

Captain Carter Littlepage Stevenson

Charter Member and first Junior Warden of Rocky Mountain Lodge No. 205 A.F.&A.M.
by George F. Winters, Historian

Stevenson was born on September 21, 1817, Fredericksburg Virginia.

Carter Stevenson was a graduate of the United States Military Academy at West point in 1838, 42nd in his class, receiving a commission as a brevet second lieutenant in the 5th Infantry Regiment and assigned to garrison duty in Wisconsin. Two years later, he was promoted to first lieutenant and participated in the Second Seminole War in Florida.

Transferred to Texas, Stevenson served on frontier duty until the Mexican American War. He fought with distinction in the battles of Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma and participated in several other fights before returning to the United States at posts in Mississippi, Indian Territory, and Texas. He helped explore parts of the proposed Southern route for the Pacific railroad, often skirmishing with Apache Indians.

In 1856–57, Stevenson again was in combat in Florida, this time in the Third Seminole War, fighting in the battles of Big Cypress Swamp and Bowleytown. He moved west with Johnston's Army from Ft. Bridger to Camp Floyd Utah Territory and was assigned as a Captain with Company I, 5th Infantry.



Stevenson, as with many other officers from Virginia stationed in the West, returned home when the state seceded from the Union in early 1861. He offered his services to the governor and received a commission as a lieutenant colonel in the Confederate army. He was soon promoted to colonel and given command of the 53rd Virginia Infantry at the recommendation of Pierre G. T. Beauregard. When openings were created with Beauregard's transfer of several officers to serve with him in the Western Theater, Stevenson was promoted to brigadier general in February 1862. On March 15, he reported to General Benjamin Huger and assigned to guard the Wilmington and Weldon Railroad in Virginia. However, this duty was short-lived, as Stevenson was sent to Edmund Kirby Smith's Department of East Tennessee and given command of a division.

Upon arriving in Tennessee, Stevenson's division marched to the Cumberland Gap to reinforce Colonel James Edward Rains but was ordered by Smith to withdraw to a position better suited to aid Chattanooga. This redeployment allowed the Gap to fall into Union hands. In August, Smith's 21,000-man Army of Kentucky spearheaded Braxton Bragg's Confederate Heartland Offensive into the Bluegrass State. Smith bypassed Union-held Cumberland Gap, leaving Stevenson's division behind to deal with the Federals there. While Smith's force moved north to the Battle of Richmond, Stevenson exercised independent command, leading a Confederate force that captured the Union garrison at Munfordsville, Kentucky. This, coupled with the approach of Bragg's force, compelled Gen. George W. Morgan's withdrawal. Stevenson missed the Battle of Perryville and re-joined Smith on the Confederates'

withdrawal back into Tennessee. Recognized again for his leadership ability, he was promoted to major general in October 1862.

During the 1864 Atlanta Campaign, Stevenson's division was positioned in the Crow Valley during the Battle of Rocky Face Ridge. It was assigned to John Bell Hood's corps and fought at Resaca; New Hope Church; Kolb's Farm; Kennesaw Mountain; and the Battle of Atlanta. When General Hood was elevated to command of the army, Stevenson temporarily assumed command of Hood's corps, until replaced by Cheatham.

During the Tennessee Campaign, Stevenson commanded a division in Stephen D. Lee's corps in the center of the line at the Battle of Nashville. When Lee was wounded, he took charge of organizing and leading the retreat. His division had suffered enormous casualties and had been unable to recruit significant numbers of replacements. Down to approximately 2,600 men, the depleted division participated in the Carolinas Campaign against William T. Sherman, making stands at Columbia; and Battle of Bentonville. For the second time in the war, Stevenson surrendered to the Federals when Joseph E. Johnston surrendered his army in April 1865 to Sherman. Stevenson again was paroled and sent home.

After the war, he was occupied as a civil and mining engineer until his death in Caroline County on August 15, 1888 , Virginia. He was buried in the Confederate Cemetery in Fredericksburg.

In 1914, Maj. Gen. Carter L. Stevenson was commemorated with a marble bust at the Vicksburg National Military Park.