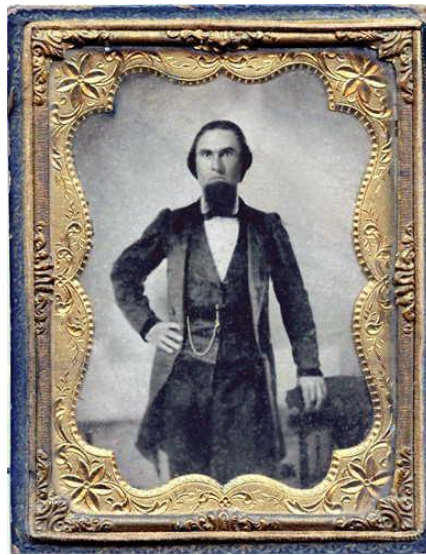


Brig. Gen. William Felix Brantley, CSA



1830 March 12: Brantley was born in Greene County, AL to parents William and Marinda Brantley.

1850 November 20: The US Federal Census enumerated in Choctaw County, MS showed William Brantley lived with his family. He was twenty years old and listed as a student.

1852 William Brantley started his practice as a lawyer in Webster County, MS.

1860 August: The US Federal Census enumerated in Choctaw County, MS listed W F Brantley at twenty seven years old. He was the head of the household and lived with his wife Cornelia and their two children. He was listed as, "Lawyer & Farmer."

1861 January 9: Mississippi voted to secede from the United States of America. William F. Brantley represented Webster County, MS and he voted in favor of secession. The final vote was 83-15.

May: Brantley was elected Captain of the, "Wigfall Rifles", which became Co. D of the 15th MS Infantry. This regiment was later changed to the 29th MS Infantry.

1862 April 6-7: Brantley fought at the Battle of Shiloh. He was a Captain in the 29th MS Infantry and was wounded in action.

December 12: Promoted to Colonel in command of 29th MS Infantry

December 31: Brantley led his men at the Battle of Stones River near Murfreesboro, TN. He was wounded in action again, shot in the shoulder.

1863 January 27: William Brantley's wife, Cornelia, died.

Sep 19-20: Brantley led his men at the Battle of Chickamauga. According to nps.gov, the 29th MS Infantry suffered fifty three percent casualties in this battle.

1864 July 22: After Brantley's brigade commander was mortally wounded at the Battle of Atlanta, Col. William Brantley took over brigade command.

July 26: Promoted to Brigadier General.

November 30: Brig. Gen. Brantley led his brigade, now in Maj. Gen. Edward Johnson's Division, as part of a desperate night assault conducted on the western part of the battlefield. As they advanced in total darkness, the Federal troops behind earthworks began to notice torches approaching them. These were carried by men in Johnson's Division to illuminate their way. In fact, Stephen Lee, their corps commander, wrote that as the Federal troops began to fire, it, "looked as if the division was moving into the very door of hell, lighted up with its sulphurous flames."

Brantley's brigade suffered the highest percentage of casualties out of the four in Johnson's Division. Brantley was the only brigade commander not wounded in the attack. Once this attack sputtered out due to blistering enfilade fire and total darkness, Gen. Hood called the attack off.

December 15-16: Brantley fought at the Battle of Nashville and retreated back through Franklin and Middle TN with the remnants of Hood's army.

After Hood's resignation, Brantley and his men were sent to NC to face off against Sherman and his forces.

1865 April 26: Brantley surrendered with the Army of Tennessee.

May 1: Paroled and headed home to MS.

1867 After the war, William Felix Brantley remarried a lady named Julia Cunningham and continued his law practice.

1870 August 16: William's brother, Arnold Jolly Brantley, was murdered in MS.

November 2: William Felix Brantley was murdered as part of an ongoing feud between him, his brothers, and another family. As William Felix Brantley rode home on his cart, an assassin shot him with a shotgun from cover and disappeared. No one was ever charged for the crime.

**A VENDETTA OF THIRTEEN
YEARS.**

*The Brantley Assassinations—The Causes
which led to them.*

**HISTORY OF A LONG AND BLOODY
FEUD IN MISSISSIPPI AND TEXAS.**

The following special dispatch appeared in the *Avalanche* of this day week:¹

JACKSON, Miss., November 2.—General W. F. Brantley was assassinated this morning at 9 o'clock, about half a mile outside the town of Winona, Carroll County.

TWENTY-FIVE BUCKSHOT STRUCK HIM.

Several persons saw the smoke of the gun, but the perpetrator of the awful deed was not discovered, though tracked some distance into a canebrake. It will

¹ *The Clarion-Ledger*, Jackson, MS, Thursday, Nov. 17, 1870, pg. 3.

actions.
In the year 1857, in the town of Gonzales, the county seat of a county of the same name, in Texas, there resided Dr. Brantley, brother of the gentleman recently killed near Winona, who was engaged in merchandizing. The Munroe brothers, John, Barney and William, lived in the same town, and were also engaged in "keeping store." The parties named were all in good circumstances. It appears that the Munroe brothers employed as clerks two young men, David and William Bolzell. One of the Bolzells, on account of alleged impudence, whipped Buford, a slave of Dr. Brantley. Buford was known familiarly as "Bufe," and was considered in those days a "smart nigger," although a "grand rascal."

The day after the whipping, Dr. Brantley attacked the Bolzells, and was killed by David, who was afterwards arrested and bailed out of custody by his employers, the Munroes. A short time after Dr. Brantley's death, Neal McCoy, a noted desperado from Mississippi, who had been sent by the friends of Brantley, appeared upon the scene. The Doctor was a native of that State, and had emigrated to Texas but a few years before his death. McCoy had been residing in Gonzales but a few days when a difficulty occurred between him and the Bolzell brothers, in the dining-room of the Gayoso House, in which Dave was killed, and William knocked senseless with a slungshot. He afterward recovered, however, and may now be living for aught we know. So far there had been but two lives lost. McCoy was arrested and gave bail. Now the feud got warmer and warmer. The Munroe brothers espoused the cause of the Bolzells, and in consequence were opposed to the friends of the Brantleys. There was hardly a man in the county of Gonzales who has not at one time or another taken sides. Some were killed and others wounded.

wounded.
Among those who were desperately wounded on the Brantley side our informant remembers the name of but one, a Mr. Davis, from Choctaw county, Miss. He received the contents of a gun loaded with buck shot through his left side, but, strange to say, recovered. The surviving Bolzell was momentarily expecting an attack. He made himself a walking arsenal.

In these days Western Texas was a rather wild country; the law was but imperfectly enforced, and consequently every one considered "self-preservation the first law of nature." A Brantley man and a Munroe man were deadly enemies. They met but to engage in a bloody fray. Thus stood affairs at the breaking out of the war of 1861. The adherents of the respective parties went into the Southern army.

In the year 1863 a young planter named Green was killed at the Boardman House, in Jackson, Miss., by Arnold Brantley, a brother of Dr. Brantley, and the same man who was Mayor of Winona at the time of his death, a few weeks ago. The affair, it was supposed, grew out of a gambling scrape, but it may possibly have been connected with the feud which originated in Texas. Thus it will be seen that the late affair in the neighborhood of Winona can in a measure be accounted for. At last accounts, two years ago, William Bolzell was living. He was a member of the Tenth Mississippi Cavalry Regiment, and passed safely through the war. He proved himself a gallant soldier, and it is not thought that, if alive, he would be guilty of an assassination. His life, it is said, after the death of Mr. Brantley, was a dissipated one. He apparently cared but little for an existence, and resorted to strong drink. He was a native of Virginia.

William Felix Brantley was later buried in the New Greensboro Cemetery in Webster County, MS.

² *The Weekly Democrat*, Natchez, MS, Wednesday, Nov. 23, 1870, pg. 1.

³ *Ibid.*



⁴ findagrave.com/user/NatalieMaynor