

**Private Sampson S. Simmons**  
**Company E – 8<sup>th</sup> Virginia Cavalry**

Born November 5, 1843 in Milton, Virginia (now West Virginia). Enlisted (age 18) at Giles Courthouse on April 30, 1862 by Captain Everett.

Served as a dispatch rider for General Williams during March and April, 1863.

Captured at Moorefield, Hardy County, Virginia on August 7, 1864 by General Averell's Union cavalry. Departed Harper's Ferry Prison pen 4/10, departed Antheum Prison, Wheeling, VA 4/11, arrived Camp Chase Prison Camp, Columbus, Ohio on August 11, 1864. Shown as age 20, 6' 1", lt. complex., gray eyes, light hair, farmer. Transferred to Point Lookout Prison, Point Lookout, Maryland on March 18, 1865. Paroled in Charleston, West Virginia on May 22, 1865.

Sampson S. Simmons died at his home in Bell, California on January 28, 1942 at age 99.

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In the early 1930's Sampson's daughter took him to a Hollywood recording studio and they made a recording of Mr. Simmons doing the "Rebel Yell." His daughter sent that recording to the United Daughters of the Confederacy in Richmond, Virginia to preserve that iconic battle cry for future generations.

WBT radio in Charlotte, North Carolina has a recording made at their radio station from the early 1900's of another Confederate veteran.

The sound of the infamous "Rebel Yell" has always been a mystery. The WBT recording was known but so were a variety of other "purported" & "supposed" yells. The Museum of the Confederacy heard that the United Daughters of the Confederacy had a 1930's "Rebel Yell" recording on an Edison disc. They asked permission to play it and try to retrieve the recording. There were concerns that the disc might be destroyed. However, the winning concern was that if they did not try we would never know if this "Yell" was the same as the WTB "Yell."

The results are remarkable! These two Confederates from different States, recording their "Yells" at different times, sound the same. Using the magic of modern sound mixing the Museum of the Confederacy was able to take these two voices and turn them into a Company of 80 men, a Regiment of 500 men, and a Brigade of 1800 men. The sound sends chills up your spine. It sounds like the demons of earth have been released.

*"The REBEL YELL Lives!"* and we thank Private Sampson S. Simmons and his daughter.

*(8<sup>th</sup> Virginia Cavalry, J. L. Dickinson, Lynchburg, 1986, p. 106; Compiled Service Record – Confederate, United Daughter of the Confederacy, Richmond, Virginia Micro Copy 324, Roll 35; "The Rebel Yell Lives!" CD, M. O. C., 2008.)*