

**1<sup>ST</sup> LT COUSEN JONES STRIGHT.**  
**4<sup>th</sup> Iowa Volunteer infantry**  
**Ancestor of Dan Hopping**

Coursen Jones Stright was the son of a pioneer Methodist circuit rider, preaching in the Indiana wilderness. His mother was a descendent of Richard Warren of London, who came to America aboard the Mayflower in 1620. Both of Coursen's Grandfathers served in the Revolutionary War and his Great Grandfather was a Lutheran Chaplain under General Washington.



Figure 1 Coursen 1862

Coursen was born in 1837 the year that saw Victoria become Queen of England, that saw the birth of Sitting Bull, that saw Samuel Morse exhibit his electric telegraph in New York and that saw Michigan become the 26th state of the Union.

Coursen, a school teacher, was a delegate from Indiana to the Republican Convention in the Chicago Wigwam that nominated Abraham Lincoln to run for the presidency. From the convention, he traveled west to Cass County, Iowa where he had purchased a farm sight unseen. He traveled by Train to Davenport with other delegates and brass bands and then to the end of the Western bound tracks from where he took a stage coach to Des Moines. From there he hitched rides on three buggies going west and from Audubon, Iowa walked the last twenty three miles to his new farm.

In June of 1861, he walked off his farm 55 miles to Council Bluffs, leaving his first crop in the field. There he enlisted in the 4<sup>th</sup> IOWA Volunteer Infantry as 4<sup>th</sup> sergeant under Col. Dodge. (as in Dodge City) He was given an old Prussian Musket and a black uniform. After the battle of Pea Ridge, he was promoted to 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. as everyone else above him in the Company had been killed in the battle.



Figure 3 Coursen 1863

After the battles for Vicksburg, He was furloughed home for a month and married his sweetheart Louisa Brotherton. He was soon back to the front in time for the battle of Cherokee Station, Alabama leading up to Lookout

Mountain, Tennessee. He had to hitch rides on the supply trains and steam boats to get from Vicksburg, MI home to New Albany, Indiana and he rode on the top of the trains through the mountains to get back to his unit.



Figure 2 Coursen's Wedding photo

In the Atlanta Cyclorama, the visitors sit on a revolving stage in the middle of a gigantic painting that creates a 360 degree panorama of the Battle of Atlanta. When the lights go down and the narration starts you are told of the action around the Troup Hurt House where the DeGress battery of Union Cannon is captured by the Confederates. The scene in the painting recreates

the recapture of the battery by John Logan and his XV Corps which included the 4<sup>th</sup> Iowa. Lt. Stright was in that charge depicted in the Cyclorama. His diary entry of that fight was simple:

*Heavy fighting in  
Dec(atur) and (to our) Left. Rebs took 2nd Div works.*

**Page 85** *And Co H. Ill(inois). Bat(tery) 2nd Brig charged 4  
Dead and retook Bat(tery) Then formed  
to right. Reb Brig charged our Reg(iment) but (were)  
repulsed. (Our) Div Lost 3 Killed 11 wounded. Bishop  
wounded. Bartlet, Prather Killed, Frank (Stright)  
wounded in eyes. I went to Dr. staid that night.*



Coursen was in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade that retook the battery. Co H III Battery was the DeGress Battery. Coursen was wounded in the fight. In the picture from the Cyclorama, Coursen's Brigade is entering the image from the lower right.

Coursen served three years and three months in the 4<sup>th</sup> Iowa. He was in 27 battles and under fire 156 days. He was wounded twice at the battle of Pea Ridge, Arkansas and was in all the Western battles to Lookout Mountain and in the entire Atlanta Campaign. He was also wounded in the Battle of Atlanta. He lived outdoors for three years, marched thousands of miles, and ate hardtack and questionable food.

He served until September 17, 1864 where he mustered out, wounded, just before the March to the sea. He died of natural causes two days after Christmas in 1904. He was an active GAR member and attended most encampments until 1903.

I have his diary of his trip to the 1860 republican convention and his trip out to Cass County Iowa. I also have his wartime diary of the Atlanta Campaign from the battle of Resaca through the battle of Atlanta. I also inherited his letters, papers, eyeglasses, sword, watch, inkwell, GAR

medals and encampment ribbons as well as other Civil War items. His diary is fascinating and I am publishing it as part of his history.

Lt. Stright wrote out the following list of battles he fought in:

1	Sugar Creek, AR	Feb 17, 1862 ("Oh hell what a fight" is written in margin)
2	Pea Ridge, AR	Mar 7-8, 1862
3	Chickasaw Bayou, AR	Dec 27-28-29, 1862
4	Arkansas Post, AR	Jan 10-11, 1863
5	Black Bayou, MI	Apr 10, 1863
6	Jackson, MI	May 14, 1863
7	Vicksburg, MI	May 18 to Jul 4, 1863
8	Clinton, MI	Jul 8, 1863
9	Jackson, MI	Jul 10 to 17, 1863
10	Brandon, MI	Jul 19, 1863
11	Cherokee Station, AL	Oct 21 to 24, 1863
12	Caney Creek, AL	Oct 26, 1863
13	Tuscumbia, AL	Oct 27, 1863
14	Cherokee Station, AL	Oct 29, 1863
15	Lookout Mountain, TN	Nov 24, 1863
16	Mission Ridge, TN	Nov 25, 1863
17	Taylor Ridge, GA	Nov 27, 1863 (Ringgold)
18	Resaca, GA	May 13 to 16, 1864
19	Dallas, GA	May 13 to June 1, 1864
20	New Hope Church, GA	Jun 4, 1864
21	Pine Mt, GA	Jun 10 to 16, 1863
22	Kennesaw Mt., GA	June 17 to July 4, 1864
23	Nickajack Creek, GA	Jul 6 to 10, 1864
24	Battle of Atlanta, GA	Jul 22-23. 1864 (Augusta Rd)
25	Ezra Church, GA	Jul 28 to Aug 26, 1864
26	Jonesboro, GA	Aug 31 to Sep 1, 1864
27	Love Joy Station, GA	Sep 2 to 5, 1864

He does not list the hundreds of skirmishes and small firefights that took place between the major battles.