

Corporal Silas Rippeon, Co "E"

Corporal Silas Rippeon was born about 1837 in Frederick County, Maryland, to David and Sarah Ann Cain Rippeon, though some records show a birth as late as 1842. His father was a cooper, making wooden casks, barrels and similar containers. Silas married Mary Jane Rippeon (a cousin) January 11, 1862, and daughter Fannie Louise was born in 1863. By then Silas was a member of the 7th Maryland Volunteer Infantry, having enlisted as a Private in Company E August 30, 1862. Company E (as well as Companies B and G) were recruited primarily from Frederick County. Captain David Theodore Bennett, a carpenter by trade, was the commander of Company E.

Silas served faithfully during the next three years and was promoted to Corporal in May 1864. At the time the 7th Maryland was heavily engaged in the Battle of the Wilderness May 5-7, 1864. Major Edward Mobley (the former Company A commander) wrote in his diary that the 7th Maryland lost 85 men on May 5 alone (4 officers wounded, 7 men killed, 54 wounded, 18 missing and 2 unknown). Among the wounded was Captain Bennett of Company E, shot in the face while trading pistol shots with a Confederate officer. For his gallantry that day Bennett would be promoted to Lieutenant Colonel of the 7th Maryland. Some of the wounded had to be rescued from fires that broke out in the dry underbrush of the Wilderness.

Silas mustered out May 31, 1865, with the rest of the 7th Maryland and returned to Mary Jane and Fannie Louise. His brother Hanson also served during the war, enlisting in Company I of the 13th Maryland Volunteer Infantry in February 1865. Unfortunately, despite surviving three years of combat Silas was accidentally killed in an apparent hunting accident October 20, 1865. He was buried in Fairview Chapel Cemetery in Frederick County. Mary Jane applied for a widow's pension in 1890. She never remarried and died in 1915. Fannie Louise would marry Francis Fritz in the early 1880s and the couple would have nine children. Their youngest child (Silas' granddaughter) Golden L. Fritz Burdette died in 1995.

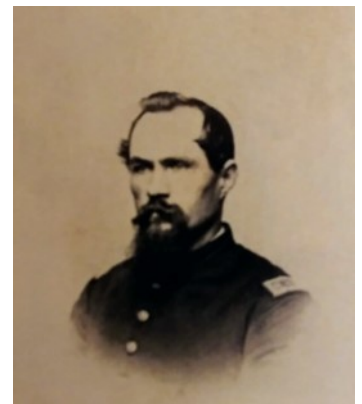
Thanks to 7th Maryland members Erik Schwetje and Bill Hart for discovering Silas Rippeon's resting place (though his name on the headstone is misspelled) and Maryland Brigade historian Daniel Carroll Toomey for Captain Bennett's picture.



Silas Rippeon's marker.



Left, Mary Jane Rippeon's marker.



Right, Captain David Theodore Bennett of Company E.



Rescuing wounded soldiers from fires in the Wilderness.