

An 'Iron Scout' Who Rode With Colonel Mosby

John Anderson Bradley enlisted for the war in Company A, 2nd South Carolina Cavalry known as 'Boykin's Rangers'. He was a cadet at the Citadel before deciding to join the Confederate army. Bradley was one of the twenty or so 'Iron Scouts' detailed in April of 1863 to scout and procure horses for the army. On May 3, 1863, the Iron Scouts joined in the fight at Warrenton Junction in support of Mosby's command. Following the end of the war, Bradley studied law and served as Justice of the Peace in DeLand, Florida.¹

17 September 1904: On this date, John A. Bradley filed for a Confederate pension.² He stated he was born October 28, 1842; had enlisted June 1, 1861 in Company A, 2nd South Carolina Cavalry; Captains A.H. Boykin and John Chesnut commanding; and stayed with the regiment until it disbanded May 1, 1865 in Chester, South Carolina. The doctor's certificate accompanying the application stated he had suffered with a stiff hip joint since 1870 and was now unable to do any labor. The doctor diagnosed that his problem was due to exposure and hardship during active service with the 2nd South Carolina Cavalry in the War Between the States.

To certify his service, he provided the following letters:

Columbia, May 29, 1899.

John A. Bradley was a member of the Second S.C. Regiment of Cavalry, and he served under my command during the civil war. It gives me pleasure to state that he was a true and gallant soldier.

Wade Hampton

Washington, D.C. July 17, 1892

This is to certify that John A. Bradley was a faithful and gallant soldier of the Confederate States Army, serving throughout the war in Company "A", Capt. John Chesnut commanding that said company, and was a part of the 2nd South Carolina which I had the honor to organize and command in Hampton's Brigade, Army of North Virginia, that said brigade was composed of the 1st and 2nd Cavalry, Cobb Legion, Jeff Davis Legion, and Phillips' Legion Cavalry – a finer body of men were never assembled in any army or in any war. John A. Bradley was a worthy comrade of the men in this splendid Brigade.

M.C. Butler

Maj. Gen'l, C.S.A.

M.C. Butler, Senator from South Carolina, and a Major General of Volunteers in the U.S. Army during the Spanish-American War, sent this accompanying letter with his certificate:

Washington D.C., July 17, 1892.

Mr. John A. Bradley:

DeLand, Florida

It gives me pleasure to send you the enclosed certificate. Your letter of the 10th Instant, was almost like a voice from the tomb, as I have not heard from you for years. I wish very much we could have a re-union of the 2nd S.C. Cavalry. Instead of the hale, active, aggressive young men we were, when last we met now nearly thirty years ago, we should confront each other as comparatively old men, gray with age and care, moving along surely to the final Camping Ground, still it would be a great pleasure to me. It is too much I suppose, scattered and thinned out as we are. How long have you lived in Florida and how is the world using you?

Very truly yours,

M.C. Butler

20 September 1905: The pension was approved for \$96 per annum.

17 July 1909: John A. Bradley re-filed for his pension.³ More detailed information was required at this time. He stated he had moved to Florida in 1886. He had enlisted in June 1861 at Richmond, Virginia in Company A, 2nd Regiment of South Carolina Cavalry. When asked about a discharge, he stated: "No discharge issued to any member of my command as same was withdrawn prior to surrender by Gen. Johnston and marched into S.C. where Regiment was disbanded at Chester, S.C. in April 1865."

21 August 1909: The pension was approved at \$120 per annum.

30 January 1911: Mary L. Bradley filed for a Widow's Pension.⁴

19 February 1911: The pension was approved for \$120 per annum with pay from December 1, 1910.

There was no death certificate in the pension file. However, since the widow's date of payment was back dated, John A. Bradley probably died on December 1, 1910.⁵

© Thomas J. Evans, SMHS member; co-author with James M. Moyer of *Mosby's Confederacy*, *Mosby Vignettes*, Volumes I to V.

¹ Keen, Hugh C. and Mewborn, Horace, *43rd Battalion Virginia Cavalry Mosby's Command*. Lynchburg, VA. H.E. Howard, Inc., 1993, page 299.

² Soldier's Application for Pension, #3495.

³ Soldiers Pension Claim, #3495.

⁴ Widow's Pension Claim, #3692.

⁵ Florida Confederate Pension Application File, #AO3692, contains all pension claims, applications and related correspondence.