Road intersects with Eastside Road in the Town of Bloomfield. Small farms and one-acre country homes dot the surrounding landscape and there was a peaceful feel under the tall trees in the cemetery as sunlight filtered down through the tree tops.

We plotted on paper the dozen or so graves in the cemetery, noting the two burial spots of soldiers from the War of 1812. The tombstone for one of the soldiers is missing and the marker for the other is almost unreadable. Brother Bob and Camp #15's chaplain, Jerry Coveney, plan to order new markers for both from the federal Veterans Administration.

The nearby village of Pell Lake now cares for the cemetery. Pell Lake residents Tony and Janet LaPlant had mowed the cemetery the last half-dozen years, and our day included a stop at their home where Janet generously shared the history she had put together over the

Bob Koenecke at a memorial to U.S. veterans recently erected in Pell Lake, Wis.



years of the cemetery.

We learned that the village also hoped to erect a flag-pole at the cemetery and Brother Bob is now making plans to help the village out.

Here, I want to single out Janet and Tony LaPlant for their help with this newsletter as well as Brother Jeff Graf for his research on the veterans listed in this issue.

# A Party for Navy Boot Camp Grad Max Frederick

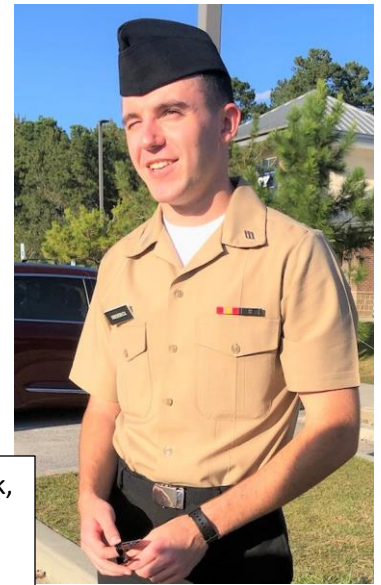


Photo by Marie Frederick

Brother Max Frederick graduated from boot camp at Naval Station Great Lakes Oct. 8<sup>th</sup>, dashed home for a party at his parent's home outside Kansasville, Wis., and the next day was off to South Carolina for up to half a year training in the Navy's nuclear power program. After the party, Max and two fellow boot camp sailors (above) sang the National Anthem at the football game at Max's alma mater, Catholic Central High School in Burlington, Wis.



Max showing off his boot camp haircut to friends and family at his graduation party.



Brother Max's new address: FN Frederick,  
Maximillian M., Class 2205-A, 101  
NNPTC Circle, Goose Creek, S.C. 29445

## An Oct. 31 Text Message from Max

Hi, Dave, it's Max. I'm about to begin week two of schooling at Naval Nuclear Power Training Command with machinist mate class 2205-A. I'm currently in A School with 15 weeks until graduation. I'm learning mathematics right now along with basic machinery but in a week it'll be basic machinery and mechanical equipment.

The school has around 3,000 sailors both enlisted and officers all studying and training to become machinists, electricians and technicians for the nuclear navy. When it comes to material, there's a lot of it and it's presented very quickly. Within a year and a half of school, you'll have approximately a bachelors degree in Nuclear Power Plant Operation. I really enjoy the atmosphere there and that dynamic between the instructors and students.



Max's great-aunt Pat Murray (left), a 20-year U.S. Air Force lieutenant colonel (retired), at his party. Another vet at the party, some guy (above with Max) who made it to buck sergeant in the Army and then had to start over in the SUVCW as a buck private.