

Willard Musson, Sergeant, Co. H, 107 IL Infantry, US

- 1840 January 1: Musson was born to Mr. and Mrs. Richard Musson in Erie, Pennsylvania. His mother died while he was an infant.
- 1850 June 30: The U.S. Federal Census enumerated in Manitowoc, Manitowoc County, WI showed Willard living with his Aunt and Uncle, Charlie and Clarisa Musson. His father, Richard, lived in a hotel in the same city.
- 1860 October 4: The U.S. Federal Census enumerated in Champaign, Champaign County, IL showed Willard, a farm laborer, living with his father, step mother and siblings. His father was a farmer.
- 1862 Musson's exact enlistment date is unknown at this time, however his regiment was in Louisville, KY being trained by the fall of 1862.
- 1864 Kennesaw, Excerpt from Musson's newspaper reminiscence "War, As I lived it."

"Here a halt occurred. Our men stepped out of the road; some stacked their guns, others threw down their traps for a rest. Our colonel, Frank Lowery, rode through the regiment and said, 'Men, now if any of you want to clean up, this is your chance. We will stay here until tomorrow.' Joyful news! No sooner spoken than I rushed for our wagon train, got a camp kettle and made my way to that clump of trees, filled the kettle with water, placed it over a fire and stripped of all clothing except hat and shoes, I placed the clothing in the kettle and stood watching in fiendish delight the punishment I was about to enact on those graybacks. I was surrounded with dozens of soldiers similarly attired earnestly engaged in this laudable undertaking. My kettle had commenced boiling when, attracted by the sound of nearby musketry, we looked to see our men grabbing their guns and returning the fire of a rebel force that had surprised them unexpectedly. I will have to admit that my first impulse was to run, then realizing that I was in no shape for a hurried retreat through brush and briars with no clothing except hat and shoes, I kicked over the kettle grabbed a button of my pants with one hand and my blouse or shirt with the other and ran up the incline to our stand. The rebels had fallen back; the men helped me wring out my wardrobe which I donned immediately. No sooner

done than the bugle sounded to fall-in and we were on the march skirmishing and digging dirt as usual. I never saw that camp kettle again.”¹

November 30: Fought at the Battle of Franklin.

Musson’s description from Columbia to Franklin, from his reminiscence for the newspapers entitled “War, As I lived It.”

“Before night we had crossed to the north side of the Duck river and were shoveling dirt again. Our forces were falling back before Hood’s advance. We skirmished a little here at the river; then we had some fighting at Spring Hill and were closely followed to Franklin. Here we made a determined stand. Words can’t describe a battle; a painter could only catch what occurred at the instant His picture could not keep up with the ever varying and instantaneous changes occurring. We lost two men of our company here, our colonel and I don’t know how many others.”²

1867 July 31: Married Isabelle Doyle in Piatt, IL.

1870 June 23: The U.S. Federal Census enumerated in Ridge, Union County, IL showed Willard, a mechanic, and Isabelle living with their two-year-old daughter Julia. Also living with the couple are two other mechanics Thomas and James White.

1897 June 28: Musson applied for and was granted a military pension for his service during the Civil War.

1900 June 30: The U.S. Federal Census enumerated in Louisburg, Montgomery County, KS showed Willard, a miller proprietor, living with his wife Belle.

¹ The Nebraska State Journal, Lincoln, NB Sunday 10 Oct 1915, pg. 31

² Farmer City Journal, Farmer City, IL Friday 31 Mar 1916, pg. 6

1903

Mr. Willard Musson fell from a scaffolding while working on the new lumber yard shed Tuesday and was badly injured internally. He was taken home in a buggy and Dr. Strawn spent a couple of hours examining him. He reports that while no bones were broken the shock was very severe as he fell about fifteen feet. He suffers considerably but no serious consequences are feared.

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1904

They Caught Sixty Croppies.

Harry Woods, musical specialist of Cosgrove's Concert Orchestra, which played here last Saturday night, played a queer instrument Sunday. He and Willard Musson gathered a good supply of bait and piling into Mussons boat and took a sneak up Elk River. They spent the day in fishing, telling yarns, and fishing some more. When they had tired of their sport they counted their catch and found that they had caught sixty (60) of as pretty croppy as you ever saw. We believe it too because we saw them. Mr. Wood thinks well of our city and aims to spend his next vacation with us after his present theatrical season closes.—Elk City Sun.

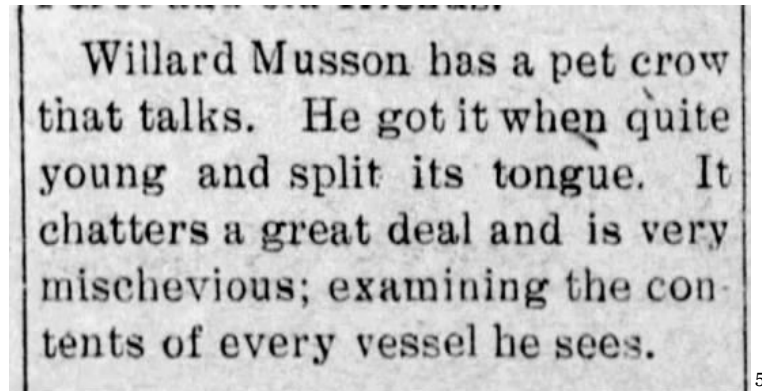
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³ South Kansas Tribune, Independence, KS Wednesday 22 Apr 1903, pg. 8

⁴ Wilson County Sun, Neodesha, KS, Friday 4 Nov 1904, pg. 3

1910 June 1: The U.S. Federal Census enumerated in Louisburg, Montgomery County, KS showed Willard, a house carpenter, living with Isabella and their daughter and grandchildren.

1913



Willard Musson has a pet crow that talks. He got it when quite young and split its tongue. It chatters a great deal and is very mischevious; examining the contents of every vessel he sees.

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1915-1916 Musson's reminiscences of the war appeared in newspaper print in western newspapers.



There is a Big War on Now
But it is a gigantic mechanical struggle, not a battle of men.

The Civil War
The war of men, vivid to every school boy and every patriarch was

War As I Lived It
That is why you will want to read some recollections of civil strife by
WILLARD MUSSON

It is not remarkable for any hair-raising turners, but for the fact that it is the simple story of a private soldier. The first narrative of the series will appear with many other good things in the next

Sunday State Journal

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1916 June 5: Musson died at his home in Elk City, KS.

⁵ Elk City Sun, Elk City, KS, Friday 30 May 1913, pg. 8

⁶ Lincoln Journal Star, Lincoln, NB Wednesday, 22 Sep 1915, pg. 11

Answers Last Roll Call.

Willard Musson peacefully passed away at his home in this city Monday morning after an illness extending over several months. He has always been active in the observance of Memorial and Decoration Day and when he was unable to participate in the services this year it was apparent that he would soon be mustered out.

Funeral services were held at the late home of the deceased at 3 p. m. Tuesday and the large attendance was a testimonial of the regard in which he was held by all.

Rev. M. J. Simmons, a friend of the deceased for many years, was in charge of the funeral services, which closed with the burial ritual of the G. A. R., of which Mr. Musson had long been an active member. Interment was in Oak Hill Cemetery. The casket was covered with beautiful floral offerings; many sent by friends from a distance.

Mr. Musson was 76 years old and had lived half of his life in Elk City. He did a great deal for the community during these many years and his demise has brought sorrow to many hearts. The sorrowing relatives have the heartfelt sympathy of a host of friends in their bereavement.

Willard Musson Passes Away.

Another One of Our Comrades Gone.

Willard Musson, one of Elk City's early settlers, a veteran of the Civil War, passed away at his home in this city early Monday morning about 6:20 o'clock after a lingering illness for several months. The end came very quietly, seemingly just fell asleep. He bore his suffering without complaint and was kind and gentle through all his illness to the last. His death was not unexpected as his heart bothered him greatly, but the end came so peacefully that it was a great shock to the family.

He was a member of the Episcopalian church, a firm believer in the Bible and always admonished his family to be honest and upright in everything they undertook and to live every day alike.

He was 76 years of age New Year's day and 38 years of this time he with his family lived in the house where he passed away in this city.

The funeral services were held in the family home yesterday at 3:00 p. m. with Rev. M. J. Simmons and the G. A. R. in charge. The remains were laid to rest in Oak Hill Cemetery. A complete obituary will appear next week.

⁷ Elk City Sun, Elk City, KS, Friday 9 June 1916, pg. 1

⁸ Mid-Week Reporter, Elk City, KS, Wednesday 7 Jun 1916, pg. 1