

# Historic Flag To 'Fly' — Under Glass — At UCSC

A 34-star American flag, said to be the personal gift of Abraham Lincoln to a

member of his cabinet, will soon be on permanent display at University of Cali-

fornia at Santa Cruz.

The historic relic has come to UCSC from a des-

endant of the cabinet member's family: Mrs. E. Forbes Wilson.

Mrs. Wilson, who is current traveling in Spain, is widely known as a sports-woman, grande dame of society and founder of Pogonip club. With her distinguished attorney husband, E. Forbes Wilson, she also has gained international fame as a hostess at their Santa Cruz home, Windy Hill Farm.

Mrs. Wilson happens to be a great niece of John Palmer Usher, who was Abraham Lincoln's Secretary of the Interior. The story goes that Usher received the flag from Lincoln as a personal memento, shortly before the president was assassinated 102 years ago this month.

The 12-foot-long banner is presently being framed under glass. It will be on display the first week of May in the Central Services Building at UCSC, according to Bill Urbick, plants services supervisor.

Friends of Dorothy Deming Wheeler Wilson will remember the flag; it hung for many years over a staircase at Windy Hill, a treasured family possession.

However, time took its toll of the historic banner.

"It was very badly in need of repair," Mrs. Wilson said recently.

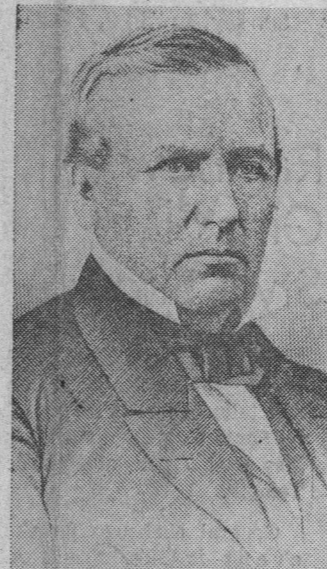
She sent it for renovation to the noted San Francisco art restorer, Theresa Gysenberg. Mrs. Gysenberg noted that portions of the flag were machine stitched and she questioned its authenticity.

United States. Usher rode the court circuit in Indiana, argued occasional cases with his friend Lincoln, and served in the Indiana legislature in 1850-51.

In 1861 he was appointed attorney general for Indiana, but resigned several months later to accept the post of assistant secretary of the interior in Washington, D. C. In 1863 he was appointed head of the interior department. Usher's special interests were the Homestead Law and the welfare of the American Indian, for whom he recommended larger reservations and larger appropriations, with a policy guided by "justice and humanity."

On May 15, 1865, exactly one month after his long-time friend Lincoln died of the assassin's bullet, Usher resigned his cabinet post and moved his family to Kansas. There he accepted appointment as chief counsel for Union Pacific Railroad. He held this post until he died in 1889, representing Union Pacific in important legislation in both state and federal courts.

When Usher moved from Washington to Lawrence, Kansas, he took with him the precious Lincoln flag. It was there that Mrs. Wilson was presented with the flag many years ago, by Usher's sons.



John Palmer Usher

But after some careful research, including the fact that Elias Howe patented the first U. S. sewing machine in 1846, Mrs. Gysenberg's doubts evaporated.

John Palmer Usher was an Indiana lawyer who had matched legal wits with Lincoln long before Abe became president of the



This historically valuable "Lincoln" flag, now the property of UCSC, was mounted on heavy linen backing with Mrs. Pearl Andrews and John Dorsett of EBSCO doing the delicate job. Dorsett is supervisor of EBSCO's drapery shop. The job took several days. The 34-star flag was locked up in the company's vault each night. It was recently presented to UCSC by Mrs. E. Forbes Wilson.



Flag donor . . . Mrs. E. Forbes Wilson

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