

This week's veteran is Andrew Johnson.

Andrew Johnson is the only Medal of Honor winner from Assumption. Johnson was born in Delaware Co., Ohio, in 1833. According to the 1860 Census, Johnson, age 26, was a farmer living in Assumption with his wife, Mary, age 18. He entered the service at Assumption on August 14, 1862. The following information about his Medal of Honor is from the National Park Service web-site: "Rank and organization: Private, Company G, 116th Illinois Infantry. Place and date: At Vicksburg, Miss., 22 May 1863. Entered service at: Assumption, Ill. Birth: Delaware County, Ohio. Date of issue: 9 August 1894. Citation. Gallantry in the charge of the "volunteer storming party."

Following is information from Wikipedia.org concerning Andrew Johnson: "On May 22, 1863, General Ulysses S. Grant ordered an assault on the Confederate heights at Vicksburg, Mississippi. The plan called for a storming party of volunteers to build a bridge across a moat and plant scaling ladders against the enemy embankment in advance of the main attack. The volunteers knew the odds were against survival and the mission was called, in nineteenth century vernacular, a "forlorn hope". Only single men were accepted as volunteers and even then, twice as many men as needed came forward and were turned away. The assault began in the early morning following a naval bombardment. The Union soldiers came under enemy fire immediately and were pinned down in the ditch they were to cross. Despite repeated attacks by the main Union body, the men of the forlorn hope were unable to retreat until nightfall. Of the 150 men in the storming party, nearly half were killed. Seventy-nine of the survivors were awarded the Medal of Honor." Notice that it says only single men were accepted, but Johnson was married. Johnson and the 116th were part of many other battles and campaigns including: Missionary Ridge, Kennesaw Mountain, Atlanta, and Sherman's March to the Sea.

Andrew Johnson moved to Tower Hill after the Civil War. The 1870 Census list him as a farmer in Tower Hill. He died February 7, 1912, and is buried in the Tower Hill Cemetery. Following is part of his obituary from the Shelbyville Democrat: "Andrew Johnson, age 75 years, a lifetime resident of Shelby County, died at his home at Tower Hill, Wednesday morning, after a long illness. He was at one time police magistrate of Tower Hill and one of the best known men of that section."

Thank you, Private Andrew Johnson, for what you gave for us.

A big thank you to Norman and Jerri Bethard and the Assumption Historical Society for the research on Andrew Johnson.