



Texas Navy Association

Historical Article



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THE LOUISIANA RECORDER
"The Blacksmith of Brazos"

Most of our readers are apprized of the naval contest about a fortnight ago between the Mexican armed schooner *Correo*, under the command of Thompson; and the American schooner, *San Felipe*, under the command of Capt. Hurd. They may recollect that after the Mexicans perceived the approach of the *San Felipe*, they ceased their attack on the *Brig Tremont*; and that Hurd having during the evening landed most of his cargo, and some passengers, he stood out for sea, resolving to attack the *Correo* or her Mexican companion. Many gentlemen, about ten (?) in number; armed with rifles, volunteered to his assistance, and put themselves under his command.

During the night both the Mexicans attacked the *San Felipe*; but the Yankees were prepared. They reserved their resistance till the foe was within rifle shot; and then let fly a volley, guided in their aim chiefly by the sounds emanating from their enemy guns: for the darkness of the night prevented a view of the foe. Still the *San Felipe* remained victor; and the Mexicans hastened a retreat—glad of their escape, as many with Capt. Thompson were wounded.

At the break of day, the *Correo* was descried at some two or three leagues distance; and Hurd resolved to give (more?) chase. For this purpose, he engaged the steamboat to take him in tow, that he might sooner approach the foe. In vain did Thompson endeavor

to preserve his distance; his own men were rather obstinate; and the advantages of the Yankees who had "raised their steam" could not be counterbalanced nor repelled. Thompson was obliged to surrender.

Among the Texanians who had volunteered under Hunt on the preceding evening, was a blacksmith (or rather a gunsmith) of Brazos, a Mr. S.D. Sharp. He had been encircled by a large belt or zone; more like Venus than her vulcan; except that it contained about 8 or 10 carbines pendant. Sharp had looked on very composedly during the encounter; a spectator but not an actor. But when the prize crew was ordered to board the *Correo*, up started Sharp, 'in shape and gesture proudly eminent; and put himself at the head of the boarders. He was actually first to board the *Correo*; and fancy him there another Jack Cade, with merely the covering of an Indian across loins; an in bulk, nerves and sinews like a Jack A_s. Rough and rugged like a Ground H_g, he advanced the captain. 'Do not fear Capt. Thompson, I shall not harm you: I shall see that you are treated honorably,' said he, while he spewed out his spittle, and twisted the quid in his mouth. 'Now men, (said he to the prize crew approaching) this is your man: take care that you keep him safe; or your lives will answer!' Sharp consequently thought himself a captain.

Soon afterwards when the officers and crew of the *Correo* were brought on board of the *San Felipe*, a desultory conversation occurred in the cabin. Sharp was in a distant part of the vessel; and seated on a trunk or pile of luggage. Reluctant to return with his carbines loaded to Brazoria, whither the steam boat was now towing

both schooners; and desirous to make a display of what he could if he would have done; he took out his pistols; and began to fire them seriatim—taking good care however to have his face in a different direction from his fire; and his head far aloof. He was reprimanded for this useless effect, and unnecessary noise. But he had now been promoted in his own opinion. ‘Who says anything against Colonel SHARP? Said he to the person who remonstrated. But a Brazorian volunteer advanced during the dispute. Do you mean to call yourself colonel?’ ‘Aye, by G_d, and as good as any of you. Wasn’t I the first to board that there captain?’ asked Sharp in triumph, while he grasped a pistol, his streamers waving in the wind’; and acting as fans to his military enthusiasm, with its ragged honors or horrors thick upon him.

But the self doubted colonel altered his tone, when he saw the altered look of one determined to chastise further insolence. Yet his depression was but for a moment: for when he landed at Brazos, he wished to believe that he was the captor of Thompson. He was now General Sharp; and inflicted severe punishment on a punny young wag who was impudent enough to tamper with his glory. But during the act of beating the lad with irons on the head, he perceived a gentleman approaching in the street, whose character he had previously calumniated: and one whom had afterwards learned was determined to take sure vengeance. General Sharp ceased beating

the boy; and beat his own retreat. But the slandered gentleman was eagle-eyed. He saw the skunk trying to abscond; and immediately dispatched a laden ambassador to arrest his flight. The ball shattered the arm of the Blacksmith General; and this species of antiphlogistic treatment abated the fever of military greatness and honors.