

Our next story takes us to **Isaac Davis Stamps**. This really made sense because it involves Gettysburg as well.

Isaac was born on April 23<sup>rd</sup> 1828 in Woodville, Wilkinson County Mississippi. His grandparents Samuel and Jane Davis settled in Woodville after leaving Kentucky in 1812. They helped to operate and maintain a plantation which included black slaves. Samuel and Jane's youngest son was Confederate president Jefferson Davis. Isaac was the nephew of Jefferson Davis.

In September of 1861, Isaac organized a company of men from Wilkinson County. They traveled to Manassas, Virginia and consolidated with the 1<sup>st</sup> Mississippi battalion. This regiment was then re-designated the 21<sup>st</sup> Mississippi infantry in April of 1862. Isaac was appointed Captain and his company became company E, also known as the Hurricane Rifles.

The 21<sup>st</sup> Mississippi's baptism of fire came on July 1<sup>st</sup> 1862, at the Battle of Malvern Hill where they sustained heavy casualties: 32 killed and 119 wounded. Two months later they participated in the Battle of Antietam. They arrived at 9 AM on the morning of September 17<sup>th</sup> and took a position in the West Woods. Heavy fighting would continue until noon. Though they were driven back, the brigade managed to hold this position until the following evening. On the night of September 18<sup>th</sup> they retired back across the Potomac River and marched with the Army back into Virginia. After the retreat to Virginia they were ordered to Fredericksburg November 18. At the beginning of the battle of Fredericksburg, December 11, 1862, the Twenty-first had an honorable part in the remarkable performance of Barksdale's brigade in checking until late in the evening the building of pontoon bridges from the opposite shore and the crossing of the Federal advance. The right wing, Companies A, Lieutenant W. Wolcott; C, Lieut. J. J. Lengofield; H, Lieut. S. B. Bryan; F, Capt. W. H. Fitzgerald; G, Capt. W. H. Dudley, all under the command of Maj. D. N. Moody, took position in the town in support of Major Govan of the Seventeenth, and from four in the morning till sometime after noon were exposed to the heaviest fire of artillery they had ever experienced. Lieut. S. B. Bryan was killed. The remaining companies, under Colonel Humphreys, were stationed in the town to support Colonel Fiser's wing of the Seventeenth. After the enemy had effected a landing Humphreys' men were in a hot fight in the streets. Capt. R. C. Green was killed in command of his company. Captains Gibson, Sims and **Stamps** with their companies checked the Federal advance and held it until about seven in the evening. The 21<sup>st</sup> Mississippi headed west on Amelia Street towards the Sunken Road with the 20<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts in pursuit. The regiment lost 8 killed, 25 wounded and 13 captured. This was the first urban warfare, house to house door to door fighting in American history. In April of 1863, the 21<sup>st</sup> Mississippi went with Longstreet for the Suffolk Expedition. This expedition was Longstreet's first independent command and ended with mixed results. He was able to protect Richmond and succeeded in foraging; however, the main objective was Suffolk which remained in Union hands. Longstreet's next independent command would be the Knoxville Campaign after the Battle of Chickamauga which was a complete failure.

Longstreet's 1<sup>st</sup> Corps joined Lee's army in June 1863 at Culpeper, Virginia and prepared for the northern invasion.

At the Battle of Gettysburg, Longstreet's 1<sup>st</sup> Corps arrived on the battlefield at 3 PM on the second day of battle July 2<sup>nd</sup> 1863. Isaac and the 21<sup>st</sup> Mississippi were attached to McLaw's Division and Barksdale's brigade. The regiment commander was Col. Benjamin Humphreys. Along with the 21<sup>st</sup> were the 13<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Mississippi regiments. Isaac commanded company E.

At 6 PM on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, Longstreet started his assault on the Union extreme left flank. McLaw's division unexpectedly ran into Sickles' 3<sup>rd</sup> Corps at the Peach orchard. Sickles and his command were stretched thin. Barksdale's brigade approached the Emmitsburg Road near the intersection of the Wheatfield road. On the northeast corner (Where the Wentz farm stands today) lay the 2<sup>nd</sup> New Hampshire infantry with the 141<sup>st</sup> Pennsylvania facing south on the Wheatfield road. The 21<sup>st</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Mississippians with the rebel yell, slammed into these union troops and proceeded to push them back. It wasn't long before the entire union line began to collapse and were in full retreat. Barksdale's brigade pressed the Yankees all the way to Plum Run. The 21<sup>st</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> after running through the Peach Orchard ran into the 9<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts battery. It is here that the 21<sup>st</sup> took their most casualties. The infamous 1<sup>st</sup> Minnesota had plugged that gap long enough for re-enforcements to arrive and repulsed the confederate onslaught. Barksdale was mortally wounded in this action.

The brigade sent in 424 men during this battle at the Peach Orchard. 18 were killed and 85 wounded. Unfortunately Isaac Davis Stamps was one of those killed. It is unknown exactly where Isaac met his last breath during this battle, probably when they met the artillery placement. There doesn't appear to be any documents of Jefferson Davis's reaction to the loss of his nephew.

Article written by Brad Cox

Edited and approved by Jim Davis.