

Private French Dulany, C.S.A.

By Barbara Glakas

A story of a Confederate soldier who met his demise in Herndon.

As you have learned from our last series of articles about Mosby's Raid at the Herndon Station, Col. John Singleton Mosby frequently operated his Confederate Cavalry unit around the Northern Virginia area. One man who rode with him in was Private Daniel French Dulany, commonly referred to as "French."

French Dulany was the son of a Union officer, Colonel Daniel Dulany. Col. Dulany was an aide to Governor Pierpoint, an unelected governor of the Union-controlled parts of Virginia during the Civil War. In one of Mosby's escapades in the Rose Hill area near Franconia, he proceeded to a farm to surprise and capture Dulany, who was residing in a house there. The Colonel initially thought Mosby and his men were Union troops dressed as Confederates until his son stepped in and "invited" his father to accompany them to Fauquier County. The Colonel was taken to Libby Prison in Richmond and was later exchanged and returned to Fairfax County. He survived the war and was buried in a cemetery in Falls Church.

French Dulany was not so lucky. He was mortally wounded by members of the Second Massachusetts Cavalry almost one year later in a raid at Herndon.

In a letter written on June 27, 1864, First Lieutenant William Parker of the Second Massachusetts unit described how Mosby had just "gobbled a party of 40 men of the 16th New York" who had stopped to feed in the Centreville area. Mosby "struck them as the horses were unbridled & everyman had an armful of hay." The Lieutenant complained of the New York unit's carelessness, but he also lamented about Mosby's guerrilla warfare tactics, saying how the guerrillas were:

... mean fellows. They hide in the bushes & give a fellow no chance. One of them French Delaney who was recently shot was a son of Col. Delaney of our army... French arrested his father & sent him to Richmond. When shot he rode and walk 1/4 mile although mortally wounded. Told the doctor if he saw his father to give him his warmest regards & tell him that he had give up the spirit. This guerilla warfare is the meanest imaginable... Won't fight fair and square...

The story of French's death also was recalled by Kitty Kitchen Hanna, a lifelong Herndon resident who was a young wife and mother during the Civil War. She recalled:

Did you ever hear of French Dulaney? He was one of Mosby's squad who was shot here while pursued by the Unions. I saw him gallopin' by. When they reached the pines on hill

to eastward, the pursuers stopped followin' an' all Mosby's men went on 'cept this poor fellow, who was wounded. They sent for Doctor Jack, who came at onct; an' the doctor sent to me for some brandy, knowin I had a little on hand. I gave all I had, but poor French Dulaney died an' he was buried atop the hill where Crouse's house now stands; but his body was moved later to his home.

The Crouse house was built in 1879, after the Civil War, and it still stands today at the corner of Madison and Monroe Streets. A strange rectangular area the size of a grave can be seen on that property. The area is outlined in old brick, with the center grassy area a depression.

I consulted with a Civil War historian, who told me, "I have seen old graves lined with brick, but these were in cemeteries and I don't think at the time French would have had such a planned burial. I expect he was just wrapped in a blanket and buried."

According to Kitty Kitchen, French's body was eventually moved to his home, but his final resting place has never been identified.

One Mosby researcher said he had been told that French was buried in the Frying Pan Park cemetery. Others have said that he may have been buried in the Falls Church Cemetery with his family. His grave, which could be unmarked, has never been found at any of those cemetery locations, and he is not listed as being buried in Herndon's Chestnut Grove Cemetery. And there is no tombstone recorded in Fairfax County with his name on it.

As one historian remarked, "We can only hope that his father knew his son's final resting place."