

1st Lieutenant William Appleton Webb

Charter Member of Rocky Mountain Lodge No. 205 A.F.&A.M.

by George F. Winters, Historian

Little is known about William A. Webb's early days other than he was born in Maine about 1830. On September 1, 1849¹, Webb enters the Military Academy at West point New York²



William Appleton Webb (Wallis Brothers, Premium Photograph Gallery, 117 Lake Street, Chicago, IL).

The 1850 Census lists William A. Webb age 19, as a Cadet in Class at the U.S. Military Academy³. He was a graduate of West Point, number 35 in his class⁴ and, on July 1, 1853, received the commission of brevet second lieutenant in the Infantry.

After graduation, he served in garrison at Fort Columbus located on Governors Island between Long Island and Manhattan in New York Harbor 1853-1854.⁵ Then moved onto frontier duty at Fort Steilacoom near Lake Steilacoom Washington 1854-1855 where he is breveted second lieutenant in the 5th Infantry. At this post he is responsible for conducting recruits to Texas and serves at Fort McIntosh Texas until the hostilities against the Seminole Indians 1856-1857 and participates in the skirmish near Bowieg's Town on March 13th, 1857⁶, during the Third Seminole War⁷.

At the end of the war, Webb and the 5th infantry garrison at Jefferson Barracks, Missouri where he is breveted 1st Lieutenant on April 1, 1857⁸

He is with the troops traveling to Utah Territory during 1857.

1st lieutenant William Appleton Webb was one of the original signers on the petition to the Grand Lodge of Missouri to form a

Lodge at Camp Floyd sometime late in 1858 On the letter requesting a charter, he lists himself as a Master Mason, inferring he received his degrees prior to traveling to Utah Territory. He remains at Camp Floyd until the outbreak of the war and when the camp is disbanded in 1860. He first travels to Fort Columbus on Governor's Island in New York. He is listed on the Federal 1860 Census, July 24, 1860, where 1st Lieutenant Wm A. Webb is listed in garrison at the U.S. Recruiting Depot⁹

He receives a commission dated May 14, 1861, as captain in the 16th Infantry. He subsequently accepted the position of mustering officer and of commissary of subsistence at Chicago, and, under his superintendence, many of the regiments which left the city, were organized.

On July 22, 1861, at Chicago, the Forty-second Regiment was organized as the 1st Regiment, Douglas Brigade, by Colonel William A. Webb¹⁰. He was unanimously elected colonel of the first regiment of the brigade: a position which he accepted, with the permission of the War Department.

After conducting the regiment to Missouri, he returned to Chicago to settle the affairs of his office, and then leaving it in charge of Lieutenant John Christopher, rejoined his command at Tipton, and after a brief period of active service, succumbed to the united influence of exposure, fatigue and typhoid fever

on December 24, 1861. He was buried at Graceland Cemetery¹¹, Chicago, Cook County, Illinois with military honors, on December 28, 1861, in Section I, Lot: A, Space: 1.

¹ Return of the Military Academy and Post at West Point for the month of September, 1849, https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/1571/images/32169_127097-00284?treeid=&personid=&hintid=&queryId=ae612c472b125d3d212a3e7c30830a55&usePUB=true&_phsrc=dtU627&_phstart=successSource&usePUBJs=true&_ga=2.130320781.386762592.1629482658-1288806490.1614291356&_gac=1.90448232.1629584181.CjwKCAjwyIKJBhBPEiwAu7zll-y5kOh1NrEgnLv1fZMIU0_SqprYbkebOXI5ToB1NdjSTTxHoHqgfBoCf_4QAvD_BwE&pId=5109481 visited 8/21/2021

² Biographical Register of the Officers and Graduates of the U.S. Military Academy, From 1802-1867 Vol III, by Brevet Major General George W. Cullum, Third Edition Revised and extended Vol II, USMA Library Digital Collection, page 560, <http://digital-library.usma.edu/digital/collection/p16919coll3/id/15616> visited 8/21/2021

³ Ancestry.com, 1850 Census, Town of Cromwell, Orange County, New York, https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/8054/images/4202541_00353?treeid=&personid=&usePUB=true&_phsrc=dtU460&_phstart=successSource&pId=7929242 visited 6/20/2021

⁴ Official Register of the Officers and Cadets of the U.S. Military Academy, West Point New York, "Order of Merit in General Classes as Determined at the General Examination", June 1853, page 7, https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/2203/images/32761_2221301230_6538-00010?treeid=&personid=&usePUB=true&_phsrc=dtU626&_phstart=successSource&pId=3256889 visited 8/21/2021

⁵ Cullum IBID

⁶ Cullum IBID

⁷ Wikipedia, Seminole Wars, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seminole_Wars visited 8/21/2021

⁸ Cullum IBID

⁹ Ancestry.com, 1860 U.S. Federal Census, Governor's Island, New York County New York, page 191, https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/7667/images/4236616_00448?usePUB=true&_phsrc=dtU618&_phstart=successSource&usePUBJs=true&pId=46869167 visited 8/21/2021

¹⁰ History of Chicago from the Earliest period to the Present Time, In Three Volumes, Volume II From 1857 to the Fire of 1871 Page 208

¹¹ Find A Grave Website: <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/132332788> visited October 20, 2019