

Andrew McCornack

Born

April 02, 1844 at Elgin, Kane County, Illinois

Entered Service

August 22, 1862

Rutland, Illinois

Company I

Division: 127th Illinois US Infantry

Civil War

Died

May, 04, 1920 Monticello, Wright County, Minnesota



Early Years

Andrew McCornack son of John McCornack and Martha Malinda McMillan, both of Scotch parentage, was born April 02, 1844 near Elgin, Kane County, Illinois. Andrew grew to manhood on his father's farm, where he lived until he enlisted in the Union Army.

The War Years

McCornack enlisted August 22, 1862 at Elgin, Illinois at the age of 18. He was 5 feet 5 inches in height, brown hair, and black eyes. His complexion was listed as Dark. McCornack was listed as a single farmer at this time. He joined for a period of 3 years. He was mustered into service in Company I, 127th Illinois Infantry, September 5, 1862, in Chicago, Illinois. He entered in at the rank of Private.

His regiment was soon sent to Memphis, where it was assigned to Grant's army in the immediate command of Gen. W. T. Sherman. Here the subject of this sketch participated in all the maneuvers and battles of that active, untiring commander. He helped to dig Grant's great ditch; was along with Sherman on the expedition to Young's point and was in the movement against Vicksburg from start to finish. He was on the skirmish line that drove in the rebel pickets as the army of Grant closed in on the doomed fortress.

It is recorded that Private Andrew McCornack fired the first shot over the walls of Vicksburg aimed at an officer who was riding along the works. At the first assault on the works of the city, young McCornack, with a comrade, made himself conspicuous for noble courage and fearlessness by carrying from the field several wounded comrades in the midst of a perfect hail of shot and shell.

May 22, preceding the second great assault on the fortress, a number of volunteers were called for to lead the assault, and McCornack was quick to respond. In speaking of this action recently, he said, "It was fearful". The country knew it was at the time.

Soon after Vicksburg surrendered he was promoted to a sergeant and given a furlough to visit home.

Congress voted him a medal of honor for his conspicuous gallantry. Young McCornack was along with Sherman on that wonderful finking campaign from Chattanooga to Atlanta, and for one hundred and ten consecutive days he was constantly within range of the enemies' bullets. He marched with Sherman from Atlanta to the sea and up through the Carolinas and Virginia to Washington. His regiment was detailed to forage for the Army of the Tennessee and on that great march they reveled in horses and cattle and in the turkeys and sweet potatoes which the old song has made famous.

After the grand interview at Washington his regiment was soon mustered out and Andrew returned to his home and parents in Elgin, Ill. At the late day, although a modest man, he delights to talk of the exciting days of his youth, and rejoices that he was a worthy member of "Sherman's Bummers."

Medal of Honor

The Vicksburg campaign was waged from March 29 to July 4, 1863. It included battles in west-central Mississippi at Port Gibson, Raymond, Jackson, Champion Hill, Big Black River and numerous smaller battle fields. On the morning of May 22, General Grant launched what he hoped would be a crushing assault against Vicksburg. In the fighting that followed, the Union Infantry was repulsed and thrown back along a three-mile front. The Union Army suffered more than 3,000 casualties, and 97 Union soldiers earned Medals of Honor (the second largest single-day total in history.)

Private Andrew McCornack was one of eighty soldiers cited simply for "Gallantry in the charge of the 'volunteer storming party,' seemingly innocuous wording that actually denotes the fact that Private McCornack was at the head of his attacking force where the enemy fire was hottest and the danger the greatest. Following the failed assault on May 22, a forty-seven day siege was laid against the city, which finally surrendered to Union forces on July 4.

The Post War Years

Andrew McCornack mustered out 5 Jun 1865 in Washington, DC. Shortly after leaving the army, Andrew, following Horace Greeley's advice, "went west." He settled in Monticello, MN.

On May 3, 1869, McCornack married Elsietta Hanaford, in Monticello, Minnesota. They had ten children in 18 years.

Effie Myrtle McCornack, (1871 - 1940); Carrie Etta McCornack, (1873 - 1957); Mertha Estelle McCornack, (1874 - 1921); Martha Grace McCornack, (1877 - 1952) ; Alice Jeannette McCornack, (1879 - 1957); Unnamed McCornack (1880 - 1880), Perry Curtis McCornack (1881 - 1954); Nettie Lillian McCornack, (1884 - 1947); Robert Andrew McCornack, (1885 - 1908); Isabelle Emily McCornack, (1889 - 1894).

Andrew McCornack, died on May 4, 1920, in Monticello, Minnesota, at the age of 76, and is buried in Monticello, Wright, Minnesota.



Compiled by DeAnn Caddy
Captain Robert Orr Chapter DAR

SOURCES:

- 1 NEWS FROM THE PAST; MONTICELLO, MINNESOTA, MAY 6, 1920: DEATH OF A GALLANT VETERAN OF 611
- 2 OBITUARY: MONTICELLO, MINNESOTA, MAY 6, 1920
- 3 IDAHO, DEATH INDEX, 1890-1964. FOR EFFIE MYRTLE MOULTON.
- 4 1860 FC RUTLAND, KANE, ILLINOIS, ROLL: M653_191; PAGE 685; FAMILY HISTORY LIBRARY FILM: 803191.
- 5 WEB: ILLINOIS, DATABASES OF ILLINOIS VETERANS INDEX, 1775-1995
- 6 WEB: FINDAGRAVE.COM
- 7 MINNESOTA, DEATH INDEX, 1908-2002