

William Henry Harrison Morris

I was a member of Company I 154th New York Volunteer Infantry, second Brigade, second Division of the 11th Army Corps in the civil war of 1861 & 5.

We were stationed at Cemetery Ridge at the Battle of Gettysburg Pa, July 1.2.3.4th 1863.

On July 4th at 12:30 A.M. a call was made for 50 men from our Brigade to go on picket.

Our regiment had to furnish 6 men and a sergeant. All of our sergeants were killed wounded or taken prisoners so I was appointed to take the place of a sergeant.

I ordered to take the detachment to Round Top Ridge and to report to the Officer of the day. I was ordered by the Officer of the day to relieve pickets then on post. While I was relieving those on post I discovered that there was a gap between our pickets and those farther to the left of about 500 yards. So I reported this fact to the officer of the day and he gave me men to fill the gap. When I returned I was ordered to take 25 men and reconnoiter. I proceeded through the town and took the road leading to Hagerstown. I came across rebels who gave themselves up and I had to give a man to take them to our lines, so I sent back squad after squad until I had but one man left (a corporal). I was just about to turn back, when the rear guard of the rebels army came into view. We were going along a worm fence the corporal was two steps ahead of me when he started to run. I told him that I would put a bayonet through his heart if he stirred. He exclaimed what are you; I replied I am in Command). We had no chance to get away from them and I thought they might think that our forces had moved up. I waited until they came within 25 feet of me when I stepped out in the road directly in front of them and leveled my gun at the Captain and said surrender or die. He surrendered, and he ordered his men to ground their arms. I ordered them to march up the road and when they all passed me I ordered them to take 5 paces apart and not to look back. And I ordered the Corporal to shoot the first man who looked back or I would shoot him. I noticed that some of them looked fierce when they passed me, one of them in particular who was 6 feet 2 or 3 inches tall and redheaded. The Captain unbuckled his scabbard and handed it with his sword to me. I told him to throw them on the ground and to get in front of me I cautioned the men that if a break was made the Captain would die. (It's my opinion that if the mens feelings for the life of their Captain had not predominated, I would not be here to tell the tale) I ordered them to march

We had about 3 miles to march to reach our command. Nothing occurred on the road. And when I turned them over to the officer of the day, (17 men and a Captain) he says how did you take them? I replied that I flanked them and surrounded them. He repeated his question HOW DID YOU TAKE THEM? I replied THAT I leveled my gun on the Captain and ordered him to surrender or die. And he surrendered. He replied "YOU ARE A DAM FOOL." I replied opinions differ. Every word of the above is true.
I Am Very Faithfully Yours

W.H.H. Morris

Personally appeared before me said W.H.H. Morris and on his Oath and Affirmation says that the foregoing is true. SWORN before me on the 9 day of March 1910

Leon Fuld Notary Public Idaho

(Courtesy of Vanda A. Greenwood, Boca Raton, FL)