

## Almon C. Steele, Corporal, Co. D, 74 IL Infantry, U.S.

1843 August 18: Almon Camden Steele was born to Wolcott and Lavinia Steele in Ohio.

Steele was "...reared on his father's farm in Winnebago county, Illinois, and in the district schools gained the rudiments of an education."<sup>1</sup>

1850 October 9: The U.S. Federal Census enumerated in Shirland, Winnebago, IL showed seven-year-old Almon living with his parents and siblings. His father, Wolcott, was a farmer.

1859 June 1: Steele's mother, Lavinia, died.

1860 September 8: The U.S. Federal Census enumerated in Shirland, Winnebago, IL showed seventeen-year-old Almon living with his father and siblings.

1862 August 7: Steele enlisted in the U.S. Army and mustered into Co. D of the 74th IL infantry.

1864 September 29: Brother Orange enlisted in U.S. Army Co. D 74 IL Marengo IL

October 1: Steele was promoted to Corporal.

November 5: Brother, Orange, died at Chattanooga of disease.

November 28:

Steele wrote:

*"On the morning of Nov. 28, 1864, we broke camp near Columbia, Tenn., and headed toward Nashville, our division of our corps ahead, and brigade ahead of our regiment, consolidated with the 88th Illinois, led the brigade. The long wagon train of about 2,000 wagons behind our division. We marched rapidly all the morning and as we came to the village of Springhill we found Forrest with his division of the rebel cavalry in line of battle across the road in front of us determined to stop us and we determined that he should not.*

*Our brigade Updyke's were ordered to put on our bayonets and form a line of battle and get after the 'Johnnys' which we did with a vim. Turning to our right, east of the pike, opening gaps in the rail fence and falling back across an open field then we deployed as skirmishers and took after them, going*

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<sup>1</sup> Maclean, Paul, and S.J. Clarke Publishing Company. History of Carroll County, Iowa: a Record of Settlement, Organization, Progress And Achievement. Chicago: S. J. Clarke Pub. Co., 1912, pg. 105-107.

*through the gaps in the fence that they had, and on across the field. They turned upon us thinking they could take us in before our support could get through the fence and come to our relief, but our skirmish line was ordered to rally by fours and we did mighty quick, but on they come with their rebel yell and with drawn saber and their carbines ready, all on a g o o d, sharp trot. They rode around our squads of fours yelling 'surrender, you Yankees' and slashing away with their sabers and firing on the part they could with their carbines.*

*But they could not budge us, we never flinched. They soon saw that they could not ride over us nor scare us or make us give up, they turned about and went back the way they come. As they left they took up a washed ravine and as they went into that ravine we concentrated our fire upon them and filled that full of dead 'rebs' and wounded and horses.*

*As a result of their charge upon us we lost many of our grand boys. George Schimerhorn, one of my squad of four was shot in the leg and arm. I have a scar on my wrist where one 'Johnny' whacked me with his saber. Schimerhorn was in the hospital 14 months with his wounds, lost his leg, and only lived a year or so."*

*After we had driven Forrest out of Springhill our division and brigade were left out on the line while all the balance of the army went by and the great wagon train. Our regiment stood on the picket or skirmish line all that night without relief, cold and chill, without anything to eat, except such as we munched dry out of our haversacks.*

*All night long we heard our artillery and men marching by on the left of us and Hood with his 45,000 on our right. We could plainly hear the rebels giving orders to their men, hear their artillery rattle over the roads and the mule whackers cursing their mules. There we stood in the mud and cold all night, and such a long night, wondering what the outcome would be the next day with our 17,000 men and Hood's 45,000.*

November 30:

*When morning came all the army had gone by, we were in the rear, our brigade, the last of all, and as the day before, we were to fight Forrest's men all the way back to Franklin. We were deployed as skirmishers, and would stand on some knoll and give the 'rebs' a volley, and then run for the next one. That is the way we kept it up until we reached Franklin, on the way we were ordered to drive all our stragglers ahead of us and there were many recruits and several regiments that had joined us a few days before.*

*I recollect Updyke, our brigade commander, urging them to move on, slapping some with the flat of his sword, coaxing, pleading with them.*

*On one knoll where we made a stand, there sat a soldier belonging to an Ohio regiment with his shoes off, musing with his feet. I said to him, "What are you doing?" He looked up and said nothing. I said, 'Get up and move on or the 'Johnnys' will get you in three minutes. He would not move. I pricked him with my bayonet, thought I could get him mad and then he would move but he would not: then the 'Johnnys' were right upon us, so we gave them a volley and ran for our lives, and left the poor fellow for Andersonville. All the way back to Franklin was fight and run."*<sup>2</sup>

1865 June 10: Steele mustered out of the U.S. Army in Nashville, TN.

1869 July 3: Steele married Julia Aldrich.

1870 July 7: The U.S. Federal Census enumerated in Owen, Winnebago, IL showed Almon, a farmer, and Julia living on their own farm.

1880 June 14: The U.S. Federal Census enumerated in Kendrick, Green County, IA showed Almon, a farmer/stock dealer, living with Julia and four daughters.

1890 November 18: Julia Aldrich Steele died in Carroll County, IA.

1894 November: Steel married a second time to Anna Cretsinger.

"Mr Steele is not a member of any religious denomination but his estimable wife is identified with the Presbyterian church, in which she is an active worker. He applied himself to such good advantage in earlier years that he now enjoys the rest to which he is well entitled, leaving to younger men the work of carrying forward the development of the wonderful resources of the state. He is a valued member of Perry Wright Pot, No. 148, G.A.R. and politically is a stalwart supporter of the republican party, having voted "as he shot" ever since the Civil War. He served as township trustee for many years and for twelve years was a member of the county board of supervisors, displaying a clearness of judgment and an ability in protecting the rights of the people that met the hearty approval of citizens of all political parties in Carroll County."<sup>3</sup>

1900 June 4: The U.S. Federal Census enumerated in Coon Rapids, Carroll County, IA

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<sup>2</sup> The Daily Times, Davenport, IA, Monday, 6 Nov 1961, pg. 19 (accessed newspapers.com)

<sup>3</sup> Maclean, Paul, and S.J. Clarke Publishing Company. History of Carroll County, Iowa: a Record of Settlement, Organization, Progress And Achievement. Chicago: S. J. Clarke Pub. Co., 1912, pg. 105-107.

showed Almon, a farmer, and Anna living with a home filled with their blended families.

1904 September 19: Applied for and was granted a pension for his military service.

1910 April 18: The U.S. Federal Census enumerated in Union, Carroll County, IA showed a retired Almon living with Anna and their children. His youngest child was only three years old.

1915 May 29: Almon Camden Steele died in Coon Rapids, Carroll County, IA. His youngest child was only eight years old.



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<sup>4</sup> findagrave.com