

SAN ANGELO MORNING

SIXTEEN PAGES TODAY

SAN ANGELO, TEXAS, THURSDAY MORNING, APRIL 25, 1929

Aged Confederate Here Ready When Last Call Sounded

Col. Z. I. Williams, veteran of more than a score of the major battles of the Civil War and a leader of his companions in the Lost Cause since Lee's surrender, was ready to die, he told his son, Arthur, not more than 10 minutes before the end came at 11 o'clock Wednesday morning.

He had been at a local hospital since late last week and suffered a relapse after an operation there.

The "Confederate Gray" is in mourning.

The "Confederate Gray" is the wooden horse which has stood in front of the R. J. Andrew and Son Harness Shop, 104 S. Chadbourne, for many years. It has long been the assembling point for the Confederate veterans of this community.

The wooden symbol has been draped with black crepe out of respect of Col. Z. I. Williams.

His condition was too weak to stand the operation which had been found necessary and it was with willingness that he joined the majority of his companions of the days of the war.

"I have lived a clean life and I

am not afraid to die," the 89-year-old Confederate veteran, who had fought with Stonewall Jackson, said to his son. He died in peace of mind.

The funeral will be held at 3 o'clock Thursday afternoon from the First Baptist church, with the Rev. Elmer Ridgeway officiating. Col. Williams had been a member of that church since his arrival here in 1897. The Masonic lodge, with which he had been affiliated for more than 60 years, will have charge of the burial services in Fairmount Cemetery. Johnson's Funeral Parlor will have charge of the funeral arrangements.

He is survived by four sons, a daughter, 30 grandchildren and 19 great-grandchildren. The sons are: Arthur of San Angelo, Joe B. of Deming, N. M.; Ernest of Maria, and Dan W., the daughter is Mrs. Will Martin of Phoenix, Ariz. Two of the children will not be able to attend the funeral because of illness in their families.

With the death of Col. Zack Isbell Williams, Company E of the 23rd Georgia Regiment, one of the most famous of the entire war, passes out of existence. He was the sole survivor of the company of 125 men which was organized at Jasper,

Pickens county, Georgia, in June, 1861. He was 21 years old when he joined the Confederate army. J. Wheeling Worley of Gainesville, who died August 4, 1921, was the next to the last survivor of the famous outfit which has remained intact throughout the duration of the war.

When the South surrendered there were only six of the 125 men available. The rest had either been killed, wounded or were on detail at some other place.

Col. Williams was the commanding officer of the Mountain Remnant Brigade, having been named general of the district which is made up of eight counties in West Texas, at the annual reunion in Christoval on August 6, 1926. Col. J. M. Israel automatically becomes leader of the organization until the election of officers at the next reunion at Christoval in July.

He was held in high esteem by the citizens of San Angelo. A member of the group of older men who "headquartered" at the R. J. Andrew and Son Harness shop on Chadbourne, he was always outspoken in his conviction and a friend has said "always was on the moral side of every question."

"Bob" Andrew, senior partner of

the shop, said, "Col. Williams was a wonderful character. His loyalty to his friends was one of the greatest things in his life. He was considerate to the highest degree and always was first to attend his friends when they became ill."

Mr. Andrew said the passing of Col. Williams had brought the death list of the "old timers" who often gathered at his shop to 57 within the past 10 years.

Colonel Williams had made his home in San Angelo for 32 years, coming here in 1897. He operated the old San Angelo Hotel, which occupied the second floor of the building at the corner of Beauregard and Chadbourne, until the structure burned 25 years ago.

He was burned in the fire, having warned the guests of the hotel before he thought of his own safety. He then went into the transfer business from which he retired in 1906 after the death of Mrs. Williams in April of that year.

His war record reads like a book and his experiences would more than fill one. He was given early training at Camp McDonald or Big Shady and then was transferred to Richmond, Va., the capital of the

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 11)

COL. WILLIAMS, CIVIL WAR VET SUCCEUMBS HERE

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

Confederacy, and moved to Yorktown where the 23rd Regiment wintered.

In the spring of 1862 his outfit started what proved to be one of the bitterest campaigns a military company was called on to do during the war. It started with a skirmish en route back to Richmond, at Williamsburg, Va., a few days later taking part in the battle of the Seven Pines. He was in the seven days of fighting before the city of Richmond in which his regiment suffered heavy losses.

Later followed the campaign in

the Valley of Virginia and the Second Battle of Manassas, the Colonel going from there to Gettysburg where most of the regiment was wiped out. After another battle the remainder of the regiment went into winter quarters again. He was captured by the union army at Chancellorsville, where General Jackson was killed by his own men who had mistaken him for charging northern cavalymen. The Colonel got back into the fray in an exchange of prisoners and took part in many other battles before the end of the war.

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The Wooden Horse Mourns

April 24, 1929

An anachronism in this age of motor cars and airplanes, a harness shop, stands on one of San Angelo's principal streets. And proudly rearing his head disdainfully above the clamor of the automotive traffic in front of it stands a wooden horse.

Tacked to the horse Wednesday was a bit of black crepe. Colonel Williams is dead. Colonel Williams, who followed the fortunes of the Lost Cause with Stonewall Jackson and lived to see the day when that cause had become an American epic, and the ranks of the valiant band who followed the Stars and Bars had thinned to almost nothing; has answered the last trumpet call and the wooden horse brigade has lost its leader.

The wooden horse brigade is that group of congenial spirits which sits at the feet of that symbolic animal and passes the hours in the pleasant West Texas sunshine with that almost vanishing American art—conversation. Great are the problems that have been settled by that little group at the feet of the horse that never moves, and in all those involved discussions Colonel Williams played no small part.

The battle of Chancellorsville, in which Colonel Williams took part, and where the mighty Stonewall Jackson met his death, was refought many times there. The place is the forum of San Angelo and it was the scene of the happiest hours of the twilight years of the Confederate officer.

So the wooden horse mourns his passing. There is something more symbolic in that bit of crepe on the figure than the mere indication of the death of a kindly old man who spent hours at that spot.

Had he fought in another cause or had death taken him at a time when that bloody struggle we call the Civil War was a tragic memory, fresh in its grim reality, a horse of flesh and blood would have followed the funeral procession to the grave. Sabres would have flashed and there would have been those formal marks of respect which are paid a military leader.

But only the wooden horse is here to symbolize the gallant army of which Colonel Williams was a part. A few decrepit veterans will attend the funeral, automobiles will carry the mourners, and the horse, that, too, was meant for a day that has gone, will stand a silent reminder of another blank on the roster of the men who were willing to die for that which they believed right.

No marching men, no bands, no prancing horses honor a lost cause. The splendor and the fanfare of war is reserved to the victors. Those who go down to defeat, though unconquered, have only the glory of the spirit that animated their heroic struggle to preserve as an adornment to their sacrifice. Ragged and half-starved and impoverished, the men that served the Confederacy were not a beautiful spectacle after the war, but the ideals their comrades died for are beautiful. They are the pageant of splendor the remnants of the Confederacy and we of Confederate lineage have.

The Army of the Confederacy is fast leaving us. Soon it will swing off forever, marching into the starless night without military pomp to join the spirits of Lee and Jackson and Stuart. Colonel Williams has gone.

But a horse of splinters is draped in mourning.