

## **John Noland** (1844 – June 25, 1908)

Scout

Partisan Ranger, Quantrill's Company



Quantrill's Raiders were the best-known as the pro-Confederate partisan guerrillas who fought in the War Between the States. Their leader was William Quantrill. The Confederate government granted Quantrill a field commission under the Partisan Ranger Act. The Partisan Ranger Act was passed on April 21, 1862 by the Confederate Congress. It was intended as a stimulus for recruitment of irregulars for service into the Confederate Army.

Among Quantrill's men was a freed former slave, a man named John Noland. He was William Quantrill's chief scout and in many conflicts served as Quantrill's hostler. He joined Quantrill's raiders because of the abuse his family suffered at the hands of Kansas Union Jayhawkers. Noland helped scout Lawrence, Kansas, before the raid by Quantrill's men in 1863. Post-war pictures show him sitting with comrades at reunions of the Raiders.

John Noland was a Partisan not a body servant, he was armed and took part in the raids and actions and was trusted to scout alone and forage alone. He scouted for Quantrill a good percentage of the raids 62 thru 64. Noland has been credited with getting the closest to the court house in the Lamar Raid and leading the breakout from the Tate House.

Noland was probably the most noted Black soldier in Quantrill's company. Federals once offered him ten thousand dollars to betray Quantrill and his men, but Noland only replied with scorn. During the First Battle of Independence on August 11, 1862 Noland and four other volunteers crawled more than two hundred yards under a withering fire to gather combustibles to smoke Union Colonel James T. Buel out of his headquarters building.

In *THREE YEARS WITH QUANTILL*, guerrilla John McCorkle writes that Noland was present during the raid on Lamar, Missouri on November 6, 1862. He says that Noland stood by Quantrill's side shouting lots of intimidating orders for troop movements, etc., in an effort to bluff the union garrison into thinking they were surrounded and force a surrender. Noland made three separate charges against the Federal stronghold. Noland's bluffs didn't convince the federals to surrender. From this event's inclusion in the book it's clear that McCorkle thought Noland was demonstrating a lot of clever initiative.

During the raid on Lawrence, Kansas in August of 1863 Noland risked his life reconnoitering the town to gather intelligence information prior to the raid. It's easy to understand why Noland was so effective as a scout since no one would have ever suspected a freed black man of being a part of Quantrill's Raiders. As a freed black man, Noland was able to come and go as he pleased. He entered Lawrence without a problem.

Post-war pictures show him sitting with his comrades at reunions of the Raiders. Noland tried to attend most of the reunions and was popular among other Quantrill veterans, who described him as "A man among men." That phrase was actually inscribed on his tombstone when he died in 1908. He was buried in Woodlawn Cemetery which became known later as Independence Cemetery in Independence, Missouri. It is said that all of his pallbearers were his Quantrill comrades.