



A History of the 4th Wisconsin Infantry and Cavalry in the American Civil War

Michael J. Martin

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Michael J. Martin's *A History of the 4th Wisconsin Infantry and Cavalry in the Civil War* is a deeply researched and vividly written study of an unheralded Federal combat regiment. Few of the thousands of regiments raised to fight the American Civil War experienced the remarkably diverse history of this little-known organization.

The Wisconsin "Badgers" began the war as foot soldiers in the summer of 1861 as the 4th Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry. After service in Maryland guarding railroads, the men sailed to the Gulf of Mexico to join Maj. Gen. Benjamin Butler's expedition to capture the South's most important city: New Orleans. From August 1862 to July 1863, the 4th Wisconsin participated as infantry or mounted infantry in a series of bloody battles in Louisiana, including Baton Rouge, Bisland, the siege of Port Hudson, and Clinton. With a desperate need for mounted troops, the Badgers were officially changed to cavalry in September 1863 and became the 4th Wisconsin Cavalry. As troopers, they took part in four mounted expeditions across Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama, serving under such notable generals as Albert Lee, John Davidson, and Benjamin Grierson.

The Confederate armies surrendered in the spring of 1865, but the 4th Wisconsin Cavalry joined Maj. Gen. Wesley Merritt's cavalry division that July on its ride from Louisiana into Texas, where the regiment was broken up and deployed in various outposts along the Rio Grande River. On May 28, 1866, Wisconsin's last regiment of Civil War volunteers was finally mustered out at Brownsville, Texas. Unfortunately, many of the men would not be going home: 431 had lost their lives to enemy bullets and disease.

Eight years in the making, Martin's regimental history is based upon scores of previously unused soldier and civilian diaries, letters, reports, contemporary newspapers, and reminiscences. It includes dozens of previously unpublished soldier photos, and a complete roster. Martin's study is a must-have addition for every serious Civil War reader.

About the Author: A descendant of a Civil War soldier who was wounded at the Wheatfield at Gettysburg, Michael James Martin grew up in Mequon, Wisconsin, and received both an MS and a Ph.D. in Animal science from the University of Missouri-Columbia. He is the author of several published articles on the Civil War. This is his first book.

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