

## Benjamin Franklin McQueen, 43<sup>rd</sup> Virginia Cavalry

On September 4, 1864, a detachment of Mosby's men from companies A and B were lounging in the woods near Myer's Ford on the Shenandoah River in Jefferson County, Virginia. (now West Virginia). They were resting near the road from the ford to Wilson's Gap in the Blue Ridge Mountains. The rangers, commanded by Lieutenant Joseph H. Nelson, were surprised by a detachment of Captain Richard Blazer's Independent Scouts. In the ensuing fight, the Confederates were overwhelmed by the Union cavalrymen, the result being two of Nelson's men were killed and several wounded and captured.<sup>1</sup>

A post-war chronicler of Mosby's rangers, James J. Williamson, who himself was wounded in the affair at Myer's Ford, identified one of the ranger fatalities only as "McKim, who broke his neck."<sup>2</sup> John Scott, in his post-war history of the partisans, identified the dead ranger as M'Quinn."<sup>3</sup> The ranger was actually Benjamin Franklin McQueen from neighboring Rappahannock County, Virginia.<sup>4</sup>

Benjamin Franklin McQueen was born about 1846 in Rappahannock County, the son of Boswell W. McQueen and Cassandra Deale. The McQueen family was residing in the Laurel Mills P.O. area of Rappahannock County in 1860.<sup>5</sup>

As the Civil War progressed into its third year, an older brother, Henry C. McQueen, enlisted in Company B, 6<sup>th</sup> Virginia Cavalry Regiment.<sup>6</sup> An uncle, William A. McQueen, had enlisted at the outset of the war, in Company I, 49<sup>th</sup> Virginia Infantry Regiment and had risen to the rank of a 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant. William A. McQueen resigned his commission with the 49<sup>th</sup> Virginia Infantry on November 27, 1863 after spending some time recruiting in Rappahannock County.<sup>7</sup>

William A. McQueen and his young nephew, Benjamin F. McQueen, joined Company B of the 43<sup>rd</sup> Virginia Cavalry likely in the spring of 1864 although no specific records exist today detailing the date of their enlistment.<sup>8</sup> Less than a year later, the younger McQueen would fall in the first of two minor defeats the rangers suffered at the hands of Blazer's Scouts.

It is not known whether or not William A. McQueen was involved in the affair at Myer's Ford on September 4, 1864. The final resting place of Benjamin F. McQueen is also unknown.

Let us never forget the sacrifice of Benjamin Franklin McQueen.

© Hugh Keen, March 2005

---

<sup>1</sup> Williamson, James J. *Mosby's Rangers*. 2nd ed., New York, N.Y.: Sturgis & Welton Company, 1909, pages 266-7.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, page 268.

<sup>3</sup> Scott, John. *Partisan Life with Col. John S. Mosby*. New York, N.Y.: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1867, page 290.

<sup>4</sup> Johnson, Elizabeth B. and Johnson, C. E., Jr. *Rappahannock County, Virginia – A Story*. Orange, Va.: n.p., 1981, 410.

<sup>5</sup> Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (CJCLDS), Salt Lake City, Utah. International Genealogical Index, Vol. V. On-line ed. ([www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org)). Individual Record #100307815547, "Boswell W. McQueen;" National Archives, Washington D.C., 1850 Federal Census, Rappahannock Co., Va., Series M432, Roll 972, page 86a; 1860 Federal Census, Rappahannock Co., Va., Series M563, Roll 1374, page 150.

<sup>6</sup> Musick, Michael P. *6th Virginia Cavalry*. Lynchburg, Va.: H. E. Howard, Inc., 1990, page 137.

<sup>7</sup> Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, Family Group Record #3117519, "Strother McQueen;" Kleese, Richard B. *49th Virginia Infantry*. Appomattox, Va.: H. E. Howard, Inc., 2002, page 115.

<sup>8</sup> National Archives, Washington D.C., Record Group 109, War Dept. Collection of Confederate Records, Compiled Military Service Records of the Officers and Men who served in the 43<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, Virginia Partisan Rangers, Microfilm #324, Roll #209, record #947.