

## Bushwhacked\* at Lost Mountain?

By Thomas Anderson Phelps  
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This we know for certain. **Sergeant Jonathan R. McGuffin** died on April 4, 1865, while serving in the Confederacy and fighting for what he must have thought was right for him and his family. After having fought in several states for General John C Vaughn, and his Captain, Jackson Decatur Bushong, he ended up dying in a skirmish about 12 miles from his home at Lost Mountain in Greene County, Tennessee. Much has been said and written about how he died. Stories repeated over 150 years can sometime innocently get twisted and turned a bit. Based on the research of several documents and conversations with people whose family members were involved and/or lived in the area at the time, this is a likely scenario of what happened at the "Old Wash Moore" place in Afton, Greene County, Tennessee on that fateful morning.

Near the end of the Civil War, most of the fighting in East Tennessee was between small units, using guerrilla type tactics. A unit of 20-40 soldiers would "scout" an area looking for the enemy. When found, they would engage if they thought they had an advantage, otherwise they would flee and report back to their commanding officer requesting more men and possibly artillery.

On April 3, 1865, Captain Jackson Decatur Bushong and Sergeant Jonathan R. McGuffin with their small unit of probably 20-40 men stopped to gather information and spend the night at the home of George Washington Moore. It is thought that they most likely took over the place because the Moore family were known Union sympathizers and their two sons were fighting with the Union somewhere in Alabama or Georgia. Bushong, McGuffin and at least one other soldier spent the night in the house with the rest of their unit camped on a hill in the nearby woods. They were having breakfast the next morning when a much larger force of Union soldiers surrounded the house and scattered the smaller Confederate unit that was camped in the woods. The Union was probably notified by sympathizers sometime during the night. Captain Bushong, Sergeant McGuffin and the third Confederate soldier were shot and killed in the skirmish. Some say they were bushwhacked as they

Jonathan's grave was found with the use of a Ground Penetrating Radar device. Efforts to relocate his remains have been delayed due to legal issues. Installation of a memorial marker near his wife's grave site at Big Springs Cemetery in Mosheim, TN is being considered .

\***Bushwhacking** was a form of guerrilla warfare common during the Civil War. This was particularly prevalent in rural areas where there were sharp divisions between those favoring the Union and Confederacy in the conflict. The perpetrators of the attacks were called **bushwhackers** who many times shot from cover and without warning.

exited the house. There's no record or suggestion that any others were killed. No one knew the dead soldiers, so they could not notify the next of kin. George Washington Moore was likely the only man at the house and he was elderly. So, it was left to the women to bury the soldiers and they did not want to place them in their family or church cemetery probably because they were Confederate's. Instead they took them down the road a piece and buried them on a small knoll in a common grave.

Sometime later an uncle of Jackson Decatur Bushong who lived in Sullivan County, TN, decided to try to find and relocate his remains to a more respectable place. Rev George Bushong Hancher (Lutheran) investigated and with the help of Bonnie White, a young girl who was 8 years old at the time of the burying, was able to find the grave site. Ms White had remembered that one of the men had red hair which was a common trait in the Bushong family. They dug up one and he had black hair so they put him back. They uncovered the second body which had red hair. This was what they were look for, but there was something else that confirmed it. Sometime earlier, Bushong had been visiting at home with relatives and some children were admiring the buttons on his Confederate uniform, so he just cut one off and gave it to them. The red haired soldier they just uncovered, had a button missing on his jacket so they knew this was their loved one. It is reported that Mary Louise Crumley of Sullivan County, Tennessee, had the actual button in 1967. Captain Jackson Decatur Bushong was moved to Rev Bushong Hanshire's Lutheran Church in Mosheim, TN, and buried with a proper headstone in what is now called the Blue Springs Cemetery. His grave is located directly beside the church.

The location of Sergeant Jonathan R. McGuffin's grave remained a mystery to the McGuffin family until June, 2015, after an intense search was instigated. This story is described in the document "Finding Jonathan R McGuffin". The document can be found in the Album section of the website: [www.phelpsfulpancestry.com](http://www.phelpsfulpancestry.com)

## The Various Sources for this Document are Shown Below:

1. This is an excerpt from Audrey Taylor McGuffin Phelps's 1980's research and subsequent story, "Origins of the McGuffin Family", shown in the album section of the website: [www.phelpsfulpancestry.com](http://www.phelpsfulpancestry.com) A note has been added to the document showing that Jonathan David McGuffin's name has been determined to have been Jonathan R. McGuffin.

Mother wrote:

"Jonathon David McGuffin, Ellen, John, and James were counted in the 1860 U. S. census as living in Blue Springs, Greene County, Tenn., prior to the Civil War. The 1860 census recorded the status of families on the eve of the Civil War. Many families would never be as intact or as stable again, including the McGuffins.

Jonathon David McGuffin was one of the 110,000 men from Tennessee who joined the Confederate Army during the Civil War (in addition to those Confederate soldiers, an estimated 31,000 men from east Tennessee fought with Union forces). We don't know when he joined the army, but oral family history relates that although he survived actual war hostilities, he was murdered for his horse as he was returning from the war in 1865. He was about 12 miles from home when he and two other soldiers were bushwhacked when they stopped to eat breakfast at a farm house. They tied up their horses and stood their guns inside the door while they ate. All three men were shot and killed when they rushed to investigate a disturbance outside the home. The murderers took the horses and escaped. Jonathon David and his companions were buried in a common grave in Sullivan Greene (corrected 6/4/2015) County near a place called Roaring Springs, Tenn."

2. Here is an excerpt of the Clarence Ivan Hawkins story, as told in the 1971 article in the Greenville Sun Newspaper. The story focuses on Captain Jackson Decatur Bushong, who was one of the three soldiers killed. "Bushong and a small band of Confederates were in the Lost Mountain area, probably hunting Union sympathizers and bushwhackers. The night of April 3, 1865 they stayed at the old Wash Moore place. It was to be his last one. Early next morning just after the break of day, the place was surrounded by Union men, who had somehow got the word that the men were staying there. Bushong and at least two of his men were killed. No one at Lost Mountain knew the men and probably cared less at the time. They didn't like what they saw but neither did they like the whole tragedy of war. There was no way to attempt to find out where the soldiers were from, what the families of the deceased wanted to do or any of the other things that are usually associated with a funeral. Matter of fact, it was left up to the women of the Lost Mountain community to bury them. They didn't want to bury them in any of the family or church cemeteries so they took them a little piece down the road and buried them on a small knoll—away from war and away from the future that everybody back at Paperville was talking about that awaited Decatur Bushong.

But the Decatur Bushong's story was not quite finished with that burial. Some years later a member of the family started an investigation that led to him to the small knoll where the three men were buried. A young girl, who was 8 at the time of the burying, showed the graves to the inquiring kinsmen, remembering that one of the three dead had red hair, a trait common to the Bushong family. They dug up one of the bodies. The man had been dark-headed. They reburied him. They dug up another. He had been red-headed. But more importantly, a button was missing from the soldier's coat. That's all the evidence they needed to accept the remains as that of Decatur Bushong. The body was then moved to the Blue Springs Cemetery at Mosheim, TN, a service held and given a proper stone, thus ending the Decatur Bushong story. "

3. This is a summary of conversations with Cecil Hawkins, the son of Clarence Ivan Hawkins and also his wife Phyllis, who is a descendant of George Washington Moore. You can see the "Small Knoll" where Jonathan is buried from the back yard of their home.

Cecil told the story that his father had told him and it was pretty much what ended up in the 1971 newspaper article. I told him about my mother's account of what happened, that they were on their way home from the war and were bushwhacked for their horses. He responded, "the war was still going on and they were

bushwhacked by the Union army when they came out of the house". He added that the others were camped on the hill and probably got away.

He showed me the burial place and said that a few others were later buried on the same knoll. He also told me that a previous land owner had removed the stones used as markers and threw them down a deserted well.

Cecil and I visited the log cabin where the three men died. It was on the left at the end of Carl Doty Rd. A neighbor who lived across the road joined us and pointed out that the cabin was behind a barn that you could barely see through the heavy vegetation. He said that it had collapsed and even the chimney had now fallen. Cecil also showed me the George Washington Moore grave which was located alongside Carl Doty Road. It was with several other headstones and among heavy vegetation.

4. Betty Blake (Descendent of George Washington Moore & a Greene County Amateur Genealogists- Retired)

In an interview on June 30, 2015, MS Blake said that her family tradition and research suggested that a small group (maybe 20-25) of Confederates had taken over the Moore house and some were in the house having breakfast while the others were camped outside on a nearby hill in the woods. The Moore's were known to be Union sympathizers, with two of their sons (Jessie and James) fighting for the Union somewhere in GA or AL. Somehow word got to the nearby Union army and they arrived early in the morning with a larger force and scattered the Confederates. She said that one was killed in the house and two outside.

MS Blake and her husband took me to the "Old Wash Moore Place" where she said the confederates had died. This popular home was built after the Civil War and burned to the ground many years later. She said that the incident probably occurred at a log cabin which must have been behind the spot of the mansion. A later conversation with MS Blake concludes that the skirmish probably occurred at the log cabin further down the road. She said this was where the White family lived. Mrs. White was Mr. Moore's daughter and with her husband probably moved there after the war when George Moore moved into his new "Old Wash Moore Place". The Old Wash Moore Place became a landmark because of its mansion type size and quality. It is easy to see how it could have been the reference point for the Civil War incident. However, the evidence suggests that the incident took place at George Washington Moore's original log cabin near the end of the driveway rather than the actual physical location of the "The Old Wash Moore Place" some 200-300 yards away.

5. Shown below is a copy of a note donated to the T. Elmer Cox Library in Greenville, Tennessee from the files of Mary Sue Carson Going.

"Carl Hays visited Mrs. John Ross Carson (Chuckey, TN) on February 12, 1967. He told her that 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Jackson Decatur Bushong, a confederate soldier, was buried on the Wash Moore farm at Union Temple, Greene County, TN. During the War Between the States, he was killed in a skirmish, or by bushwhackers, there. Bonnie White, a little girl during the war, told Mr. Hayes she remembered that when Lt. Bushong was later disinterred, that first a black haired man was dug up. He was re-buried and the red haired Lt Bushong was then uncovered. Lt. Bushong's nephew, Rev Bushong Hanshire (Lutheran) had his uncle's body removed to the Mosheim Lutheran Cemetery.

Mrs. John Ross Carson (Sarah Ann Crumley) remembers Rev. Hanshire telling about disinterring Lt JDB—that bones and buttons from his uniform were found. She thinks the reburial was prior to 1900. She says that he mother, Mary Louisiana Seneker (b. 1855) as a child had so admired he uncle's (Decatur Bushong's) Confederate uniform that he cut off a button an gave it to her when at her home in Sullivan County. Mrs. Carson's sister, Mary Louise Crumley, still has the button (1967).

- a. Elizabeth Bushong married James King Seneker (called Elija) their daughter, Mary Louisiana married David James Crumley.
- b. Sarah Bushong married James Knicely? Hanshire, parents of Rev. Bushong Hanshire.

- c. Sarah & Elizabeth Bushong were daughters of George Bushong (soldier in War of 1812) who is buried at Paperville, Sullivan County, TN

(Found in the files of Mary Sue Carson Going and donated to Cox Library 11/16/2001 by Betty Jane Hylton, Johnson City, TN)"

6. The Book "Neighbor Against Neighbor, Brother Against Brother" by Carl N Hayes  
This is an excerpt of the Civil War incident as described in the book.

"A small force of Confederates came to what is now known as the "Wash Moore" Place and spent the night. A body of Union soldiers surprised them early in the morning and scattered them. A Weems, a Union soldier, grabbed the rifle of a Confederate soldier and knocked him from the saddle with it. There were three Confederates killed in this skirmish and they were taken to a small cemetery near where the road from the Jake Justice Place enters the Newmansville Road and there buried.

A Mrs. White, then a young girl of about 8 years old, was present when they were buried and years later some people came here from the West in search of their son, they contacted her. She remembered that one was red-haired and they said that was their son.

They went to the cemetery, she pointed out the three graves, and they proceeded to dig up a body. The first one had been black-haired so they put it back and covered it up, then dug up # two. This body (or skeleton) had been red-headed, so the visitors accepted it as their son and took it back West with them."

7. Conversation with Sam Patton who has lived all his life in Mosheim, TN and recalls the Civil War story. The three confederates were returning home at the end of the war and were shot by bushwhackers who stole their horses. They were later relocated to the Blue Springs Cemetery in Mosheim, TN. A marker was placed at their grave. He was not surprised that there were variations of the story.
8. A Richard Zollman, who is a descendent of Captain Jackson Decatur Bushong, reports that Captain Bushong was in the Confederacy's 29<sup>th</sup> TN Cavalry and leading a small scouting expedition in the Greene County, TN area for General John C Vaughn when he was killed in an ambush. His extensive military research suggests that Captain Bushong and Sergeant Jonathan R. McGuffin were good friends. They came from the same town, Mosheim, TN, and have been identified together in many places throughout the war
9. According to military records, Jonathan R McGuffin entered the military as a Private and was later promoted to Sergeant. He fought for the 29<sup>th</sup> Regiment of the Tennessee Confederacy
10. Several historical writings confirm that General Vaughn was leading a Brigade in East Tennessee near the end of the war. His men actually continued to fought skirmishes and battles on past the end of the war. Here is an excerpt from the book "Home-Growed Rebels by William D Taylor .

*His East Tennesseans were some of the last to lay down their arms and flag, surrendering over a month after General Lee's surrender at Appomattox. It would mean to them they had no place to go if they gave up. Those men remaining with General Vaughn reflected his dedication and their defense and loyalty to the South were never questioned.*

*At Bulls Gap, he had the considerable thrill of helping stampede General Alvin C. Gillem of the 13<sup>th</sup> Tennessee Volunteer Cavalry and his hated bushwhackers after being stampeded a month before by Gillem.*

*The men of Vaughn's Brigade would fight many skirmishes and battles before finally laying down their arms. Vaughn's Brigade, while serving under General Jubal Early, would not give up, even after General Lee. When ordered to disband and go home, Vaughn's East Tennesseans would not. They chose instead to cross the mountains into North Carolina and join with General Joseph E. Johnston and his Army of Tennessee. After finding out Johnston had also surrendered, Vaughn and his men rode on, joining up with President Jefferson Davis and his cabinet, forming part of the escort on their attempt to escape capture. These men were riding with their enigmatic general one full month after Lee's surrender.*

11. Shown below is a copy of a military report written by General Vaughn, describing one of "Captain Bushong's Scouting" activities. Our Jonathan was very likely in this skirmish.

HEADQUARTERS CAVALRY

Rheatown, October 17, 1864.

GENERAL: Your note of the 15th instant is at hand. So soon as Lieutenant-Colonel Bean, who was in command of the troops of my brigade in the Valley, arrives, I shall procure the names of the officers who left their command without the proper authority and see that they are ordered before the military court at once. it is impossible to procure the names at present in the absence of Colonel Bean. Lieutenant Hopkins, who shot Captain Day, will also be sent up. On my front all is quiet. Captain Bushong, in charge of a scout of some thirty men, attacked a scout of seventy of the enemy within eight miles of Bull's Gap last night and stampeded them. The enemy's loss unknown, as he took to the woods; our loss, 1 man mortally wounded. I heard from Colonel Palmer's command on the 14th instant. He will move to-day and by at Warm Springs on the 19th instant, nothing preventing.

I am, respectfully,

JOHN C. VAUGHN,

Brigadier-General.