

William Henry Noble
21st WI Infantry, Company K

Born: February 6, 1837

1860 Federal Census: WI, Manitowoc County, Manitowoc Twp/William Noble family:
Wm. H. Noble, 23, Farmer, b New York

Enlisted: August 15, 1862 as a Corporal from Manitowoc, WI; 25 year-old, Carpenter, 6" 1", blue eyes, dark hair
Transferred out: February 15, 1864
Transferred into: February 15, 1864 to Veteran Reserve Corps
Mustered Out: June 29, 1865

Wife: Jean Anderson, 1846-1884

1868-69 Edward's Directory of Village of Manitowoc: Nobles Henry, carpenter, r. Chicago, nr. 11th

1870 Federal Census: WI, Manitowoc County, Manitowoc Ward 4:
Wm. H. Nobles, 31, Mill Wright, PE 500, b New York
Janie Nobles, 34, Keeps house, b Scotland
Chd: John H.-1, b Wisconsin

1880 Federal Census: WI, Manitowoc County, Maple Grove Twp:
Henry W. Noble, 42, Married, Huba Spoke Manufact, b New York
Jean M. Noble, 34, Wife, Keeping house, b Scotland
Chd: John-12, William-8, both b Wisconsin
George W. Noble, 25, Brother, Laborer, b New York
Sarah J. Noble, 27, Sister, at home, b New York

1885 Soldiers & Sailors of the Late War, Residing in Wisconsin, 1885: W. H. Noble, Sergeant, K 21 WI, P.O. Reedsville

1890 Veterans Schedule, Manitowoc County: William H Noble, Sergeant 21 K, Post office Reedsville

Died: October 21, 1894
Buried: Evergreen Cemetery, Manitowoc, WI
Gravesite: W2-185-3: "Wm. Henry (Noble)/1837-1894/
Cpl. Co. K/21st Wisc. Inf."

Der Nord Westen, 25 Oct. 1894: "Death on Sun. evening in Reedsville of 58 yr. old W.H. Noble. The deceased leaves a widow and 7 children of whom 2 are from his



Noble, Wm H.	
Co. K,	21 st Regt.
Wis. Inf.	
Cemetery	Swanwick,
at	Manitowoc,
	Wis.
Grave	
Date of death	Oct. 21 st 1894.
Headstone supplied by	
W. H. Cross, Lec. Mass.	
CONTRACT FEB'Y 24, 1899.	

Headstones Provided for Deceased Union Civil War Veterans, 1879-1903

first marriage. Mr. Noble enjoyed great affection in Reedsville and served his town during his lifetime as Village President. The funeral took place yesterday in the local cemetery under the auspices of the G.A.R."

"History of Manitowoc County" by Dr. Louis Falge, 1912, P. 317: Reedsville Town History: "In early times lumbering was always considered vital to the interests of the community, for which reason the early history of sawmills and factories is always interesting. The most important business of the village and for many miles around was the old HUBBARD & NOBLE mill, built in 1871, just before the railroad was completed to Reedsville. It was at first a general sawmill and a manufactory of hubs, spokes and general wagon stock, situated on the block just north of the depot. Later Messrs. HUBBARD and NOBLE became interested in the formation of the Manitowoc Seating Company.. After the fire and failure of that concern, W. H. NOBLE continued the business at Reedsville, making in addition syrup and nail kegs and general cooperage, as well as turning Indian clubs, dumbbells, etc. and employed at times one hundred men. After Mr. NOBLE'S

death in 1894, a joint stock company of citizens continued its operation until 1896, when one night the plant was completely destroyed by fire. It went into receiver's hands and out of business. However, the creditors received eighty-six per cent. Later it was rebuilt on a smaller scale by John Duggan, but was discontinued in agog. A branch of the Landreth Pea Canning Company plant is now located upon the site.

W. H. NOBLE was Reedsville's foremost citizen, generous to a fault, an adviser willing to help at all times, and always foremost in every civic enterprise. He was a veteran of the Civil war and enjoyed the distinction of having been chosen one of the eight color sergeants appointed to guard the remains of President Lincoln from Washington to Springfield in 1865. His widow cherishes the medal received by him for these services by congress. He died in October, 1894, after a brief illness of pneumonia."

Profiles in History: "William Henry Noble was just one of several million soldiers in service on April 15, 1865, but he was in the right place at the right time. Noble would take part in a historical event that still lives with us today.

William Noble was born in 1837 at Ogdensburg, New York. He came to Manitowoc with his parents in the early 1850s and shared in the hardships of pioneer life. As a young man he took up the trade of a carpenter, a vocation that would serve him well in later life.

At the coming of the American Civil War, Noble enlisted as a private in Company K, 21st Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry. In his first engagement at the battle of Perryville, Kentucky, he was seriously disabled and required months of hospitalization. Continuing health problems required Noble's transfer to the Veterans Reserve Corps at Washington.

Sgt. Noble was still in Washington on April 15, 1865, when President Lincoln was assassinated by John Wilkes Booth. Known to his superiors as a trustworthy and loyal soldier, Noble was selected to be a member of the guard of honor and pall-bearer for Lincoln's funeral. For 19 days, he traveled with the President's remains at stops in 11 cities, each time conducting a separate funeral procession.

With their duties complex, Noble and his fellow guard of honor returned to Washington. For a job well done, each man was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor.

Returning to Manitowoc, he married Jean Anderson and the couple moved to Reedsville where they operated a boarding house and William engaged in manufacturing. In

1892, Noble and other prominent residents of Reedsville successfully petitioned the courts to have Reedsville incorporated as a village.

Noble served as the first village president until his death in 1892."

Old Newspaper Clipping—Paper not known: Milwaukee Man Who Guarded The Body Of Lincoln In the Capitol At Washington During the exciting days following the assassination of Lincoln when the national capital was the theater of intensely dramatic and interesting events, James Noble of Milwaukee was an actor in many of the most interesting portions of the incidents interwoven with the story of that terrible deed.

After serving in the West as a member of Co. K, Twenty first Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry, Mr. Noble became corporal of the Twelfth regiment, Veteran Reserve corps, and was on duty in the capital.

The night Booth shot Lincoln, 1,500 arsenal employees who had gathered for the purpose of serenading the president, when they heard the news went wild.

"Kill the rebels!" was the cry, and seizing arms to which they had access the arsenal employees started for the old capitol prison with the announced intention of massacring 700 rebel officers, confined there.

The Twelfth regiment, V.R.C. was ordered out to stop this armed mob from carrying out this purpose, and Mr. Noble says of the experience;

"We stopped them but such a wild night I never saw. It was a terrible experience to face 1,500 determined men, frenzied with sorrow and anger over Lincoln's death, and tell them to turn back. But we were successful in stopping their march and dispersing them."

Arrest of the Surratts When Mrs. Surratt and her daughter were arrested, Corp. Noble was officer of the guard at the Carroll street prison, where the Surratts were taken on the night of their arrest.

"I remember the incident well," said Mr. Noble. "They were brought there in the evening, in separate carriages, and the orders were to place them in separate cells, and allow no one to enter the cells where they were on pain of death.

??? Miss Surratt in her cell, I did not notice that the window was open, and later she called out of the window and asked to have it closed. I finally went in and closed it, thereby violating my express instructions. However, it was never known to Secretary Stanton of the war department, who had issued the instructions, although he afterward entrusted me with important duty." **Guard Over Lincoln's Body** Lincoln's remains lay in state in the rotunda of the capitol, and the last day they were there. Corp. Noble was in charge of the first guard that went on duty there at 8 a.m.

"The people crowded in to see the murdered president, and I stood at the entrance and formed them into a double file, one row passing each side of the bier.

"All removed their hats, except one old Quaker who soon after the crowd started tried to pass me with his hat still on.

"Halt, there!" I called to him. "You'll have to take off your hat."

"We friends never remove our hats," he told me. "Well, you'll have to remove your hat here or get out," I told him. Those are my orders, and they go." "Very well," he answered, "If thee insists, I'll do it rather than fail to see the president," and his hat came off.

"Gen. Meade was on duty at the head of the casket at the time, and he was watching me. Shortly afterward he came to me and asked whether I could stay in on duty there all day, offering an extra pay and a furlough to recompense me for the extra duty.

"I refused everything, but remained on duty there all that day until the doors were closed at 10:30 that evening.

"That stream of people never ceased all that time, and the one prevailing memory of the crowd today is my recollection of the expression of profound woe and sorrow on almost every face. Not every one, however, and you could pick out the Southern sympathizers in a moment by the expression of the face.

"That night I slept in the rotunda of the capitol with the twenty five members of the guard on duty there."

Prisoners on Monitors

Some time afterward, when the prisoners arrested for participation in the assassination conspiracy were confined in two monitors in the Potomac river, Mr. Noble again was called on to perform a duty growing out of the great tragedy. He was detailed to stand guard on a third monitor moored to a wharf near the two floating prisons, and prevent any attempt to approach the assassins' place of confinement.

The two monitors on which the assassins were confined were anchored in the stream away from the wharf, and the orders, given to Corp. Noble by Secretary of War Stanton personally, were not to allow any floating object of any kind to approach the monitors. Artillery was on the wharf, loaded and trained, and the orders were to blow anything that looked suspicious out of the water. It was then though there might be an attempt to rescue the prisoners.

Nearly Caused a Tragedy

These orders came near causing a tragedy too, for when Gen. Auger was sent on a ferry boat to remove the prisoners to the old penitentiary, Secy. Stanton, started to the navy yard to inform the guard of the plan and give instructions to allow the steamer to land there.

A broken wheel delayed Stanton and when the ferry approached the wharf, Corp. Noble hailed it. There was no answer. A second hail brought no response, and then the young officer hailed once more, and shouted:

"Ahoy, there! Come any closer and I'll blow you out of the water."

"This is Gen. Augur" a voice from the boat replied. "For God's sake don't shoot. Isn't Secretary Stanton there?"

"No, sir," shouted Noble. "Bank water! Keep off! If you come any closer I'll fire on you."

"Don't shoot, for God's sake, don't shoot, came the general's ? ? more. "There's some mistake."

Meanwhile the ? ? hurried orders to reverse, and the ? Slowly fell back from the danger.

Meanwhile Stanton, finding the ? car he was in disabled by a ? wheel, thought of the danger that ? result to the ferry and started ? for the navy yard. Just at t? interesting period, he arrived out of breath with haste, and straightened out the misunderstanding.

"Would you have shot?? he asked Noble.

"I certainly would have carried out my orders," replied the corporal.

This must have impressed Stanton, for after the prisoners were removed to the old penitentiary, he asked that Noble might be detailed to guard them, and Noble, with twenty five picked men, guarded the prisoners until and during the famous trial at which seven of them were sentenced to be hanged, and day after day he sat in court between two of them and heard all the proceedings.

Guarded Booth's Body

On the night when he went to take charge of the guard at the monitors, just before he took up his duties, and while Secretary Stanton was there, Col. Baker, chief of the United States secret service at that time, came on board with a single companion and with orders from Secretary Stanton removed the body of the assassin, John Wilkes Booth, that had been placed there after he was killed by his pursuers. Corp. Noble saw Baker and other men take the remains away in a skiff.

The next morning the Washington papers came out with the story that the remains had been sunk in the Potomac river.. But Corp. Noble happened to learn differently. Talking with an old colored man he knew, the old fellow told Noble of seeing two men on this identical night in question bring something to the wharf of the old penitentiary and carry it inside the prison.

"I got a ladder and peeked over," said the old colored uncle, "and they was a digging a hole. I was afraid to watch and ran away."

Noble afterward, when on duty at the penitentiary, inspected the flagged court yard, and found a flagstone before a cell that looked as if it had been removed. He later told a brother that he believed Booth's body was buried there and never was sunk in the river.

Many will recall that years afterward the government exhumed the body and

turned it over to Booth's relatives for final disposal.

Lincoln's Second Inauguration

Corp. Noble saw Lincoln's second inauguration, and tells of an incident which he says was chronicled in all the papers of that time, but which is not often heard of now.

The day was extremely dark and gloomy. Just after Lincoln took the oath, the clouds parted almost overhead, and someone shouted:

"Look at the star!"

Thousands of eyes were turned to the heavens and there shining through the rift in the clouds, in mid ? was a single bright star.

Mr. Noble, although well passed ? is very vigorous and insists that he is a young man yet. He lives at 1610 State street.

His brother, W. H. Noble was one of the guards on the train that conveyed the body of the martyr president to Springfield."