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CIVIL WAR TO CIVIL RIGHTS: ANDREW JACKSON SMITH (MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENT)



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1862. Later, while accompanying Warner to Illinois on a furlough, Smith learned about the Emancipation Proclamation and that he could be a fighting soldier in the Union army. He enlisted in the 55th Massachusetts Infantry, made up largely of free African American men from the North. On Nov. 30, 1864, an exploding shell hit the 55th's color bearer at the Battle of Honey Hill, S.C. Smith caught the flag, carried it through the battle and was wounded. His actions exemplify the sacrifices and courage of the U.S. Colored Troops and he was promoted to color sergeant for his bravery.

Smith mustered out of the army in August 1865 and purchased land in Eddyville. He later was nominated for the Medal of Honor but inaccuracies and the omission of Smith's actions in the battle's official report caused him to be denied. Smith died in 1932 and was buried in Grand Rivers, Livingston County. His descendants received his posthumous Medal of Honor in 2001.

LYON & LIVINGSTON COUNTIES
— Andrew Jackson Smith, the son of an enslaved African American and her white owner, was born in Lyon County. Smith's father enlisted in the Confederate army and intended to take him along as a body servant. When Smith learned this, he ran away to a Union encampment in Smithland, Ky. There, he offered his services to Maj. John Warner.

Attached to the 41st Illinois Infantry, Smith saw the Tennessee battles of Fort Donelson and Shiloh in early

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