

William Hall Turner, 43rd Virginia Cavalry

William Hall Turner was born June 13, 1841 in Harford County, Maryland, the son of William Fitzhugh Turner and Jane Smith Hall. Called 'Willie' and one of 10 children, his father died December 4, 1852 and his mother died in December 1857.¹ Willie Turner was a class of 1861 student at St. Paul's College Preparatory School in Concord, New Hampshire. He enrolled in Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut as a class of 1864 student.²

There is no record that William Hall Turner enlisted in a Maryland Confederate organization upon the outbreak of the Civil War. Instead, he apparently tried to make his way to Virginia, arriving at the home of his first cousin, Mary E. 'Ida' Dulany on July 30, 1861. Ida and her husband Henry G. 'Hal' Dulany resided at 'Oakley' located east of Upperville on the Little River Turnpike in northern Fauquier County, Virginia. Ida Dulany noted in her diary for July 31, 1861: "Willie Turner wishes to join a cavalry company. He has just escaped from Maryland."³ In September 1861, Turner joined his brother-in-law, William Carrere, on the staff of Brigadier General Isaac R. Trimble.⁴

Willie Turner made frequent trips back to Fauquier County to visit his relatives. On September 2, 1862, he was visiting his uncle Edward Carter Turner of 'Kinlock' at which time the two of them took a trip to the Second Manassas battlefield to try to locate the grave of cousin Wilson Turner, son of Henry Smith Turner of St. Louis, who had fallen in that battle.⁵

Sometime during the summer of 1863, Willie Turner joined Mosby's 43rd Virginia Cavalry Battalion. He formally enlisted in Company B on October 1, 1863 at Scuffleburg in Fauquier County by Captain William R. Smith. Turner appears as present on the October-December, 1863 muster roll.⁶

William Hall Turner joined with 105 other rangers on January 9, 1864 in the ill-fated January 10th attack on the cavalry camp of Major Henry A. Cole's 2nd Maryland Home Guard Battalion located at Loudoun Heights south of Harpers Ferry, West Virginia. Turner was mortally wounded during the battle and died shortly thereafter.⁷ The final resting-place of William Hall Turner is unknown.

Editor's notes: There are no Confederate records indicating William Hall Turner's service on General Trimble's staff; only the reference in Ida Dulany's diary and the service record noted of Turner's brother-in-law, William Carrere.

William Hall Turner was related to several Thomas Turner's who served as staff members for generals in the Army of Northern Virginia. His older brother Captain Thomas Shirley Turner, known as 'Baltimore Tom', served in the escort party for General Robert E. Lee.⁸ Cousin Thomas Theodore Turner (brother of Wilson Turner noted above), known as 'St. Louis Tom', served as a 1st Lieutenant and aide-de-camp to Major General Richard S. Ewell.⁹ Another cousin, Thomas Baynton Turner, known as 'Kinlock Tom', was the son of Edward Carter Turner and served as a Lieutenant and aide-de-camp on the staff of Major General J.E.B. Stuart before joining Mosby's Rangers.¹⁰ William Thomas Turner, known as 'Prince George's Tom', who was mortally wounded along side William Hall Turner at Loudoun Heights, was unrelated to the above mentioned Turner's.

Although William Hall Turner's final resting-place is unknown, it could be assumed that his remains may have been returned to Maryland and buried near his parents. This is based on the efforts expended by the Turner family in the area to claim the body of his cousin Wilson Turner from the Second Manassas battlefield and have it returned to his home in St. Louis, Missouri. Likely, no less was done for William Hall Turner, especially given he had a brother on General Robert E. Lee's staff.¹¹

Let us never forget the sacrifice of William Hall Turner.

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¹ Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah. First Presbyterian Church, Baltimore, Maryland. "Church Records, 1767-1879." Microfilm #13699, item 5, page 51; Ibid, International Genealogical Index, Vol. V. Online ed. (www.familysearch.org). IGI Family Record "William Fitzhugh Turner;" National Archives, 1840 Federal Census, Harford County, Maryland, Series M704, Roll 167, page 29; Ibid, 1850 Federal Census Harford County, Maryland, Series M432, Roll 294, page 177; "Genealogies of Virginia Families from the Virginia Magazine of History and Biography," Vol. V. Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc., 1981, page 598.

² Information provided by Horatio W. (Harry)Turner III, Easton, Maryland; Records of St. Paul's School Alumni Association, Concord, NH; Records of Trinity College Alumni Association, Hartford CT.

³ "The Diary of Mrs. Ida Dulaney (sic.) Oakley Plantation Upperville, Va." Typescript transcription, part I, page 10.

⁴ National Archives, Washington, D.C. Record Group 109, War Dept. Collection of Confederate Records. Compiled Military Service Records of Confederate General and Staff Officers and Non-regimental Enlisted Men, Microfilm 331, Roll 48.

⁵ "The Diary of Mrs. Ida Dulaney (sic.) Oakley Plantation Upperville, Va." Typescript transcription, part I, pages 27-9, 39, 49, Part II, pages 12-13, 18, 64; Ramey, Emily G. and Gott, John K., eds. "The Years of Anguish, Fauquier County, Virginia, 1861 – 1865." Warrenton, Va.: The Fauquier Democrat, 1965, page 21.

⁶ National Archives, Washington, D.C. Record Group 109, War Dept. Collection of Confederate Records. Compiled Military Service Records for soldiers serving in the 43rd Battalion, Virginia partisan Rangers, Microfilm 324, Roll 209, record #1419.

⁷ Keen, Hugh C. and Mewborn, Horace, *43rd Battalion Virginia Cavalry Mosby's Command*. Lynchburg, VA: H. E. Howard, Inc., 1993, pages 100-103

⁸ National Archives, Washington, D.C. Record Group 109, War Dept. Collection of Confederate Records. Compiled Military Service Records of Confederate General and Staff Officers and Non-regimental Enlisted Men, Microfilm 331, Roll 252.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Trout, Robert J. *They Followed the Plume – The Story of J.E.B. Stuart and his Staff*. Mechanicsburg, Pa.: Stockpole Books, 1993, pages 263-268.

¹¹ Opinions of the editor only.