

## Biographical Sketch of Adam Kiehl (1823 - 1898)

Adam Kiehl, the son of Jonathan and Susanna Kiehl, was born on 06 July 1823 in Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania.<sup>1,2</sup> Adam is the namesake of his grandfather John Adam Kiehl, who was born in Berks County Pennsylvania in 1758, and migrated with members of his family to Westmoreland County in the early 1800's.<sup>3,4,5</sup> Adam's father, Jonathan, was born 07 June 1787 in Albany Township, Berks County, Pennsylvania, and died at the age of 44 on 22 December 1830 in Sewickley Township, Westmoreland County, when Adam was 8 years old.<sup>6,7,8</sup> John Miller was appointed as Adam's guardian by the Westmoreland County Orphans Court.<sup>9</sup>

Adam's mother, Susanna, remarried Conrad Crock (or Krack) on 15 Nov 1832, who died soon after in 1835.<sup>8,10</sup> In 1850 Susanna, age 64, was living with her son-in-law, Jacob DeWalt, in Elizabeth, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, suggesting that Susanna was born ~1786.<sup>11</sup> Susanna's family name was probably Fisher.<sup>12</sup> Susanna and Adam were beneficiaries of the will of Jacob Fisher of Sewickley, Westmoreland County; and a Jacob Fisher was appointed guardian of Henry's sister Ann Katharine Kiehl after their father Jonathan's death.<sup>9,13</sup> Records of the First Lutheran Church of Greensburg, Westmoreland County list Susanna "Fuesher" as a communicant on 29 September 1805, and Susanna "Kuel" as a communicant on 20 September 1812, and 19 September 1814.<sup>14</sup> These entries suggest that Jonathan Kiehl and Susanna Fisher may have been married between September 1805, and the birth of their first son, Jacob, in May 1807. Elizabeth Fisher was a sponsor at the baptism of Jonathan and Susanna's son Daniel at First Lutheran Church in Greensburg.

Adam had 8 siblings: Jacob (b. 10 May 1807), Jonathan (b. 25 April 1809), Elizabeth (b. 18 August 1811), Susanna (b. 1812-1813), Daniel (b. 05 March 1814), Henry (b. 14 April 1820), Ann Katharine (b. 1818-1824), and Anne Rebecca (b. 17 September 1825).<sup>8,9,15,16</sup>

At the age of 21, in 1844, Adam Kiehl was a beneficiary of the will of Lewis Weaver of Sewickley Township, Westmoreland County.<sup>17</sup> The bequest to Adam was: a sum of 10 dollars, a saddle, black harness and bridle, tools in the amount of 35 dollars to be selected by himself, a great coat and dress coat. Jacob and Elizabeth Fisher, among others, were also mentioned in the will. It is possible that Adam's first son, Jacob Lewis Kiehl, was named after Lewis Weaver. Adam Kiehl and Catharine Ann Kunkle were married on 12 February 1846 in Westmoreland County by Lutheran pastor Michael J. Steck.<sup>18,19</sup> Catherine (b. 14 February 1828) was the daughter of John Sebastian Kunkle (b. 17 December 1798) and Sarah Walthour (b. 02 December 1804).<sup>2,20</sup> In the 1850 US Federal Census, Adam and Catherine were living next to Catherine's parents in North Huntingdon Township, Westmoreland County; Adam and Catharine resided in North Huntingdon Township until their deaths.<sup>21</sup>

Catharine Kunkle had been confirmed in the Brush Creek Lutheran Church in Hempfield Township, Westmoreland County, on 15 May 1846; Adam was confirmed at the same church 2 years later, on 20 May 1848.<sup>20</sup> Brush Creek was a German-speaking church. After pastor Michael Steck died on 01 September 1848, a dispute arose in the congregation whether to hold services in German or in English.<sup>22</sup> By a vote of 80 to 58, the congregation elected the Rev. Jonas Mechling who would preach only in German. A group of dissenters organized the Evangelical Lutheran Congregation of Trinity Church in the Adamsburg schoolhouse on 28 July 1849. A brick church building was built about half a mile south of Brush Creek church on what is now Pennsylvania Avenue - Old Route 30 in Adamsburg. The church was dedicated on 13 December 1850, and services were held alternately in German and English. Adam and Catherine Kiehl attended the new Trinity Lutheran Church along with Catherine's parents. Three of Adam and Catherine's children were baptized at Trinity Lutheran: Jacob Lewis Kiehl on 19 November 1849, Susanna Kiehl in 1851, and John S Kunkle Kiehl in 1856. None of their other children were baptized at Trinity Lutheran; Adam and Catharine were removed from the church rolls

sometime between 1861 and 1863 for not having attended communion within 4 years.<sup>22</sup>

Adam pursued a number of occupations. In his youth he learned the carpenter trade and worked at it for several years.<sup>1</sup> He then engaged in the peddling business, and traveled over a large portion of the county gathering up marketing which he disposed at Pittsburgh. Among his effects after his death was a peddler's license procured from James McCallister, Westmoreland County clerk of courts, on May 8, 1849.<sup>1</sup> His occupation was listed as farmer in the 1850 US census, carpenter in 1860, farm laborer in 1870, and day laborer in 1880.

Adam and Catherine had 8 children: Sarah (b. ~1847); Jacob Lewis (b. 26 Jan 1849); Susanna (b. 14 Sep 1853); John S. Kunkle (b. 03 Feb 1854); Henry S. (b. ~1857); Joseph T. (b. ~1859); Elizabeth (Lizzie) L. (b. ~1865); and William W. (b. ~1867).<sup>22,23,24,25,26</sup> Sarah married George W. Cox, a baker; they had no children.<sup>27,28</sup> Jacob L. was a farmer and a butcher; he married Catherine Monahan; they had 9 children.<sup>29,30,31,32,33</sup> John S.K. was a farm worker, grist mill worker, and plumber; he married Amanda Fox and they had 3 children.<sup>34,35,36</sup> Henry S. was a school teacher, assistant to the president and a director of Jones & Laughlin steel company, vice president of Charles Babst Company (a medical and pharmaceutical supplier), and a director of Pittsburgh Passavant Hospital; he married Harriett Babst, and they had 3 children.<sup>37,38,39,40</sup> Joseph T. was an engineer for the P&LE railroad; he died in a train wreck in Youngstown, Ohio; he and his wife Ida had no children.<sup>41,42</sup> Lizzie married Matthew P. Black, a teamster, and they had 4 children.<sup>43</sup> William was a day laborer, and a clerk and bookkeeper for railroad and mining companies; he and his wife Margaret had no children.<sup>44,45,46</sup> In the 1880 census Ida May, a 9 year old granddaughter, was living with the Kiehls.<sup>26</sup> Nothing else is known about Ida May, or about the Kiehl's second daughter, Susanna.



*Fort Brady, near Dutch Gap Virginia*

During the Civil War, Adam enlisted on 13 Aug 1864 as a private in Company E, 206th Regiment, Pennsylvania Volunteers.<sup>47,48</sup> After the war Adam was a member of Capt. S.S. Marshand Post, No.190, G.A.R., of Irwin.<sup>1</sup> The following history of the 206th Regiment is abstracted from Bates' history of the Pennsylvania Volunteers.<sup>48</sup> In October 1864 the 206th Regiment was assigned duty with the engineer corps, and worked on building a fort a mile north of Dutch Gap, Virginia, on the James River. They came under enemy fire, suffering one death and several casualties. A complimentary order was issued for the speed and quality of their efforts, and the work was named Fort Brady in recognition of the 206th Regiment's commanding officer. The regiment was later assigned to comfortable winter quarters on the line of works north of Fort Harrison, where every facility was afforded for drill and discipline. On 03 April 1865, the troops in front of Richmond were ordered to advance. It was discovered that the

Confederate troops had evacuated their works, and fired the city, so that the Union troops marched in without opposition. The regiment was assigned to provost duty in the city. When the regiment was mustered out in July 1865, General Dandy, in command of the brigade, said: "Under your gallant commander, Colonel Hugh J. Brady, you were the first to enter Richmond, and to display in the capital of traitors, the Stars and Stripes of your country".

Adam Kiehl was accidentally injured during the occupation of Richmond. Jeremiah Bush, of Greensburg, gave the following account in an affidavit in support of Adam's disability pension claim:<sup>49</sup>

I was well acquainted with Adam Kiehl the above named claimant as he was a member of my Co. E 206 Regt. Pa Infantry vols of which I was Orderly or first Sergeant and I know that he took sick with chronic diarrhea and Rheumatism while we were building Fort Brady on the peninsula near Dutch Gap where a number of our boys took sick. He was able to go about but was very weak with said disease but he being a very spunky man would never give up, as he should really have then been in the Hospital but the boys would not go to Hospital as long as they could avoid it, that is good soldiers wouldn't as they looked on it. We entered the City of Richmond Va., that is our Regt, the evening of the nineteenth (19<sup>th</sup>) of April 1865. The day of the Surrender and our Regt. was put in charge of the City on Patrol duty and a few days after we were in Richmond this claimant was on duty on Clay street when he went to cross a ditch when he fell and the lower part of his body struck an upright stone which caused him to rupture himself when he was sent to the Hospital. I know this fact as I was then Orderly or first Sergeant on duty and had him in charge and from my notes he remained in Hospital until he was discharged which was about the 16<sup>th</sup> day of May 1865. He and another member of my Co. Henry Barnhart were discharged at the same time. This comrade Kiehl was a very worthy man and he has been totally unfitted for any manual labor for a number of years and I believe his case to be a very worthy one.

After his return from the service, Adam was disabled by rupture and chronic rheumatism which originated in the service.<sup>49</sup> Adam's experience was not uncommon, a quarter of Union volunteers were sent home because of physical disabilities: such as hernias, arthritis, tuberculosis, cardiovascular disease, and blindness.<sup>50</sup> A medical exam on 20 June 1883 indicated that Adam Kiehl at 60 years was 5' 8 ½ " tall and weighed 140 pounds, similar to the average 5' 8¼" and 143 pounds for Union enlistee's.<sup>51</sup> His neighbor Jacob Painter of Irwin wrote the following:<sup>49</sup>

I have been a near neighbor of "Ad Kiehl's" all these years, and I believed all he ever said about his suffering and inability to work, because nobody could make me believe that he would refrain from work, when able to do it.

Catharine Kiehl died on 27 Jun 1890.<sup>22</sup> Adam died about 8 years later on Wednesday morning about 10 o'clock, March 30, 1898 at the age of 74 years, 8 months and 24 days.<sup>1,22</sup> He had been in feeble health for over a year before his death, which was caused by Bright's disease, an inflammatory disease of the kidneys.<sup>1</sup> His obituary describes Adam as "one of these good, quiet and friendly men whom everybody loved. Pleasant and agreeable; he had a good word for everybody and had the regard and esteem of all who knew him". Adam and Catharine are both buried in the Trinity Lutheran Church graveyard in Adamsburg; Catharine's parents are buried nearby.<sup>22</sup>



## Sources:

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