

MILITARY ORDER OF THE LOYAL LEGION OF THE UNITED STATES

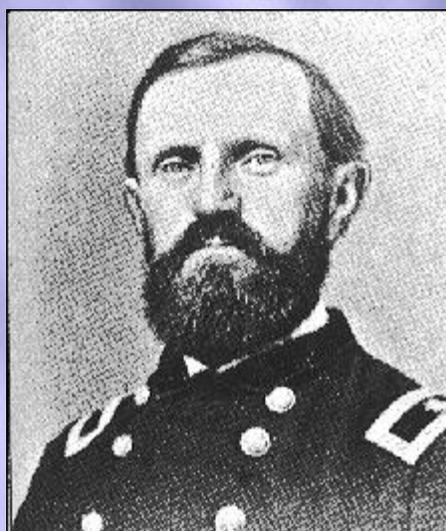


Loyal Legion Vignettes



**MAJOR GENERAL GEORGE WASHINGTON DEITZLER, KSM, BG USV
(1826 Pennsylvania - 1884 Arizona)
Original Member of the California Commandery
Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States**

**By
Christopher Alan Edwards
Missouri Commandery
Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States
(April 2004)**



George Washington Deitzler was born at Pine Grove, Schuylkill County, Pennsylvania, November 30, 1826, the son of Jacob L. and Mary (Mennig) Deitzler. He received the ordinary education to be obtained at the district schools of his time, and in February 1855 removed to Kansas.

George's efforts for the Free-State Party were numerous. He allied himself with the Emigration Aid Society of Boston, and took an active interest in politics, and in promoting the interests and aims of the Free-State Party. He was a coworker with Amos A. Lawrence, Eli Thayer, and Charles Robinson,

and belonged to the conservative wing of the Free-State Party, as opposed by James H. Lane and John Brown, radicals. He was delegated to go to Boston and procure rifles for the protection of settlers against the active opposition of the pro-slavery advocates. He obtained an order from the Aid Society in Boston, and with it obtained a quantity of Sharp's rifles, which he had boxed and marked books, and carried them back to Kansas. This was early in April 1855, and before John Brown had reached Kansas, and before his sons, who came there early in the spring, had in their possession any arms, save two squirrel-guns and a revolver. Deitzler made Lawrence his headquarters and was active in supporting the efforts of the Free-State Party in securing a territorial government and a constitution for the projected state. In the fall of 1855, the Free State Party was formed to secure a territorial government and a constitution for the future state in opposition to the pro-slavery territorial government. The two factions clashed immediately in the Wakarusa War, November 21st to December 8th, 1855. George Deitzler was aide-de-camp to the commander of the free state faction, Governor Charles Robinson, and was in full command for a portion of the time.

In the spring of 1856, in one of the various movements made by the pro-slavery party to provoke the Free-State Party to collision with the Federal forces under Colonel E.B. Sumner, stationed in the state to maintain order, the sheriff was shot by some unknown party. The district court, in the second week in May 1856, indicted for treason Deitzler, together with ex-Governor Reeder, George W. Brown, George W. Smith, Henry H. Williams, James H. Lane, S.M. Wook, Gaius Jenkins and Charles Robinson. On May 21st, they were arrested and imprisoned; Reeder, however, escaped in disguise, and for some reason that history may in the future disclose, Lane and Wood were missing from the roll of prisoners who were placed in the custody of the U.S. officers. On September 19th they were released, and returned to Lawrence, where they were received with an ovation.

During the winter of 1857 - 1858, he was a member and Speaker of the Kansas House of Representatives and was reelected. Subsequently, he was elected Mayor of Lawrence, and also served as Treasurer of the State University. He wrote articles for newspapers, served on committees, organized and attended meetings, and was considered a party leader. George served in both the Kansas Senate under the Topeka constitution (1855 - 1856), and the Kansas House of Representatives (1857 - 1859, Speaker, reelected in 1859). At the beginning of the Civil War, he was appointed Indian agent by President Lincoln. His name did not come to the Senate for confirmation until James H. Lane had taken his seat as a Senator from Kansas, and he opposed the confirmation of the appointment, and the President withdrew it.

Deitzler then raised the 1st Kansas Infantry US Volunteers, and was appointed Colonel by Governor Charles Robinson. He was wounded severely leading the Third Brigade which included the Kansas regiment at the battle of Wilson's Creek near Springfield, Missouri, in August 1861. He was made Brigadier General, USV on November 29th, 1862 by President Abraham Lincoln himself, and led a corps of the Army of Tennessee in Mississippi near Corinth and in the early battles against Vicksburg southern forces. He served under Grant until he resigned his commission on August 27th, 1863, because of illness related to his earlier wound at Wilson's Creek, and returned to Kansas. In the fall of 1864, George Deitzler was commissioned with the rank of Major General Kansas State Militia (KSM) and placed in command of the entire Kansas Militia to repel General Sterling Price's Raid in Missouri and eastern Kansas. He was successful in leading movements against the Confederates, including the Battle of Westport, August 23rd, 1864; the last full-scale battle of the Civil War in the West.

Before the war, George was married in Lebanon, Pennsylvania to Anna Maria Reinhart (born 1829, Pennsylvania) and had two children. After the war, he remarried in 1865 in Lawrence, Kansas to Anna Maria Neill (born December 1841, Abingdon, Virginia; died October 26, 1901, San Francisco, California) and had five children. The family moved from Lawrence, Kansas to San Francisco, California around 1872 for his health. While on a business trip, General Deitzler was killed by being thrown from a carriage at Tucson, Arizona, April 11, 1884. A funeral was held at the First Congregational Church in San Francisco, California under the direction of the Knights Templar.

There was a large attendance of the Golden Gate Commandery, of which General Deitzler was a member, and also of the Grand Army of the Republic and of the Legion of Honor. The Guard of Honor, Eminent Sir Tristram Burgess, Commander, consisted of Sir Knights: H.B. Chapin, F.L. Turpin, M.H. Renwick, W.H. Smith, William Fonda, William T. Fonda, Isaac S. Locke, M.C. Edwards, Samuel Swift and C.M. Osborne. The pall-bearers were: Governor George Stoneman, General Kautz, General William O. Gould, Judge E.D. Sawyer, D.H. Haskell and Dr. S.M. Mouser of Golden Gate Commandery; John Hammond and John F. Snow of the California Commandery. General Deitzler was buried at Oak Hill Cemetery in Lawrence, Kansas.

Major General George Washington Deitzler, KSM, BG USV was elected a Companion of the California Commandery, Insignia #2901. His great great grandson, [Christopher Alan Edwards](#), Insignia #22363, is a hereditary member of the Missouri Commandery of the Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States.

Children of George and Anna Maria (Reinhart) Deitzler

- 1) Walter Henry Deitzler, born January 7, 1851 Pennsylvania; died 1921, married Clara Moudy and had ten children.
- 2) George J. Deitzler, born January 4, 1853 Pennsylvania, married Mary Ann Bush and had four children.

Children of George and Anna Maria (Neill) Deitzler

- 1) Mary Macey Deitzler, born 1866 Lawrence, Kansas; died 1950, a Field Representative for the American Red Cross during World War I.
- 2) Philip Deitzler, born 1866 Lawrence, Kansas; died 1872 Kansas; buried Oak Hill Cemetery, Lawrence, Kansas.
- 3) Douglas Deitzler, born April 18, 1867 Lawrence, Kansas; died September 16, 1867 Kansas; buried Oak Hill Cemetery, Lawrence, Kansas.
- 4) Stephen Neill Deitzler, born February 3, 1870 Lawrence, Kansas; died August 26, 1870 Kansas; buried Oak Hill Cemetery, Lawrence, Kansas.
- 5) Georgie Dalton Deitzler, born 1872 Lawrence, Kansas; married 1891 San Francisco, California to Herbert James Edwards, born 1865 Wales, England; died (Missing Person) 1896 London, England and had three children.

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Sources:

- 1) [1912. Volume I of Kansas: a Cyclopedia of State History, Standard Pub. Co., Chicago, Illinois. pp.504-505.](#)
- 2) Encyclopedia USA Vol. 20 from the Kansas Historical Society
- 3) 1907. *The National Cyclopaedia of American Biography*, James T. White and Company, New York, New York.7, Vol. V, p367.
- 4) Membership Records of the Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States.
- 5) Cemetery Records: Oak Hill Cemetery Sec 2, Lawrence, Kansas.
- 6) *Arizona Daily Star*, Tucson Arizona, April 11 & 15, 1884.
- 7) *San Francisco Morning Call*, April 17 & 21, 1884.

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