

Jan. 8, 1917

DEATH CLAIMS ANOTHER VETERAN.

Taps for Major John Engel, Grand
Old Color-Bearer.

ONE OF DURYEE'S FAMED ZOUAVES.

Major John Engel, who died in Hackensack last Monday morning, was one of hundreds of thousands of boys fired with the martial spirit which led them to join the Union army and serve the country with loyal devotion and valor during the most trying period of the great rebellion. Born at Bunde, Prussia, and educated at a home military school, young Engel was better equipped



for discharging the duties of a soldier than most American lads when, Sept. 1, 1862, he enlisted in the 165th New York volunteers (Second Duryee's Zouaves), in which command he served three years with distinction. He was a corporal within a month, sergeant in a year, and then colorer bearer, a post of honor and greatest danger. Want of familiarity with English speech alone prevented him from attaining more exalted rank.

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Sergeant Engel was in all the engagements of the Red River campaign in Louisiana, where in a period of 68 days the army marched 520 miles and fought a score of battles, including four desperate assaults on Port Hudson—one of these at night when the men used hand grenades at close quarters.

At the battle of Cane River, in April, 1864, Sergeant Engel was wounded, but was able to return to active duty in a few days. In this engagement the Union forces had to ford the stream and charge up a steep slope, which they did in gallant style, winning the fight but with great loss.

The Zouaves were then transferred to the Army of the Potomac, in the 19th corps. Here they saw much active service in the Shenandoah valley, and took part in the famous fight at Cedar Creek where Sheridan came down from "Winchester, twenty miles away," stemmed the tide of retreat and pounded a glorious victory out of inglorious defeat—an achievement that thrilled the nation and placed the hero's name in golden letters upon the pillar of Fame. The regiment was now detailed to guard wagon trains carrying stores to the front. While on this duty they had to conduct the paymasters' wagons, on which occasion they had a running fight with Colonel Mosby and his famous guerillas. The colonel had learned of the treasure train and made a bold bid for it; but his dash was met with equal spirit by the red jacketed "zoo-zoos" and his force retired with loss.

Sergeant Engel was discharged Sept. 1, 1865, being now of legal age and a veteran of the Grand Army, having passed through a score of engagements. The Zouaves had been on provost duty at Savannah, Ga., and Charleston, S. C. It was at the last-named city that Sergeant Engel left the regiment just before it came north Sept. 6; and there he was married Oct. 30, 1867.

Sergeant Engel came to Hackensack in 1870, beginning life in the little town as a barber. Whatever his hand found to do received his best effort, and the stranger soon established friendships such as come to man who proves his worth. He promptly identified himself with the interests of the community, and naturally, when Company C, Second Battalion, was organized by the late General Van Valen, October 8, 1872, the young German soldier was enrolled as a sergeant. He passed up the grades

until January 27, 1891, he became Captain John Engel.

Only those familiar with Company C in its palmy days can appreciate the ardor and enthusiasm of Captain Engel, and the pride he manifested in bringing "My Boys" up to the perfection of military drill. The company gained state-wide notoriety for its snappy skirmish drill, which was at times the show feature of encampments. But Captain Engel never reached a higher stage of military exaltation than on the occasion of the Kilpatrick encampment at old Deckertown when his "boys" charged through a cornfield and stormed a hill in face of heavy artillery fire. To the eye it was the nearest approximation of a field of carnage, and General Kilpatrick, one of the most brilliant cavalry officers of the rebellion, was greatly elated over this realistic and meteoric incident of his encampment—all on his own fine estate.

In 1897 the captain was elected major of the Second battalion, Second regiment, and on May 2, 1898, was mustered into the United States service as major, accompanying the regiment as U. S. volunteers for the Cuban campaign. He retired from the National Guard in 1899, after 27 years of duty that was in the highest degree creditable to the man, the service and the town which he had made his home.

There were many pleasing incidents in Major Engel's soldier experience in Hackensack—there are those still living who recall Engel's Broom Brigade, composed of a number of well-known young women who created a social sensation by their skillful drilling with brooms as weapons. It was the magic of the master who made this perfection possible and thus contributed to the pronounced success of a charitable entertainment. On another occasion Major Engel drilled a company of brilliantly uniformed and dashing hussars recruited from the town's most charming young women; they took the audience by storm and won high praise. Exhibitions of this nature were a joy to the veteran, whose heart and soul were in anything military.

When the Second regiment returned from Florida members of Company C formed a camp of Spanish War Veterans, taking the name of "Major John Engel" in recognition of their admiration for the old commander; and "My Boys" never had a gathering but "the major" was a leading figure. This evidence of loyal comradeship was a source of great consolation and pleasure to the veteran.

Major Engel was strongly entrenched in the fair opinion of the people of Hackensack. In 1888 he was made postmaster and gave the public efficient service during his term. He was twice elected justice of the peace, and had other offices tendered him; but he had little taste for politics, preferring the more serene life of the citizen free from the moil of partisan strife.

The Major was proprietor of the National Hotel for some years, the house being a rendezvous for everything pertaining to military affairs. His character for probity and his diplomatic ability caused him to be elected president of the Bergen County Retail Liquor Dealers' Association, a position he held for years.

To most people he was "The Major," a title of affection, and when he passed to and fro his erect figure and jaunty military bearing attracted general notice. Until physical infirmity overtook him his services were always in demand as marshal or guiding spirit of public parades.

Major Engel was one of the organizers of James B. McPherson Post, G. A. R., serving as commander and in other capacities. He was also a member of several civic societies.

Major Engel is survived by his seven children: John, Charles, Herbert, Frank, Daniel, Augusta, and Emma.

Funeral services will be held at the late residence of deceased, 69 State street, at 2 o'clock this afternoon.

So one by one the orders come
For "arms reversed" and "muffled drum,"
"To beat off" dirges to the grave
Where drooping flags in sorrow wave.

For step by step comes pallid death
To seal all lips, to stifle breath,
To bid all hearts to cease to beat,
To call "lights out" and beat "retreat."

And one by one our comrades go—
Go from their "picket posts" below,
Go out of "duty" into life,
Yes, go to rest from battle's strife.

We hear the peat of minute gun
That tells us of life's duty done;
Yea, tells us of a comrade gone—
Gone out of night to endless dawn.

Gone where no bugle notes begin,
Or sound alarms, "Fall in! Fall in!"
But where he hears "Stack arms" and rest—
Yea, rest forever with the blest.

For through the gate that inward swings
To Him who reigns the King of kings,
God's blessed soldiers enter in,
Relieved from death and freed from sin.

—Col. R. M. Moore.

Major John Engel - 1917

Democrat
Jan. 12, 1917

DEATH OF MAJOR JOHN ENGEL Had Distinguished Military Career. Lived in Hackensack 49 Years.

Major John Engel, who won distinction in the military service of the state and nation, and was one of the best known citizens of Hackensack, having lived here forty-nine years, passed away early Monday morning, January 8, at his home, No. 69 State street, after an illness of several months, in his 72d year. He was a man of great energy, ability and enterprise, and during his entire career maintained the respect and confidence of all who knew him.

Besides being connected with several military organizations, he was a member of the Odd Fellows, Red Men and the Hackensack Wheelmen.

He is survived by two daughters, Miss Augusta Engel, who lived at home with her father, and Mrs. Emma Traugot, and five sons, Commissioner Herbert B. Engel, Charles W., John A., Frank B. and Daniel C. The first two sons reside in Hackensack, while John A. lives in Chicago, Frank in Brooklyn, and Daniel in Bridgeport, Conn. The married daughter lives in Ohio.

Major Engel was born in Prussia, Germany, on April 16, 1845, and came to America in 1860, settling in New York City. In 1862 he enlisted in the 165th New York Volunteers and served until the close of the Civil War in 1865. In 1868 he came to Hackensack and engaged in the barber business. He became postmaster of Hackensack in 1888, serving one term of four years. Afterward he engaged in the hotel business in Hackensack, being proprietor of the National Hotel for some time.

In 1898 he enlisted for active service in the war with Spain, becoming Major of the Second Battalion, Second Regiment, New Jersey Volunteers, and going into camp with his regiment at Jacksonville, Fla. He was mustered out in November, 1898. He was past commander of James B. McPherson Post, No. 62, G. A. R., and also captain of Major John Engel Command, No. 56, Spanish War Veterans. He served twenty-seven years (1872-1899) in the National Guard of New Jersey, rising from a private to the command of the same battalion in which he enlisted in 1872.

Funeral services held at his late residence yesterday afternoon were largely attended and he was buried with military honors.