inspiring, even to this day, the noblest sentiments of Christian duty.

I am not able to learn how the village got its name of Pleasant Hill, but it became a village in the early fifties and was the center of refinement and education for miles around. The Childers and Jordans, the Chapmans, the Davises, the Harrells, and the Hamptons, were some of the leading, early settlers of the village. Most of these were wealthy before the war and became poor after the loss of their slaves. These families still live somewhere near the old village.

Nothing remains of the old Pleasant Hill, and I am informed that the main street now forms part of a field cultivated in cotton or corn. The buildings were torn down and moved to Sodus station on the New Orleans & Pacific branch of the Texas and Pacific Railroad, which is called Pleasant Hill by the Post-office Department, in response to a sentiment in favor of preserving the old name.

BATTLE OF PLEASANT HILL, LOUISIANA.

BY WM. H. HEATH.*

The 1st Division of the 16th Army Corps, commanded by Brig. Gen. Jos. A. Mower, to which has been given the credit of winning the battle of Pleasant Hill, was at the extreme rear of General Banks' army when it left Grand Ecore, La., to "go and take Shreveport."

Two divisions of the 13th Corps, under command of Brig. Gen. T. E. G. Ransom, were at the front. The center, composed of troops of the 9th and 19th Corps, moved one day's march behind Ransom's column, and the rear, under command of Brig. Gen. Andrew J. Smith, moved another day's march behind the 9th and 19th Corps, commanded by Generals W. B. Franklin and Emory.

General A. J. Smith's command consisted of two divisions of the 16th Army Corps, known as the left wing of that corps, the first commanded by General Mower, and the second com-

*Late Lieutenant-Colonel 33d Missouri Volunteer Infantry.

manded by Gen. Thos. Kilby Smith. In the movement against Shreveport, Kilby Smith's division was charged with the protection of the transports and gunboats from annoyance by land forces, and therefore it was with the fleet, which was expected to keep abreast of the land forces.

Both of A. J. Smith's divisions had been much depleted by veteran regiments going home on furlough.

The same thing was true of the two divisions of General Ransom, and that general was greatly concerned at being sent so far in advance with such an unsatisfactory command. He felt constantly that a mistake had been made in exposing his divisions to the danger of defeat before support could possibly reach him.

On the 8th of April his divisions were attacked in force by Kirby Smith's army and almost annihilated.

The rear division (Mower's) heard the firing in advance in the afternoon of the 8th and rushed forward in great haste to try and get into the fight, only to find themselves utterly exhausted at dark and still many miles short of the scene of battle.

They were ordered into camp about one mile east of the field upon which the most important and decisive battle of the campaign was to be fought.

During the night that followed news of the terrible disaster at Mansfield, or Sabine Cross-Roads as it was also called, came sifting through the camp, filling all with the most poignant regret that the miles had not been shorter, or our legs longer, on the previous day.

Having learned that General Ransom was in a house, wounded, a short distance west of our camp, I rode over to find him. I was directed to a large double frame house on the edge of the timber east of the plain since known as Pleasant Hill. This plain was apparently about a mile wide, with heavy timber east and west of it, and a ravine, then dry, running through it from the west to southeast.

In the parlor, which was a large double one with two fireplaces, I found General Ransom lying on a cot near the western window, suffering from a severe wound in the knee. I

sat down beside him, and from his own lips heard the first full and authentic news of the battle of Mansfield.

General Ransom said he was apprehensive of an attack by superior numbers from early in the morning, that he seemed to "feel it in the air." So impressed was he with the imprudence of advancing, without having adequate support near at hand, with his two small divisions, that he halted his column and asked General Banks for permission to await the arrival of the center within proper supporting distance, saying to him frankly that he felt he was then "in the presence of the enemy in superior force."

General Banks appealed to his chief of cavalry, whose duty it was to scout his front and flanks, to know what ground there was for the apprehensions of General Ransom. According to General Ransom's account that officer pooh-poohed the whole matter, asserting vehemently that there was "no organized enemy within 50 miles of Ransom's front." Thereupon General Banks ordered the march resumed. Early in the afternoon General Ransom's divisions were viciously attacked by a large force. He said they "came at him like the wings of a V, the open part covering his front and flanks, and that every time he attempted to form a line of battle the wings of the V enveloped his flanks and closed down on them like a nut-cracker."

His movements were very much hampered by the heavy trains, which filled the road and impeded any satisfactory movement of his artillery.

Before sundown he had lost nearly all of the train, and his best batteries of artillery had also been captured, as well as numbers of his men. With the defeated and disheartened remnants he drew off as best he could and reformed to the rear. Support failed utterly to reach him in time to strike an effective blow for his rescue, and in darkness and defeat he retired toward Pleasant Hill.

The parlors where General Ransom was lying swarmed with generals, of high and low degree, who all with one voice agreed that the expedition against Shreveport was a dismal failure and that nothing remained now but to get back with

as little further loss as possible "*to New Orleans and reorganize.*"

From the western window I could look out, as General Ransom talked, and see General Banks' fine and well equipped army, infantry, cavalry, artillery, and trains loaded with paper collars and other things, all rushing helter-skelter from the timber on the west side of the plain, as they emerged from it spreading out like the leaves of a fan, and rushing madly, frantically across the plain, each striving to be the first to get control of the single road that entered the screen of timber on the east side of it.

I had never before witnessed such an apparently needless rout, and as no enemy seemed to be pressing them from behind, I wondered much what made each so urgent and determined to get there first. I drew General Ransom's attention to the scene, and he drew the attention of others in the parlor, who rapidly gathered about the windows to view it. Rising on his elbow to get a better view, he denounced the fleeing army, in the terse language of which he was past master, as cowards and poltroons, sarcastically comparing them to the "wicked, who flee when no man pursueth."

Smarting under the universal verdict of failure, by the assembled generals, and the necessity of going back to New Orleans, "way back" he expressed it, he finally burst out with: "Oh, for heaven's sake get out of the way there, you cowards, and let Smith get his corps up. I know he'll fight."

Among those who were most insistent on failure and the necessity for reorganization were two men in slouch hats and rusty brown overcoats, who bore no sign of rank about them. From their frequent reference to the trains and anxiety for their safety, I had concluded they must be quartermasters. One was much larger than the other. When Ransom spoke about Smith's corps, the smaller of these two men asked petulantly: "Who is this Smith we hear so much about?"

Ransom tried to tell him who he was, but before he got half through A. J.'s pedigree, the man who had asked for it turned contemptuously on his heel and shrugging his shoulders in a

significant way, blurted out: "Oh, damn it, there are so many Smiths."

Really, there were a good many Smiths down there: Kirby, Thos. Kilby and A. J. But we of the 16th Corps always felt that our Smith was one of the few, the immortal, Smiths that were not born to be sneezed at by quartermasters, and I fairly snorted in derision of this man who dared to belittle him.

But new duties now began to claim the attention of the generals and one by one they drew away from Ransom's bedside. As they disappeared I ventured to ask him who the two big men in the brown overcoats were, who seemed to have so much to say.

The general apologized for not introducing me, but I begged him not to mention it. He said the big one was General Franklin and the other General Emory. In some confusion, I confessed to him that their solicitude about the trains had led me to believe them quartermasters. Ransom laughed, it was the only time I saw him laugh that morning, and I laughed with him, though I still bore a grudge against them, all on account of the Smiths.

The whole morning and part of the afternoon was spent in passing General Banks' army and trains as far east as possible. Notwithstanding the immense losses the day before, there were still enough of the trains left to cause great anxiety.

About 2 P. M., General Mower's 1st Division was brought up and placed in line near the edge of the timber on the east side of Pleasant Hill, and batteries posted at intervals between regiments or brigades. As the last wagons passed under shelter of the timber, General Banks came riding up with a staff and escort like a small army, to where Generals Smith and Mower were engaged in conversation, and gave orders to General Smith that all he was expected to do was to protect the rear and to hold that position only long enough to give the army and trains time to get away well on the road to Grand Ecore. He closed his instructions with the admonition to "not under any circumstances bring on a general engagement."

I had been talking with General Mower when General

Smith joined him, and still stood near, expecting special orders in regard to my line, and so heard most of the conversation.

As General Banks rode away General Smith turned to Mower and said: "Mower, as your division is the only one here, this will be your affair, and you have heard what the orders are." Then he in turn rode away, and as he did so General Mower turned to me, with that wonderful hair and beard sticking straight up in the air, and said: "By ———, if they try to come through here they will have some kind of an engagement."

He directed me to have my men lie down flat, so as not to be seen by the enemy until he could not save himself from a sudden onslaught.

Colonel Shaw, of the 14th Iowa, had been sent with his brigade to hold the woods on the west side of the plain until the enemy appeared in force. He was then to fall back to the left, uncovering our front and forming on our left.

He had not long to wait, and executed his orders with skill, and so much determination as to make the enemy believe he was the only one they had to reckon with. Prisoners said afterwards that when they reached the open ground and saw the batteries standing, apparently alone, they concluded Banks was trying to sacrifice his artillery to save his trains, as he had the day before at Mansfield.

They came on across the field and down into the dry ditch, yelling like wild Indians. As they rose to view again from the east side of the ditch, the batteries opened on them and the men, rising out of the ground, gave them a volley or two, then charged straight at them.

They stopped for a bare second and then turned and dropped hurriedly back into the dry ditch and up again to the west side of it and back without looking behind them, until they got under the shelter of the timber once more. There they rallied around their artillery, but our men got into the batteries almost with them, and after a brief struggle the enemy once more started westward, leaving their artillery, and kept on, with our men at their heels, for a mile or two.

As night fell the pursuit was checked and our troops drew back out of the timber and bivouacked on the open ground at the west side of the plain, well satisfied with having won the only pitched battle so far won in the campaign.

I met General Mower soon after the bivouac was established, and he remarked that he was in some doubt whether General Banks would consider that a "general engagement" or not.

Having received a slight wound, I went back to our previous camp to have it dressed. As I was riding back to our place of bivouac, I met what I supposed was a cavalry regiment. When I arrived at its front I was halted and questioned, and soon discovered that my questioner was no less a person than General Banks.

When he learned that I belonged to Mower's division, he praised us without stint, and when I thought of the orders about a general engagement, I could not but murmur to my inner self: "Blessed are the successful, for they shall know no blame!"

As the general seemed to be in great spirits, I ventured the remark that I supposed we would now go right on and take Shreveport. He answered: "We will know more about that in the morning," and bade me good-night.

In the morning at 3 o'clock the sullen and disappointed 16th Corps, with two as disgusted generals as I have ever seen, were marched back and made the rear guard of the Red River Expedition, as it made its precipitate and ignominious retreat through the state of Louisiana to Yellow Bayou and the Mississippi river.

St. Louis, Mo.