

DAVID BAILEY FREEMAN - THE YOUNGEST CONFEDERATE SOLDIER

MAY 1, 1851 - JUNE 18, 1929

"I hadn't lost any war and wasn't hunting any..."

"I attracted much attention. Some would give me presents ... And some would observe that I ought to be at home with my mother."

His fellow Confederates called him "Little Dave." He was the smallest soldier in his unit, and he rode a spotted pony. He later recalled that whenever his unit rode into a town, "By the diminutive size of myself and steed, I attracted much attention." During his two year enlistment, Little Dave witnessed the bloody fighting at Chickamauga, and during the last months of the war he fought against Sherman's Campaign for Atlanta, seeing action in Resaca, Cassville, and Kennesaw Mountain with General Joseph E. Johnston.

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"Little Dave" was David Bailey Freeman, the youngest Confederate soldier, and the youngest soldier of both armies to serve in the American

Civil War. He enlisted at the ripe old age of eleven. Today, he is one of the "forgotten folk" who are buried in Cartersville's Oak Hill Cemetery.

David's brother Madison Montgomery Freeman, almost a dozen years David's senior, raised a cavalry company in Gilmer County. Madison worried about offering his unit for Confederate service because he suffered from "White Swelling" (Phlebitis, an inflammation of the veins in his legs) so much so that he was almost crippled at times and was afraid he

would not be accepted for service. Madison asked their mother if David could accompany him to camp as his aide. David was then only ten years old, a month shy of his eleventh birthday, yet his mother consented. Offered the position of marker with

the company's surveyor team, David enlisted in the 6th Georgia Cavalry, Company D, on May 16, 1862, just two weeks after his eleventh birthday.

He has been proclaimed "The Youngest Confederate Soldier" His career included Newspaper Publisher, Editor, and Writer. He served as Mayor of Calhoun, Georgia, Cedartown, Georgia and Cartersville, Georgia. He co-authored *General Nathan Bedford Forrest - The Wizard of the Saddle*.

Late on the evening of June 18th, 1929, at the age of 77, General David Bailey Freeman, the Civil War's youngest Confederate soldier, quietly and peacefully died of a heart attack in his apartment in Atlanta, Georgia. He had been ill for several days and had just returned from a Confederate Veterans Reunion in North Carolina just ten days earlier. His wife had preceded him in death seven years earlier. He was survived by several grandchildren and two great grandchildren. Several obituaries and eulogies were published in area

newspapers around Calhoun, Atlanta, and Cartersville as many in David's family were in the newspaper business. Many of the obituaries named David as "General Freeman" and all pointed to his youthful service to the Confederate States of America.



GRAVE OF DAVID BAILEY FREEMAN

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