

## MILITARY ORDER OF THE LOYAL LEGION OF THE UNITED STATES



### Loyal Legion Vignettes



### HUNGARIAN COMPANIONS OF THE FIRST CLASS IN THE MILITARY ORDER OF THE LOYAL LEGION OF THE UNITED STATES

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The Civil War prompted soldiers on both sides to organize veterans' organizations, local as well as national. While small, local ones tended to have a purely social function, prominent groups focused on an array of important issues: just pensions for veterans, proper medical care and other forms of assistance for the wounded and the maimed, financial aid for widows and orphans, Soldier's Homes for those without an adequate income, and the endorsement of officials and politicians who professed commitment to look after the interests of veterans and their families.

The two leading national associations for the men in blue were the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) and the Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States (MOLLUS). The principal organization for the men who wore the gray was the United Confederate Veterans (UCV). While MOLLUS remains active to this very day, GAR and UCV have receded into history decades ago. The final encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic occurred at Indianapolis, Indiana, on August 28 to September 1, 1949. The last reunion of the United Confederate Veterans was held on May 20, 1951, at Norfolk, Virginia. Both events are commemorated by postage stamps.

It is often overlooked that a very significant proportion of the Union and Confederate combatants were men of foreign birth. Therefore it's not surprising that non-natives were well represented in veterans' organizations.

The Hungarian were one of the smaller ethnic groups to participate in the conflict. Today some 1.5 million Americans can claim Hungarian ancestry but at the time of the Civil War the Hungarian population of the entire country didn't exceed three thousand according to the most reliable estimates. Most of them were political refugees who came

to the United States after the unsuccessful 1848-49 War of Liberation led by the charismatic Lajos Kossuth against the ruling Hapsburg dynasty.

The War of Liberation was part of the great revolutionary tide which swept across continental Europe in 1848. The literature on the topic by a vast array of diverse authors is simply enormous and, like the American Civil War, remains a fertile ground for research and interpretation. One of the most highly regarded books on the subject is *Revolutions of 1848, A Social History* by Priscilla Robertson. It provides a comprehensive chronicling of the events in all the countries affected with a substantial chunk of the text devoted specifically to the Hungarian experience.

Although there were a multitude of complicated issues surrounding the events of 1848-49, the key points may be summarized in a nutshell as follows. The political map of continental Europe in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century differed considerably from what it is today. Hungary, or more properly, the Kingdom of Hungary, was part of the sprawling Hapsburg Empire. This arrangement satisfied some Hungarians but not others. When the revolutionary movement of 1848 began, it found a receptive ear in Hungary. Liberal elements carried the day, forcing the Hapsburg dynasty to make concessions in political and economic spheres. But peaceful negotiations soon turned into armed conflict. Following initial setbacks, the hastily organized Hungarian army inflicted a series of defeats on the Hapsburg forces, prompting Emperor Franz Joseph to seek help from Czar Nicholas I. The Russian autocrat obliged. Given the current political situation in eastern Europe, who can deny that history doesn't repeat itself?

The heavily outnumbered Hungarian forces crumbled under the new onslaught. No aid, diplomatic or military, was extended by the Western nations; the Evil Empire was allowed a free hand as in 1956. Kossuth, along with several thousand patriot, sought refuge in the neighboring Ottoman Empire. The great fortress of Komárom, straddling the Danube River midway between Vienna and Budapest, under General György Klapka and Governor László Ujházy, held out for a while but considering the hopelessness of the situation capitulated with the provision that every defender be given a safe conduct. This provision allowed those who wished to go abroad. Ujházy, Klapka and several hundred others followed this course.

The émigrés soon dispersed throughout the globe. A few remained in the Near East. The Australian gold rush attracted a handful and a small number found their way to South America. The majority headed for western Europe, especially England, and across the Atlantic Ocean to the United States.

The bulk of the newcomers to America settled throughout the Northern states though a significant number eventually made their homes in St. Louis, Missouri, a border state. Lack of economic opportunities and aversion to the "peculiar institution" were the chief reasons for avoiding the Deep South. Kossuth himself toured the United States between December 1851 and July 1852, but didn't remain, choosing to reside in London, England, after returning to Europe. Three of his sisters and their families, however, settled in

America. In 1958 Kossuth was honored on two stamps by the US Post Office in the Champion of Liberty series.

The émigrés in America, like those living in the Near East or western Europe, closely followed international political developments during the 1850s. Hopes for a renewed struggle against Hapsburg autocracy were raised at the outbreak of the Crimean War. The brief 1859 War in northern Italy which pitted the Hapsburg realm against the Kingdom of Sardinia allied with France offered considerable promise for the advancement of the Hungarian cause. However, like the Crimean War, it failed to deliver the expectations. When the revered patriot Giuseppe Garibaldi landed in Sicily the following year, thousands of Italian and foreign sympathizers, among them hundreds of Hungarians, joined his banner. They organized a contingent of their own, the Hungarian Legion. After the great battle of Volturno, October 1-2, 1860, which paved the way for Italian unification under King Victor Emanuel II of Sardinia, Garibaldi's army was disbanded but the Hungarian Legion was retained in royal service as a para-military force against the brigands in the southern part of the new country.

By the time the Civil War erupted, the overwhelming majority of Hungarians in the United States had become adjusted to their new homeland, mastered the English language, and successfully pursued a wide array of occupations. Some were embroiled in local politics. A number of them were conspicuous in Masonic circles.

The number of Hungarians involved in the Civil War is impossible to peg accurately. However, a figure of 250 – 300 seems most reasonable under the circumstances; about 150 of them – mainly officers – can be fully accounted for. Almost all of them served under the Stars and Stripes; only a truly handful fought for the Stars and Bars. While the Hungarians were few in numbers, they were disproportionately conspicuous in the upper ranks. This phenomenon can be attributed to the fact that the majority of them had considerable military experience. Hungarians in the Union army boasted two full generals, four brevet brigadier-generals, some thirty colonels and majors, and at least twenty captains. Contrary to some claims at no time during the war was there a distinctly Hungarian unit. Hungarians were too few in numbers and too widely scattered to form even a company.

While the Civil War was raging in the United States, momentous events were also unfolding in Europe. Defeat at the hands of the Prussians in 1866 forced Franz Joseph to revamp the political map of the Empire, leading to the Compromise of 1867 and the creation of the Dual Monarchy. The new order was acceptable by many of the exiles, but not to Kossuth and his die-hard followers. While a large number of émigrés returned to Hungary from western Europe, only a few in America followed their example.

After the collapse of the Confederacy, Hungarian émigrés, like their native comrades, returned to civilian life and carved out careers in various fields. About a dozen veterans received overseas diplomatic appointments; several others were granted civil service positions. The biggest success story was undoubtedly attained by Private Joseph Pulitzer.

His meteoric rise in journalism is thoroughly chronicled in dozens of books and countless articles.

Many of the Hungarians, especially the former soldiers of the Union army, joined one or more veterans' groups. Six Hungarians are listed as MOLLUS companions of the first class: Julius Stahel, Frederick Knefler, George Pomutz, Ladislav Zulavsky, Ignatz Kappner, and Peter P. Dobozy. The text below gives a succinct overview of their lives. The names of all Hungarians involved in the Civil War are denoted as they appear in official American documents; however, gross misspellings are duly noted. Names of all other Hungarians mentioned are written as in Hungarian sources, accents marks and all, but in the American sequence. (According to Hungarian custom, the family name comes first and then the given name.)

## **Julius Stahel** (New York Commandery, Insignia #01491)

Born in the city of Szeged into a typical middle class family, Stahel moved to Budapest as a youth where he became an associate of Gusztáv Emich, a leading printer and publisher. Working in this milieu allowed Stahel to meet established and rising literary figures. Among them was the lyric poet Sándor Petőfi, regarded as the most outstanding figure of Hungarian literature. The two young men became friends and Petőfi even penned a short whimsical poem dedicated to Stahel, namely *Egy könyvárus emlékkönyvébe* [To the Memorial Album of a Bookseller]. The last two lines of the poem read:

S imádd az istent, s mindenekfelett  
Áruld erősen költeményimet.

[And worship God, but above all  
Sell my poems assiduously.]

At the start of the War of Liberation in 1848 Stahel espoused the revolutionary cause, in a civilian as well as in a military role. He rendered valiant service as a soldier, was wounded in action, and was decorated for bravery. Upon the victory of the Hapsburg and Russian armies, he fled abroad to England. However, powerful friends at home were able to arrange his return without repercussions. After coming back, he resumed his affiliation with Emich, albeit as a silent partner. Due to personal and financial problems a few years later, he emigrated again and this time the move was permanent. He settled in New York City and became a valued member of the German-language press.

At the outbreak of the Civil War, he and Ludwig Blenker, a flamboyant German soldier-of-fortune, organized the 8<sup>th</sup> New York Infantry. Stahel became the regiment's lieutenant-colonel. For their exemplary conduct at First Bull Run, both of them were promoted. Reporters closely followed the troops and filed innumerable stories about prominent officers. Stahel was among those who received considerable attention by the press from the very beginning of the war. "Colonel Stahel is 36 years of age, of small stature, but has

eminently intelligent and large eyes,” intoned *Frank Leslie’s Illustrated Newspaper*, Nov. 9, 1861. Three days later he was advanced to brigadier-general.

Stahel was labeled as a political general, the same as close friends and fellow émigrés Franz Sigel and Carl Schurz. The designation implied that the rank was bestowed due to the individual’s perceived or actual political influence rather than military ability. “Political generals” abounded among both the native-born as well as the foreign-born in the early days of the war.

J. H. Kidd, colonel of the 6<sup>th</sup> Michigan Cavalry and brevet brigadier-general, who was acquainted with Stahel and his staff, left this vivid picture in his *Personal Recollections of a Cavalryman*, published in 1908: “He [Stahel] took great pride in his messing arrangements and gave elegant spreads to invited guests at his headquarters. I was privileged to be present at one of these dinners and must say that he entertained in princely style. His staff were all foreigners, and would have been ‘dudes,’ only there were no ‘dudes’ in those days. Dudes were types of the genus homo evolved at a later period. They were dandies and no mistake, but in that respect they had no advantage over him, for he could vie in style with the best of them.”

Several of these foreign “dudes” on Stahel’s staff were Hungarians. One of the was Philip Figyelmessy, holding the rank of colonel. A veteran of the 1848-49 War of Liberation and Garibaldi’s campaign of 1860, he resided in London during most of the 1850s. A faithful follower of Kossuth, he carried out a number of sensitive missions in his behalf. Emeric Szabad, an acclaimed writer in Hungarian, French, German and English, was also a veteran of 1848-49 and fought under Garibaldi against the Neapolitans. During the greater part of the 1850s he lived in Scotland and contributed several entries to the *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Elek Ludvigh was the son of János Ludvigh, a close associate of Kossuth and a prominent politician during the War of Liberation. Elek shared his father’s exile in the 1850s in Brussels, Belgium.

Stahel and the 8<sup>th</sup> New York participated in General John C. Frémont’s pursuit of Stonewall Jackson in the Shenandoah Valley in the spring of 1862. The regiment sustained a high casualty at Cross Keys. The battle of Second Bull Run, shortly afterwards, was disastrous for General John Pope’s Union army; however, Stahel was cited for bravery by General Robert C. Schenk.

On March 14, 1863, Stahel was elevated to the rank of major-general. The promotion had been contemplated by Lincoln for several months. On January 12, 1863, the President wrote to Secretary of War Edwin Stanton: “I intended proposing to you this morning, and forgot it, that Schurz and Stahl should both be Maj. Genls. Schurz to take Sigel’s old corps, and Stahl to command cavalry. They, together with Sigel, are our sincere friends; and while so much may seem rather large, any thing less is to small. I think it better be done.”

On the 17<sup>th</sup> of March Stahel was relieved from duty with the Army of the Potomac and ordered to report to the Department of Washington. Three brigades of cavalry were

organized as a division, which together, with the outposts, was placed under his command. President Abraham Lincoln stressed that the daring and embarrassing raids by John Singleton Mosby's guerrillas must stop. The *Washington Star* hailed Stahel's appointment. The paper was elated that the cavalry was finally getting an "experienced and efficient commander," who would keep a vigilant eye on "every movement of the small bands of guerrillas and other irregular troops" of the enemy. While Stahel managed to curtail Mosby's depredations, he was no more successful than his predecessors or successors in decisively defeating the Grey Ghost.

There are few who dispute that Mosby was the most daring, resourceful and successful leader of small irregular bands during the Civil War. "Partisan warfare, until it was synthesized and its capacities displayed by the genius and energy of Mosby, had no place among the military arrangements of any nation," stated Confederate officer John Scott in his 1867 book *Partisan Life with Mosby*. Another unabashed admirer of Mosby, John Esten Cooke, the South's most romantic reporter as well as Jeb Stuart's ordnance officer, wrote in his *Outlines from the Outpost*: "The exploits of Captain Mosby would furnish material for a volume . . . He had been the chief actor in so many raids, encounters and adventures . . . The Captain is a determined man in a charge, dangerous on a scout, hard to outwit, prone to turn up suddenly where he is least expected, and bang away with pistol and carbine. His knowledge of the Yankee character is extensive and profound – his devices to deceive them are rarely unsuccessful."

According to Mosby himself, "the military value of a partisan's work is not measured by the amount of property destroyed, or the number of men killed or captured, but by the number he keeps watching." Mosby and his Rangers so completely dominated northern Virginia's Loudoun and Fauquier counties that this region was dubbed "Mosby's Confederacy."

Scott didn't think much of Stahel's approach to combating Mosby. In the aforementioned book he wrote: "General Stahl assuredly deserves to be classed with the most prudent commanders who have ever carried on aggressive war, or graced the page of history. On his march, as wakeful and vigilant, he counted the watches of the night; he caused not only all the bridges in his rear to be torn up, but also fences to be built, and trees to be felled across his track, by which means he proposed to prevent the fierce guerrillas from charging hi rear, and spreading confusion and alarm through his ranks."

When President Abraham Lincoln delivered his famous Gettysburg Address on November 19, 1863, Stahel commanded the guard of honor during the ceremonies. A week before, on November 12, Stahel was among the five hundred guests at the reception following the wedding of Kate Chase, the beautiful and ambitious daughter of Secretary of Treasury Salmon P. Chase, to William Sprague, wealthy manufacturer, former governor of Rhode Island, and current U.S. Senator from the state. The wedding was the highlight of the social season in the nation's capital.

It was at the battle of Piedmont in the Shenandoah Valley on June 5, 1864, that Stahel attained his most glorious moment of the war. Personally leading some of his dismounted

troops to support the infantry, he displayed such bravery and leadership that even fellow officers antagonistic towards him couldn't withhold their admiration and respect. Stahel resigned from the army on February 8, 1865.

After the end of the war, Stahel entered the diplomatic corps, representing the United States in the Far East, first in Japan and then in China, for nearly two decades. One of his colleagues was none other than his former nemesis, John Singleton Mosby. Becoming personally acquainted with Stahel made such a favorable impression on Mosby that he recommended to President James A. Garfield that Stahel be appointed Assistant-Secretary of State. Stahel's labors in the Far East were much appreciated by the government; Secretary of State Thomas F. Bayard wrote a highly complimentary letter to him when he retired. Upon withdrawing from overseas public service, Stahel returned to New York City. For several years he was associated as an executive with the Equitable Life Assurance Society. Organized in 1859, it was one of the foremost life insurance companies of the world. Its head office, the Equitable Building, erected in 1872, was located on Broadway between Pine and Cedar Streets.

In 1893, nearly thirty years after the battle of Piedmont, Stahel was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for his heroic role. Such belated recognition was by no means rare. Commenting on the award, the *Brooklyn Eagle*, November 13, 1893, wrote: ". . . medals for gallantry are, even at this tardy day, being presented. . . . The war department has just awarded him a congressional medal for 'distinguished gallantry at the battle of Piedmont, June 5, 1864.' General Stahel has since the war also earned distinction in the diplomatic service of the United States in Japan and China."

Stahel spent much of his time participating in a wide variety of social functions. His presence at funerals became more frequent with each passing year. Naturally many of the events he attended had to do with events and comrades from the Civil War days.

Stahel was among the guests at the lavish dinner accorded to the Comte de Paris by more than one hundred of his former comrades of the Army of the Potomac at the Plaza Hotel on October 20, 1890. Louis Phillippe, Albert d'Orleans, Count of Paris was a volunteer aide on the staff of General George B. McClellan until July 1862. Each of the veterans afterwards received as a souvenir of the occasion a large photograph of the French nobleman, with his autograph. The Comte devoted much of his time since the end of the war to writing the *History of the Civil War in America*. Several critics deemed the massive tome "the best history of the late struggle which has yet appeared."

On May 14, 1899, twenty-eight veterans of the 8<sup>th</sup> New York Infantry gathered for a special occasion. Princess Agnes Salm Salm, whose husband Prince Felix Salm Salm served as colonel of the regiment from October 1862 until its muster out in April 1863, presented the assemblage with a regimental flag that had been in her possession for more than thirty years. "I want you to rally round it once again and keep it with you until the last comrade shall have passed away," she said. Among the distinguished guests was Stahel's good friend, Carl Schurz. Both he and Stahel made toasts and gave speeches in English as well as in German.

Almost exactly seven years later, on May 13, 1906, a very somber day, Stahel visited Schurz who lay on his death bed. Others coming to pay their respects to the invalid on that day read like a *Who's Who in America*: Mark Twain, Andrew Carnegie, Felix Adler, Nicholas Murray Butler, Ida M. Tarbell, and William Dean Howells.

During the greater part of his latter years Stahel resided at the Hoffman House, on Madison Square, described in *King's Handbook of New York City* (1892) as “famous the world over for its magnificent banquet hall and its art gallery, no less than for its superb cuisine and its general excellence as a hotel.” The fabled establishment was often featured not only in local newspapers but also in those of far-away places. For example, in an article about the colorful history of the hotel and its renowned guests, the *Idaho Daily Statesman* of May 13, 1906, wrote: “Sometimes ex-President Grant called to see General Julius Stahel, who was commander of division under him during the civil war, and is still living at the hotel, probably the youngest man of 80 in all the big town.”

Despite the advancing years, Stahel's mental faculties did not diminish and his opinions on sundry topics were often sought by the media. In a column denoted “Personal Views,” printed in the September 23, 1911, edition of *The Evening News* of San Jose, California, Stahel stated: “ I am now and always have been greatly interested in the army of the United States. That we need a well drilled, thoroughly trained army there is no doubt, but I am of the opinion that at present an army of 100,000 is LARGE ENOUGH. . . . America is situated differently from most of the other world powers. It is PECULIARLY ISOLATED, and thee is no great foreign power that could send an EFFECTIVE army against us.”

Angina pectoris claimed Stahel's life on December 4, 1912. He was laid to rest in Arlington National Cemetery. Among his honorary pallbearers were a galaxy of civilian and military notables, including General Nelson A. Miles, George T. Wilson, vice-president of the Equitable Life Assurance Co., and Rear-admiral Adolph Marix.

Several of the obituary notices were subtitled “Death of a Patriarch” in deference to his age and the fact that among the Civil War generals only Daniel F. Sickles outlived him. “The services and exploits of General Stahel during the Civil War furnished one of the most noteworthy records in the military history of the country,” gushed the *New York Tribune*, December 5, 1912.

Fond recollections of Stahel often appeared in newspapers after his death. For example, the *Evening World* of December 13, 1921, paid homage to him in its series of articles devoted to the “Foreign-Builders of America.” The piece on Stahel, number XII in the set, recounted his career and ended with the comment that he “was a picturesque, chivalrous and almost youthful figure of New York life in the thickening twilight of his years.”

Stahel's name is frequently denoted as Stahl in official and unofficial documents as well as in the general Civil War literature. A number of entries in biographical dictionaries, obituary notices and miscellaneous writings claim that his real name was Count Serbiani



or Count Sebastiani. *Harper's Weekly*, November 9, 1861, declared in no uncertain terms that "Julius Stahel . . . is a descendant of a family of the oldest nobility." How all this nonsense began is impossible to pinpoint. It certainly wasn't started or propagated by Stahel himself since even the severest critics of his military talents conceded that he was a man of irreproachable integrity. Besides, his modest family background was well known in émigré circles. Stahel's real name was Számvald; he adopted Stahel upon arriving in America. For this reason, some American and Hungarian writings denote him as Stahel-Szamvald. A multitude of American writings claim that Stahel was a lieutenant in the Hapsburg Imperial Army before the events of 1848-49. This contention is incorrect; Stahel held that rank in the Hungarian revolutionary army.

## **Frederick Knefler** (Indiana Commandery, Insignia #02846)

Only 15 years old at the start of the 1848-49 War of Liberation, Knefler nevertheless enrolled in the revolutionary army. His father, a physician, was in charge of a military hospital. Following the victory of the enemy, the whole family went abroad, eventually settling in Indianapolis, Indiana, very much a frontier town in those days. Knefler's father was one of fourteen men who, on November 2, 1856, founded the Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation, the city's first synagogue.

Young Frederick mastered the English language by reading the Bible and Shakespeare. "He wrote the English language well and used it well," commented a fellow Hoosier later and added that Knefler "was a remarkably well-informed man in all general topics." Knefler studied law in the office of Jonathan W. Gordon while clerking for Marion County. He formed a life-long friendship with Lew Wallace, a veteran of the Mexican War and the future author of such classics as *Ben-Hur*.

At the outbreak of the Civil War, Governor Oliver Morton entrusted Wallace with raising the required number of troops requested by President Abraham Lincoln and Wallace chose Knefler as his principal assistant. Their diligent work ensured that the troops requested were raised promptly. By April 24 they had assembled 111 companies, 51 more than the 60 requested. Not content with mere paperwork and eager to experience action in the field, Wallace and Knefler enrolled in the 11<sup>th</sup> Indiana Infantry, a three-month regiment, and both promptly re-enlisted when they were mustered out on August 2, 1861. Knefler, a captain in this regiment, the three-year 11<sup>th</sup> Indiana Infantry, was by Wallace's side during the capture of Fort Donelson and at the great battle of Shiloh, April 6-7, 1862.

Upon the organization of the 79<sup>th</sup> Indiana Infantry in August, Knefler became the regiment's colonel. He and his men fought in some of the war's fiercest encounters: Perryville, Stone's River, and the Chattanooga-Chickamauga campaign.

While Union forces eked out hard-fought decisions at Perryville and Stone's River, the fortunes of war smiled on the Confederates at Chickamauga, the "great battle of the West." The encounter was proceeding without favoring either side when a poor maneuver

by the Union army opened a gap in the line of battle. Taking full advantage of the opportunity, the Confederates drove the bluecoats from the field. The 79<sup>th</sup> Indiana lost 54 officers and men. Years later the State of Indiana erected a monument in recognition of the regiment's role in the battle, with the following inscription on the tablet of the monument:

INDIANA'S TRIBUTE  
TO HER  
SEVENTY-NINTH REGIMENT INFANTRY

Col. Frederick Knefler, Commanding  
First Brigade (Samuel Beatty)  
Third Division (Van Cleve)  
Twenty-first Corps (Crittenden)

Knefler and his troopers had their most glorious moment at the storming of Missionary Ridge, outside Chattanooga. In this engagement, Knefler commanded the consolidated 79<sup>th</sup> and 86<sup>th</sup> Indiana Infantry. They spearheaded the attack which culminated in a resounding victory. B. F. Taylor, who witnessed the assault as the correspondent of the *Chicago Tribune*, wrote: "What colors were first upon the mountain battlement I dare not try to say; . . . But this I can declare, the Seventy-ninth and Eighty-sixth Indiana, of Wood's division, fairly ran over the rifle pits, and left their whole line in the rear, and their breathless color bearers led the way. A minute and they were all there, fluttering along the Ridge from left to right." Years later Knefler himself gave an account of the events at a MOLLUS assemblage.

Knefler and the regiment participated in General William T. Sherman's famous Atlanta campaign and fought against General John B. Hood's army at Franklin and Nashville. For gallant and meritorious service Knefler was brevetted brigadier-general on March 13, 1865. The war ended for the men of the 79<sup>th</sup> Indiana when they were mustered out in the early days of June. The regiment during its term of service was constantly in the field, upon active campaign, never having been detailed for garrison duty.

Upon demobilization, Knefler resumed the practice of law in partnership with John Hanna, former US district attorney. During his legal career Knefler handled a wide array of cases, routine as well as peculiar. In June 1887 he filed an invalid army pension application in behalf of Andrew Campbell, the Union soldier who fired the shot that ended the life of General John Hunt Morgan, the legendary Confederate cavalry leader.

Urged by countless friends, Knefler ran for city council in 1874. The *Indianapolis Daily Sentinel*, May 5, described him as: "Republican – Hungarian by birth – lawyer – soldier." An intelligent and cultured gentleman of great force of character – honest and fearless." Knefler was a strong supporter of the temperance movement, an unpopular stance in an era when drinking was the chief form of recreation for the majority of men. When he was defeated at the polls, the *Cincinnati Daily Gazette*, May 7, 1874, commenting about the

reaction in Indianapolis, wrote: “To-day there is general rejoicing among saloon men and drunken men can be counted by the score.”

President Rutherford B. Hayes appointed Knefler the Pension Agent at Indianapolis in 1877. When the news reached the city, several hundred citizens marched to his residence to congratulate him. “The appointment is evidently very popular, locally and throughout the state,” observed one newspaper covering the story. Knefler’s appointment owed much to the ardent support of Benjamin Harrison, the future 23<sup>rd</sup> president, which in turn exerted a decisive influence on President Hayes.

Till the end of his life Knefler was active in veterans’ organizations and was a conspicuous figure at local and national reunions. He held membership not only in MOLLUS but also in GAR and served as president of the 79<sup>th</sup> Indiana Infantry veterans’ association.

Writing a post card to a client in 1894, Knefler criticized the Pension Department of the Grover Cleveland administration. An inquisitive and alert postal employee spotted the card and its contents, prompting him to forward it to Washington. Soon Knefler received a stern official rebuke from officials who didn’t appreciate his candor. They also demanded a formal apology. If he chose to refuse, warned the missive, he’d face dire consequences, including disbarment from practice before the Pension Department. Knefler replied that he had no intentions of apologizing since his comments were valid.

The disagreement rapidly escalated and Knefler was disbarred. The incident attracted nationwide attention and the support for Knefler was overwhelming. Under the heading of “A Vindictive Exercise of Arbitrary Power,” the *Weekly Indiana State Journal*, June 17, 1896, condemned the Washington bureaucrats, declaring that “the disbarment of General Knefler is an act of governmental tyranny and political vindictiveness worthy of the most absolute monarchy in Europe.” Knefler wasn’t reinstated until May of 1897.

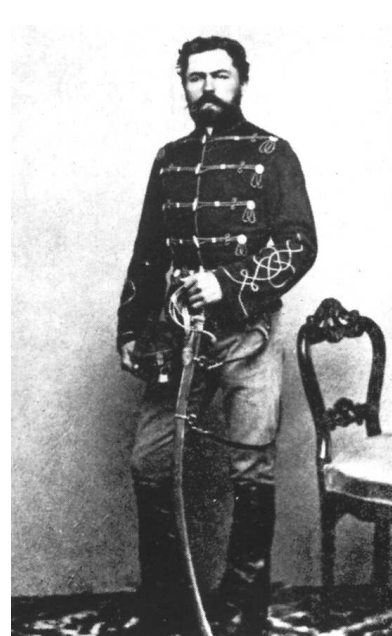
Knefler’s most important and undoubtedly his most enduring civic legacy was his role in the completion of the Soldiers and Sailors Monument, Indiana’s tribute to the bravery and endurance of her citizen soldiery and the “signature” structure of Indianapolis. Plans for the splendid memorial were advanced shortly after the war. However, nothing concrete materialized until 1887 when an international competition for its design was held. The winner was Bruno Schmitz, the great German sculptor. The cornerstone of the imposing structure was laid on August 22, 1889, with elaborate ceremonies in the presence of a host of dignitaries, among them President Benjamin Harrison. Construction progressed rather slowly and haphazardly under the guidance of the original board entrusted with the realization. Consequently, this governing body was replaced in 1895 by a Board of Regents, headed by Knefler.

The grand monument was formally dedicated on May 15, 1902. An estimated 75,000 spectators came out for the occasion. Lew Wallace was the master of ceremonies. Sadly, Knefler didn’t live to see this glorious day; he died on the afternoon of June 14, 1901, at his home. During the last six years of his life he had to endure considerable pain. Stricken with diabetes, his constitution slowly ebbed away, reducing him to an invalid. His

remains were laid to rest in the city's Crown Hill Cemetery. In accordance with the instructions he left, his funeral was plain and simple: "I have never believed in the propriety of spending on dead bodies that which can benefit the living." He stipulated that the internment take place at midnight, thereby avoiding crowds and ensuring privacy.



**Julius Stahel, George Pomutz and Ignatz Kappner**

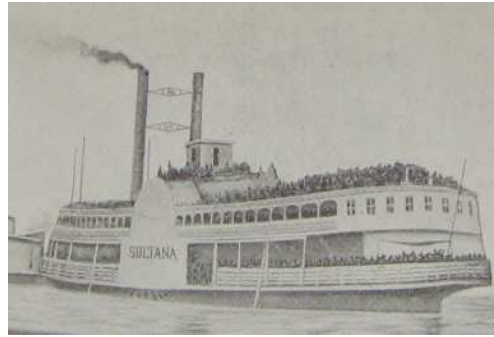


**Ladislav Zulavsky, Frederick Knefler and Peter Paul Dobozy**

\* Pomutz, George. Hungary. Iowa. 1 lt adjt 15 Iowa inf 23 Dec 1861; maj 3 June 1863; lt col 23 Mar 1865; bvt col and brig gen vols 13 Mar 1865 for gal and mer ser dur the war; hon dischd 24 July 1865; [died 12 Oct 1882.]

POMUTZ, George. Union officer. Hungary. 1st Lt. Adj. 15th Iowa 23 Dec. '61; Maj. 3 June '63; Lt. Col. 23 Mar. '65; Bvt. B.G. USV (war service). Commanded 3, 4, XVII (Tenn.). After the war he was Consul at St. Petersburg (1866) and in 1878 was named Consul General for Russia. Died 1882.

**Entries on Pomutz from Francis B. Heitman's *Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army* and Mark Mayo Boatner's *The Civil War Dictionary***



**Hungarian stamps honoring Sándor Petőfi; The ill-fated *Sultana***



**Kossuth statue in New York City; Graves of Ladislas and Sigismund Zulavsky**



**Map of southern Italy; Postage stamp commemorating the battle of Shiloh**

Furthermore, the funeral ceremonies were to be devoid of any religious services. His obituary in the *New York Times* on the following day referred to him as “one of the most

prominent men in Indiana.” His death was reported in newspapers across the country; several of the notices bore the subtitle “Was a Famous Soldier.”

Even though an extensive and reliable body of information is readily available on Knefler, some glaring errors tend to persist. Among the more ubiquitous is the assertion that he enrolled in the 79<sup>th</sup> Indiana Infantry as a private and eventually rose to the rank of colonel. Also, the highest rank he attained was brigadier-general by brevet; he wasn't brevetted major-general.

## **George Pomutz** **(Pennsylvania Commandery, Insignia #01159)**

A lawyer by education, Pomutz served as secretary to László Ujházy, the civilian governor of the fortress of Komárom, in the final days of the 1848-49 War of Liberation. When the stronghold capitulated with a provision of safe conduct for all defenders, Pomutz was among those who chose to leave the country with Ujházy. They arrived in New York aboard the *Hermann* in December 1849.

Ujházy secured a pristine tract of land in Decatur County, Iowa, for what he hoped would be the nucleus of a settlement for all the exiles. However, only a few accompanied Ujházy to New Buda, the name he gave to the little colony. Most of the émigrés preferred the more civilized environs of Davenport and other established communities. Pomutz was among the handful who followed Ujházy to Iowa. When Ujházy, despondent over the death of his beloved wife, departed to the vicinity of San Antonio, Texas, Pomutz remained and tried his best to promote the tiny community, but without any notable success. He possessed a thorough education, was an excellent organizer, and had a flair for languages, being conversant in eight tongues.

At the start of the Civil War he enrolled in the 15<sup>th</sup> Iowa Infantry, organized at Keokuk, becoming a first-lieutenant and adjutant. Two of his regimental superior officers, Hugh T. Reid and William W. Belknap, became notable figures in American history albeit for different reasons. Pomutz fought with distinction at Shiloh in April 1862 and was among the wounded. In June 1863 he was promoted to major and subsequently attained the rank of lieutenant-colonel. Upon promotions to Belknap and Reid he became the *de facto* commander of the regiment. On March 13, 1865, he was brevetted brigadier-general.

After the end of the conflict, Pomutz, ably assisted by Loren S. Tyler, a veteran trooper of the regiment, compiled a meticulous history of the 15<sup>th</sup> Iowa Infantry. The January 21, 1866 edition of the *Iowa State Daily Register* described it as “the most elaborate history we have yet seen of any organization of the late war,” and added that “Col. Pomutz is deserving of the highest praise for this able and laborious work.”

Pomutz, appointed US consul to St. Petersburg, Russia, departed shortly afterwards to take up his duties. In 1874 he was named consul-general for the entire country. The *Diplomatic Register of the United States for 1878* listed his annual salary at \$2,000. During his posting he attended a wide array of functions. He served as one of the

pallbearers at the funeral of Anson Burlingame, the lawyer, legislator and diplomat who died suddenly on February 23, 1870, while negotiating a treaty with Russia; he was among the guests at the wedding of Grand Duke Vladimir to Grand Duchess Marie Paulovna in 1874, and attended the gala banquet given by members of the Russian Department of Commerce in April 1877 to express their appreciation of American hospitality extended to their representatives at the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition. At this last named occasion, toasts were made to Pomutz and he himself offered toasts. In accordance with good diplomatic protocol, he declared that “there is no doubt that the future of Russia and America is most brilliant” and stressed the mutual interests of the two great nations and the desirability of co-operation.

Russia, like the United States, underwent profound changes during the early part of the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Serfdom was abolished in 1861, aggressive expansion in Central Asia and the Far East followed Czar Nicholas I’s dictum “Where once the Russian flag has flown it must not be lowered,” and the endless fighting with the Ottoman Empire was renewed in 1877. Desirous of continued rapprochement with the United States, Russia sold Alaska at a bargain price in 1867. The 1870s saw the birth of three individuals in Russia destined to exert a major influence not only domestically but internationally as well: Vladimir I. Ulyanov (better known as Lenin), Grigori Rasputin and Josef Dzhughashvilj (better known as Stalin). The two architects of the Evil Empire and founders of the cult of personality are venerated as role models to this very day by millions. The Mad Monk has his devoted followers as well.

When his tenure as US diplomat ended, Pomutz remained in Russia. He died on October 12, 1882, and was laid to rest in Smolensk Cemetery. “A Brave Soldier Gone” was the subtitle of one of the American obituaries. Pomutz died under rather penurious circumstances. However, when a dusty trunk packed with his personal papers was discovered in the cellar of the American legation a few years later, a number of relatives in Hungary, heirs to his estate, became convinced that Pomutz was actually a very rich man.

The fanciful drawings depicting grandiose buildings lining the streets of New Buda and sundry other documents implied that Pomutz had a huge fortune hidden somewhere. With America reveling in the Gilded Age, this dream didn’t need much stoking. Forming a consortium, the relatives spent huge sums hiring lawyers, detectives and sundry other professionals on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean to locate and acquire this fabulous wealth. Eventually it dawned on most of the treasure hunters that their quest was futile. But one determined individual by the name of Ferenc Lőkősházy persisted for several more years until an honest lawyer told him to stop wasting time and money.

One of the best accounts of Pomutz’ Civil War activities appears in Loren S. Tyler’s “The Tyler Photographs of Iowa Military Men” in the *Annals of Iowa*, July 1912. The often-cited “Some Hungarian Patriots in Iowa,” by Lillian May Wilson in the October 1913 issue of the *Iowa Journal of History and Politics*, a rather silly and patronizing article about Pomutz and a number of other émigrés, is riddled with factual errors. The

lengthy reflective article on him in the *Kalamazoo Gazette*, June 12, 1891, likewise contains several incorrect statements.

## **Ladislav Zulavsky** (New York Commandery, Insignia #01159)

Five nephews of Lajos Kossuth fought in the Civil War; four of them were the Zulavsky brothers: Emil, Ladislav, Casimir and Sigismund, from oldest to youngest. They were the sons of his sister Emilia.

When Kossuth fled to the Ottoman Empire all members of his family remained behind. His wife managed to join him by an adventurous route and the Hapsburg government permitted his three children to leave. That left his aged mother along with his sisters and their families. Due to the relentless efforts of Charles McCurdy, the American diplomatic representative in Vienna, Kossuth's mother and three of his sisters – Zsuzsanna, Emilia and Lujza – were allowed to emigrate to the United States. Departing from Hungary in the spring of 1852 while Kossuth was touring America, the party had an unexpected and prolonged stay in Brussels, Belgium, due to the serious illness of Madame Kossuth. While Emilia and her husband along with Emil, Casimir and Sigismund sailed from Southampton, England, for New York City aboard the *Humboldt* on July 6, 1852, Lujza and Zsuzsanna remained to attend to their mother. Also staying behind for the time in order to finish his studies was Ladislav.

To help the Zulavsky family financially, wealthy ladies of the city contributed generously towards the purchase of a fully-furnished boarding house close to fashionable Union Square. Running such an establishment was a most respectable and monetarily rewarding occupation for a woman in those days. Emilia's priority was to ensure a good education for her sons, all of whom, with the exception of Emil, were very gifted academically. Ladislav, holding an engineering degree, spoke five languages fluently.

Money was an ever-present problem in the Zulavsky household in the 1850s. Emilia's husband, a rather irresponsible individual pre-occupied with quick get-rich schemes, neglected the day-to-day operation of the boardinghouse. Emilia came down with tuberculosis. Ill-health and other difficulties strained the marriage, leading to divorce. Zulavsky Sr. then disappeared from their lives, departing for parts unknown and leaving her alone to raise the boys.

After suffering for years, Emilia died on June 29, 1860 and was laid to rest in Greenwood Cemetery in Brooklyn. Her passing was noted in a slew of American and British newspapers. Shortly after their mother's death Ladislav and Emil went to Europe and joined the Hungarian Legion in Italy. Ladislav, the most militarily talented of the brothers, rose to become an officer on the general staff, but the highest rank Emil attained was sergeant. Both participated in numerous forays against the brigands infesting the heel of the Italian boot, especially Basilicata. They returned to the United States on December 28, 1862, aboard the steamship *Glasgow*. Their arrival was duly noted in the next day's edition of the *New York Times*.



When Ladislav and Emil returned the Civil War had been raging for more than a year and a half. Their younger brothers were already seasoned veterans. At the start of the conflict, Casimir signed up with a regiment raised in Kansas while Sigismund enrolled in the 8<sup>th</sup> New Hampshire Infantry.

Eventually, three of the Zulavsky brothers – Ladislav, Emil and Sigismund – became affiliated with the 82<sup>nd</sup> US Colored Infantry. Ladislav commanded as colonel, Emil held the rank of first-lieutenant, while Sigismund was a second-lieutenant. This regiment, previously called the 10<sup>th</sup> Infantry, Corps d’Afrique, was organized at Port Hudson, Louisiana. Its designation as the 82<sup>nd</sup> US Colored Infantry became effective on April 4, 1864. Sigismund’s career was very brief; he died of typhoid fever at Port Hudson, on September 6, 1863, and was buried in Green-Wood Cemetery, next to his mother. He was 19 years old.

In the middle of April 1864 the 82<sup>nd</sup> US Colored Infantry was assigned to the District of West Florida, headquartered in Fort Barrancas, outside Pensacola. General Alexander Asboth, Kossuth’s faithful companion, was in charge. His force consisted of black and white soldiers. Besides Ladislav and Emil Zulavsky, there were several Hungarians on his staff or attached to various regiments under his command. Asboth’s mission was to raid far and wide, disperse small bands of regular and irregular enemy formations, capture and/or destroy supplies useful to the Confederate war effort, help pro-Union locals, and provide refuge for escaped slaves.

William Watson Davis’ *Reconstruction in Florida*, published in 1913, has some startling statements about Asboth, his subordinates, and their activities: “A force varying from 1,800 to 3,000 men was in garrison at Barrancas. The commander was Brigadier-General Alexander Asboth, a native Hungarian who had served under Kossuth . . . With him were several Slav and Magyar comrades in arms . . . A portion of Asboth’s force was black, recruited partly from negroes in the vicinity. While not engaged in the barbarous practice of pillaging, Asboth was an urbane, pleasant fellow . . . He and his fellow Hungarians were hated, dreaded, and condemned by the country people of that section on the triple charge of being ‘furreners,’ Yankees, and ‘nigger lovers.’ “

On September 18, 1864, Asboth personally led a large raiding party toward Marianna, seat of Jackson County. His troops consisted of a mixture of white and black soldiers, with Ladislav Zulavsky second-in-command. Asboth himself was badly wounded in the melee and it devolved upon Ladislav to oversee the mop-up operations and lead the men back to Fort Barrancas. These he accomplished satisfactorily. It took Asboth several months to recuperate and resume field duty.

Ladislav cared deeply about the men in his charge and addressed them frequently. In one of these addresses he reminded his troopers that “the eyes of the world are upon you – to you the friends of your long oppressed race look for the proof of manliness which they hold to be just as much your gift from Almighty God as that of any white man.”

In the middle of January 1865 General Ulysses S. Grant ordered General Edward R. S. Canby to move against Mobile, Alabama. Since the main lines of fortifications, three in number and very strong, being on the western side, Canby decided to approach Mobile on the east, where he could also count on help from the navy. The principal works he'd have to reduce were Spanish Fort and Fort Blakely. The movement involved two columns, one led by Canby himself and the other from Pensacola, under General Frederick Steele. Steele's force numbered about 13,000 and included the 82<sup>nd</sup> US Colored Infantry.

Steele left Pensacola on March 20<sup>th</sup>. Moving about to disguise his target, he deployed before Fort Blakely on April 1<sup>st</sup> and the siege of the stronghold began on the next day. Following a heavy Union bombardment of Spanish Fort on the afternoon of April 8<sup>th</sup>, the defenders evacuated it. On the next day Blakely was overwhelmed by a general assault of 16,000 men. In his official report, Brigadier-General William A. Pile mentioned that Colonel Zulavsky's regiment, which, "although in reserve and consequently late in starting on the charge, preserved their regimental organization throughout, the officers exhibiting both skill and bravery."

Following the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln, Ladislav had his Acting Assistant Adjutant General, Lieutenant George Mahaffey, deliver General Orders No. 12 (May 18, 1865), which, after praising the qualities and policies of the late Chief Executive, stressed that "The U.S. colored troops, above all classes of men, must carry love and veneration of Mr. Lincoln's memory in their hearts. They owe freedom, justice, consideration, fame, and every other blessing they and their kindred enjoy to him above all other men."

Ladislav and his regiment were mustered out September 10, 1866. Due to their service with the USCT the names of Ladislav and Sigismund Zulavsky are inscribed on plaque no. C-89 of the African-American Civil War Memorial. Emil's name is missing while Ladislav appears twice. Obviously one should honor his older, but less heralded, brother.

Emil wished to continue a military career, but the massive demobilization made it impossible. The émigré literature is silent about his subsequent fate.

Ladislav took up cotton brokering as a post-war career, establishing himself in Augusta, Georgia. He and his cultured wife, née Emma Norton, were readily accepted by the locals. They acquired a large circle of friends and played a prominent role in the social and business life of the community. Sadly, when his business fortunes declined the reverses drove him "hopelessly and incurably insane" according to *The Atlanta Constitution*, November 9, 1883. He was taken back north and confined to the asylum at Middletown, New York, where he died on April 22, 1884, aged 47. His remains were interred in Green-Wood Cemetery, next to his mother and brother Sigismund.

There was one more tragic chapter in the saga of the Zulavsky family. Several Southern newspapers – among them the *Times-Picayune* of New Orleans, March 16, 1882 - reported the gruesome demise of two employees at the Savannah railroad yard. Both were run over by a locomotive. One of the victims was identified as Sigismund Zulavsky, once

Kossuth's brother-in-law. He was crushed, "mangled horribly, dying almost instantly." Besides graphic details of the blood-curdling accident, the accounts provided some valuable information about the senior Zulavsky's sojourn in Dixie. After his divorce he left New York City and drifted southward. During the Civil War he served on the staff of General Jeb Stuart, the flamboyant Confederate cavalry leader. Subsequently, at the recommendation of another renowned figure, General Joseph E. Johnston, he became a mounted policeman in Savannah before assuming his humble post as gate keeper at the cotton yard. Zulavsky Sr. had remarried and at the time of his death had a wife and was the father of a small child.

**Peter Paul Dobozy**  
**(Missouri Commandery, Insignia #06857)**

Dobozy tried to enroll in the revolutionary army at the start of the 1848-49 War of Liberation but was rejected because of his youth and short stature. Due to the family's modest financial circumstances, aggravated by his father's death, he was apprenticed to a butcher. Dobozy found such career rather dull and when an opportunity arose decided to try his luck in the Ottoman Empire. At Constantinople he was warmly welcomed by a former neighbor and veteran of the events of 1848-49, now a high-ranking officer in the Turkish army. The ex-compatriot arranged a thorough military training for him.

Like a number of other Hungarian patriots Dobozy was drawn to Italy by the political situation unfolding there after the end of the Crimean War. As a member of the Hungarian Legion, he participated in Garibaldi's victorious Neapolitan campaign in 1860 and remained with the Legion when it passed into royal service. Fighting incessantly against the brigands terrorizing southern Italy, most notably against Carmine Crocco Donatelli, one of the most infamous outlaws in Italian history, Dobozy was wounded more than once.

When legionnaire comrades Ladislas and Emil Zulavsky, nephews of Kossuth, decided to return the United States in December 1862 and join the Union army, Dobozy accompanied them. Initially he was on the staff of fellow Hungarian émigré General Alexander Asboth at Columbus, Kentucky. Upon the formation of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tennessee Heavy Artillery (later renamed the 4<sup>th</sup> US Colored Heavy Artillery), he became the regiment's lieutenant-colonel and then with the same rank, its commanding officer. The regiment was cited several times for exemplary discipline, proficiency in drills, robust health, and high sanitary standards. According to one of General James N. McArthur's official reports, Dobozy was "a perfect gentleman in every respect; a very energetic and good officer."

Dobozy made national news in the summer of 1865 when he had Emerson Etheridge, the last Whig to serve in Congress and a Conservative Unionist during the war, arrested for derogatory and inflammatory remarks about President Andrew Johnson and William G. Brownlow, Tennessee's Reconstruction governor. Etheridge was treated with all due respect and courtesy. He acknowledged his proper treatment publicly, even injecting a bit of humor. One of his letters, reproduced in several newspapers, read: "I was arrested at

my home in Dresden, Tennessee, . . . by a detachment of armed soldiers whose deportment would do honor to any service. . . . They were commanded and directed by four or five white men who arrested me as Mr. Adder-rig, from which, I infer, they claim a lager beer nationality.”

Newspapers identifying the originator of the arrest order displayed an array of quaint variations on Dobozy’s name, including Dobozee and Du Bossy. “Lager-beer nationality” was a humorous jab to USCT’s white officers of German heritage. Beer-drinking and Germans were practically synonymous in the eyes of native-born Americans of that era.

Dobozy ended his military career on January 5, 1866. Due to his affiliation with the USCT, his name is inscribed on the African-American Civil War Memorial; it is on plaque no. A-10.

After the war Dobozy made his home at West Plains in the Ozarks of Missouri although he also spent several years in Kansas City in the northwestern part of the state, earning a living as a real estate agent. Dobozy lobbied vigorously in the 1880s to be appointed consul to Rome, Italy. A host of prominent individuals supported his quest, among them fellow Hungarian émigré Roderick Emil Rombauer, himself a Civil War veteran and now a towering legal figure in St. Louis. Dobozy even traveled to Washington, DC, to plead his case.

Apparently the unpleasant memories incurred in Italy had faded over the years and he longed to return to the land where tranquility now prevailed. It’s also possible that he wanted to put a considerable distance between himself and his wife. The two of them were locked in a bitter marital quarrel and freely aired accusations in the newspapers. Documents filed in their pending divorce case also leaked to the press and the salacious details didn’t fail to titillate the reading public. Dobozy claimed that Melinda was unduly interested in members of the opposite sex, including a clergyman; she vehemently denied such allegations and insisted that her husband was insanely jealous and cruel to boot. The proceedings fizzled out when the warring couple realized that divorce can be very expensive.

In his 80s when the United States entered World War I, Dobozy nevertheless offered to train cavalry for the army. He died in October 1919, aged 86.

When American writers mention Dobozy’s birthplace, they tend to refer to it as Sabaria, which was the name of Szombathely in ancient times when this part of Hungary was a Roman province called Pannonia. Sabaria is certainly easier to handle for non-Hungarians than Szombathely. A number of American articles about Dobozy, including obituaries, invariably dwell on his noble lineage, heroic conduct during the War of Liberation, and the confiscation of the family’s vast estates which reduced him to poverty. Dobozy never tried to hide his humble origins nor did he invent an exalted and colorful background as some European émigrés did. His parentage and early life are told in a letter written by himself and reproduced in the article by Róbert Orbán in a 2004 issue of *Vasi Honismereti és Helytörténeti Közlemények*, a magazine devoted to the

history of Vas County where Szombathely is located. The unfettered imagination of American reporters may be ascribed to the fact that stories about an exiled hero of impeccable descent who once wallowed in untold riches certainly had far more appeal for the readership than the mundane struggles of a rather ordinary immigrant.

Dobozy's name appears as Doborzy in the roster section of *Union Blue: The History of the Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States* by Robert G. Carroon and Dana B. Shoaf. Martin Öfele's *German-Speaking Officers in the U.S. Colored Troops, 1863-1867* denotes him as Dobosy. Incidentally, Dobozy is one of the more common Hungarian surnames.

### **Ignatz Kappner** (Missouri Commandery, Insignia #05281)

The émigré literature offers very little on Kappner before the Civil War. According to this source, sundry American newspaper articles, and subsequent recollections by friends and acquaintances, he supported himself during the 1850s in New York City by commercial activities.

When Fort Sumter was fired upon, Kappner enrolled in the 7<sup>th</sup> New York State Militia, one of the three-month regiments answering President Lincoln's call. Leaving Gotham, he headed West. It is highly likely that his decision was due to the fact that fellow Hungarian émigré General Alexander Asboth was Frémont's chief-of-staff at St. Louis, Missouri. Asboth shared the entire Turkish internment with Kossuth as did Ignatz's father, Ferenc Kappner. Kappner became a first-lieutenant in Bissel's Regiment of the West, Missouri Engineers. However, his affiliation with this unit was brief for he was appointed an officer in the US Colored Troops.

His first assignment was recruiting in the Memphis, Tennessee, area and his efforts culminated in the organization of the regiment eventually designated as the 3<sup>rd</sup> US Colored Heavy Artillery. He was mustered in as colonel on September 4, 1863 and was also named commander of Fort Pickering, one of the redoubts on the outskirts of Memphis.

Kappner's troopers were among the first to reach Fort Pillow following the massacre on April 12, 1864, by Nathan Bedford Forrest's raiders. The wanton slaughter of black and white soldiers enraged the entire North. President Lincoln condemned it in no uncertain terms. A short while later, Kappner was among the attendees of the memorial service held at Fort Pickering for the victims of the Fort Pillow massacre. While most of the speakers were overcome by emotion and clamored for revenge, Kappner assumed a more subdued tone and urged restraint.

Kappner and his men played a vital role in rescuing survivors of the *Sultana* disaster from the Mississippi River in April of the following year. The terrible tragedy unfolded when the huge steamer conveying about two thousand newly released Union prisoners-of-war exploded and sank in a fiery inferno. The flames and the raging waters of the swollen river claimed many lives.

The involvement of Kappner and his men in both of the above incidents is more than amply described in the multi-volume *War of the Rebellion*, the “Bible of the Civil War.”

Kappner was mustered out with his regiment on April 30, 1866. For his services with the USCT his name is inscribed on the African-American Civil War Memorial; it’s on plaque no. A-8.

Upon their discharge some of the soldiers decided to celebrate by visiting local drinking establishments. Here and there their boisterous behavior prompted some proprietors to call the municipal police. Memphis was a city where the Confederate cause enjoyed strong support, Yankees were disliked and resented, and African-Americans, especially those familiar with firearms and possessing military training, were viewed with suspicion and fear. The less-than-tactful methods employed by the police sparked a small riot which rapidly escalated in intensity as the Mayor and Sheriff hastily formed a large posse to assist the police. Indiscriminate shootings and unprovoked assaults on innocent bystanders by reckless and irresponsible elements claimed numerous victims, including an estimated two dozen dead. The bewildered Mayor even contacted Kappner for assistance. He assured the Mayor that the troubles would cease and calm restored if the armed citizens would be dispersed. The violent disturbance received nationwide attention. In general, Northern newspapers severely criticized the Memphis authorities for their handling of the event.

Following demobilization, Kappner lived for several years in St. Joseph, Missouri, where he was a leading citizen as attested in several local history books. Relocating to St. Louis, he became the business manager of the *Post-Dispatch*, a newspaper owned by fellow Hungarian émigré Joseph Pulitzer. As a high-ranking veteran who rendered competent service in the Civil War and as the holder of a prominent position, Kappner enjoyed respect and popularity not only among the Hungarians of the city but also the German and English-speaking population.

Kappner died on October 20, 1891, aged 65. Notices of his passing appeared in newspapers throughout the Midwest. His MOLLUS companions didn’t forget him; they released a memorial booklet in which he was commended for his upright character and described as “a natural soldier and a gentleman.”

While Kappner was a staunch pillar of the community, his son Frank was anything but. A hopeless alcoholic by his own admission, he was often in the newspapers for drunkenness, brawling, and a variety of activities commonly associated with substance abuse. Even a hiatus of several years in Guatemala failed to cure his fondness for booze. Frank’s unhappy and turbulent life ended on June 12, 1914, in a St. Louis hospital from ailments brought on by excessive consumption of liquor.

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### **General Comment on References:**

It is evident from the above text that information on the Hungarian participants of the Civil War can come from a wide array of sources. Concerning their role in the conflict itself, pertinent details can be gleaned from their service and pension records. The essentials of their American military career can also readily reconstructed from a number

of standard references, e.g. Francis B. Heitman's *Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army, Official Army Register of the Volunteer Force of the United States Army for the Years 1861, '62, '63, '64, '65* from the Adjutant-General's Office, and the *War of the Rebellion*. Their part – if any – during the 1848-49 War of Liberation is summarized in a host of writings, overwhelmingly in Hungarian of course. Particularly authoritative in this respect is the series of books by the military historian Gábor Bona. The history of the Hungarian Legion in Italy is chronicled in several books in Hungarian, Italian, and English. For example, Andrea Viotti's *Garibaldi: The Revolutionary and His Men* has an excellent discussion, enhanced by a plethora of pictures. The distinguished French writer Maxime du Camp, who rode with the Legion, relates a multitude of nostalgic comments in his *Recollections of a Literary Life* and *Expédition des Deux-Siciles, Souvenirs Personnels*. However, the most comprehensive and useful work on the subject is undoubtedly Lajos Lukács' scholarly *Az olaszországi magyar légió története és anyakönyvei* [The History of the Hungarian Legion in Italy with Biographical Sketches].