

FRANCIS HARRISON ROBINSON
3rd West Virginia Cavalry

Submitted by Charlie Robinson.

Date of Birth: 30 Oct 1832
Date of Death: 17 Jul 1913
Place of Birth: Fairmont, VA
Place of Death: Fairmont, WV
Place of Burial: Maple Grove Cemetery, Fairmont, WV
Residences: 315 Market Street, Fairmont, WV
Married: Rebecca Jane Hoult 16 Aug 1852, Stewartstown, PA
Parents: James H. Robinson & Elizabeth Baker

Children:		<u>D.O.B</u>	<u>D.O.D.</u>
1. Mary E.		11 Oct 1853	3 Jan 1854
2. Charles Lee	<i>m.</i> Marie Barnes	1 Jan 1855	1 Apr 1922
3. Ella May	<i>m.</i> A. W. Sterling	30 Aug 1858	8 Nov 1926
4. Clyde B.		22 Oct 1860	11 May 1861
5. John E.		20 Mar 1863	30 Oct 1863
6. Frank B.		30 Nov 1864	21 Dec 1865
7. Cora Belle		8 Mar 1868	18 Jan 1871
8. Efsrain B.		15 Nov 1870	24 Mar 1871
9. Clarence Delmar	<i>m.</i> Elizabeth Morris	2 Aug 1872	20 Oct 1929
10. Harry Presley	<i>m.</i> Lora May Powell	5 Jun 1876	

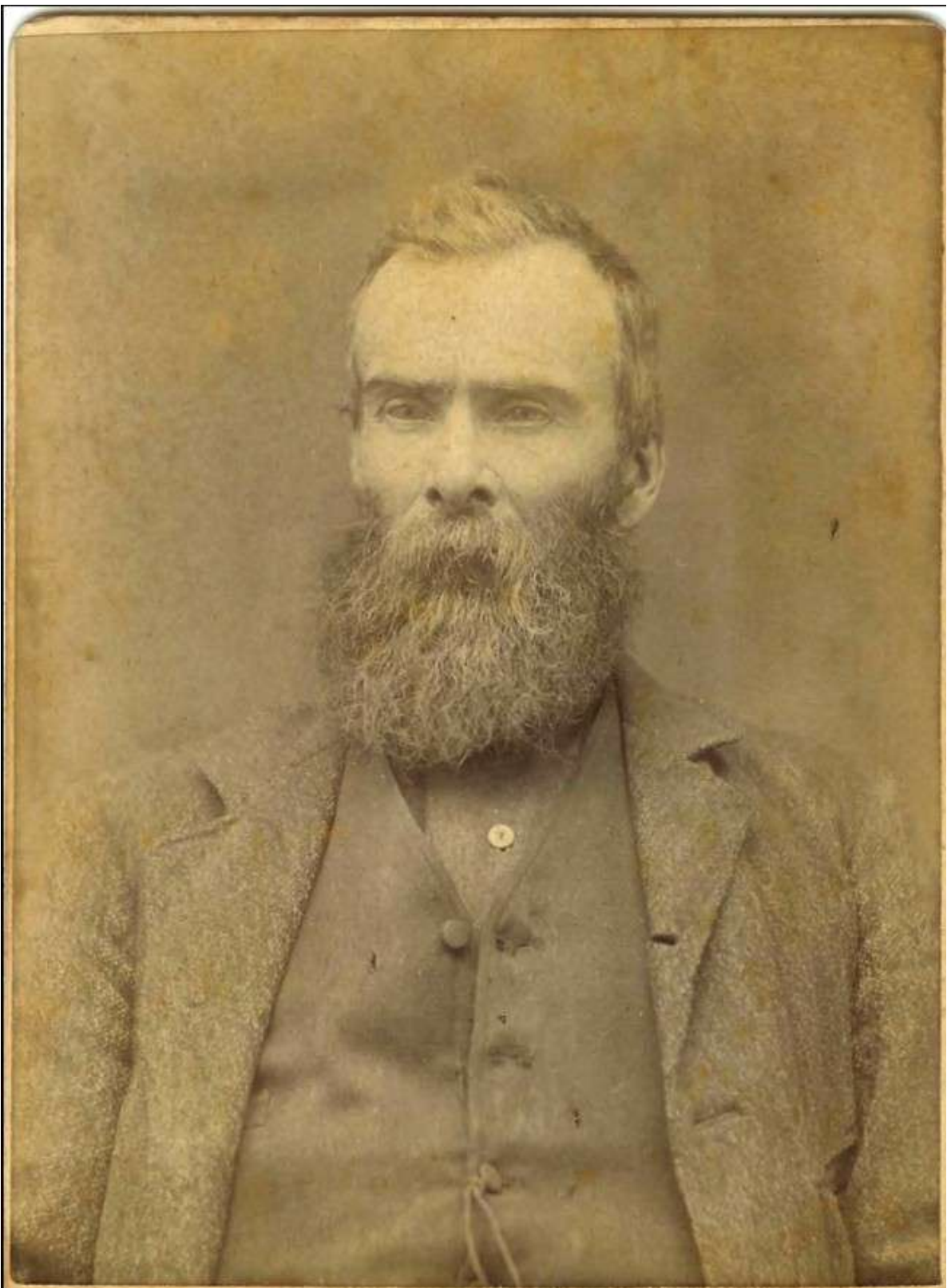
Military Service: 3rd WV Cavalry wounded in forearm during charge up the Valley Pike on 19 Sep 1864 during the battle of 3rd Winchester. Enlisted, 2 Oct 1862, M.O. 30 Jun 1865 Wheeling WV, Co. H, Private

Occupation: B & O Railroad, Freight Conductor

Other Organizations: G.A.R. Pierpont Post, Knights of Pythisis

Other Information: Died of stroke at age 8., oldest natural born resident of Fairmont at the time. He was 5'11", dark complexion, brown eyes and black hair.

Sources of Information: Laura Powell letter; Fairmont Times, 18 Jul 1913; National Archives, Pension Papers



Francais Harrison Robinson
30 October 1832 - 13 July 1913

DEATH OF OLDEST NATIVE BORN SON OF FAIRMONT

FRANCAIS HARRISON ROBINSON DEAD AFTER LONG AND USEFUL LIFE

CELEBRATED SIXTIETH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY IN SUMMER OF 1912

**IS SURVIVED BY WIDOW AND FOUR CHILDREN -
MANY WILL MOURN HIS DEATH**

Mr. Francais Harrison Robinson, aged 81 years, one of the best known and highly respected citizens of this county died yesterday morning at 930 o'clock at his home on Market street in the First ward. Death was due to apoplexy sustained some five weeks ago. Mr. Robinson had been in poor health for several months before that, however.

Mr. Robinson was one of the oldest residents of this section of the state. He was born October 30, 1832, in an old house in what is now known as Walkers Siding, in what was then Middletown. He is believed to have been the first male child born in Middletown, which afterwards became Fairmont, and at the time of his death was beyond all question the oldest living native born citizen of Fairmont.

Deceased was the son of James and Elizabeth Robinson. On August 16th , 1852, Mr. Robinson was united in marriage with Rebecca Holt, who survives. Last summer Mr. and Mrs. Robinson celebrated their sixtieth wedding anniversary.

There are ten children born to the union, six of whom died in infancy, and four of whom survive their father. The living children are Charles L. Robinson, of Winchester, Va. Clarence D. Robinson and Harry P. Robinson, of this city and Mrs. A.W. Sterling, also of this city. In addition to the four living children there are ten grandchildren and five greatgrand children who survive. Two sisters, Mrs.D.S. Helmick, of Fairmont, and Mrs. Jennie Bonnifeild, of Tunneiton, and one brother, Mr. Joseph Robinson, of this city, are also living.

Mr. Robinson was a veteran of the Union army serving for over four years in the war between the states, he served in the third Virginia Cavalry and was always a brave and ready soldier. Mr Robinson was a member of the Pierpont Post. G.A.R. and the local Knights of Pythias lodge, and those organizations will be in charge of the funeral services.

The obsequies will be held from the Diamond Street M.E. church in the first ward Saturday afternoon at 2 o'clock. Interment will be made in Maple Grove cemetery. Undertaker Fred L. Jenkins will have charge of the burial. Rev. L. B.Bowers will conduct the funeral services. Mr. Robinson was a member of the Diamond Street M. E. church.

For many years Mr. Robinson was an employee of the Baltimore and Ohio railroad and had an excellent record as a railroad man. He retired from active life several years ago.

Mr Robinson was known to almost every resident of the city. He was congenial and friendly and his death is a sad shock to the many who knew him well. during his long life he was always interested in the progress of the city and was a progressive citizen who was closely identified in many of the interests of the city in his younger years.

Also Appearing in the same paper:

FUNERAL NOTICE

The members of Marion Lodge, No. 27, Knights of Pythias are requested to meet Saturday, July 19th, at 1:30 o'clock at the castle Hall and attend in a body the funeral of F.H. Robinson.

S.H. SHATTERFIELD
Chancellor Commander

WILL ARRIVE TODAY

Mr. Charles L. Robinson and family of Winchester, Va. will arrive today for the funeral of the former's father, Mr. F.H. Robinson whose death occurred Thursday morning.

The War Of The Rebellion
Official Records
of the
Union and Confederate Armies
Series 1, Vol. 46, Part 1, pgs. 496 - 501

3rd Battle of Winchester September 19, 1864

P.H. Sheridan
Major-General

My division on the 8th of August consisted of First Brigade, Fourteenth Pennsylvania Cavalry, Eighth Ohio Cavalry, Twenty-second Pennsylvania Cavalry, attached, Col. J.M. Schoonmaker Second Brigade, First West Virginia Cavalry, Second West Virginia Cavalry, **Third West Virginia Cavalry**, First New York (Lincoln), attached, Col. W.H. Powell. Battery L, Fifth U.S. Artillery, Lieutenant Weir (four guns). These troops had marched almost continuously about 1,700 miles. With the greatest exertion I had been able to obtain horses for my dismounted men or remounts in place of my exhausted animals. The strength of my command had been partially maintained by using horses captured from time to time from the enemy. I concentrated my division at Hancock and reached Martinsburg on the 14th of August, on my way to join General Sheridan, who was then near Cedar Creek. At Martinsburg I received orders to remain and refit my division for the field. I was unable to obtain any information of General Sheridan's movements, except through my own scouts, until the 18th, when I received information from the chief of staff that Torbert's cavalry had been compelled to fall back to Summitt Point, and directions to fall back to the north side of the Potomac if necessary, covering the crossings (marked A), and also orders

through the chief of cavalry to fall back from Martinsburg to Charlestown (marked B). Starting from Charlestown, I received verbal orders through the chief of cavalry to go to Smithfield. Changing direction to the latter place, I was overtaken by the order (repeated) of the major-general commanding to cover the crossings of the Potomac, crossing the river if necessary. To cover the crossings of the Potomac from Cherry Run to Harper's Ferry with a division of cavalry operating on the south side of the river, it is necessary to take post at or near Martinsburg and establish a picket-line from Mill's Gap, in North Mountain, across the Valley to Charlestown. If unable to maintain that line it is best to guard the fords on the north side of the river. There had been nothing in the instructions received from the major-general commanding which contemplated the occupation of Martinsburg by my division. I therefore moved to Shepherdstown on the evening of the 18th and picketed the river as well as possible.

On the morning of the 20th I received an order (marked C) from the chief of staff in which these words occur:

" In fact, the general rather desires that the enemy should cross all that he wants is early information of the character and number of the troops that pass over." In order that the enemy should have the opportunity to make the desired movement, and that the required observations might be made, I moved my division across the river to Fair Play and established my pickets from Cherry Run to Antietam Furnace, which satisfied all the conditions of the instructions received from major general commanding. Having received orders direct from the chief of cavalry on the 19th, I addressed a communication (marked D) to the chief of staff on that date, in reply to which I received on the 23d the order (Marked E) to report to Brigadier-General Torbert, and to obey all orders coming from him, although he was and is my junior. On the morning of the 21st I received the dispatch marked F from the major-general commanding, which amazed and pained me, as it evinced an undue readiness on part of the major -general commanding to find faults in my official conduct. My reply (Marked G) is inclosed.

The correctness of my dispositions was shown on the 26th, when the enemy attempted to force a crossing of the river with his entire cavalry force supported by an infantry division, with artillery. He was prevented and suffered loss without any casualties worth mentioning in my command. My action of preventing the crossing of the enemy into Maryland received no expression of approval from the major-general commanding. Believing the enemy was about withdrawing to the vicinity of Winchester, I crossed the river on the 28th and advanced to Hainesville, and on the 29th to Martinsburg, driving the enemy's pickets four miles beyond that place, and establishing a picket line across the Valley. This line being too close to the enemy for his comfort, he advanced Rodes' division, with cavalry and artillery, on the 31st, compelling me to retire to Falling Waters, with the loss of forty-eight men killed and wounded. Again I believe this advance a screen to a retrograde movement, and moved forward on the 2d of September without meeting any serious opposition until near Bunker Hill, ten miles from Martinsburg, where I attacked three brigades of the enemy's cavalry under Lomax, routing them and capturing 2 battle-flags, 55 prisoners, 20 wagons, 1 battery forge, a herd of cattle, and a quantity of small arms. The enemy had no artillery. On the ensuing day the enemy's cavalry attacked me, but were completely beaten and were driven to within five miles of Winchester, where his infantry was encountered. The enemy was pressed again on the 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th until it was ascertained that he did not intend any further movements up the Valley. All the information gained by the above detailed movements from scouts and all other sources was promptly transmitted to the headquarters of the Middle Military Division, and I have reason to believe that upon the information thus sent the army left its intrenchments in front of Harper's Ferry and moved forward to the line of the Opequon. These movements, it may be seen from the inclosed orders (marked H), were made in compliance with instructions from the major-general commanding yet these very operations were the subject of convert animadversions at the

headquarters Middle Military Division. and I have been informed that the manner in which they were represented to the General-in-Chief induced the issuance of an optional order to relieve me from duty. Actuated solely by a desire to render the greatest possible service with my division, I cannot conjecture the grounds upon which my motives and reputation were permitted to suffer reproach.

Pursuant to orders received from the chief of cavalry I moved the main body of my division, on the 8th, across the Opequon to Leetown, picketing the Valley with one brigade until the 10th, when it was driven back to Martinsburg by a division of the enemy's infantry. On the 13th, pursuant to instructions from the major-general commanding, I made a reconnaissance with my division to Bunker Hill and Pughtown. The enemy's cavalry were driven beyond Bunker Hill and his infantry found in position. On the 14th I returned to my former position and remained quiet, but with vigilant pickets and active scouting parties out, until the 18th, when the enemy, under Early in person, advanced a division of infantry, with a brigade of cavalry and sixteen pieces of artillery, supported by a division of infantry at Bunker Hill, to Martinsburg, driving my First Brigade across the Opequon after an obstinate resistance, in which several of the enemy were killed and captured.

Battle of the 19th. -- In obedience to instructions received from the chief of cavalry, I advanced at 5 a.m. on the 19th across the Opequon to Darkesville, thence to Bunker Hill, driving the enemy's pickets steadily. The enemy made a determined stand with his cavalry at Bunker Hill and stubbornly resisted the advance of my division to Stephenson's Depot, five miles north of Winchester. At this point my attention was attracted by heavy firing to my left and rear, which was soon ascertained to be General Torbert endeavoring to cross the Opequon with Merritt's division of cavalry. Distant firing could also be heard to the southward. Attacking the enemy opposed to Custer promptly in rear he was enabled to cross and join my left. My division soon shifted entirely to the west side of the pike, and as it advanced the line of battle on the left had an opportunity to form. My division advanced at a trot when within three miles of Winchester, never failing to drive the enemy before it. The enemy, one mile in front of the town, presented a strong line at 2:30 p.m., but the attack of my division swept away that portion of the line west of the pike, captured one piece of artillery, seized the heights west of town, and penetrated the town itself, when the giving away of Custer's brigade opened my left flank to the enemy's attack, an opportunity he quickly embraced with infantry and artillery, but without succeeding in making my division relinquish the important position it had gained. Three of my staff, with several orderlies, were engaged for some time in rallying Torbert's cavalry, and our advance was delayed on account of the resistance the enemy was able to offer. At about this time, 3p.m., the attack of the infantry of the Army of West Virginia was made, and it became at once visible to both armies that we had gained the day. The broken ground, intersected by deep ditches and high embankments, west of town gave the enemy a chance to save his left flank. Opposed by stubborn infantry and well handled artillery our cavalry on such ground could make but slow progress, but with the shades of evening some of our infantry came to our assistance. Through out the whole engagement my division was not broken nor thrown into disorder and was constantly in advance. My losses, as stated by informal reports of brigade commanders, in killed, wounded, and missing, were 250. Of the enemy, 3 officers and 80 men were captured, and 1 gun, 1 caisson, and 2 ambulances. The reports received from brigade commanders indicate a greater number of prisoners captured, but the above mentioned number is all for which my provost marshal has receipts.

At 5 o'clock on the morning of the 20th, pursuant to instructions received from the chief of cavalry, I marched my division by the Middle r to cedar Creek, the advance driving the enemy

pickets four miles beyond and forming a junction with the pickets of Torbert's cavalry on the Strasburg pike. Rations and forage were brought up and issued. On the 21st moved at 5 a.m., to Lebanon Church, where I awaited orders until 7.45 a.m. Merritt's division was withdrawn from my left, and I was alone, with instructions to move on the Middle and Back roads until stopped by a superior force of enemy keeping up my connection with the right of the infantry line. As there is but one road besides the pike leading by Fisher's Hill, with the exception of some blind lanes, I moved along the Back road and across the country, driving the enemy outposts until a line of rail and earth breast-works was reached, behind which the enemy had a strong line of infantry and dismounted men. I informed the major-general commanding that cavalry could not carry the position without co-operative movements of infantry, and that an infantry corps, by hugging the base of North Mountain, might break around the enemy's left and render the position untenable. The major-general commanding inspected the line in person and directed me to keep a strong show of cavalry before it, which was done to the ensuing morning, when I pressed it as closely as possible with dismounted men. About 3 p.m. of the 22nd a division of the Sixth Corps attacked on the left of my immediate front, enabling me to carry the line, after which the enemy was driven by my division about a mile into his main works. General Crook's command passed along my rear through a ravine to my right and assaulted the enemy's extreme left in conjunction with one of my brigades, which leaped the works and scattered the enemy in wild confusion, pursuing the fugitives seven mile up the valley, while Crook's command passed toward the center. The country was only practicable for cavalry along the back road toward the center of the enemy's position it is broken and wooded. The guerrillas were busy with Crook's rear, picking up his stragglers, and my remaining brigade protected it, pursuant to a request from Major-General Crook, to whom I had been directed to report, and guarded our own and captured artillery, collecting prisoners and property. The Second Brigade captured 110 prisoners, 175 horses, 14 wagons, 8 ambulances, 4 guns, 4 caissons, and two battle flags. This report is made from the verbal reports received at that time. The division was not entirely assembled at midnight. The sounds of battle had died away on my left and rear with the daylight, and a darkness succeeded through which it was difficult to find the way. Trains of ambulances, ammunition wagons, with guards and stragglers, were constantly coming up, requiring directions as to their destinations. No information was received from the left and no instructions came from the major-general commanding or any one else. A staff officer, who had been sent to obtain information, returned and reported the operations on the left concluded and the army at a halt.

At daylight the ensuing morning I pushed over a rough country road, sending scouting parties out to the left to communicate with the troops on the pike. Lieutenant Wakefield returned with one of these parties when I was within six miles of Woodstock, and reported the army was four mile behind. A staff officer sent to Major-General Crook returned with the message that I " had done exactly right," and if no orders had yet been received by me to move on. The road was so hilly and indirect that I was delayed, so that upon my arrival at Woodstock I found the major-general commanding already there. Calling upon him, he informed me that I had made a mistake in not pursuing the enemy the night before. He did not ask if I had pursued him or seemed to care about knowing what had occupied me. I replied that I had received no information or instructions from him. He stated that he could not find me. I asked him if he had tried, to which he made no reply, but stated the rebel army was a perfect mob, which run away upon the firing of a single gun, and that he desired me to go and put in my cavalry. I assured him that I had never hesitated to put it in when there was any chance of success. The tone, manner and words of the major-general commanding indicated and implied dissatisfaction. I did not entertain the opinion that the rebel army was a mob. The loss of guns at Fisher's Hill had been the result of a flank movement, but his loss in men had been inconsiderable, and his troops too well handled and his stragglers too few to justify in my mind

an opinion that he was totally demoralized. I proceeded along the pike as rapidly as possible to within two miles of Mt. Jackson, where I found the brigade of General Devin engaged with a superior force of the enemy. Putting my division in action, the enemy was driven beyond the town. Major Lady and several prisoners were captured. On the heights beyond the village the army of the enemy could be plainly seen in bivouac, while a division of his infantry marched down an engaged me, opening five pieces of artillery. The position, naturally strong, had been strengthened by artificial defenses. The enemy was fully on alert and perfectly able to hold the position against five times my force, and a signal officer reported to me that the enemy was moving a brigade or division around my right. My left rested on the river, and in my rear was an almost impassable creek, across which a detail from my division built a bridge, used by the army the next morning. I held my position until dark, reporting the strength and position of the enemy to the major-general commanding. Placing a strong picket-line close to the enemy, I moved my command across the creek in rear, where water and forage could be obtained, and where my command could rest securely until morning, as they had but little forage for two days. At 11 p.m. I received the note marked I from the major-general commanding shortly after the order marked K, relieving me from duty with my division.

I have in the above report introduced some details which would have been excluded were it not for the peculiar circumstances under which it is written. An officer who has served the government nine years, who has suffered from wounds in battle, cannot without any assigned cause or pretext be suddenly relieved from the command of a division whose record tells of nothing but success and victories without having his sensibilities outraged and his reputation jeopardized. It is natural that the War Department should ask the wherefore for such action, and it is proper that I should state as explicitly as possible the reasons so far as known to me. I have evidence that it was determined to relieve me in order to make Brigadier-General Torbert chief of cavalry before Major-General Sheridan assumed command of the Middle Military Division. My success at Moorefield, achieved with an exhausted division against twice its numbers, probably caused hesitation in my removal. The note of Major-General Sheridan, dated August 20, exhibits his readiness to avail himself of any pretext to censure me, and his reply to my explanation shows how completely his purpose was baffled. Major-General Sheridan illegally assumed the prerogative of the President of the United States and ordered me to report to a junior officer on the 23rd of August without any just cause. While I had the entire country on the right flank of the army to guard up to the 19th of September and had the orders of the major-general commanding to attack the enemy whenever I had the opportunity, my successes were barely mentioned, my activity was covertly censured, and unjust impression was permitted to rest in the mind of the General-in-Chief to the extent of causing him to send an optional order for my relief. It was, I believe, admitted on the 19th of September, on both sides, that our cavalry attack was the key to the victory which we won, and I think it was obvious that the success of the attack, as to time and place, was mainly attributable to the exertions of my division, yet although I was the ranking officer of cavalry making the attack the mention of my name in the dispatches was studiously avoided. Finally, the angry and discourteous note of the 23d was addressed to me to give the pretext implied therein a quasi establishment in history, and before time was given to reply the order was issued which, trampling upon my record and upon all military courtesy and justice, consign me to the ignominy of idleness.

I am, colonel, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

WM. W. AVERELL
Brevet Major-General.

CLAIMANT'S AFFIDAVIT.

State of West Virginia, County of Mineral, ss:

In the matter of Invalid Pension Claim No. 7,001,681. of Francis H. Robinson, Private late of Co. "K" 3d Reg. W. Va. Cavalry Vols.

ON THIS 11th day of July A. D. 1891, personally appeared before me, a Notary Public in and for the aforesaid county, duly authorized to administer oaths, Francis H. Robinson, aged 58 years, the applicant in the above-entitled claim for pension, a resident of Palatine in the county of Marion and State of West Virginia whose Post Office address is Elk Garden, Mineral Co., W. Va. well known to me to be reputable and entitled to credit, and who, being sworn, declared in relation to aforesaid case as follows:

I was wounded at Manchester Va 19th September 1864 while in line of duty in left arm Chest Below the Elbow by Pistol Ball

F. H. Robinson
Signature of Claimant

-For persons who can write sign here.-