

LUCIAN B. HUDGENS

Lucian B. Hudgens was born at Hudgens, Williamson County, Illinois on 2 November 1842, the son of Henry H. and Susan M. (Harrison) Hudgens. Family tradition is that Lucian's mother was of the same family of Virginia as the Presidents Harrison; however, this has never been verified through actual records.

It's not known when the family went to Iowa. They were in Iowa at the time of the 1856 state census. The History of Davis County, 1882, gives June 1847 as the date of their arrival in that county. They settled in Marion township, Davis County where Henry Hudgens farmed along the North Soap Creek. Little is known of Lucian's life except through documents obtained in my own family research, so it must be assumed that he lived the life of any Iowa farm boy of the time and was given some form of formal education, although the extent is not known.

At age 19, while a resident of Unionville, Appanoose County, with the written consent of his parents, Lucian enlisted for three years in the 36th Regiment Iowa Volunteer Infantry on 22 August 1862. His enlistment papers described him as having blue eyes, fair hair and light complexion, standing six feet tall.

He mustered at Camp Lincoln, near Keokuk, on 1 October 1862 as a Private in Company C where, along with many others, he promptly became ill. This initial illness continued into November of that year. When the Regiment was taken to St. Louis, Missouri Lucian was hospitalized (19 December) at Hospital No. 1, Benton Barracks with chronic pneumonia. He was discharged from hospital and returned to duty 30 December. He was again hospitalized in the Regimental Hospital from 24 July to 3 August 1863 with congestion. He was further hospitalized in Washington Army Hospital, Memphis, Tennessee on 27 August 1863. During his convalescence he was employed at the hospital as a guard, released on 18 November to return to duty.

Despite his illness, which persisted through his lifetime, he engaged in several battles. On 11 March 1863, the 36th Iowa engaged the enemy for the first time at Fort Pemberton, Mississippi on the Yazoo River above Vicksburg. Fort Pemberton was hardly above water level on a tiny island in mid-river and offered no land approach. The 36th remained under fire for two hours before being ordered back to the boats. The Regiment returned to Helena, Arkansas where at 4 o'clock the morning of 4 July they repulsed the enemy, but it wasn't until midnight of 6 July that it was evident the enemy troops were in retreat towards Little Rock. On 10 August, the Regiment joined the Arkansas expedition which led to the capture of Little Rock on 10 September.

On 23 March 1864, the 36th Iowa left Little Rock, on what was known as the Camden expedition under Major General Steele, to cooperate in the Red River expedition, a very hard and disasterous undertaking.

On 4 April the 36th met the Confederate forces at Elkins' Ford (Ferry), Arkansas on the Little Missouri River, which is the boundary between present Clark and Nevada counties, six miles south of Oklona. They fought on for nearly a week to Prairie D'Anne, a distance of some 12 miles, where on

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Feb. 1983

12 April at Nubbin Hill (10 miles north of Prescott) and at Prairie D'Anne proper (west of Prescott), after three days of fighting in dense timber and other natural defenses they dislodged the opposing forces. It was at this point it was learned that Confederate forces were converging on Camden. The two forces met at Poison Spring, 16 miles south of Camden. After a running fight, Camden was regained on 15 April 1864.

On the morning of 25 April 1864, a bloody battle ensued at the junction of the Warren and Camden roads near Mark's Mills (10 miles east of Fordyce). The Confederate forces, consisting of approximately 6000 troops, outnumbered the 36th six to one. Two hundred Union men were lost, killed or wounded and the remaining 300 overpowered and captured.

Lucian was reported missing on muster rolls from 25 April 1864, then as a prisoner in Tyler, Texas. There are conflicting stories of the prison life endured by those men of the 36th. The troops were marched to Tyler at a rapid pace, sometimes a distance of 52 miles before halting. Some reported brutal treatment, no rations for as long as 48 hours, and all valuables stolen.

In the beginning prisoners at Camp Ford, four miles north of Tyler, Texas experienced few hardships. They lived in small log houses (called "shebangs") and in dugouts. There were at first many recreational activities, to include baseball, wrestling, singing and musicals, and gardening. There were newspapers as well, "The Camp Ford Borough" and "The Old Flag", the latter hand-written in Roman letters. The men made their own tools which they then used to make necessary items, including bedsteads, smoking pipes, chess sets, cups, hoes, etc., to ease their every-day existence.

The prisoners from the Red River operation (including those of the 36th Iowa) overcrowded the ten-acre prison to the extent that disease was prevalent and many men, for lack of shelter, burrowed in the earth, covering themselves with blankets or whatever was at hand. The ration was finally reduced to corn meal, some times eaten raw for lack of a pot or a fire.

In April 1864, there were over 4000 prisoners at Camp Ford. In the latter days of the war it held as many as 6000 Federal prisoners and required 1500 guards.

Lucian was released in an exchange of prisoners 25 February 1865, paroled at Red River Landing, Louisiana 26 February 1865. He was to have reported to New Orleans, but nothing confirms this. He was furloughed home to Iowa on 20 March 1865 and returned to duty 21 April 1865. On 21 July 1865, he was hospitalized at DeValls Bluff, Arkansas for intermittent fever, returned to duty 5 August 1865 as a cook, and mustered out 24 August 1865.

Lucian returned to his father's farm in Iowa. The illness prior to his capture and the conditions of the prison camp took their toll of his health, but it's assumed that in the beginning he led a fairly active life and was able to farm alongside his brothers.

On 25 April 1869, he married Sarah Jane Harper, daughter of Benjamin B. and Clarissa (Neal) Harper. Sarah was born c. 1845 in Tennessee and moved with her parents to Davis County, Iowa in 1856 as a ten-year-old girl.

Clarissa Wade NEILL

Lucian and Sarah remained in Marion township, Davis County, and began their own family. In May 1870, twin girls, Ida and Ada, were born. Ida died 29 April 1872. By the 1880 census, Udell township, Appanoose County, where they had moved in 1875, "Addie" was 9 years old and Nora (c. 1873) and "Orvie" (b. 1877; my grandfather) had joined the household.

In 1882, the family migrated to Bon Homme County, South Dakota (then Dakota Territory) and another son, John E., was born in 1884. They remained in South Dakota, moving to Charles Mix County prior to 1902, until the deterioration of Lucian's health necessitated a move to Colorado in February 1903.

Lucian B. Hudgens received a pension for his Civil War service until his death at Loveland, Larimer County, Colorado on 20 April 1903. His wife, Sarah Jane, applied for a widow's pension following his death, which she received until her death, 15 January 1916, in Westphalia, Knox County, Indiana.

NOTE: The spelling of Lucian has been adopted because that is the way he spelled his name on his Civil War Enlistment papers. It has been spelled as "Lucian", "Lucien" and even as "Lutis".

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Sarah Jane Hudgens, Westphalia, Knox County,
Indiana, 15 January 1916.