

## A Famous War Horse

In the spring of 1864 the Fourteenth Iowa Infantry participated in the Red River campaign. The Second Brigade, of which the Fourteenth Iowa was a unit, was commanded by Colonel William T. Shaw of the Fourteenth, while Lieutenant Colonel J. H. Newbold of Hillsboro, Iowa, was in command of the regiment. When General N. P. Banks organized his expedition to ascend the Red River and capture large stores of cotton which the Confederates had assembled at various ports along the river, Colonel Shaw's brigade was ordered to join the other forces in Louisiana.

On the tenth of March, Colonel Shaw's brigade left Vicksburg as a part of the First Division of the Sixteenth Army Corps, and proceeded to Alexandria, Louisiana, encountering some resistance on the way. After a brief rest, the detachment broke camp at Alexandria and marched to Cotile Landing up the Red River, where it embarked on transports and was conveyed to Grand Ecore. On April 9th the brigade reported to General Banks at Pleasant Hill.

During this campaign, the horse that Colonel Newbold was riding got infected eyes and it was feared that he was going blind. On the twenty-mile march from Alexandria to Cotile Landing, a squad of soldiers



of the Fourteenth from Hillsboro, Iowa, neighbors of Colonel Newbold, were out on a foraging expedition. In the course of their search for supplies, they arrived at a very aristocratic plantation and decided at once to see what they could find. In the barn they discovered a beautiful white horse. Here was a real prize, just such a horse as the colonel needed to take the place of the one he was riding.

Just as they were leading the horse from the barn, however, the lady of the house came rushing out greatly excited. She told the soldiers that she was Mrs. Taylor, the wife of General Richard Taylor, who was the son of Zachary Taylor, former President of the United States. The white horse they were taking was the one that General Taylor had captured from a Mexican officer and had ridden during most of his campaigns in the Mexican War. She did not tell them, however, that her husband was even then preparing to attack the Union forces at Sabine Crossroads and Pleasant Hill.

When the Iowa soldiers persisted in seizing the General's horse, Mrs. Taylor pleaded with them to take anything else on the plantation but to leave "Old Whitey". The horse was old, she said, and could do them but little good, while he was highly prized by the Taylor family because of his military record.

Mrs. Taylor was a woman of prepossessing appearance and made a strong appeal, but not quite strong



enough to convince the Hillsboro boys that they did not need the famous war horse more than the Taylor family did. Consequently they marched away with their prize and presented him to Colonel Newbold who accepted the gift. The horse was henceforth reckoned as his property.

When Colonel Shaw reported to General Banks at Pleasant Hill he was ordered to march his brigade to the front and relieve General J. W. McMillan's brigade which had been engaged in covering the retreat of the Union forces after their decisive repulse on the previous day at Sabine Crossroads. The position occupied by the Fourteenth Iowa was in the front line where skirmishing was hottest all day. About five o'clock in the afternoon the Confederates attacked in force, hoping to rout General Banks's army completely.

Within half an hour the brigades on both sides were forced back by the determined charges of the enemy, until Colonel Shaw's regiments were exposed on three sides. At one time the Thirty-second Iowa, on the extreme left of the brigade, was completely surrounded, but succeeded in fighting through the encircling gray lines.

Meanwhile Colonel Newbold, mounted upon the old white war horse that belonged to the commanding general of the enemy, rode through the thick brush urging his men to hold their ground. Presently a



swift cavalry charge sent a protecting battery hurrying pell-mell to the rear and left the Fourteenth Iowa to receive the full force of the attack. The cavalry was repulsed, but immediately two lines of infantry advanced. The first contingent was checked in front but the second line shifted to the right and opened a terrific cross-fire. Just when the fighting was hottest, Colonel Newbold was shot and fell from his horse mortally wounded.

Thereupon Captain Warren C. Jones of Mount Pleasant assumed command of the Fourteenth Iowa and rode the white horse through the rest of the battle. Eventually Colonel Shaw received orders to fall back. Other troops were brought into the fight and after two hours of constant battle, the Confederates were forced to retreat in considerable disorder. Instead of following up the victory, however, the Union commander continued to withdraw down the river.

Soon after the battle at Pleasant Hill, General Taylor's white horse was sent by boat to Keokuk and thence to Mount Pleasant where the wife of Colonel Newbold then resided. A few days later he was taken to the Newbold farm in Van Buren County about two miles from Hillsboro. There the horse was kept by Cyrus M. Newbold, a brother of Colonel Newbold and of Governor J. G. Newbold. Cyrus Newbold taught the old war horse how to work on



the farm, a service which it had never before performed.

After a period of two years on the Newbold farm, the horse was sold to John Moxley, a horseman of considerable note living four miles west of Salem. Moxley, however, kept the horse but a short time when he sold him to Captain Warren C. Jones, who had ridden him at the battle of Pleasant Hill. Captain Jones tenderly cared for "Old Whitey" as long as the thoroughbred lived, and at the end buried him with military honors a mile and a half north of Mount Pleasant.

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