



All about the Spencer rifle and carbine. See page 3.



C.K. PIER BADGER CAMP # 1

SERIES 2020

CAMP ORDERS

SEPTEMBER 2020

THREE-TIME RECIPIENT OF THE MARSHALL HOPE NEWSLETTER OF THE YEAR AWARD

SOLDIERS HOME IS BUSY WITH WORK



Work on our former home of Building 1, Old Main and other places at the Milwaukee Soldiers Home is coming along nicely. The Camp's meeting site was closed in 2014 but no work was evident in the ancient buildings for years; now there are piles of equipment and scaffolding galore. The \$40 million project will provide housing for homeless veterans and is expected to finish by spring. Photos by Tom Mueller and Steve Michaels. See the special two-page insert.



Stay tuned, but we will meet at 7 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 14, on Zoom or at the Lions Clubhouse, 7336 St. James St., Wauwatosa. JVC Grant Johnson will have the patriotic presentation.

C.K. PIER BADGER CAMP # 1

SUVCW

MADISON, MILWAUKEE WERE NOT ALONE

By Tom Mueller, PCC

While Madison and Milwaukee carried most of the load when it came to being the sites of Civil War training camps before regiments left for the war, plenty of other cities around the state were locations, too.

Madison was the site for organizing and mustering 30 full units and Milwaukee 17, according to a count of the histories at <http://civilwararchive.com/unionwi.htm>

Twelve were mustered at Racine, and others at places like Ripon, Janesville, New Lisbon, La Crosse, Oshkosh, Fond du Lac, etc.

The histories are for full units and do not report how some individual companies in regiments were recruited in individual cities or areas.

Among other noteworthy findings from examining all the histories together is that only two of the 13 light artillery batteries were organized and mustered in Madison (the 11th) or Milwaukee (13th).

Ten of the infantry regiments were organized and mustered outside Madison or Milwaukee. There were 53 such regiments overall, plus the three-month unit of the 1st Infantry.

Some regiments were sent out of state almost immediately – such as the 21st Infantry being mustered in Sept. 5, 1862, and being sent to Cincinnati, Ohio, on Sept. 11 – while generally the light artillery trained for a couple months or longer before leaving Wisconsin.

Here is a list of the sites other than Madison and Milwaukee where regiments and batteries were organized and mustered.

1st Regiment Cavalry: Organized at Ripon and

Kenosha, Sept. 1, 1861, to Feb. 2, 1862. Mustered in March 10, 1862. Left state for St. Louis, Mo., March 17.

3rd Regiment Cavalry: Organized at Janesville, Nov. 30, 1861, to Jan. 31, 1862. Mustered in Jan. 28, 1862. Moved to St. Louis, Mo., March 26-28.

4th Regiment Cavalry: Organized at Racine as 4th Wisconsin Infantry and mustered in July 2, 1861. Moved to Baltimore, Md., July 15-22. Its designation was changed to cavalry after the fall of Port Hudson, La., in 1863.

1st Independent Battery Light Artillery: Organized at La Crosse and mustered in Oct. 10, 1861. Moved to Camp Utley, Racine, no date given, and ordered to Louisville, Ky., Jan. 23, 1862.

2nd Independent Battery Light Artillery: Organized at La Crosse and mustered in at Racine, Oct. 10, 1861. Moved to Baltimore, Md., Jan. 21-27, 1862.

3rd Independent Battery Light Artillery: Organized at Racine and mustered in Oct. 10, 1861. Ordered to Louisville, Ky., Jan. 23.

4th Independent Battery Light Artillery: Organized and mustered in at Racine, Oct. 1, 1861. Ordered to Baltimore, Md., Jan. 21, 1862.

5th Independent Battery Light Artillery: Organized at Racine and mustered in Oct. 10, 1861. Left state for St. Louis, Mo., March 15, 1862.

6th Independent Battery Light Artillery: Organized at Racine and mustered in Oct. 2, 1861. Moved to St. Louis, Mo., March 15-16, 1862.

7th Independent Battery Light Artillery: Organized at Racine and mustered in Oct. 4, 1861. Moved to St. Louis, Mo., March 15-16, 1862.

8th Independent Battery Light Artillery: Organized at Racine and mustered in Jan. 8, 1862. Ordered to St. Louis, Mo., March 18.

9th Independent Battery Light Artillery: Organized at Burlington and mustered in Jan. 27, 1862. Moved to St. Louis, Mo., March 18-19.

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REMEMBERING COL. PIER: BRAGGING VS. FOG OF BATTLE

These monthly articles about our Camp namesake are written by PCinC Steve Michaels. This item first was published in the September 2000 Camp Orders.

Shortly after the Battle of Falling Waters, Pvt. C.K. Pier of the 1st Wisconsin Infantry wrote: "...Every man (with few exceptions) has done something wonderful, and those who did the least seem to tell of it the most ...

"One in Company ___ persisted in saying he loaded and shot six times and killed his man every shot.

"This he was telling to everyone he met: going up to his captain, he related the fact to him, and was told ... to put his ramrod down the barrel and see whether his gun was loaded; doing as he was told, he found the rod would not go to the bottom by nearly a foot.

"A ball screw was obtained and six cartridges drawn from the musket; the young man had cracked six caps, and he supposed slaughtered six of the enemy. When such incidents come to light the boys are merry at the hero's expense."

From Fond du Lac Saturday Reporter, July 20, 1861; Trewloc Letter #12, dated July 5, 1861



THE SPENCER REPEATING RIFLE AND CARBINE

REPORTED BY PDC TOM BROWN



Spencer repeating rifles and carbines were early American lever-action firearms invented by Christopher Spencer.

The Spencer was the world's first military metallic cartridge repeating rifle; more than 200,000 were manufactured by the Spencer Repeating Rifle Co. and Burnside Rifle Co. between 1860 and 1869.

The Spencer repeating rifle was adopted by some in the Union Army, especially by the cavalry during the Civil War, but did not officially replace the muzzle-loading rifled muskets in use at the time.

The Spencer carbine was a shorter and lighter version designed for the cavalry.

The design for a magazine-fed lever-operated rifle chambered for a 56-56 Spencer rimfire cartridge was completed by Christopher Spencer in 1860.

The Spencer repeater was fired by cocking a lever to extract a used case and feed a new cartridge from a tube in the buttstock. Like most firearms of the time, the hammer had to be manually cocked after each round in a separate action before the weapon could be fired.

The weapon used copper rimfire cartridges, based on the 1854 Smith & Wesson patent, stored in a seven-round tubular magazine. A spring in the tube allowed the round to be released one after another. When empty, the spring had to be removed before putting in fresh cartridges, then replaced before firing. Rounds could be loaded one at a time or from a Blakeslee cartridge box, which contained up to 13 tubes of seven cartridges.

When Spencer signed his new rifle up for adoption right after the Civil War broke out, the view by the Department of War Ordnance was that soldiers would waste ammunition by firing so fast with repeating rifles, and he was denied a government contract for all such weapons.

The department encouraged the use of breech-loading single-shot carbines like most arms of the day, but shorter rifles were more suited to mounted warfare. The biggest fear was that the Army's logistics train could not keep up with the demand. Also, cost was another problem – the Spencer was several

times the cost of a Springfield rifled musket (\$40).

Shortly after the Battle of Gettysburg, Spencer was able to gain an audience with President Abraham Lincoln, who invited him to a shooting match and demonstration of the weapon on the lawn of the White House. Lincoln was impressed with the weapon, and ordered Gen. James Wolfe Ripley to adopt it for production. Ripley disobeyed the order and continued to use the old single-shooters.

It eventually was adopted by the Navy and later by the Army. It became a popular weapon. The Confederates occasionally captured some Spencers and the ammunition, but they were not able to manufacture the cartridge because of a copper shortage, so their use of these weapons was limited.

Gettysburg was the first major battle of the war where Spencer rifles were used – they recently had been issued to the 13th Pennsylvania Reserves. They were used at Chickamauga and became fairly widespread in the western armies. But the Army of the Potomac rarely used these rifles.

The Spencer was a very reliable weapon under combat conditions, with a rate of fire 14 to 20 rounds per minute, compared to two to three rounds per minute for the standard muzzleloaders. But detractors complained that the amount of smoke produced made it even harder to see the enemy; muzzleloaders long had been quickly blinding whole regiments.

One of the advantages of the Spencer Rifle was that its ammunition was waterproof and hardy and could withstand constant jostling of long storage on the march. The story goes that every round of paper and linen Sharps ammunition carried by supply wagons was found useless after a long storage in supply wagons. The metallic cartridges of the Spencer had no such problem.

In 1867, Brig. Gen. James F. Rusling of the Quartermaster's Department recommended exclusive use of the carbine on cavalry against mounted Indian raiders after completing a one-year tour of the new western territories.

In the late 1860s, the Spencer Co. was sold to Fogerty Rifle Co. and ultimately to Winchester.

Spencer specifications

Length: 47 in. rifle with 30 in barrel; 39.25 in. carbine with 22 in. barrel

Cartridge: 56-56 rimfire

Caliber: .52 in.

Action: Manually cocked hammer, Lever action

Muzzle velocity: 931 to 1,033 ft/s

Effective firing range: 500 yards

Feed system: 7-round tube magazine

Training sites – Continued from page 2

10th Independent Battery Light Artillery: Organized at New Lisbon and mustered in Feb. 10, 1862. Moved to St. Louis, Mo., March 18-20.

12th Independent Battery Light Artillery: Organized at St. Louis, Mo., as a company for the 1st Missouri Light Artillery, to be known as the 12th Wisconsin Battery, February and March, 1862.

3rd Regiment Infantry: Organized at Fond du Lac and mustered in June 19, 1861. Ordered to Hagerstown, Md., July 12.

13th Regiment Infantry: Organized at Janesville and mustered in Oct. 17, 1861. Left state for Leavenworth, Kan., Jan. 13, 1862.

14th Regiment Infantry: Organized at Fond du Lac and mustered in Jan. 30, 1862. Left state for St. Louis, Mo., March 8.

21st Regiment Infantry: Organized at Oshkosh and mustered in Sept. 5, 1862. Left state for Cincinnati, Ohio, Sept. 11.

22nd Regiment Infantry: Organized at Racine and mustered in Sept. 2, 1862. Left state for Cincinnati, Ohio, Sept. 16.

25th Regiment Infantry: Organized at La Crosse and mustered in Sept. 14, 1862. Ordered to St. Paul, Minn., Sept. 19.

31st Regiment Infantry: Companies A to F organized at Prairie du Chien and mustered in Oct. 9, 1862. Companies G to K organized at Camp Utley, Racine, and mustered in Dec. 24, 1862. Regiment ordered to Columbus, Ky., March 1, 1863.

32nd Regiment Infantry: Organized at Oshkosh and mustered in Sept. 25, 1862. Left state for Memphis, Tenn., Oct. 30.

33rd Regiment Infantry: Organized at Racine and mustered in Oct. 18, 1862. Left state for Memphis, Tenn., Nov. 12.

**This is a bugle call –
for all Brothers to
be fans of the Camp’s
Facebook page**

**We have 487
Followers,
and always want more
– this means YOU**

**[https://www.facebook.com/
CKPierBadger](https://www.facebook.com/CKPierBadger)**

CIVIL WAR TRIVIA

Q: What were dandy-funk and duff?

A: Navy cooks made a dish out of hardtack by soaking it in fresh water and then baking it with salt pork and molasses, according to “Life in Mr. Lincoln’s Navy,” a 1998 book by Dennis J. Ringler. That was dandyfunk. Duff was a flour pudding boiled in a bag.

OCTOBER

BIRTHDAY

13 – Paul Eilbes



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**<https://www.facebook.com/CKPierBadger>
and <http://www.sucw-wi.org>**

**Report address changes to editor Tom Mueller,
PCC, at thewisconsin3800@gmail.com**

**Your Banner is not forwarded by the Postal
Service, so you need to report a new address to
us.**

CAMP CALENDAR

**In the pre-pandemic world, we would
be previewing Camp activities and events
here. Instead, we continue to offer a bonus
trivia about medical matters:**

Q: What disease had symptoms of spongy
gums, loose teeth and bleeding into the skin and
mucous membranes?

A: It was scurvy, caused by lack of ascorbic acid (found in fresh fruits and vegetables).
This from <https://www.battlefields.org/glossary-civil-war-terms#>



SPECIAL INSERT: SOLDIERS HOME



By Steve Michaels, PCinC

It's been six years since C.K. Pier Badger Camp #1 lost its meeting place in Building 1 of the Milwaukee Soldiers Home. The Soldiers Home historic district remained largely fenced off and vacant for five years. However, behind the scenes, negotiations and fundraising were underway.

In 2016, the Alexander Co. and the City of Milwaukee Housing Authority signed an agreement with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to restore and rehabilitate six Soldiers Home buildings, including Building 1 and the iconic Old Main. Under the plan, the renovated buildings would provide supportive housing units for veterans and their families who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

The rehabilitation project costs \$40 million. The vast majority, \$36 million, was secured through private investments. A coalition of organizations and volunteers dedicated to saving the Soldiers Home launched a capital campaign to raise the rest from private funds.

The rehabilitation of six of the district's historic buildings finally began a year ago. A total of 101 supportive housing units for veterans and their families now are slated to be completed by spring 2021.

I had seen videos and images online of the positive changes taking place and had to see for myself.

Old Main (Building 2), designed by Edwin Townsend Mix and completed in 1869, housed resident veterans for more than 100 years.

The entrance to Old Main is being restored to its past grandeur. Note the new roof flashing and tiles.



The 1869 Old Main had a severely deteriorated roof and crumbling facade after decades of standing empty. The inside was equally neglected. The extensive repair and renovation has brought back to life the distinctive windows. Photos from <https://www.milwaukee-preservationalliance.org> and <https://www.savethesoldiershome.com>

The fine architectural details are visible again, especially around the cupolas. Tuckpointing and complete facade restoration eliminated the need for the netting that enveloped the main tower for several

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Soldiers Home

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years, preventing falling brick.

Old Main will contain 70 one-bedroom apartments and 10 two-bedroom apartments, community spaces, resource centers, fitness area and management offices. There's still extensive scaffolding on the backside of Old Main, as much exterior work remains. For many weeks, the entire tower had scaffolding, easily seen from the freeway.

The Administration Building (#1) is also receiving long-needed attention. Camp 1 and several other local non-profit groups held meetings in this building. Built in 1896, the Administration Building contained the offices of the home governor, treasurer, quartermaster, adjutant, clerical staff, commissary officer, chief guard and the fire marshal. The second floor contained reading and sleeping quarters for clerks who were civilian employees. The basement contained the print shop. It served as the VA center main office until 1942, after which it housed the domiciliary staff office and the campus post office.

There will be single-room units for 14 veterans and their families, with community and activity rooms.

The quality exterior restoration work that I observed was truly dramatic and wonderful to see after so many years.

New flashing and doors are readily apparent.

Additionally, four duplexes across Mitchell Boulevard from Wood National Cemetery are being renovated. Three will be two-story, three-bedroom units on each side. One building will remain a single family, four-bedroom home.

The Ward Memorial Hall (Building 41) was built in 1881-'82. Prominent Milwaukee architect Henry C. Koch designed the building with a theater / meeting room, store, restaurant and railroad ticket office. This unusual combination of building uses was intended to address the growing recreational needs of the Soldiers Home. In 1898, the theater space was reconfigured to have a sloped floor, balcony and boxes flanking the proscenium stage.

In recent years, the building had been vandalized and was boarded up. Its trademark stained-glass window, featuring Gen. U.S. Grant, a gift from the 1887 National GAR Encampment in St. Louis, was put into storage in 2011, for safekeeping. While the exterior has been cleaned up, the Ward Memorial Theater is currently vacant and in need of rehabilitation.



After Old Main, Building 1 and its clocktower / cupola is the other focal point of the \$40 million renovation at the Milwaukee Soldiers Home into facilities for homeless veterans and their families. Roof work and extensive work inside led the agenda.

Take a look at

Inside Old Main – before the work began

**by Lee Matz of the Milwaukee Independent
in October 2018**

<http://www.milwaukeeindependent.com/featured/360-inside-old-main-a-special-vr-walkthrough-as-the-soldiers-home-prepares-for-revitalization/>