

NAPOLEON BONAPARTE HILL History

HILL-VUE Farm

Napoleon Bonaparte Hill (b. 11/14/1832; d. 1/17/1910) was born in Rutherford County, North Carolina and moved into Union County, Georgia in 1865.

Napoleon was the eldest son of Felix Walker Hill and Elizabeth Cooper Hill. Around 1840, he moved with his father and mother to Cherokee County, North Carolina. In 1860, when he was 28, Napoleon married Arabella Evans—the daughter of Charles Evans (b. 1798 in South Carolina). Arabella Evans was born in Haywood County, North Carolina on April 15, 1833. The Evanses had also moved into Cherokee County. Napoleon's and Arabella's first child, Mary Ursula, was born in Cherokee County, September 14, 1861.

With a name like “Napoleon Bonaparte” Hill, one might expect that a soldier's future might be in store for him. The War Between the States was looming on the horizon, and this relatively isolated mountain area, and the Hill family, would not escape it.

Georgia seceded from the Union on 1/10/1861. Fort Sumter was attacked on 4/12/1861. North Carolina voted to secede on 5/20/1861, and Virginia seceded on 5/23/1861.

The state of North Carolina and all the southern states feverishly began raising troops. Napoleon, at the age of 29, along with his brothers—Abel and Noah [crossed out] Charles—enlisted on 6/17/1861 as volunteers in Company “A”, 29th Regiment, North Carolina Infantry, State Troops, Confederate States of America. Colonel R. B. Vance was Commanding Officer of the 29th Regiment; Captain William C. Walker was the first Commanding Officer of Company “A”.

The regiment assembled at Camp Patton in Asheville, North Carolina and continued training and drilling in Camp Vance, near Sulphur Springs, North Carolina. Company “A” was armed with the Mississippi rifle without bayonet. Further election of officers was held, and Napoleon was elected and promoted to Second Lieutenant on 11/4/1861.

The 29th North Carolina Regiment was ordered to East Tennessee on 11/25/1861, specifically to help guard bridges between Bristol and Chattanooga. The regiment was serving under the Confederate Army of East Tennessee, commanded by General Kirby-Smith.

Sometime near February of 1862, they went into garrison at Cumberland Gap, Tennessee. In March of 1862, Company “A” and the Hill brothers with their Mississippi rifles skirmished at Harlen Road and Fort Pitt in Kentucky. On May 9, 1862, Napoleon Bonaparte Hill signed a petition to senior officers to appoint Morgan L. Nelson, M. D. of Ashville, North Carolina as surgeon of the regiment and to appoint Rev. Greenfield Taylor, A. M. as chaplain. The petition was addressed Cumberland Gap, Tennessee.

Further movement of the regiment was to Baptist Gap near Knoxville; then back to Cumberland Gap; then into Kentucky at Danville, Lancaster, Harrodsburg, Frankfort, Versailles, and Perryville. By November of 1862, the regiment went back through Cumberland Gap to Knoxville, Lenoir Station, and McMinnville, Tennessee. Napoleon's brother, Abel, was captured by federal forces in Lancaster, Kentucky in October, 1862.

On 12/25/1862, the regiment was ordered to Murfreesboro, Tennessee. Company "A" continued to be under the 29th Regiment with Colonel R. B. Vance. The regiment was under the Second Brigade, commanded by Brig. General James E. Raines, and the brigade was under Hardee's Corps, commanded by Lt. General Hardee, who reported to General Braxton Bragg, Commander of the Army of Tennessee.

The 29th Regiment camped on the bank of the Stones River on 12/30/1862. The stage was set for one of the major battles of the War, Stones River and Murfreesboro. The two armies—Federal and Confederate—extended for some four miles along the river bank and battlefield. Early the morning of December 31, 1862, the 29th Regiment forded the river with the rest of the corps. The 29th was in the lead and brought on the battle.

It was reported that Trooper Waldrop of Company "D" was the first Southern casualty of the battle. General Raines, Brigade Commander, was shot and killed off his beautiful black horse. A Federal officer supposedly caught this horse, and he in turn was shot off the horse. This was thought to be the only instance in the War in which an officer of rank from both sides was killed from the same horse in the same battle.

After the battle, the regiment and army fell back to Murfreesboro, and later went to Shelbyville, Tennessee for headquarters, in January of 1863.

With the coming of spring, the regiment was ordered to Wartrace, Tennessee on 5/11/1863, and subsequently on 5/17/1863 the regiment was broken away from the Raines Brigade and placed under the command of Colonel W. B. Creasman and ordered to Vicksburg, Mississippi. Colonel Creasman's troops arrived at Yazoo City, Mississippi on 6/1/1863 and held it until 7/13/1863 when they were driven out. (This was after Vicksburg was lost on 7/4/1863, and Gettysburg was lost on 7/3/1863.)

The Creasman troops marched across country, 150 miles to Martin, Mississippi and then went by rail to Meridian, Mississippi on 7/27/1863.

Records show that on 7/28/1863, 2nd Lt. N. B. Hill requested of Col. T. B. Roy, A. A., 29th North Carolina Regiment, thirty days leave. This was recommended by James M. Sheaver, 1st Lt., Company "A" and was addressed Meridian, Mississippi. It is not known if leave was granted.

During August of 1863, the 29th Regiment was sent to Chattanooga to be assigned under Ector's Brigade, Walker's Division, D. H. Hill's Corps, Bragg's Army. It is not known for sure if N. B. Hill was on leave during the Battle of Chickamauga on 9/19/1863. It is thought that he did participate in that battle. Also, it is believed that at

Chickamauga he became acquainted with Major Ben M. Ledford of the North Georgia Troops. (The story has come down through the years that Major Ledford was a fierce fighter who boldly rode his horse up and down the firing lines, waving his sword, and urging his men to "Hold the line; hold the line!")

The next report of N.B. Hill is on 10/23/1863 when he appeared on a roster of Ector's Brigade at Brandon, Mississippi. Ector's Brigade and the 29th North Carolina Regiment had been sent back to Meridian Mississippi, after Chickamauga, to serve under General Polk's Army. While in Mississippi, in October 1863, Hill apparently injured his right hand and was somewhat disabled.

On 11/17/1863, Lt. N. B. Hill, who was apparently commanding officer of his company by then, was given orders and forty days leave to go back to Cherokee County, North Carolina to recruit the absent, the paroled, and any recently released men who had been previously captured and who were in his Company "A". This was done. Next, the records show that while back in Mississippi, Napoleon was reinjured on 1/25/1864 with a dislocated and fractured arm when a shanty fell on him during maneuvers.

Later in January of 1864, 1st Lt. N. B. Hill made a request and certification for clothing, blankets, and shoes for his men. The issue was made by Captain W. E. Weaver, an assistant quartermaster of the Confederate States of America at Meridian, Mississippi.

On 3/1/1864, while at Demopolis, Alabama, 1st Lt. N. B. Hill made another request to Lt. Col. Thomas M. Jack, A. A. for permission to go to Cherokee County, North Carolina again to regroup more of his company. This leave was not granted. On 3/6/1864, he requested three days to get certain uniform clothing made. Some time in April of 1864, N. B. Hill's injury was aggravated again, and he was hospitalized.

Ector's Brigade was ordered to Georgia to defend Atlanta and to serve under French's Division, Stewart's Corps, and Hood's Army in April of 1864. On 4/25/1864, N. B. Hill was listed in General Hospital in Atlanta. On 8/20/1864, Hill was still accounted for in the Atlanta Hospital.

During August of 1864, Sherman began his siege of Atlanta. Many Confederate troops were scattered, among which were many of Lt. N. B. Hill's Company "A" Cherokee County men.

By October of 1864, N. B. Hill made it back to Cherokee County where he found many of the original men of Company "A". This group reorganized and re-enlisted as Company "H" under Major Ben M. Ledford's Cavalry Regiment of North Georgia Troops. The following is a list of those men and officers as elected.

1. N. B. Hill, Captain
2. A. S. Hill, 1st Lieutenant
3. John C. Chastain, 2nd Lieut.
4. David Loudermilk, 3rd Lieut.
5. Noah Hill, Private

6. John Sneed, Private
7. Andrew J. Ledford, Private
8. Alex. Ledford, Private
9. Joseph Chastain, Private
10. Benj. Chastain
11. Benj. B. Chastain
12. Robt. A. Harper
13. Grason Rogers
14. William McClure
15. Jerome Harper
16. Isaac Glazner
17. James P. Teague
18. Frank Sneed
19. Alfonso Loudermilk
20. James Cobb
21. William Little
22. Sylvester Lewis
23. Abner Ledford
24. William R. Franklin
25. Porter Ledford
26. Jesse Brown
27. Lewis Little
28. John Cobb
29. Carroll Reese
30. A. J. Stemmey
31. Willborn Reese
32. Wm Rice
33. Wm Welch
34. John Dockery
35. Frank Palmer
36. Westley Palmer
37. John Reese
38. Andrew Miller
39. Frederick King
40. Harve King
41. Henry King
42. William Mason
43. John Mason
44. Jesse Mason
45. Elijah Gilbert

The records show that there was an Order #30 dated 12/7/1864 by Major General Howard Cobb, Georgia Reserves from the headquarters at Macon, Georgia which refers to certain battalions and regiments commanded by Major Ledford and others,

formerly under General Hood, to rally to Georgia's defense. It is believed that the troops of Major Ledford (later Colonel) were used to route [sic] out certain renegades and bushwhackers in North Georgia and Western North Carolina. Among the most notorious were the Rae brothers and their band of thieves.

On 1/17/1865, N. B. Hill was apparently dropped from the rolls of the 29th North Carolina Regiment. During this ensuing period, N. B. Hill was elected to Major while serving under Col. B. M. Ledford's Cavalry.

Major N. B. Hill, Ledford's Cavalry Regiment, Army of North Georgia, surrendered and was paroled on May 12, 1865 at Kingston, Georgia. The parole was signed by Captain R. B. Hughes, by order of Brig. General Judah, U. S. A.