

## John G. Merritt

(31 Oct 1837 – 17 Dec 1892)

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*The Evening Star, December 19, 1892*

### **Funeral of Captain Merritt**

The funeral of the late Capt. John G. Merritt, acting Assistant Doorkeeper, United States Senate, took place at 10 o'clock this morning from his family residence, 118 Maryland avenue northeast. The Rev. Dr. Butler, chaplain of the Senate performed the funeral ceremony and delivered a very touching address upon the career and dying hours of the deceased. The residence was well filled with the associates of Capt. Merritt in the Senate, from among whom the pallbearers were chosen as follows: Hon. Albert K. Valentine, sergeant-at-arms; Stanley Plummer, postmaster, and Messrs. C.W. Barrett, W.E. Pressey, James A. Crystal and W.I. Lattimer.

Served as Sergeant in Company K of the 1st Regiment of Minnesota Volunteers. Awarded the first Medal of Honor by Congress for distinguished bearing in the Battle of Bull Run (July 21, 1861). He was wounded in advance of his regiment.

*The Washington Post, December 20, 1892, p. 8*

### **Won The First Medal Of Honor**

### **Death of Capt. John G. Merritt, Whose Noble Deeds Were Conspicuously Recognized**

The proud distinction of having received from the Congress of the United States a medal of honor for distinguished conduct in the presence of the enemy" was not all that was enjoyed by Capt. John G. Merritt, acting assistant doorkeeper of the United States Senate, whose death from the effects of wounds received in battle occurred in this city last Saturday, and whose funeral took place yesterday. Capt. Merritt was the first of the few hundred heroes to whom a medal of honor was given by Congress and whose heroism lies buried in the pigeon-holes of the War Department and in the recesses of their own breasts.

First in the list of persons whose noble deeds were recognized by Congress in the award of medals of honor, the history of which is given in Gen. Theodore F. Rodenbaugh's very interesting book, appears what has been styled "the picturesque report by Sergt. John G. Merritt, of the First Minnesota Infantry of the first battle of Bull Run," which closes with a letter written by Hon. Alexander Ramsey, Secretary of War, transmitting to Merritt the first medal of honor, the inscription upon which reads:

Congress  
to  
Sergt. John G. Merritt  
Company K, First Minnesota Volunteers.  
This medal is awarded to you under provisions  
of the War Department for gallantry  
in the battle of Bull Run, in July,  
1861, where you were wounded  
while in advance of  
your regiment.

The Rev. Dr. Butler, Chaplain of the Senate, performed the funeral ceremony and delivered a very touching address upon the career of the deceased. The pallbearers were: Hon. Albert K. Valentine,

sergeant-at-arms; Stanley Plummer, postmaster, and Messrs. C.W. Barrett, W.E. Pressey, James A. Crystal, and W.I. Lattimer.

Capt. Merritt was one of a quartet of veterans of the old First Minnesota Volunteer Infantry, who have resided in this city for some years past, and was composed originally of Comrades David A. Cofflin, of Company C; John G. Merritt, of Company K; John M. Churchill, of Company I, and Orville D. Thatcher, of Company E. The two first named are now gone, "mustered out," Comrade Cofflin having died some four or five years since.