

## ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY'S FIRST CONFEDERATE BURIALS

By

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The first Confederate soldier buried at Arlington National Cemetery was private Thomas G. Holman, Company F, 4th Virginia Cavalry. Holman was buried on Tuesday, May 17, 1864, the fifth day of soldier burials on the Arlington Estate, home of Robert E. Lee and his family for thirty years before the Civil War. Holman was the 21st soldier, but the first Confederate soldier, buried at Arlington. Sometime between the end of the Civil War and 1900, Holman was exhumed and reinterred in a separate cemetery. Accordingly, Michael Quinn, of the 13th Mississippi Infantry Regiment, who was buried the day after Holman, is the remaining "first" official Confederate burial at Arlington National Cemetery.<sup>1</sup> Both Quinn and Holman fought under the command of General Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia. Both were buried on their commanding officer's wife's Northern Virginia estate. One hundred and twenty-five years after their burials, the stories of both Quinn and Holman deserve to be told.

### **Private Thomas G. Holman**

The story of Thomas G. Holman's military service begins in Richmond, Virginia in 1861. Holman was recruited by Captain John H. Guy of the Goochland Light Artillery on June 18, 1861, at the Baptist College in Richmond. His enlistment was for 12 months.<sup>2</sup> Holman's unit initially saw no fighting as they were in "camp at Lidney Church on plank road above Richmond" for July and August 1861.<sup>3</sup> On August 25, 1861, the Goochland Light Artillery received orders "to proceed to western Virginia and report to General John B. Floyd."<sup>4</sup>

### **Commendation at Carnifax Ferry**

On September 8, 1861, Holman and his comrades of the Goochland Light Artillery united with approximately 2,000 Confederates at Carnifax Ferry, Virginia (now West Virginia). Two days later the unit was engaged in its first action — the battle of Carnifax Ferry. In this small engagement, attacking Union soldiers under General W.S. Rosecrans were repulsed several times. The Confederate artillery present were the four pieces of artillery of the Goochland Light Artillery.<sup>5</sup> During the night, the outnumbered Confederates withdrew. However, Holman and his fellow soldiers performed well

enough to warrant the following commendation from General Floyd, their commanding officer at Carnifax Ferry:

[W]hile it is impossible to give praise to one portion of the force engaged over another, it is but proper to say that the artillery behaved with the greatest bravery and efficiency; that under the command of Captain Guy, who had reached me only two days before and were for the first time under fire, behaved themselves in a manner worthy of all praise.<sup>6</sup>

### **To Fort Donelson with the Goochland Light Artillery**

The winter of 1861-1862 was rough on the men and horses of the Goochland Light Artillery. An inspection report on General Floyd's troops dated December 14, 1861, states that the men are suffering a great deal of "hardship and exposure . . . [and] now measles."<sup>7</sup> The artillery horses are cited as "entirely unfit for service."<sup>8</sup> Nevertheless, the artillery unit travelled westward to Kentucky. As General Ulysses Grant's Army of the Cumberland approached Fort Donelson, Tennessee, the Goochland Light Artillery was ordered to the fort from Russellville, Kentucky, on February 7, 1862.<sup>9</sup> Holman and his fellow artillerists were deployed within the fort.<sup>10</sup>

On February 16, 1862, Thomas Holman and the outnumbered Confederate defenders of Fort Donelson surrendered to General Grant's Union forces. Holman was sent to Camp Douglas, Illinois as a prisoner of war. After spending six and a half months as a prisoner, he was exchanged at Vicksburg, Mississippi, on September 6, 1862.<sup>11</sup> It was fortunate for Holman that mass prisoner exchanges were permitted at this time. The federal government would soon end prisoner exchanges as the practice appeared more beneficial to the manpower-poor Confederacy.

Private Holman returned to Richmond after his exchange at Vicksburg. On October 22, 1862, he was admitted to General Hospital No. 6 in Richmond. Company muster rolls list Holman "present" in December 1862. However, from January to April 1863, he was listed as "absent sick on Surgeon's Certificate."<sup>12</sup> Apparently Holman was quite sick and was not "playing old soldier" i.e., feigning sickness.

### **Calvary Transfer**

On November 18, 1863, Thomas Holman was transferred from the Goochland Light Artillery to Company F (Goochland Light Dragoons) of the 4th Virginia Cavalry, one of the South's most illustrious fighting units.<sup>13</sup> The 4th Virginia Cavalry rode with General J.E.B. Stuart on all his raids. In Company A (Prince William Cavalry) were the ardent Towles brothers, three of whom were killed in action.<sup>14</sup> In Company E (Powhatan Troop)

was the famous scout and spy Frank Stringfellow. The federal government placed a \$10,000 bounty on Stringfellow, who became a post-war Episcopal minister and author.<sup>15</sup> Also in the 4th Virginia Cavalry regiment was the most famous of all Confederate cavalry companies, the Black Horse Troop (Company H) from Warrenton, Virginia.<sup>16</sup> Union soldiers came to fear the Black Horse Cavalry whose battle exploits “earned it the title of ‘The Bravest of the Brave.’”<sup>17</sup> However, Holman seemingly did not transfer into this distinguished regiment for glory. He was transferred into the unit per “order of General [Robert E.] Lee.”<sup>18</sup> It appears that the transfer or exchange was instigated by Captain Jonathan Talley — a newly promoted captain of the Goochland Light Artillery. Holman was exchanged or traded for John W. Talley, the captain’s son.<sup>19</sup> There is little information on Holman in his new unit other than that he was “present” for the Virginia or Spring Campaign of 1864.<sup>20</sup> It would be the final campaign for Private Holman.

On the third day of fighting at Spotsylvania Court House, May 10, 1864, Thomas G. Holman was wounded and captured. He was transported more than fifty miles to Old Capitol Prison in Washington, D.C., where he was admitted on May 14. The Virginia cavalryman died from his wound on May 16, 1864.<sup>21</sup> According to federal records, Holman’s personal effects consisted of a Confederate note for \$15.50 and 20 cents in currency. Holman had been paid \$31.20 on April 16, 1864, his pay calculated at \$12 per month — standard pay for a Confederate cavalry private.<sup>22</sup> Holman was buried the next day at Arlington Cemetery; however, he was disinterred sometime between the end of the Civil War and October 1900.<sup>23</sup> The records do not show who removed the body or where he is now buried.

### **Private Mike Quinn**

Since Thomas Holman’s body was removed, Mike Quinn, became the remaining “first” Confederate soldier buried in Arlington Burial Grounds. On Wednesday, May 18, 1864, Quinn was interred among Union soldiers — soldiers such as Chauncey Rice (Company K, 3rd Michigan Infantry) and John F. Kennedy (Company F, 2nd United States Sharpshooters).<sup>24</sup> A Union Chaplain, Reverend E.W. Jackson, was ordered to conduct a 2:00 P.M. funeral service for Chauncey Rice, the fifty-eighth burial at Arlington.<sup>25</sup> Quinn, the sixty-first burial, was interred the same day as Rice, Kennedy and nineteen other Union soldiers.<sup>26</sup> He was regarded as the enemy, a rebel. Even the top of his wooden grave marker proclaimed “Rebel.”<sup>27</sup> Surely none among the Union burial detail sympathized with this sole Confederate private. It would rest upon Chaplain Jackson to dare pray for a deceased enemy.

Little is known about Mike Quinn’s life prior to 1860 except that he was an unmarried Irish immigrant. Federal census records for Lauderdale Station,

Mississippi, dated July 4, 1860, list the thirty year-old Quinn as boarding with two Alabama-born doctors. Dr. L.P. Kennedy, age twenty-nine, was the head of the household. Dr. Kennedy's estate consisted of real property valued at \$13,000 and personal property valued at \$10,000 which included nine slaves. The other doctor was a thirty-three year-old owner of three slaves who was listed in the census as another J.F. Kennedy.<sup>28</sup>

### **From Ditcher to Zouave**

Of the 259 adult white males in Lauderdale Station, Mike Quinn was among the poorest and his landlord, Dr. L.P. Kennedy, was among the wealthiest. According to the 1860 federal census and Quinn's Confederate Service Records, Quinn is listed as a ditcher with no real or personal property. The only other ditcher in Lauderdale Station was a Scotsman.<sup>29</sup> It would appear that in the well-defined social hierarchy of the ante-bellum South, Mike Quinn was barely above slave status. Yet Quinn would be among the first to enlist for the Confederate cause as he enlisted in the local state militia, the Lauderdale Zouaves, on March 30, 1861, a full twelve days before Fort Sumter was fired upon and the war began.<sup>30</sup>

On May 13, 1861, the military status of Quinn and the Lauderdale Zouaves changed from state militia to a company in service for one year for the Confederate States of America.<sup>31</sup> Quinn's company of roughly 80 men was organized in Corinth, Mississippi into a regiment of 640 men known as the 13th Mississippi Infantry.<sup>32</sup> The regiment could now be ordered out of Mississippi to protect the newly created Confederacy. Said orders would soon place Quinn and the 13th Mississippi on a train in the middle of July 1861. Destination — Manassas Junction.<sup>33</sup>

Quinn's service records list him present at the battles of 1st Manassas (Bull Run) on July 21, 1861 and Leesburg (Ball's Bluff) on October 21-22, 1861. Although Quinn was at these Confederate victories his regiment arrived at Manassas too late to be engaged in action and his company, Company F, was held in reserve at Ball's Bluff. The first real action for the 13th Mississippi would be the 1862 defense of Richmond, Virginia, the capital of the Confederacy.<sup>34</sup>

### **In Battle and In Jail**

Confederate regiments like the 13th Mississippi were heavily engaged from June 25 to July 1, 1862, in an attempt to drive the Union Army of the Potomac from the outskirts of Richmond. According to Confederate service records, Quinn was present during the so-called Seven Days' Battle. The 13th Mississippi was engaged at Garnett's Farm on June 27, 1862, Savage Station on June 29, and the assault on Malvern Hill on July 1. The

regiment suffered 135 casualties during the Seven Days' Battle. Quinn emerged unscathed in battle but not in deed. Something happened either during the battle or immediately thereafter to cause Quinn to be "[f]rom 7 Day's to October [1862], in arrest in Richmond."<sup>35</sup> Accordingly, Quinn remained behind, in jail, during Lee's Maryland Campaign. Many of Quinn's comrades did not return from Antietam (Sharpsburg) — the single bloodiest day in American history. At Sharpsburg the 13th Mississippi sustained 62 casualties out of 202 soldiers in action, or a loss of 31%.<sup>36</sup>

A year and a half of hard fighting remained for Mike Quinn following his release from jail in October 1862. For this arduous fighting Quinn received \$11 pay per month — standard pay for a Confederate infantry private. Quinn was present at 1st Fredericksburg (December 11, 1862), and 2nd Fredericksburg or Chancellorsville (May 3, 1863) where he was wounded.<sup>37</sup> During the Confederate victory at Chancellorsville, Quinn was part of Barksdale's Mississippi Brigade stationed behind the historic stone wall below Marye's Heights.<sup>38</sup> The presence of Confederate soldiers on the Union left flank enabled Stonewall Jackson to conduct his famous flanking movement along the Plank Road. The post-battle scene at Chancellorsville led one of Stonewall Jackson's soldiers, John Casier, to write that he "wondered whether the American people were civilized or not . . . and I came to the conclusion that we were barbarians, North and South alike."<sup>39</sup>

After the battle of Chancellorsville Quinn again missed a Confederate invasion of the North. This time, during the Gettysburg campaign, Quinn remained in Virginia and was listed as "absent sick."<sup>40</sup> He was probably recovering from his recent wound as 481 members of his regiment marched north.<sup>41</sup> Many of Quinn's comrades did not return from Gettysburg where the 13th Mississippi suffered the loss of 39 killed or mortally wounded, 51 wounded, and 75 both wounded and captured. In addition, their brigade general, William Barksdale, was killed.<sup>42</sup>

In the late summer of 1863 a portion of Lee's Army of Northern Virginia was transferred to the western theatre of the war. With the soldiers travelling by rail under General Longstreet was Mike Quinn. Service records cite Quinn as "Irishman" and "present" during the September 20, 1863, Confederate victory at Chickamauga, Georgia, the November 18, 1863, battle at Knoxville, Tennessee, and the ill-fated assault on Fort Saunders (Tennessee) on November 29, 1863. In early December 1863, Irish Mike returned to Virginia for his final campaign.<sup>43</sup>

### **Final Chapter: The Virginia Campaign**

On May 4, 1864, General Ulysses Grant's Army of the Potomac crossed the Rapidan River at Germanna Ford (Virginia Route 3, approximately

thirteen miles southeast from Culpeper) in the initial phase of what is known as the Virginia or Spring Campaign of 1864.<sup>44</sup> It would be the Civil War's most vicious campaign in regard to casualties. The campaign would also prove to be the final chapter for the political existence of the Confederacy, for its slave-based economy, for civilization as the South knew it, and for private Mike Quinn.

During the fighting at Spotsylvania Court House on May 8, 1864, Mike Quinn was wounded and captured. He was admitted to the USA Hospital Steamer, "Connecticut" on May 13, 1864, with a "shoulder wound." The same day he was transported to Armory Square General Hospital in Washington, D.C. where doctors diagnosed a "contused wound." Quinn was placed in the hospital ward's chapel, possibly to separate him from wounded Union soldiers. Hospital records list Quinn as: "Reb . . . Age 33." He languished at Armory Square Hospital for three days.<sup>45</sup>

In the short life of the Confederacy Mike Quinn had been present at several major Confederate victories. Images of major battles which crowned the Confederate cause — 1st Manassas, Seven Days, Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, Chickamauga — were now fading rapidly during Mike Quinn's waning hours in the hospital ward's chapel. Before the drum's last roll, Quinn managed to provide a hospital worker with the name of his next of kin: Bridgett Quinn of Gallow Springs, Ohio. When Quinn died on May 16, 1864, his only possessions were \$11.00 in Confederate money, five cents in silver and one Confederate Due Bill for \$25.<sup>46</sup> (This researcher has not been able to identify Bridgett Quinn's relationship.)

### Final Resting Place

On May 18, 1864, the 6th day of burials at Arlington Burial Grounds, Mike Quinn, private, Co. F, 13th Mississippi Volunteers, Confederate States of America, was interred on land owned by the wife of Robert E. Lee, his Commanding General.<sup>47</sup> Confederate soldiers who had died in 1864 and 1865 while in local Washington prisons were buried throughout Arlington Cemetery in no systematic manner. In October 1900, Quinn and 124 "rebels" buried in Arlington Cemetery were exhumed and reinterred in a Confederate section one-half mile to the rear of Arlington House. In addition, Confederate soldiers were disinterred from the cemetery at the U.S. Soldier's Home in Washington, D.C. and were reinterred in the Confederate section, Section 16, also known as Jackson Circle.<sup>48</sup> There are now 482 persons buried in Section 16: 46 officers, 351 enlisted men, 58 wives, 15 southern civilians, and 12 unknown Confederate soldiers.<sup>49</sup> Mike Quinn's remains are in grave 157, next to one of two magnolia trees, the state tree and flower of Mississippi. Quinn's headstone simply states "Michael Quinn Miss CSA." It is

Left: "First" Confederate burial at Arlington National Cemetery. Mike Quinn, Co. F, 13th Miss. Infantry, died May 16, 1864 from wounds received on May 8 at Spotsylvania Court House. The symbol on the headstone indicates that he was a member of the armed forces of the Confederate States of America. Below: A battle line of Confederate soldiers at the 1989 Reenactment of the Battle of Spotsylvania Court House. The first two Confederate soldiers buried in Arlington National Cemetery fell mortally wounded at Spotsylvania 125 years earlier.



unclear why “Michael” is inscribed on the headstone rather than “Mike.” All available census and military records refer to “Mike Quinn.”

On June 4, 1914, the anniversary of Confederate President Jefferson Davis’ birthday, a monument at the center of Jackson Circle was unveiled at a ceremony conducted by the United Daughters of the Confederacy. According to the Daughters, the monument was to honor the common soldier. A Confederate veteran, Reverend Randolph McKim, prepared the inscription on the rear of the monument which reads:

NOT FOR FAME OR REWARD  
NOT FOR PLACE OR FOR RANK  
OR GOADED BY NECESSITY  
BUT IN SIMPLE  
OBEDIENCE TO DUTY  
AS THEY UNDERSTOOD IT  
THESE MEN SUFFERED ALL  
SACRIFICED ALL  
DARED ALL AND DIED<sup>50</sup>

This inscription is a great honor to the memory of Confederate soldiers, or any soldiers. Surely privates Thomas G. Holman of Virginia and Mike Quinn of Mississippi sacrificed all at Spotsylvania Court House, dared all for their country — and died.

### Notes and References

\*George W. Dodge is an Arlington Special Justice and lawyer. He is chairman of the Civil War Heritage Committee of the Society.

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<sup>1</sup>Register of Burials, Department of the Army, Arlington National Cemetery.

<sup>2</sup>Military Service Record of Thomas G. Holman, Goochland Light Artillery, National Archives, RG 109.

<sup>3</sup>Military Service Record of Captain John H. Guy, Goochland Light Artillery, National Archives, RG 109.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup>Military Service Record of Thomas G. Holman, Goochland Light Artillery; and U. S. War Department, *War of the Rebellion: Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, 128 vols. (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1881) Series I, Vol. 5, p. 147 and p. 995.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.* p. 147.

<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.* p. 995.

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.* p. 996.

<sup>9</sup>E.B. Long, *The Civil War Day by Day* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Co. 1971) p. 168.

<sup>10</sup>*War of the Rebellion*, Series I, Vol. 7, pp. 359-60.

- <sup>11</sup>Military Service Record of Thomas G. Holman, Goochland Light Artillery, National Archives.
- <sup>12</sup>*Ibid.*
- <sup>13</sup>Military Service Record of Thomas G. Holman, 4th Virginia Cavalry, National Archives, RG 109.
- <sup>14</sup>Kenneth L. Stiles, *4th Virginia Cavalry: The Virginia Regimental Histories Series* (Lynchburg, Va.: H.E. Howard, Inc., 1985) Introduction, p. 1; pp. 139-40.
- <sup>15</sup>*Ibid.* p. 1; p. 137. Rev. Stringfellow published his book, *War Reminiscences* — the life of a Confederate scout inside the enemy's lines, in 1892. Also, two authors, Riley B. Shepard and James D. Peavey, have written biographies of Stringfellow.
- <sup>16</sup>*Ibid.* p. 1.
- <sup>17</sup>James I. Robertson, Jr., *Civil War Sites in Virginia* (Charlottesville, Va.: University of Virginia Press, 1982) p. 23.
- <sup>18</sup>Military Service Record of Thomas G. Holman, 4th Virginia Cavalry, National Archives.
- <sup>19</sup>Military Service Record of John W. Talley, 4th Virginia Cavalry, National Archives, RG 109.
- <sup>20</sup>Military Service Record of Thomas G. Holman, 4th Virginia Cavalry, National Archives.
- <sup>21</sup>*Ibid.*
- <sup>22</sup>*Ibid.*
- <sup>23</sup>Register of Burials, Arlington National Cemetery. A list of all Confederate soldiers buried in Arlington was published in the August 1900 edition of *Confederate Veteran Magazine*, Vol. VIII, p. 372. Holman is not listed.
- <sup>24</sup>Register of Burials, Arlington National Cemetery.
- <sup>25</sup>Hospital records of Chauncey Rice, Co. K, 3rd Michigan Infantry, in the private collection of George Dodge.
- <sup>26</sup>Register of Burials, Arlington National Cemetery.
- <sup>27</sup>Arlington Cemetery's original wooden grave markers for Confederate soldiers were inscribed with "Rebel." Arlington National Cemetery Historian, Thomas Sherlock.
- <sup>28</sup>1860 federal census, Lauderdale County, Mississippi, Roll 585, p. 41; and 1860 federal slave schedule, Lauderdale County, Roll 599, p. 22, National Archives.
- <sup>29</sup>*Ibid.*; and Military Service Record of Mike Quinn, 13th Mississippi Infantry, National Archives, RG 109.
- <sup>30</sup>Military Service Record of Mike Quinn.
- <sup>31</sup>*Ibid.*
- <sup>32</sup>Joseph H. Crute, Jr., *Units of the Confederate States Army (Midlothian, Va.: Derwent Books, 1987) p. 174.*
- <sup>33</sup>*Ibid.*
- <sup>34</sup>*Military Service Record of Mike Quinn, National Archives.*
- <sup>35</sup>*Ibid.*
- <sup>36</sup>Crute, *Units of the Confederate States Army*, p. 174.
- <sup>37</sup>Military Service Record of Mike Quinn, National Archives.
- <sup>38</sup>Joseph P. Cullen, "The Battle of Chancellorsville," *Civil War Times Illustrated*, Vol. VII, No. 2 (May 1968) p. 35.
- <sup>39</sup>John O. Casler, *Four Years in the Stonewall Brigade* (Dayton, Ohio: Morningside Press, 1982) p. 151.
- <sup>40</sup>Military Service Record of Mike Quinn, National Archives.
- <sup>41</sup>Crute, *Units of the Confederate States Army*, p. 174.
- <sup>42</sup>Robert K. Krick, *The Gettysburg Death Roster* (Dayton, Ohio: Morningside Press, 1985) p. 6
- <sup>43</sup>Military Service Record of Mike Quinn, National Archives.
- <sup>44</sup>William Frassanito, *Grant and Lee — The Virginia Campaigns 1864-1865*, (New York:

Charles Scribner's Sons, 1983) p. 40.

<sup>45</sup>Military Service Record of Mike Quinn, National Archives.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid.

<sup>47</sup>Register of Burials, Arlington National Cemetery.

<sup>48</sup>William A. Gordon, "Reburial of Confederates in Arlington Cemetery," *Confederate Veteran Magazine* Vol. VIII, pp. 371-72.

<sup>49</sup>Records, Department of the Army, Arlington National Cemetery.

<sup>50</sup>Ibid. For the Memorial Day observance, American flags are placed at each Confederate grave. However, two Confederate memorial committees annually honor the Confederate dead in Section 16 by placing wreaths and Confederate flags on the anniversary of Jefferson Davis' birthday, June 4.



#### WHY DO WE CALL IT?

### CHAIN BRIDGE

The first bridge at this site — a favorite river-crossing point for centuries — was built in 1797 and was known as "the Fall's Bridge" from its proximity to the Little Falls of the Potomac. It was carried away by high water in 1804, and a second bridge, built in 1808, was suspended by iron chains anchored in stone abutments. It was this bridge which became known as "the Chain Bridge" — a name which has persisted although chains have not been used in its construction since 1852. The present bridge, built in 1938, however, still makes use of masonry piers which photographic evidence proves were in place 100 years ago.

#### WHY DO WE CALL IT?

### KEY BRIDGE

The bridge which was built in 1923 to replace the old Aqueduct Bridge across the Potomac at Rosslyn was named the Frances Scott Key Bridge in honor of the author of the "Star Spangled Banner" since his home stood near the Georgetown approach. Although the superstructure of the Aqueduct Bridge was torn down in 1934, the piers are still visible in the river.

The Aqueduct Bridge had been given that name when it was built in 1843 to connect the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal in Georgetown with the canal being built from Rosslyn to Alexandria. A trough held water, permitting barges to be towed across the bridge. Foot and wheeled traffic crossed on a wooden structure built over the trough.