

COSTER, JOHN HENRY

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COSTER, JOHN HENRY, born in New York City, November 26, 1835; son of John Henry and Sarah Adeline (Boardman) Coster; his grandfather, John Gerard Coster came to the United States from Holland in 1784; married, Emily Gertrude Olliffe (1851-1929), daughter of William John and Emily Gertrude (Williams) Olliffe, in New York City, April 22, 1873; no children.

Studied architecture and embarked in that business; enlisted at Washington, D. C., April 26, 1861 as Private, Company K, 7th New York State Militia and honorably discharged in New York City, June 3; mustered in September 12, 1861, at Newport News, Virginia, as Captain, Company F, 1st New York Infantry; served with the Company in the Army of the Potomac until June 30, 1862, when he was "fearfully wounded in jaw" in action at Glendale, Virginia; captured that day by Confederates and confined at Richmond in Libby Prison from July 5 to July 22, when he was exchanged with other prisoners of war; absent on account of wounds until honorably discharged, March 3, 1863; brevet Major of Volunteers, March 13, 1865, for gallant and meritorious conduct during the war.

Went to California where he was commissioned at San Francisco as 1st Lieutenant, Company H, 6th California Infantry on September 20, 1865; on November 18, he was transferred to Company I, 7th California Infantry, and served until March 31, 1866; the following day he was mustered in at San Francisco as Captain, Company C, 1st Battalion, Arizona Infantry and served until honorably discharged at San Francisco on tender of his resignation because of private interests, June 13, 1866; none of his service was with troops in California or Arizona but was rendered as Aid-de-Camp to Major General Irvin McDowell, Commanding

the Military Division of the Pacific with headquarters at the Presidio of San Francisco; Fort McDowell on the Verde River was established September 7, 1865, and named for the General.

Appointed 1st Lieutenant, 30th U.S. Infantry, March 7, 1867; transferred to 8th U.S. Cavalry December 15, 1870; promoted Captain, March 29, 1873; assigned as Aid-de-Camp to General McDowell from March 23, 1867 to November 21, 1879; on sick and ordinary leave until retired on account of disability, June 26, 1882.

He was a Companion, New York Commandery, Military Order of the Loyal Legion, and the following is taken from a memorial adopted at a meeting of the Commandery held at Delmonico's not long after his death;

His father, John H. Coster, was a great lover and breeder of race horses, which taste his son inherited to a marked extent. Major Coster, after his retirement from the Army came to New York, his old home. His taste for matters of the turf soon brought him in contact with all the very prominent men of that day, who with him, were engaged in placing the turf on a broader and higher level.

His character was one of those happy combinations of manliness and modesty, of deserving worth and promise, but so retiring in his disposition that such qualities were only known to his intimate friends. He was of gentle and courtly bearing, cheerful and brave in spite of ill health, and always a charming companion.

Died at New York, New York, December 7, 1895, aged 60.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the U.S. - New York State Commandery, Circular 32, April 1, 1896.
Orten, R. H. - Records of California Men in the War of the Rebellion, Sacramento, 1890, pp. 752, 790.
Powell, W.H. - Records of Living Officers of the U.S. Army, Philadelphia, 1890, p. 150.
Heitman, F.B. - Historical Register and Dictionary, U.S. Army, Washington, 1903, p. 329.
The Adjutant General of the Army - Military service records.
U.S. Veterans Administration - Pension records, X.C. 2,679,333