

Star #65 Frederick Platten

Frederick Platten, born in Torbeck, Ireland in 1849, moved to NY City, enlisted in the army in 1872, at the age of 23. He served in I Company, 6th U.S. Cavalry in the Indian Wars, and later in the Spanish American War (1891-94). He received a Congressional Medal of Honor for his heroism at the Battle of Sappa Creek, Kansas on April 23, 1875, when he rushed into a group of Cheyenne Indians intent on scalping some of his comrades. He had waded in mud along the creek behind entrenched Cheyenne positions with four other men, and charged the Indians from behind. The surprise attack broke their resistance, and resulted in the rescue of fallen comrades. He was the Sergeant in charge of that detachment. He had been struck a glancing blow on the back of his neck by an arrow, and still led his men to charge the enemy. As if that wasn't enough, after the engagement, several Indian women and children had been captured, and he refused an order from his Captain to kill them. For this he was Court Martialed. He was not convicted, but still, he may well be the only man in the history of the armed services to receive the Congressional Medal of Honor and be Court Martialed from the same engagement. He later worked in the Forest Service out West and became a Cattle rancher. He died in 1939 at the age of 91. On Veterans Day, 2018, his descendent, Rob Platten, incised a star in honor of his service.