

MARSHALL COUNTY NATIVE, JAMES NIXON ROBERTS

Corporal, Company "E" 15th Iowa Infantry Volunteers

"Died Sept 6, 1864 at Rome, Ga. of wounds received July 21st 1864."

Researched & written by Linda Cunningham Fluharty

James Nixon Roberts was born about 1834 in Marshall County, (West) Virginia to Jonathan Elmore Roberts and Maria Evans, married in Ohio County, (West) Virginia in 1823. It is not known if they were married in the part of Ohio County that became Marshall County in 1835. However, they lived in Marshall County. Maria was the daughter of Walter Evans, born in Maryland, and Barbara Barger, known residents of Marshall County, and both buried there at Oak Grove Cemetery.

The soldier's father, Jonathan Roberts, is listed in the 1836 tax records for Marshall County. He is not in the tax list for 1840, nor is he found in the 1840 census of Marshall County. The son of Reuben Roberts, Jonathan moved with his parents and family to Iowa in 1838, according to a biography of Alexander Holt Roberts in *History of Audubon County, Iowa: Its People, Industries, and Institutions*, 2000, published from materials provided by the State Historical Society of Wisconsin. Excerpts:

Alexander Holt Roberts, president of the Audubon Commercial Club, and pharmacist of Audubon this county, was born on August 26, 1848, in Des Moines county, Iowa, the son of James Dorsey and Susan (McDonald) Roberts. He was born on a farm which was entered upon and settled by his grandfather, Reuben Roberts, as early as 1838. Mr. Roberts, therefore, enjoys the distinction of being a descendant of one of the oldest families in the state of Iowa. Reuben Roberts came from Elizabethtown, West Virginia, at a time when the greater part of the country that he traversed was a wilderness. The banks of the Ohio and Mississippi rivers were not then

Richard Roberts, whose wife was Margaret, was evidently a younger son in a large family of children. He was born in 1728 and enlisted in the First Regiment of Maryland troops in the Continental service from Anne Arundel county, April 23, 1778. He died in August of 1778. His issue was as follow: Thomas, Richard, John, Edward, Gainer (born 1766, died 1856), David, Abner, Jonathan, Elizabeth, Reuben, the last named the direct ancestor of A. H. Roberts, being born in 1772 and died on March 9, 1850.

Reuben Roberts married Elizabeth Barton, a daughter of John and Sophia Barton, in 1779. John Barton was a member of the Third Haven Meeting (Friends' Records of Talbot county, volume 5, page 311). Reuben and Elizabeth (Barton) Roberts had issue as follow: John; Jonathan, born in March, 1801, and died on September 3, 1849; Penelope, 1803, died on August 16, 1839; Gaius, an infant; Sophia, February 29, 1809, died on January 29, 1885; Jehu, 1811, died in 1884; Reuben P., 1813, died on December 10, 1854; Martin S.; Rebecca J., March 21, 1818, died on June 10, 1894; Josiah, October 24, 1820, died on August 28, 1870; James Dorsey, father of A. H. Roberts, July 25, 1823, died July 27, 1903; Alexander Holt, 1826, died November 15, 1847.

It is a matter of record that Reuben Roberts removed from Maryland to Virginia in 1802 and settled in Marshall county, near Grave creek. In 1838 he migrated to Iowa and settled on a farm twelve miles west of Burlington.

The soldier's father, Jonathan Elmore Roberts, bought land in Burlington, Iowa in 1841. He died in an accident in 1849. An obituary was submitted to the Marshall County, WVGenWeb by Maureen Sullivan:

Burlington Hawk-Eye, Thursday, September 13, 1849 - DIED, in the vicinity of Lowell, Henry county, Iowa, on the 3d inst., at 4 o'clock P.M., Mr. JONATHAN ROBERTS, aged 48 years, by injuries received by his team taking fright in descending Mud Creek hill, which injuries he survived about one hour. - It would be useless for us here to enumerate the many virtues of the deceased, as he was well known to most of our readers, and all who knew him bear testimony to his sterling worth as a citizen, and neighbor. - At a special meeting of Lowell Division, No. 52, S. of T., held at the Hall I Lowell on the 3d of September, 1849, on motion of Bro. R. G. McFerling, the following resolutions were adopted, and ordered to be spread upon the minutes: Resolved, That in the death of brother JONATHAN ROBERTS, his family has been bereft of an affectionate father and devoted husband—his parents of a beloved son—society of an estimable citizen, and our Order of zealous, efficient and ardent member. Resolved, That as an expression of our grief we attend the funeral, clothed in the regalia of our Order, and that we wear the usual badge of mourning for thirty days. - Note: Buried at Blakeway Cemetery, Danville, Des Moines County, Iowa.

At the time of the 1850 census of Danville, Des Moines County, Iowa, James, 16, was residing with his mother, Maria, and older siblings, Joseph, Ruben, Joshua and Louisa.

On Feb 17, 1856 in Des Moines, Iowa, James N. Roberts married Rachel E. Anderson. Records indicate she, too, was born in West Virginia. Their children were Clarence E., Jonathan E. and Anna Laura.

James joined for three years to serve in Company "E" of the 15th Iowa Infantry Volunteers. He died on September 6, 1864 of wounds received in battle on July 21, 1864. He was initially buried at Rome, Georgia and was later interred at the Marietta National Cemetery in Marietta, Georgia.

From *Roster and Record of Iowa Soldiers in the War of the Rebellion*:

Roberts, James N. Age 27. Residence Danville, nativity Virginia. Enlisted Oct. 21, 1861, as Sixth Corporal. Mustered Dec. 1, 1861. Promoted First Corporal; Fourth Sergeant March 1, 1863; Third Sergeant June 4, 1863. Wounded in left thigh severely July 21, 1864, near Atlanta, Ga. Died of wounds Sept. 6, 1864, Rome, Ga. Buried in National Cemetery, Marietta, Ga. Section C, grave 197.

Following his death, his widow, Rachel, applied for and received a government pension. On November 1, 1865, she married William Amberger. A guardian was appointed to oversee the pensions of her children.

The following is from the *Report of Nathaniel B. Baker, Adjutant-General of Iowa*, Acting QM General, 1865. It describes the battle in which James Nixon Roberts lost his life.

FIFTEENTH INFANTRY.

IN THE CHARGE OF JULY 21, 1864.

HEAD-QUARTERS 15TH REG'T IOWA INFANTRY VET. VOL. }
IN THE FIELD ON THE LEFT FANK, 17TH A. C., July 22, 1864. }

LIEUT. O. D. KINSMAN, A. A. A. Gen. 3d Brig. 4th Div. 17th Army Corps:

SIR: I herewith transmit a report of the movements of the 15th Iowa in the charge of the 21st inst.

The 3d brigade, advancing on the afternoon of the 20th, took position in front of the enemy's work in two lines, the 13th and 15th Iowa in front—the former on the right with the Eleventh in the rear of the Fifteenth, and the Sixteenth in rear of the 13th Iowa. At 8 o'clock on the morning of the 21st, skirmishing having been constant after daylight, the order was received from Col. Shane, commanding brigade to advance on the enemy's works in front, the 15th Iowa being ordered to keep its right on the left of the 13th Iowa, with its left extending in the direction of Force's brigade of the 3d division. The whole front line advanced rapidly, with cheers to the crest of the hill in full view of the rebel works, and fought with valor and determination, and the brigade would doubtless have been successful in carrying the works, had not the right of the line, beyond the 3d brigade, broken and been driven back by the heavier line and artillery of the enemy. In the front of the 15th Iowa, a battery of several guns, previously masked, opened upon us with grape and canister, and when the line was ordered to retire, it did so in good order, notwithstanding the withering fire from the battery. The attack was successful in enabling Force's brigade to hold the hill on our left and compelling the evacuation of the line by the enemy on the next morning. The officers and men of this regiment did their duty as they always do, and have my thanks, and merit commendation for their laborious efforts, notwithstanding the fatigues of the long march just concluded from the right.

Our casualties were three enlisted men killed and three officers (Lieuts. McArthur, Gebhart, and Schievers,) and forty-five enlisted men wounded. A list of the same is inclosed herewith.

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

WM. W. BELKNAP,
Col. 15th Iowa Vet. Vol. Infantry.

LIST OF KILLED, WOUNDED, AND MISSING IN ABOVE CHARGE.

Killed—Co. E, Corp'l Christopher Orm, Privates Augustus Smith, Albert A. Bean.

Wounded—Serg.-Major James W. Henry, in face, slightly.

Co. A, Serg't James Bird, in shoulder, slightly; Privates Daniel McKinster, in foot, slightly; William H. Davis, in head, slightly; Andrew Mefford, in head, severely.

Co. B, Isaac D. Hubbard, in abdomen, mortally (since dead); Alfred Broadstone, in arm, severely; Thomas Rayger, in arm slightly; Levi Wells, in shoulder, severely.

Co. C, Privates Eden Hunt, in thigh, severely; A. C. Fenderson, in arm, severely; S. E. Hawkins, in hand, severely.

Co. D, 1st Serg't Richard M. Wilson, in breast, mortally (since dead); Privates Peter Hoover, concussion from shell, slight; Andrew McConnell, in finger, slightly; 2d Lieut. Emanuel M. Gebhart, in leg, slightly.

Co. E, Serg't J. N. Roberts, in thigh, severely; Corp'ls A. H. Johnson, in head and side, severely; S. Holcomb, in face, slightly; Privates O. E. Stuart, in hand, severely; H. Elmore, in head, slightly; Thomas Wright, mortally (since dead); J. W. Cheney, in leg, severely; C. W. Jamison, in face, severely; B. T. Thomas, in thigh, severely; J. P. Vantreese, in ankle, slightly; J. Bowen, in breast, severely; J. Orm, in leg, slightly; J. J. Henderson, in leg, severely; R. Orm, in hand, severely.

Co. F, Wm. Fitzgerald, in leg, severely.

Co. H, First Lieut. H. C. McArthur, in hip, severely; Privates J. H. Esley, in arm, severely; J. D. Fullenwider, in leg, severely; J. Cox, in shoulder, severely; P. Murphy, in shoulder and head, slightly; Corp'l J. H. Forges, Color Corporal, in leg, slightly.

Co. I, Corp'l J. Davenport, in head, slightly; 2d Lieut. H. Schievers, in foot, severely; Privates J. White, in side, slightly; C. Wolovous, in back, slightly; H. Southan, severely.

Co. K, Serg't Wm. B. McDowell, contusion of breast, severely; Privates Wm. H. Walker, in side, severely; J. H. Wood, severely.

NOTE.—Two men in Co. A, and one in Co. D, were reported after the above was made.

Recapitulation—Field and staff, 1 wounded. Co. A, 4 wounded. Co. B, 4 wounded. Co. C, 3 wounded. Co. D, 4 wounded. Co. E, 3 killed, 14 wounded, total 17. Co. F, 1 wounded. Co. H, 6 wounded. Co. I, 5 wounded. Co. K, 3 wounded. Total 3 killed; 45 wounded; 48, aggregate.