THE UNION SPY

The

Levi Weston Simmons

Autobiography

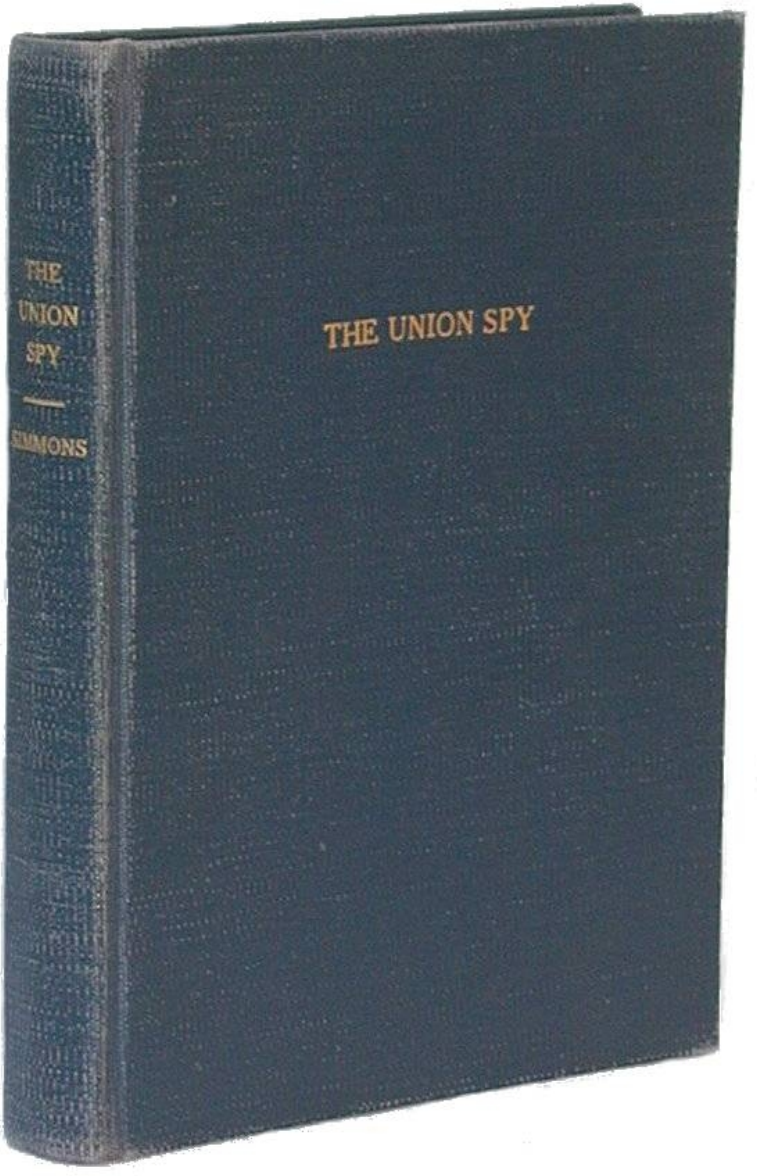

Photo of the Original Book

THE UNION SPY

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY

of

PRIVATE L. W. SIMMONS

CO. 1 11TH ILLINOIS CAVALRY

UNITED STATES ARMY

PRINTED IN THE U.S.A.

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LEVI WESTON SIMMONS

PREFACE

It is not the purpose of this volume to bring the Author into prominence. He has never sought notoriety and does not seek it now. Its purpose is to satisfy the often expressed wish of his children and a host of friends to have in permanent form the record of a life that has been full of adventure and replete with incidents of deadly peril, miraculous escapes, and physical endurance that will satisfy the reader that, "There is a destiny that shapes our ends, rough hew them as we may," and nothing but a divine Providence could have led the author through it all in safety.

While the record of the early years of my life, those eventful years that gave me the title of "The Kid of the Plains" might have been written years ago, not so with that part of my life that was woven into the Secret Service in the North as well as in the South during the great Civil War. These records I could not have made public before this time without danger to my life and the lives of others. Therefore, I have held my peace and only occasionally given in public recitals a few of the incidents of my early career.

Now that nearly a half century has passed and knowing that I shall soon have to answer the last Roll Call and take my place in the ranks of the Grand Army above and at the earnest solicitation of my children who have besought me to leave a record of my life, I now give to them and to the Comrades of the "Grand Army of the Republic" these imperfect sketches of the life of one who has tried to be true to his God, his Country, and his family and friends. I ask no one aside from these to believe the statements made in this volume.

With a profound realization of my own weakness and shortcomings and with a declaration of unwavering faith in Almighty God, and undying love for my country and my country's Flag, I dedicate this volume to my family and my Comrades of the Grand Army of the Republic.

L. W. Simmons

CHAPTER I

MASSACHUSETTS

In the Old Bay State -- I have never been sorry that it was there and if it were to be done over again and I could have any choice in the matter I would not change the location -- yes, there in the "land of steady habits and baked beans" in the suburbs of what was then North Bridgewater (now Brockton) on Thursday, October 18, 1841, I made my entry into this grand old world. I have never regretted that the event took place for I have highly enjoyed life, barring a few unpleasant incidents, and have found:

"This world is nor so bad a world
As some would try to make it
For the good and bad about this world
Depends on how you take it."

I am told that there was not much of me at that time but squall and suction with both of which I was richly endowed. I weighed but six pounds when they first put me on the scales, but by a diligent use of suction and a lessening use of squall, I soon reached the normal size of a Bay State baby. Like all other babies I was pronounced the "sweetest ever" by my friends and relatives, while the two old maids next door said I was a "squalling brat" because I suppose of the nightly concerts that I gave, not I assure you for their benefit, but because of my insatiable thirst for the elixir of life, of which I could never get enough.

My father was a son of one of the oldest Puritan families, his father being Master-at-arms on the Frigate "Constitution" commanded by Commodore Hull. His grandfather was lieutenant of Marines on the "Bon Homme Richard" under the redoubtable JOHN PAUL JONES. My father was proud of his ancestry and never tired of relating the gallant deeds of his father and grandfather in the war for American independence.

My mother was a "Shepardson" her grandmother being a Weston connected with a branch of the Weston family that has been associated with the educational interests of the New England states for many generations. I was named Levi after my great grandfather, Levi Mason,

and Weston after my great, great grandfather on my mother's side, John Ourmez Weston, a prominent educator and College President at Cambridge, Massachusetts -- my name, therefore, is Levi Weston Simmons, at your service. My childhood was not unlike that of other boys reared in the historic Old Bay State. If there was any exception it was in the care taken by my father that nothing should be overlooked in my education. I had a private teacher when I was but four years old. I have no recollection of a time when I could not read and write.

At the age of five years an event that made a deep and lasting impression upon my young mind took place. My mother, whom I loved dearly, died. While I remember very little of her, yet there are two conditions under which I can see her now as clearly as though it were but yesterday. The one was as I knelt at her side robed in my white nightgown and said my evening prayers; and the other, the time when my father held me up so that I could look for the last time into the sweet face I had loved so well, now cold in death. So vividly were these events impressed upon me they have come up before me many a time and pulled me back when I would have gone into sin and vice, and have had a wonderful influence upon all my after life. I thank God for a Christian mother. Two years after her death my father married my mother's sister who had been his housekeeper after my mother's death. My education was continued in the public school until my eleventh year when I entered the "Holden Academy" a very popular institution at that time in my native town. I recollect having but one vacation from my studies up to my fourteenth year, for when school vacation occurred I was supplied with a private teacher. I think this course upon the part of my father was a mistake, for while it gave me a remarkably good education for one of my years, it would have resulted in permanent injury to my health had it been continued. In the early part of my fifteenth year a number of incidents occurred which disappointed the hopes of my father who was bent upon making me a scholar, but instead made me a rover, a plainsman, and a soldier.

CHAPTER II

IN THE WEST

The next three years of my life prepared me for the work upon which I entered when the great Civil War began in 1861, and I shall pass rapidly over it simply calling attention to some of the more interesting events which took place in a period of my life that, were it all written up, would require a volume by itself.

In the beginning of 1854 an uncle of mine who had emigrated to Illinois in ‘30 and had been lost to his relatives for years suddenly returned on a visit to his old home and friends. He had been a frontiersman and Indian fighter having been the Captain of a company that was engaged in the Black Hawk war. He had been wounded twice and related countless adventures in that memorable conflict between the Indians and Whites in that then far western country. After the close of that eventful struggle he had settled down as a farmer in Warren County, Illinois, where his descendants still live enjoying the fruits of his foresight and energy. The tales that he told us of the productiveness of that favored region, and the possibilities of a great future for Illinois and its people, all of which subsequent events have been fully justified, had an electrifying effect upon my young mind and I, determined to see and know something of that wonderful country for myself. I had great difficulty in gaining the consent of my father to allow me, a mere boy, who had never been further away from home than Boston, to undertake a trip of a thousand miles into the wilds of the far west. I, however, brought into court in my behalf, our old family physician, Dr. Thompson, who succeeded in convincing my father that it would be the best thing in the world for me. In fact, he told my father that the trip or sea voyage was all that would save me from an early grave as my constant application to my studies had already made inroads upon my health and had hindered my constitutional development. Very reluctantly my father at last consented to my going to spend one year on my uncle’s farm in Illinois and I was a happy boy. My uncle had already returned to his home in Illinois but had promised that if my father should conclude to allow me to go, that when I arrived he would take every possible care of me. Preparations for my departure were immediately begun and when it was known through the neighborhood that I was to go to the far west, I became the center of attraction among the young people

of the community and parties and receptions were held up to the very day of my departure. So earnest and fervent were the expressions of regret at my going and so earnest the hopes expressed that I might have a safe journey and early return that I almost regretted my determination to leave this host of admiring friends; but feeling that it was only for a short year, I pushed forward the preparations for departure.

On the morning of March 6, 1854, in company with my father and stepmother and a few friends I left the home of my birth - - the familiar scenes of my boyhood's happy days, expecting that in a short year I should again return to take up my studies and grow up into the political, religious and social life of my beloved native state; for, in common with most boys of New England, I had an enthusiastic love for the land of my nativity. Dear old Massachusetts! I have never seen her since that day, but in all the eventful years that have intervened, my love for her has never abated and I still long to visit those old familiar scenes, to climb once more to the top of Bunker Hill Monument, to wander among the trees of Boston Common, to look with ever-increasing reverence at the walls and spires of old Faneuil Hall, to glide over the placid waters of Factory Pond, to coast once more down Wind Mill Hill and to visit the Old Cemetery and stand once more beside the grave of my mother and there to reconsecrate the few remaining years of a busy life to the cause of God, Country and Home, the foundation stones of our great Republic.

Bidding a tearful farewell to my parents and friends I boarded the train for Chicago and was whirled away toward the Great West! After three days and nights of tiresome travel I reached the windy city, then just beginning to give promise of commercial greatness. As I had no one to show me about, I saw but little of the city that has since become second in the United States in population and in commercial importance. Leaving Chicago on the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad, I reached Galesburg, at that time the terminus of that line, on the fifth day after leaving Boston, a trip that is now made in thirty hours, so great has been the improvement in railroad travel.

I went to the Bonner House, then the only hotel of any importance in the town, and was met within a few hours by a cousin who was at that time a student at the Illinois Liberal Institute, a school which afterward grew into Lombard University and has taken a leading position among the educational institutions of the State. To this institution I owe the finishing

of the education which I began in the Old Bay State. As to my connection with this University, I shall have occasion to refer later.

The next day after my arrival at Galesburg we took a carriage and drove to my uncle's farm. I was greatly pleased with my ride over the broad prairies that were just taking on their carpet of green; the few settlements we passed through showed evidence of that activity characteristic of the Illinois farm in the early springtime; all, however, was new to me. I manifested my ignorance of farm life by asking endless questions as to what I saw, especially when, out in the middle of a newly plowed field I saw a man with a bag swung over his shoulders pacing with long, rapid strides swinging his right arm at each step with his right foot. I watched him for a long time and finally asked my cousin what the man was doing. My cousin smiled broadly as he told me that the man was sowing wheat.

I was cordially received at my uncle's farm and entered upon what I had hoped would be a pleasant and instructive year, as I hoped to acquire a knowledge of farming that would make me a bureau of information when I should return to my home in Massachusetts. But alas, for human hopes! Only a few days elapsed before I found that my expectations were not to be realized. My uncle was a radical Democrat, a free trader and a Universalist, and his boys had imbibed his ideas. On the other hand, my father was an Abolitionist and a Methodist and I had as deeply imbibed his ideas. Discussion of the political situation soon arose and grew warmer as the days went by. My education and my association with some of the brightest lights of the Free-soil party, Charles Sumner and Henry Willson, who were frequent visitors at my father's house, had given me an insight into the political situation enjoyed by few boys of my age and made it possible for me to not only enter into these discussions intelligently but to outclass my cousins and my uncle as well in the discussions that arose almost every evening after supper as we sat around the fireplace at my uncle's home; those discussions grew more bitter and acrimonious as the days went by until they finally culminated in open hostilities. One evening the possibility of war between the North and South was the subject of debate; the possibilities and probabilities were discussed pro and con. We all became very earnest when my youngest cousin, who was just three days older than I, arose to his feet and shaking his fist in my face said he hoped the South would secede from the Union

and that he would join the forces of the South and help to give the d - d Yankee Abolitionists a thrashing, as they all needed hanging. This was a little more than I could stand. I told him that if he wanted to fight Yankees he might as well begin on me, which he immediately proceeded to do. We squared away and began the engagement in good style. The final result of the combat was that he had to go to bed for repairs while I was nursing a broken finger and a badly swollen nose. This closed my sojourn at my uncle's farm for that worthy gentleman informed me that I was entirely too much of a Yankee to suit the environment by which I was surrounded and that my room was far more desirable than my company. I replied that I found myself in perfect accord with his wishes in the matter and I at once began my preparations for departure. Packing my trunk and satchel I hailed a passing team and had my belongings hauled to a neighbor's house where I secured accommodations for the night, and the next day left for Monmouth, the county seat of Warren County. During my stay at my uncle's I had been to mill with one of my cousins to a little place called Babylon, on Spoon River, where we were compelled to remain two days before we could have our grist of wheat and corn converted into flour and meal. While waiting for our grist we interested ourselves by attending the Justice Court where a case was being tried involving the boundary line between two farms in the neighborhood. One of the lawyers in the case was the afterward celebrated Robert G. Ingersoll, for the defense, and the prosecution was conducted by a young man named Kidder. We were all stopping at the same hotel and while the two lawyers were not busy in the case in which they were engaged they were in a fierce debate upon political questions, Ingersoll being at that time a rabid Democrat while Kidder was a staunch Freesoiler. I formed quite an attachment for Mr. Kidder and an equally strong dislike for Ingersoll who was very abusive and profane.

Mr. Kidder's home was at Monmouth, so when I arrived at that place I immediately sought him out. He at once gave me employment as a copyist in his office. Mr. Kidder became very much attached to me and a friendship grew up between us which continued until his death.

I had been in Mr. Kidder's office only a few weeks when one day I was at my usual work at my desk, a gentleman entered and greeted Mr. Kidder very warmly. After some conversation on family matters (their families being in some way related) the gentleman told Mr. Kidder that he

was in search of a young man to act as his private secretary and asked Mr. Kidder if he knew of anyone whom he could recommend. Mr. Kidder said he knew of no one unless I would suit him. The gentleman looked at me and remarked that I was too young. Mr. Kidder replied that while I was young I had an old head on my shoulders; that I had a remarkably good education and in his opinion would make him a fine secretary and asked the privilege of introducing me. The gentleman consented and I was at once introduced to the Hon. William Phelps, the United States General Indian Agent. Mr. Phelps had received his appointment from Franklin Pierce, then President of the United States. He entered into conversation with me upon topics of general interest. He seemed to be pleased with the fund of information of which he found me in possession, and, after examining some of the copy I had before me, asked me to come to his room at the hotel that evening. I gladly accepted the invitation and at the hour appointed I called upon him. He questioned me closely and finally concluded by saying that he wished to notify the Secretary of the Interior of the present status of the expedition upon which he was about to enter; that he would give me a verbal summary and wished me to extend it in a letter to the Secretary. He proceeded to do so while I took notes of his statements. Having concluded his summary I was supplied with stationery and proceeded with my allotted task. In about fifteen minutes I handed him the result of my work. He expressed perfect satisfaction with it and said he should forward it just as it was, asking me to make a few explanatory sentences in a postscript after his signature. The contents of this letter gave me my first clear idea of the nature of the expedition of which Mr. Phelps was in charge. He was to visit most of the Agencies, Reservations and Trading Posts situated in Kansas, Colorado, New Mexico, Wyoming, Montana, Oregon, and California, and report upon their condition and submit recommendations as to changes of locality or management. To accompany the expedition there was to be a Topographical Engineer, a Botanist, a Mineralogist and an Ornithologist, the whole to be under the protection of a Company of United States Cavalry.

Having agreed upon the salary which I was to receive, which was fifty dollars the month and found, I was instructed to report for duty at Independence, Missouri, June 1, 1854. As it was then the 12th of May, I made immediate preparations for my departure and on the 15th boarded the

steamer “Benton” at Oquarkee bound for St. Louis where we arrived on the 17th after a delightful trip down the Upper Mississippi. I remained in St. Louis until the 20th when I took passage on the steamer Fawn bound for the Upper Missouri. We had a large list of passengers, many of whom were to be connected with the Phelps expedition. Without making myself known to my fellow passengers I began a close study of the men who were to be my associates during the next three years. Altogether they were a fine body of men. They had been carefully selected by Mr. Phelps for the duties to which they were to be assigned and were an orderly, intelligent and sober lot of men. There were, however, a number of gamblers on board who traveled continually on the Mississippi and Missouri River steamers in those days for the sole purpose of fleecing the unwary who might be prevailed upon to be separated from whatever money they might be in possession of. There did not seem to be any gullibles among the crowd on the Fawn, and the gamblers were much disappointed. On the evening of the second day out, after supper, and while we were enjoying a smoke on the hurricane deck, one of the gamblers approached Professor Worden, the Botanist of the expedition, a young man of fine personal appearance and closely knit and symmetrical figure, and invited him to go below and have a drink at the bar. Professor Worden replied that he never drank; then said the gambler, whose name was Nelson, “Let us go down and have a smoke.” Worden replied that he did not smoke; then said Nelson, “Let us eat a little hay.” Warden flushed red in the face and replied, “I accept no invitations from such as you.” Nelson came back with a retort, “Well, sir, if you neither drink, smoke nor eat hay, you are not fit for association with either men or beasts and you had better get off the earth.” He had hardly finished the sentence when the right fist of Worden caught the point of Nelson’s chin, and he reeled backward and would have fallen to the deck but for the smokestack against which he came with a thud. Nelson was a powerful man, however, and instantly rallied. Drawing a large sheath knife, he made a rush at Worden who stood his ground and when Nelson made a lunge at him with his knife, he skillfully parried the blow with his left arm, turning Nelson partly around at the same time, and then dealt him a terrific blow on the back of the head that sent him sprawling upon the deck. All was now confusion. The rest of the gamblers, four in number, rushed to the assistance of their fallen comrade, flourishing revolvers and knives, while those of who had seen

the dastardly and unwarranted attack upon the Professor lined up alongside of him, determined to see fair play. Seeing that the Professor's friends outnumbered them, they gathered up their fallen comrade, and sullenly retired below. But this was not to be the end of the conflict. The gamblers were not satisfied. They ginned up at the bar, and the quality of the whisky being of the fighting kind, they were soon ready for another demonstration. There was a young fellow aboard who was on his way to Independence to join an uncle who was fitting out a mule train for Santa Fe. He was a green country boy, had never been away from home before, and knew nothing of the conditions by which he found himself surrounded. The gamblers felt that it would be safe for them to tackle him so one of them approached him with an invitation to have a drink. The boy declined. When the gambler pretended to be highly insulted and made as though he would strike the boy, the lad stepped backward to avoid the man, caught his heels in a coil of rope and fell overboard. I was standing on the lower deck at the time and knew nothing of the trouble on the deck above until I saw the boy struggling in the water and heard the cry of "man overboard". I threw off my coat and vest and leaped into the river. Being an expert swimmer I soon reached the struggling lad, and held him up until a boat from the steamer picked us up. On reaching the steamer I went for my coat and vest but they were gone. I reported the loss to the Mate who was standing near. He immediately called the man who was on watch at the time and asked him if he knew anything of my clothes. The watchman hesitated for a moment and then seeing a number of the gamblers standing on the deck above looking at him, he declared he knew nothing of them. With a fearful oath, the Mate sprang upon the watchman, seized him by the throat and swore he would choke the life out of him if he did not tell what he knew about my clothes. Fearing that the Mate would carry his threat into execution, the watchman agreed to tell what he knew and as soon as he could get his breath he told us that he had seen one of the gamblers pick up my clothes and carry them aft and put them among the freight and cover them over with a piece of canvas. The Mate went aft to the place indicated and lifted the piece of canvas, pulled my clothes out from between the boxes of freight and handed them to me. I was very glad to get them back as the vest contained $150.00 in currency in the inside pocket. All was quiet for a time. I was in my stateroom putting on some dry clothes when I heard loud voices above me, and then

the sharp crack of pistols and the noise of a fearful struggle. When I reached the scene, I found the Mate and his crew binding the gamblers as they lay prostrate on the deck. When the job was completed -- and I assure you it was well done--the boat was run alongside the river bank, a plank was run ashore and the gamblers were hustled off the boat and left to shift for themselves, their hands tied behind them and their feet tied so close together that they could not step more than eight or ten inches at a time, and so we left them and steamed on up the river. The rest of the journey was made in peace and was altogether a very pleasant trip.

We reached Independence on the 28th, and I at once reported to Mr. Phelps who greeted me warmly and assigned me quarters in a tent near to his own. The next few days were very busy ones. I was given an order on the Quartermaster for a horse and equipment. As I took the order from Mr. Phelps he said, "You are entitled to a servant to attend to your horse and do your packing and I have been holding a Mexican for you although a number of the Officers have been trying to secure him. He was with me two years ago when I visited the Yankton Agency, and I found him a very reliable and trusty fellow. I will call him and turn him over to you now." He stepped to the rear of the tent and called to a dark, villainous looking Mexican who was engaged in braiding a riata. He laid down his work and came to where we were standing. Removing his hat he stood in a listening attitude. Mr. Phelps said, "Don, this is Mr. Simmons, my private secretary, and I have been holding you for him. You will take charge of his horses and outfit and take as good care of him as you did of me when we went to Yankton." And turning to me he said, "You will find Don one of the best of men, and I have every reason to believe that you will be pleased with him." I shook hands with Don and he seemed pleased with my cordiality and we walked away toward the Quartermaster's quarters together. I told Don that I was not familiar with horses and wished him to select a horse for me. We went into the corral and after looking about among fifty or sixty horses there, Don selected a fine bay mare, but when he attempted to approach her she shied off and would not be caught. After a few ineffectual attempts to catch the mare, Don left the corral but soon returned with a riata, and now I witnessed for the first time the usual method of catching horses in the west. Starting the whole herd on the run around the corral, Don marched around following the herd, swinging his riata in graceful circles around his head, when at the favorable moment, he

sent the loop swirling through the air and it fell lightly over the head of the mare. Don was the most expert hand with the riata that I ever saw! In all my three years experience with him I never knew him to fail once in making a catch. The mare was soon saddled and Don led her up to me and told me to mount. I put my foot in the stirrup and threw myself lightly into the saddle. I had no sooner struck the saddle than the mare threw her head between her forelegs and arching her back she began a series of leaps and bounds such as I had never seen before and have seldom seen since. I dropped the bridle and seizing the horn of the saddle with one hand and the pommel with the other I made a desperate effort to stay in the saddle, but in spite of all I could do I found myself first behind the saddle and then in front of it and sometimes perilously near to losing my hold. I hung on, however, for some time until, at last, the mare gave a fearful leap into the air and came down stiff legged! This hurt me so badly that I lost my hold upon the saddle and with the next plunge of the mare I went rolling over her head onto the ground. Don picked me up and patted me on the back as he said I had done nobly and would make a fine rider. His congratulations were well meant but were no compensation for the bruises and abrasions that I found all over my body. It was a week before I was able to sit in a saddle or anywhere else for that matter!

Don took charge of the mare and in a very few days he had subdued her completely, and while I had her she never offered to buck again and proved to be very fast and perfectly safe. I became very much attached to her. On the 12th of June we broke camp at Independence and started upon our long overland journey.

As we filed out of Independence I acted as an aide-de-camp for Colonel Phelps and carried messages from front to rear as directed. The column was made up at this time just as it was every day for the next three years with very few exceptions. First in the advance rode the vedette, consisting of eight men and a Sergeant of the troop of Cavalry which was our escort - - Troop F 20th U.S. Cavalry, Capt. C. C. McCook commanding. This vedette rode about a quarter of a mile in advance of the advance guard which consisted of about twenty more of the troopers, then came the Commissary department consisting of about forty pack mules, each carrying about three hundred pounds of provisions, one Mexican attendant for every three mules. Then followed the main body of the Troopers, after which came the Headquarters which consisted of

Colonel Phelps and his servant, myself and Don, Captain McCook and his company officers, the scientific experts and their helpers, followed by the livestock and then the rear guard of about twenty troopers, and about a quarter of a mile in the rear of all came a vedette of eight troopers and a sergeant. The expedition numbered about one hundred and fifty souls. Ordinarily our column was about a mile long when on the march, except when in dangerous territory when we were more compactly formed and four scouts rode about a quarter of a mile to the right and left of the column.

As we filed out of Independence and started on our long journey, we wound up the long hill leading to the plains. As we reached the summit the scene spread out before us in wonderful beauty; the broad rolling prairies as far as the eye could reach with not a tree in sight and the great Santa Fe Trail, of which I had heard so much, winding like a great dark stream through a carpet of green, with long trains of teams coming and going bearing the commerce between the States and the far West.

After the first day out we saw but here and there a settler's house and these were always on some stream where there was a little timber and the soil was very rich. Our first stop for any length of time was at Council Grove, where the Great Trail crosses the Neashio River. Here the government was building stone houses for the Indians who occupied the reservation. It was the Kow tribe and they were very far from being the "noble red man" that I had expected to find. Filthy to the last degree, lazy beyond expression, they were there to be cared for by the Government until whisky and disease should end their existence. They were then going rapidly and have long since ceased to exist as a tribe. They never lived in the stone houses built for them by the government but used them to house their ponies while they lived in their wickieups.

It is not my purpose to give a detailed description of our journeyings for the next three years. I shall only relate some of the more interesting events, as a detailed account would require more spare time than can be given to this narrative. Soon after leaving Council Grove, I had a little trouble with a young fellow by the name of Maxwell. He was one of a family of that name that had achieved some notoriety on the Trail. They had a Trading Post on the Picket Wire, a branch of the Colorado. Fred, that was his name, had laid in a supply of very bad whisky at Council Grove and had been on a spree ever since we had left the place.

One afternoon, just after we went into camp, my tent had been set up and I had just prepared to go to my work when Don told me of a very fine spring of mineral water not far from our camp. I went with him to the spring and found it to be a very fine one indeed. On returning to my tent I found Fred Maxwell curled up on my blankets in a drunken stupor. I shook him to arouse him and told him that I wanted the tent as I had to go to work. He was in a bad humor and swore he would not get up. I tried to prevail upon him to get out but without success. Finally, after trying for sometime to get him to move and finding it useless to talk to him, I seized him by the legs and dragged him bodily from the tent. He kicked and swore and threatened, but I did not release my hold of him until I had dragged him at least twenty yards from the tent, when I dropped his legs and started back. I had gone but a few paces, when I heard the noise of a struggle behind me. Looking back I saw Maxwell and Don in fierce struggle. Don was attempting to get possession of a revolver that Fred held in his hand. At last he succeeded and threw the weapon several yards away. Just then a Corporal and two soldiers came up and put Maxwell under arrest. When I had dropped Maxwell's legs and left him he had lifted himself to a kneeling position and, drawing his revolver, was about to shoot me in the back when Don had sprung upon him and disarmed him as I have related. This settled and fixed the relation of Maxwell to me. He was my enemy and one that would require watching. This incident also cemented the bond of friendship between Don and myself, a bond which was never loosened until the waters of Coos Bay closed over the form of the noblest Mexican I ever knew. A little incident that happened a few days later was of great benefit to me, and caused Maxwell to have a wholesome respect for me that he otherwise would not have entertained.

We were laying over a day at Diamond Springs and Colonel Phelps and I had been with the Topographical Engineer to the summit of a mound about four miles from camp, where he made some observations, taking the latitude and longitude of the mound. As we were returning we came upon a group of men from the camp who were congregated under the shade of some trees on the creek bottom. They were amusing themselves at pistol practice. They had hung a tin cup to the limb of a tree where it dangled by a cotton string and they were shooting at the cup at a distance of fifty yards and no one had as yet hit the cup. As we dismounted and joined the crowd Maxwell was just getting ready to shoot. With a flourish he brought

his revolver over his head and as it came to a level, fired. He was a good shot and added to his credit this time by putting a hole in the cup. Someone asked the Colonel to take a shot, which he did but failed to make a good score. Turning to me, he said, “You try it, you are a good shot”; I replied, “Yes, and for that reason I decline to shoot at the cup as it is too large a mark; however, I will take a shot at the string.” Drawing my revolver I dropped my arm to my side, then planting my right foot forward I swung my revolver upward with a quick but steady movement and when it reached a level, fired. To my great astonishment the cup fell to the ground. I had hit the string! I am very sure that had I fired a hundred more shots, I should not have hit the cup even, for as a matter of fact, I was a poor shot at that time. But my accidental shot that day was a good thing for me as Maxwell believed me to be a dead shot and, of course, never wanted to give me a chance to take a shot at him.

CHAPTER III

IN THE FAR WEST

It was August before we reached Bent's Fort, then an important military station in southwestern Colorado. We made this point a center for operations during the fall months and went into winter quarters on the inside of the Fort in November. We passed the long winter months in hunting, coasting and skating in the daytime and in amateur theatricals, debates and games in the evening. There was a very good library at the Fort and so altogether we passed a very pleasant, not to say profitable winter. In the spring we took up our line of march northward, passing up through the South Park over the divide under the shadow of Pike's Peak, over the ground where Denver now stands without a thought that within a few years, it would be the site of a large, prosperous, and beautiful city.

While we were traveling up slowly through the South Park, an incident occurred which interested me very much and which I think will be of interest to the reader; if you think not, you can just skip the next few pages and thus save a little time in the reading of this book. One day in June soon after we had started in the morning, I got permission to take Don with me and ride ahead of the vedette a short distance in hopes that we might be able to shoot an antelope, with which the country abounded. We were about half a mile ahead of the vedette, riding down a little valley. The points running down from the plateau above were covered with a dense growth of chaparral, the ground was sandy and we made but little noise. As we rounded one of these points mentioned above, we suddenly came upon a herd of about fifty wild horses. They saw us and lifted their heads high in the air and each giving a snort they dashed away up the little valley toward the plateau above. Before I hardly knew what was going on, Don gave a terrific yell and swept past me at full gallop. In less than a quarter of a mile from where the horses had been feeding, the little valley became but a narrow gorge up which but one or two of them could go at a time. They crowded and kicked each other as they struggled to gain the plateau and were thus so much hindered that Don gained on them rapidly and just as they reached the open plain I saw Don's riata circling around his head; suddenly the loop shot out from his powerful hand and with unerring aim fell over the arched neck of a beautiful black stallion. Don gave him a chance until they had gone well out on the plain and then

started him on that circle around him that could end only in one way, around and around went the terrified pony while Don's horse stood braced keeping the riata taut and always facing the pony who was fast exhausting himself in his frantic but futile efforts to escape. Suddenly putting spur to his own horse, Don dashed straight away toward the pony thus loosening the riata. The pony instantly wheeled, and seeing the herd away out on the plain darted off in that direction. But even as he did so, Don with a dexterity which I have never seen equaled, swung a loop in his lasso which swirled along the line and caught the pony's foot just below the fetlock. The pony's head and foot were drawn together and he went headlong to the ground. I had remained outside the circle of operations, but when the pony went down, I went forward and took the riata from Don while he went up to the fallen animal and threw his serape over his head and made him fast. We then proceeded to get a saddle on him, taking mine for that purpose. We finally succeeded in saddling and bridling the captive and we then let him up. With the serape over his head, he stood trembling in every fiber but made no effort to move. Without thinking of my previous experience in riding a wild horse I took the saddle and told Don to remove the serape. As he did so the pony threw his head in the air, and with a long loud neigh which ended with a terrific snort, he bounded forward and set out at a fearful pace in the direction of the herd that was then about a mile away, circling around with their heads high in the air, neighing and snorting in great confusion as they had lost their leader. We were now rapidly approaching the herd and I had no desire to be carried on into the midst of that snorting, kicking crowd of excited and vicious horses so I tried to hold my pony up. My efforts were useless, My pony's chin came down to his breast and my pulling amounted to nothing, he dashed madly on, carrying me rapidly to the herd. I pulled and jerked but it was of no use, At last with a mighty effort born of desperation I succeeded, not in stopping my Pegasus, but in breaking the ring of my bridle bit and found myself helpless and rapidly approaching the herd. Something had to be done, Throwing myself forward in the saddle, I took a turn with the bridle rein around the pony's neck just back of the ears and drawing my sheath knife, I thrust the buck horn handle under the rein and began twisting it. The effort was gratifying. The pony's heavy breathing showed me that the end was near; his speed slackened -- his course became unsteady, he reeled, staggered and went floundering to the ground.

I watched my opportunity and as he fell I threw myself from the saddle and went rolling in the grass. Picking myself up, I threw myself upon the pony's head, loosened the rein upon his neck and then looked for Don, who was about a quarter of a mile away, coming as rapidly as possible with my horse in the lead. When he arrived he patted me on the back and exclaimed "Bueno Muchacho Vacquero - Bueno Bueno." While Don could speak very good English, when he became excited or deeply interested, he always returned to his mother tongue.

The exhausted pony lay quiet. The herd circled a few times about us and then struck off over the rolling plains and were soon lost to view. Don patched up the broken bridle with a strong buckskin thong and when everything was ready, we let the pony up. As he arose, Don leaped into the saddle. It was an hour at least before Don succeeded in so subduing the pony that he could be made to go in any given direction and even then we made slow progress in our return to the trail. The column had passed long before we reached it, but we followed on. About 10 o'clock we met a scouting party of our troopers who had been sent back in search of us. We reached the column while they were stopping for lunch and Don told the Colonel in glowing terms of the adventure, not forgetting to occasionally slap me on the back, while he exclaimed "Bueno Muchacho, Bueno Muchacho." The Colonel congratulated me upon my getting off with a whole neck, but cautioned me against taking too many chances as there was some responsibility resting upon me and he could not afford to lose me at that time. I was perfectly satisfied with my experience and, realizing the responsibility of my position as well as the danger connected with such undertakings, I never attempted anything of the kind again while with Colonel Phelps.

In August of 1855 we reached Central City, an old trading post of the Hudson Bay Co. and, although that company had long since abandoned the place, it was still quite a center of activity. It was a romantically beautiful place occupied by about five hundred inhabitants, there being several American and a few French and Mexican families among the number. The site of the village was a beauty spot -- a lovely little valley, surrounded by lofty mountains, towering far up into the region of eternal snow; sheltered from the bleak winds of the higher regions, it had a climate as soft and balmy as the "Vale of Chamois" with a soil as productive as any spot upon the earth. The town was laid out in a

perfect square, the center of which was a plaza filled with trees and flowers while here and there a beautiful rustic fountain threw its crystal waters in arching jets into the soft summer air. Surrounding the plaza on either side were the cottages of the families, in front of each of which was a flower garden while the cottages themselves were covered with trailing vines and climbing roses. In the rear of each was a vegetable garden and fruit orchard where a great variety of fruits and vegetables grew in lavish profusion. Away from the cares and confusion of civilization and yet supplied with every necessity of life, these frontier people lived in peace and plenty. The town library was supplied with standard literature, an orchestra furnished music almost every evening at the music stand in the plaza. The only vice apparent was that of cock fighting in which the Mexican part of the population indulged. There was little gambling and during our stay of six weeks at Central City I never saw a person under the influence of liquor. The old buildings of the Hudson Bay Co. were just to the North of the town less than a quarter of a mile away. They were in rather a dilapidated condition and were surrounded by what had been at one time a strong and large stockade, but the timbers had rotted away and there were breaks in those once strong walls.

It was at Central City where the great Pathfinder, General Fremont, made his headquarters, while he explored the surrounding country and planted the U.S. flag on the highest pinnacle of Pike's Peak. It was here that Joseph Smith, the Mormon prophet, spent a winter with his host as they journeyed to the Great Salt Lake. But Central City has succumbed to the influences of civilization and but little remains to tell of its former glory and it is no longer known as an oasis in the great far West.

It was with great regret that we pulled up stakes early in September and took up our line of march for Ft. Laramie. There were sorrowful partings of beautiful senoritas and some of the young troopers but "When the goodbyes were said, and the tears were all shed we marched away in the morning." Nothing of particular interest broke the monotony of travel on our march to Laramie. Here we found a large company of prospectors on their way to the Black Hills where gold had been discovered. This was the first discovery of gold in that region. The company had a splendid outfit costing thousands of dollars for its equipment. They were just leaving for the Hills when we arrived, but I had the privilege of meeting a few young men from Monmouth who were among the number going to

the Hills. They were buoyant with hope and sure of success. We saw them again in the early winter as they came straggling in to Ft. Kearney, a broken and shattered remnant of a once strong and confident body of men. They had lost more than half their number and most of their stock and outfit and had not seen an ounce of gold. The Indians had ambushed them just as they entered Black Pass, stampeded their stock and killed many of their number. The next year, however, the survivors returned with a strong company and, profiting by their previous experience, succeeded in effecting an entrance into the "Hills" country and established Deadwood City, which afterward became famous as a mining center.

We remained at Laramie until the 20th of October when we again set out. This time our destination was Ft. Kearney which we reached about three weeks later. Here we went into winter quarters. Nothing occurred to break the tedium of camp life until about the 10th of November when the suffering remnant of the company of prospectors just referred to, came in. There was more than a foot of snow on the ground and the weather had been very cold for several days. Many of the poor fellows were badly frozen and altogether they were in a sorry plight. Captain Mason, who was in charge of the wrecked expedition, suffered the loss of an ear and two fingers of the left hand by amputation owing to their being so badly frozen. He alone, of all that crowd of defeated and suffering gold seekers, remained at Kearney over winter. The rest pushed on after a few days rest to Laramie and thence down the Platte to Omaha, where the expedition had been outfitted. It would have been well for Captain Mason if he, too, had left Ft. Kearney. Mason was a large, symmetrically built man of striking personal appearance, with long, curly black hair, keen black eyes, a heavy mustache, and altogether a very attractive man. He was a fine violinist, a good singer, and almost perfect as a conversationalist. He was particularly attractive to the ladies at the Post and soon became a favorite among them. Colonel Magruder, whose brother afterward was distinguished as a Confederate Leader in the great Civil War, was then in command at the Fort. He was a small, inferior looking man wearing a patch over one eye, that member having been seriously injured in an engagement with the Indians. He was a brave man, a good soldier, and a high-minded, chivalrous gentleman and was loved and respected by everyone at the Fort except his wife, who always seemed to be ashamed of the personal appearance of her husband. They had no

children and it was said that their home life was far from pleasant. Mrs. Magruder formed an attachment for Colonel Mason upon his first appearance at the Fort. She lost no opportunity of being in the company of handsome Colonel Mason. So marked were the attentions she paid him, that it soon became the subject of gossip. Some time in December, Colonel Magruder was called away to visit an outpost over the Cottonwood about ten miles from Kearney, there to remain for several days, as it was supposed. He unexpectedly returned on the following day, arriving at Kearney about l0 o'clock at-night. He went immediately to his quarters and entering his rooms found Colonel Mason in the company of his wife. Some words passed between the two men which resulted in Magruder ordering Mason from the house. Mason left but was followed in a few moments by Magruder's Adjutant bearing a challenge to a mortal combat. Mason accepted the challenge and chose pistols as the weapons and named Colonel Phelps as his second. Adjutant Howe acted as second for Colonel Magruder. Colonel Phelps called upon Magruder and did all that he possibly could to avert the conflict, but all to no purpose. Magruder was determined to have satisfaction.

Six o'clock the next morning was chosen as the time and a little opening in a grove of timber just below the Fort as the place for the duel. Colonel Phelps asked me if I wished to accompany him, to which I replied in the affirmative. At the appointed time we sallied forth to the place named, and were soon joined by Magruder and his second and the Post Surgeon. The preliminaries were soon arranged and the men took their places. They were stationed twenty paces apart with their backs toward each other. At this time Mason drew a sealed package from his pocket and handing it to Colonel Phelps requested him, in the event of his death, to open and read the contents, but if he survived to return it to him unopened. It had been arranged that thirteen counts were to be made, for the first three counts the men were to mark time, at the count four they were each to pace forward at each count until the count ten, when they were to wheel and fire. Dr. Blaine, the Post Surgeon, did the counting. At the count four the men paced steadily forward, at the count ten they both wheeled and fired, both pistols were discharged at the same instant. Mason fell with a bullet through his heart. Magruder was uninjured. The event cast a gloom over our camp which was not dispelled during our stay. Magruder and his wife lived apart, never seeing each other during the winter. In the spring

Mrs. Magruder went home to the States and the following year was granted a divorce. Magruder was never the same man again. From the pleasant, affable gentleman he had previously been, he became morose and silent. He drank heavily. In the spring he was relieved and went to Fort Leavenworth where in a few months he died. In a few days after the duel Colonel Phelps opened the letter given him by Mason. After reading it he handed it to me, and I read it. In the letter Mason declared that there had been no improper relations between himself and Mrs. Magruder; he went to Magruder's quarters on the evening of Magruder's unexpected return at the invitation of Mrs. Magruder expecting to find others there, and was surprised to find himself alone with her. He had tried to excuse himself, but did not succeed in getting away before the foolish woman had declared her insane passion for him. He said he had reasoned and expostulated with her until, finding it to no purpose, he declared to her that he would leave the Fort the next day never to return. It was then that Mrs. Magruder had thrown her arms around his neck and begged him not to leave her and at this supreme moment Colonel Magruder had entered the room. How much of this story was true, I do not know, but I have always felt that Mason, while indiscreet, had never done Magruder an injury.

The winter was far from being a pleasant one, socially or otherwise. Once during the winter I had an adventure that will perhaps be of interest to the reader, at least I shall succeed in filling a few pages of this book in relating it and in so doing I shall have material for the beginning of chapter four.

CHAPTER IV

STILL ON THE TRAIL

One of the men of the ill-fated Mason Expedition, whose misfortunes I have described in the previous chapter, was a gay young man with whom I had been acquainted at Monmouth while in the employ of Mr. Kidder. He had told me of a camera and ambrotyping outfit that he had been compelled to abandon at a Trading Post about 25 miles from Kearney and told me that I was welcome to it if I could get it. So, one beautiful morning in December I got permission from Colonel Phelps to go over to the Post for the camera. There was no snow on the ground; and, as I started early I expected to be able to make the trip easily by noon and return the next day. When the sun arose and spread the day over the scene, I was enraptured with its beauty! As I rode up the divide, there arose before me the lofty and majestic domes of the Big Horn range while to my right were the dark, sombre cliffs of the Black Hills. To the left, towered Pike's Peak and Holy Cross and many other lofty mountains whose names I do not know, all with their majestic heads crowned with snow glistening in the morning sun. Looking back, a wonderful scene spread out before me. In my immediate vicinity, the ground was rolling being cut up into little hills and valleys by ravines; while away as far as the eye could reach, stretched the great valley of the Platte. I rode leisurely and was absorbed in the contemplation of scenes of nature's beauties about me. I was impressed by my utter insignificance in the presence of the mighty panorama of nature that was spread out before me. Drawn and painted by the hand of the Divine Artist were pictures that can never be reproduced by any human hand. I had not noticed that the atmosphere had become hazy and that before me on the horizon there had arisen a dark, heavy cloud which lay like a bank of black fog before me. The wind which had been asleep in the early morning had begun to blow in puffs and gusts. The sun was soon obscured and I awoke to the realization that I was soon to encounter one of those terrors in that region -- a blizzard. The temperature fell rapidly, and I was soon compelled to put on my overcoat to protect me from the cold which was becoming more intense every minute. Soon the great flakes of snow began to fall and the wind, which a few minutes before had been but sharp gusts, now became a fierce and howling gale that drove the blinding snow into my face with

stinging force. I stopped for a moment to decide whether to return to Kearney or to push forward and try to make the Post. I finally decided upon the latter course being helped to that conclusion by the fact that the trail was a good one, and, in order to help the traveler under similar conditions, little mounds of rock had been piled up along the trail to mark its course when snow was on the ground. Feeling that I should have no trouble in following the course of these mounds and knowing that I was over half way to my destination, I wheeled my horse and pushed on toward the Post. I had not proceeded a mile in that direction before the storm became so fierce that I could hardly face it. I covered my face to the eyes with my muffler, drew my hat well down, leaving but a crevice through which to look and struggled on. I looked sharply for the next mound but failed to find it, nor did I find another mound to guide me on my perilous way. The cold had become intense, and I soon found it necessary to dismount and walk in order to keep from freezing. I struggled on, lost upon that great plateau in one of the fiercest blizzards that ever swept over that blizzard-cursed region. At last, after what seemed to me hours of desperate struggling with the elements, I came into some brush where there were a few stunted trees. I gave up all hope of reaching the Post and set about to save myself from death by freezing. I tied my horse to a stubby tree, took off the saddle, tied the saddle blanket securely on him to give him all the protection I could; then, I cut the top from a sapling leaving the stump about three feet high and scraping the snow off the ground around it, I spread my pouch on the ground putting my saddle on it to keep it from blowing away, threw my blanket over the stump, making the corners fast to the surrounding brush, kicked the snow up over the edges of the blanket to keep the wind from getting under it, and then from the leeward side I crawled into my improvised tent. My efforts in preparing this miniature tent had stirred my blood, and I soon found that within its protecting folds, I was comfortably warm. Looking at my watch, I found that it was nearly five o'clock. I had put half a dozen hardtack into my saddlebags and, being hungry I got them out and ate a few, washing them down with ice water from my canteen. My thoughts turned to my poor horse who had had nothing to eat since morning and I determined to do what I could for his relief. Crawling out from my little tent, I took my knife and cut an armful of twigs and sprouts from the small trees and brush that surrounded us and laid them before him. With a

grateful whinny he began his evening meal and patting his neck I left him for the night and crawled back into my cubbyhole. While at Bent's Fort the winter before, I had been presented with a large and beautiful colemut by a Kiawa Chief. I had this with me and filling it to the brim and lighting it I proceeded to enjoy a smoke. I soon found that I could not continue that pastime without ventilation and was compelled to cut a hole through my tent in order to let the smoke out. I smoked pipe after pipe until I began to get sleepy. Looking at my watch I found it to be nearly 10 o'clock so curling myself up with my saddle for a pillow I fell asleep. When I awoke, I found it to be six o'clock in the morning. The roaring of the wind had ceased. I knew that the storm had passed. I sat up and rubbed my stiffened limbs and then crawled out from the tent. I was dazzled and blinded for a moment by the light that flooded all about me. My horse gave me a welcoming whinny and seemed glad to see me. The snow was about a foot deep where it was not drifted. Looking behind me a scene met my eyes that sent a thrill of joy through me for not a mile away, just under the hill, were the buildings of the Post. The smoke ascending from the chimneys told of comfort and breakfast. I broke camp at once and soon found myself inside the stockade where I was overwhelmed with congratulations on my escape from death in the fearful blizzard.

As early in the spring of 1856 as we could get away, we set out for a long march to the Pacific Coast. We visited but two Agencys during the summer and there was little of interest to break the monotony of travel. Soon after leaving Kearney we strukc the Yellowstone country and found ourselves in the midst of the most beautiful and inspiring scenery to be found in this or any other country. Lofty and majestic mountains towering into the regions of eternal snow -- deep canyons whose walls overhung our pathway shutting out all the light of day until we seemed to be traveling in even tide. Great geysers throwing their crystal waters a hundred feet into the air -- Old Faithful throwing his solid column of water a hundred feet heavenward without a break was the wonder of us all. We threw stones at this monster and our missiles rebounded as though they had strukc a solid marble column. I was never more impressed with the mighty powers by which we are surrounded, and the incomprehensible forces of nature, than I was while traveling through the Yellowstone Park. Our route followed the general course of the Snake River until we reached Central Oregon,

where we crossed over the divide and took our course down the Rogue River to the Pacific Coast which we reached early in September, fixing our headquarters at Coos Bay. From this point we visited a number of Agencys notable among them being the Umpgua and Coyell reservations, at both of which we found indications of a real effort upon the part of the Agent and his corps of assistants to improve and elevate the condition of the Indians, -- a condition, I am sorry to say, we found at very few of the Agencys we visited on the entire trip. Most of the Agencys seemed to be run exclusively in the interest for and for the benefit of the Agent and his crowd of helpers who never lost an opportunity to defraud the poor Indian and enrich themselves. We went into winter quarters at Coos Bay in November and spent a delightful winter in hunting and fishing. The winter of 1856-57 was a very open one -- there was but little snow and no very severe weather. One of the pastimes in which we frequently engaged was fishing in the Bay, dugouts being used for that purpose.

One beautiful and bright day in December, Don and I each took a dugout and paddled far out upon the placid waters of the Bay and entered upon a contest to see which of us could secure the largest number of Sea Bass that were abundant at that time. As we drew one after another of these shining beauties into our dugouts we drifted some distance apart. I was deeply interested in the sport and had just secured a beautiful striped fellow, weighing about 10 pounds and that had given me much trouble in his capture when I heard a smothered cry and turning in the direction from which it came, I saw Don's canoe upset and Don floundering in the water. I instantly dropped my lines and seizing my paddle strukc out to his assistance. I strained every nerve in my effort to reach my companion and in a few moments found myself alongside the overturned canoe. I threw off my coat and prepared to plunge into the water, but I could see nothing of him. I strained my eyes in every direction, but Don was not to be seen. With an effort I righted his canoe thinking he might be underneath it, but he was not there. He had sunk to rise no more. I paddled about for an hour hoping that at least I might recover his body, but was at last compelled to give up the search, and taking his empty canoe in tow I paddled toward the landing. My heart was full of sadness as I sorrowfully pulled toward the shore. Don had indeed been a true friend to me. Mexican, though he was, he had a big generous heart and exalted ideas of manliness far above many white men with whom I have been associated.

It was many months before I ceased to mourn Don, who had been more of a companion to me than a servant.

Aside from this mournful event the winter passed very pleasantly. There were a number of families living at Coos Bay and vicinity and we were frequently invited to enjoy their hospitality. In return, we furnished and decorated a large vacant room in a government warehouse and in this every few weeks we gave literary and dramatic entertainments, closing with a grand ball, the only discouraging feature of these events being the scarcity of ladies, there being but 20 or 25 in the whole settlement.

The monotony was relieved during the holidays by the visit of a party of settlers from Jacksonville on Rogue River. There were about 20 in the party. Among the number were several of the Applegate family -- a family that was prominent in the early history of the southwestern Oregon. Many of their descendants are still living in various parts of the state.

In March of 1857 we broke camp and started on the last stage of our overland journey, our destination being San Francisco. We traveled up the Rogue River and had the privilege of meeting some of the party that had visited Coos Bay during the holidays. They had comfortable homes in and about Jacksonville and entertained the officers of the Expedition royally during our stay, which extended over a period of 10 or 12 days as a snowstorm had blocked our way across the Siskiyou Mountains over which the regular route lay. One of the Applegates, however, was kind enough to volunteer his services to guide us through a pass on a much lower level and which was comparatively free from snow. By this route we left Mt. Shasta to our right and reached the McCloud River, a tributary of the Sacramento, which we followed to its junction with the latter stream, the general course of which we followed to San Francisco. We enjoyed a pleasant rest on this trip at the hospitable home of General Bidwell, this gentleman having been an acquaintance and friend of Colonel Phelps in the States. After a week’s rest we pushed on to the city at the Golden Gate where we arrived April 6, 1857.

After concluding his business at San Francisco, which took but a few days, Colonel Phelps took a steamer for Panama, then to New York. Before leaving he presented me with the mare that I had ridden all the way from Independence and to which I had become very much attached, together with a new saddle and bridle and a new suit of clothes. He further offered to take me to New York free of cost if I wished to go. I

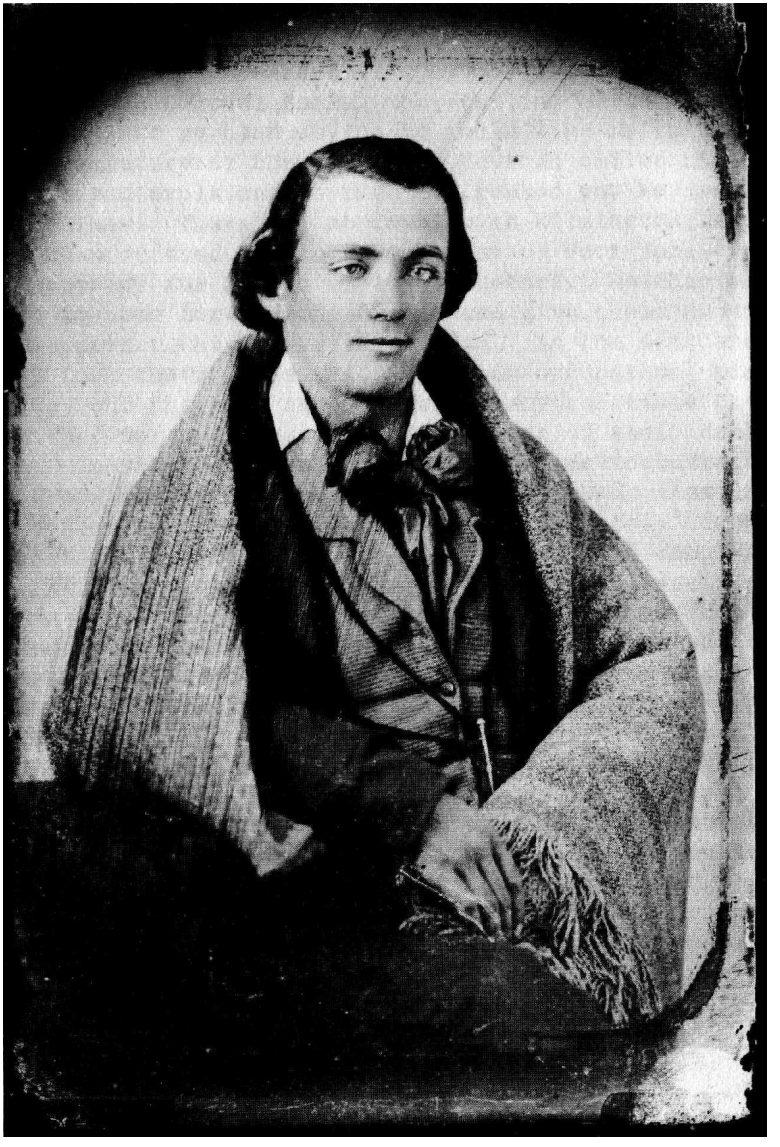
declined his very liberal offer and bid him good-bye as he boarded the steamer. Colonel Phelps was a true man, honest and faithful in all his dealings with the government, and, although he had many opportunities to enrich himself at the expense of the government and others, he never took advantage of any of them. In all my experience with men I have never known one of greater integrity and sterling worth than Col. William Phelps. I forwarded $1000.00 by him to be deposited to my credit in a bank in New York. This money I intended to use to finish my education when I should return to the States.

I somehow formed a poor opinion of San Francisco. Its inhabitants seemed to me to be made up largely of gamblers and sports, most of the resorts being disreputable in the extreme. The few days that I remained here were spent at the "What Cheer House" situated on Sacramento Street in what was then the business center of the town. I formed the acquaintance of a young Englishman who had came to San Francisco to engage in business. He had brought with him the first consignment of double-barreled shotguns that had reached the city. He had not secured a location for opening up his business and with a couple of these guns the young fellow and I made several trips to what was known as "Cow Hollow", a strip of comparatively level land lying between the town and the Presidio, covered then by sand and sagebrush, uninhabited except by jack rabbits, of which we killed a large number on such trips. On one occasion we boarded an omnibus and rode out over the sand dunes to a resort called "The Willows". At that time this resort was disreputable in the extreme. As there was nothing going on but gambling, drinking and dancing, we returned to town more disgusted than ever with our surroundings. My young English friend decided to go to Sacramento to find a location for his business venture where he hoped to find more congenial conditions. On the 20th of April I left San Francisco with a party of six who were enroute to Wilmington, a Military Post in southern California. Our route lay over the old Mission road through the Missions of Santa Clara, San Miguel, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara and Los Angeles. We had a delightful trip being entertained without charge at the Missions. But being Protestant, I did not wish to be under obligation to the Catholic Church, so always made a contribution to the Padre who welcomed us on our arrival to the several Missions.

We arrived at the Post at Wilmington on the 30th of April at about 3

o'clock in the afternoon and were cordially received, several of our party being intimately acquainted with some of the officers at the Post. I had hardly got my saddle off my horse before I was asked if I would like to go with an escort for Lieutenant Colonel Beale, who was to start for Santa Fe in a few days. I expressed my willingness to consider such a proposition and was conducted at once to headquarters where I was presented to Colonel Beale. When I informed him that I had been with Colonel Phelps for the past three years he seemed to be highly pleased and when he learned that I had been Colonel Phelps' private secretary he shook my hand very cordially and said I was just the man he wanted. Asking me to meet him on the parade ground after supper, he directed a soldier to show me to quarters. After supper I went to the parade ground where I found about 30 men assembled. Among the number were four of the men who had come with me from San Francisco. They told me that they intended to join the escort if they could get in. We were soon joined by Colonel Beale, who, calling me to him, put a small book into my hand saying he would like me to act as a sort of secretary of the meeting. He then called the men about him and explained to them the reason why he had called them together. There was no cavalry at Wilmington, and, as he had been ordered to Santa Fe by way of Fort Yuma, it became necessary for him to employ an escort. He then asked the men to come forward one by one and give their names and sign a contract which he read to them. As the men came forward, I took their names, age, previous occupation, place of nativity, and the name and address of any relations to whom they wished information sent in the event of their death. Sixteen men signed the contract at that time including myself. Four men were secured in the next few days and the books were closed. Preparations were immediately begun for the start and within a week we were ready. The company consisted of Lieutenant Colonel Beale, the guide, myself and nineteen men, four of whom had been my companions from San Francisco to Wilmington. I saw the guide about headquarters frequently and heard him addressed as "Kit". He was a rather small, inferior looking man with dark brown hair and soft blue eyes. He was very commonplace sort of a man, easy in his manners but showed no indications of marked ability. We were a number of days on the road together before I learned that our guide was none other than the celebrated Kit Carson who had already won fame as an Indian fighter and plainsman. I had an opportunity in the

months that followed to see the man in his true character. We left Wilmington May 8th and in a few days found ourselves on the desert.



LEVI WESTON SIMMONS IN CALIFORNIA

CHAPTER V

IN THE LAND OF SAGEBRUSH AND SAND

Our first trouble came on the second day after we struck the desert proper. We were traveling along at a moderate rate in the afternoon, when the column was halted by the guide who directed the pack-mules to be made fast to each other. They were placed four abreast, their heads about three feet apart. A lasso was placed about each four and these again made fast together in such a way as to hold the 20 mules in a compact body. I inquired of Colonel Beale why this was being done and he told me that Carson said that we were to have a sandstorm and that this preparation was made to prevent the mules from scattering. It was all strange to me. I could see no evidence of a storm of any kind; there was not a cloud in sight; there was no wind blowing. I could not imagine where the storm was to come from. Carson, having completed his arrangements, rode up to where we were and said that be thought the storm would be up inside an hour. I took the liberty of asking him what indications he saw of an approaching storm and he told me to look at the horses' tails; looking at them I saw that they had a very bushy appearance, each hair seeming to stand out separate from the others. Carson told me to stroke the hair on my horse's neck. I noticed the hair looked rough and when I drew my hand over it I could not only hear a snapping noise but could see the electric sparks produced by the contact. I noticed also that my skin which, a few hours before had been wet with perspiration was now dry and had a parched and shriveled appearance. Carson then explained to me that these conditions always preceded a sandstorm and that we might now expect a severe one.

Looking toward the San Bernardino Mountains to the northwest about 75 miles distant, I saw that they appeared to be enveloped in a yellow fog and in a few minutes were lost to view. Our stock seemed restless and uneasy, the mules in particular were more vicious than I had ever seen them. They were constantly biting and kicking each other and the vaqueros had difficulty in keeping them in control. There was not a breath of air stirring, and yet the dust seemed to be rising all about us. The sun was soon obscured, and it was as dark as twilight. The dust that filled the air was heavily impregnated with alkali which caused an almost constant sneezing and our eyes were smarting and watery. Carson directed

the Colonel and me to wet our handkerchiefs with water from our canteens and put them over our faces which we proceeded to do, much to our relief. The wind was now rising and soon was blowing at a rate of 40 or 50 miles an hour. The poisonous alkali dust was driven by the fierce gale into and through our clothing causing such an intolerable itching that we could hardly endure it. The dust was now so thick that we could hardly see each other, even when we drew aside our handkerchiefs, which we were compelled to do occasionally in order to breathe. The pack-mules were entirely lost to view and we only knew of their proximity by their constant squealing and snorting as they fought with each other and the shouts and curses of the vaqueros as they madly strove to prevent a stampede. For more than an hour the storm raged about us and when at last the wind died down the dust was still in the air, indeed, it was 24 hours before the atmosphere was clear again. The hot air of the desert which is constantly rising had been driven to a great altitude by the fierce gale carrying the fine particles of dust with it. We were a sorry looking lot with our parched and shriveled skin and our inflamed and swollen eyes. We laid over the next day in order to clean up and recover from the effects of the storm. Fortunately this was the only experience we had of the kind during our trip for which we were very thankful. We reached Fort Yuma on the last day of May, having been 23 days on the road. We remained at Fort Yuma a week. This was by far the hottest week I have ever experienced. The thermometer registered 120 degrees F most of the time that we were there, and the nights seemed as hot as the days. Swarms of flies tormented us by day and the mosquitoes tortured us by night. Life was a burden at Yuma, and we were glad indeed to get away which we did on the 7th of June.

Our route took the general course of the Gila River which we followed to the Big Bend where there was an Agency. Here we went into camp for a week to recruit our stock and rest. The Indians had been troublesome for a week before we went into camp. Carson had selected a lovely spot for our camp, a little valley containing perhaps 200 acres of land with an abundance of grass and water. The valley was nearly surrounded by a low line of hills. Owing to the hostility of the Indians, a guard of three men was kept out on these hills at all times day and night.

After a few days of rest Colonel Beale and Carson took half of the force and the pack- mules and went to the Agency about 20 miles distant to replenish our supplies before starting on the next stage of our journey.

The camp was left in charge of Apache Bill , who was a sort of a lieutenant for Carson, with instructions to keep a sharp lookout for Indians. Carson and the mule train left early one morning , and we had little trouble keeping our stock quite as they were disposed to follow the train. But they soon settled down to feeding and gave us no more trouble until about the middle of the afternoon when trouble began. We had stretched some canvas over the tops of some mesquite that were growing near the spring where we camped and under the shade of this we had spread our blankets and were lounging there when we heard a shout from one of the men on guard. Jumping up we saw our horses at the lower end of the valley circling around with their heads in the air, snorting in evident fright. Suddenly they made a dash for the pass through which the train had left the valley in the morning. It being about 4 o'clock p.m. Apache Bill had taken three of the men and had gone out into the hills to relieve the guard, leaving me and two other men in camp. It was but the work of a moment to saddle these and strike out after the stampeded stock. I was a little quicker than my companion and was mounted and well down the valley before my comrade was ready to start. As I turned into the pass leading out of the valley, I saw them mount then the shoulder of the hill hid them from view. I heard the shout of Apache Bill and thought he was urging my tardy comrades to hurry. I did not know until many hours later that he was calling me to halt. I dashed on through the pass and soon saw the band of fleeing horses sweeping northward over the plain. I gave chase at a moderate gallop well knowing that I could do nothing but keep them in view until their fright was over or they had exhausted themselves. I had ridden perhaps a mile when there was something passed my ear with a swish. Turning in my saddle to see where the missile came from, I was startled to see a band of 50 or 60 Apache bucks coming down at a fearful pace. When they saw that I had seen them they raised a fearful yell and rushed on. I put spurs to my horse and she responded at once. She was a splendid animal. For strength, speed and bottom she had few equals and no superiors as far as I knew. I was soon out of reach of their flying arrows, a few of which had come dangerously near me. I was widening the distance between us at every bound. Knowing that I was now out of immediate danger I slackened my pace, only making sure that my pursuers did not get to close. The Indians followed on thinking, I suppose, that when I reached the horses I would try and take them with me and

would be so handicapped that they would be able to overtake me. We were approaching a stream that crossed the Valley here and I soon saw the horses ahead of me go over the bank and new we had reached the creek and were about half way to the Agency.

I felt sure that the horses would stop to drink, and I knew we had but little time for refreshments. I dashed up to the bank, giving two or three lusty yells as I did so. The effect was what I hoped for, the fugitives made a wild rush for the opposite bank but in doing so four of them missed the trail and ran along the creek, the bank being high and steep they could not get out, the rest of the stock went out of the creek bed by the trail. I allowed my mare to take a few swallows of water and then followed the trail to the bank above; when I reached the level I saw the Indians to my right sweeping across to the northeast. I saw at once their object. The trail led along the bank of the creek for more than half a mile then passed between a steep bluff and the bank of the creek. I could see that the strip of land over which the trail ran was not over a hundred feet wide. They were heading me off. They were rapidly approaching the stream. The horses were now in the narrows, and I seemed to be running into the jaws of death. I could see no way out of it! To leave the trail and take to the hills meant that I would soon be lost in the intricacies of that rugged country with which they were perfectly familiar. It would not do. There was nothing for me to do but make a straight dash up the narrows and take the chances. Had I had my rifle I could have kept them at a respectful distance but I had but one revolver and no extra ammunition. I did not waste a single shot in an effort to scare them off. I was now near the narrows. The Indians were crowded up to the opposite bank. I should have to pass within a hundred yards of them. Throwing my bridle rein on my horse's neck I drew my revolver and putting spurs to my mare I gave her an encouraging shout and dropped over to the left side thus shielding myself from the showers of arrows that were hurtling all about me. When just opposite the Indians I pulled myself up until I could see over my horse's neck; I swung my revolver over and fired! I saw a big swarthy buck topple off his pony. I tried again but missed. I had no ammunition to waste and would not chance another shot. I was soon out of reach of their arrows and found myself close to the fugitive horses. They were evidently very tired. Then, too, they had drank so much water that they were in no mood for traveling and so we traveled the next eight miles at an easy gait.

When I reached the Agency and reported to Colonel Beale, preparations were immediately made to go to the rescue of the imperiled men at the camp. Carson gathered up every available man at the Agency and by 10 o'clock we left with 46 well-armed and equipped men. I got a fresh horse at the Agency and, borrowing a rifle from a sick man, I fell in with the company just as they left.

When Carson found that I was with the company, he tried to persuade me to go back and remain at the Agency saying that I had done enough for one day and he feared I would not be able to undergo the hardships we might be compelled to encounter in the next 24 hours, but I would not listen. I told him that I was one of the company and should take my chances with the rest. We reached a point about two miles from the camp at about 3 o'clock in the morning. Carson and two scouts went forward on foot to reconnoiter. The gray of the morning was just appearing in the East when they returned. They reported that the camp was deserted, not a white man or Indian in sight, and so far as they could see nothing in the camp had been disturbed. We mounted and rode forward to the camp. Not a thing had been moved so far as I could see since I left the camp. Carson came in while we were preparing breakfast and said that the indications were that the men had been cut off from the camp and had made their way to the bank of an arroyo up which they had probably gone. We had just finished our breakfast when we heard the faint report of two shots, the sound coming from the south. We immediately mounted and rode rapidly in that direction. After riding about three miles, we were ascending a hill, Carson being in the lead some two or three hundred yards. As he approached the summit, he turned and motioned to us to halt. He dismounted and went forward on foot until he reached a point near the crest of the hill, when he lay down and crept forward to the top. He lay there on his face for several minutes and then crawled backward down the hill some distance and then rose to his feet, ran down to his horse and mounting galloped down to us. He had an exciting story to tell us. The men, eight in number, had established themselves at a place known as the "Rock Pile". Here among the rocks in one of Nature's strongholds, they were holding off more than 200 Apache braves. The Indians, he said, had evidently been pursuing their usual method of circling around their enemy, gradually approaching, but had found it unprofitable as every time a buck got within range of the men

among the rocks, they were sure to lose one or more of their number. Now, Carson said, they were preparing for an assault in force. They were concentrating in the head of a gorge about a quarter of a mile from the "Rock Pile". Carson's plan was to divide his force, sending half the men under Colonel Beale to a point about a mile to the eastward of the "Rock Pile" where there was another rock point jutting outward from the steep hills to the south. They were to ride to the point, get well up behind it, then leave one man with every four horses and then with the rest of the force they were to come well out to the point and there concealed among the rocks, await developments. Carson was to take his half of the force and charge up the gulch to the right of us and engage the enemy, drive him out at the head of the gulch and along the skirt of the hills past the point where Colonel Beale and his men would be secreted and thus wipe them out, or as near so as possible. Colonel Beale and his force left at once for their station, while Carson and the rest of us waited until they had time to reach their destination. I was congratulating myself upon being so fortunate to be with the famous Indian fighter in a charge upon the redskins, when he approached me and told me that I was to stay where we were then and take charge of the loose stock, of which we had about a dozen head. I was much disappointed but knew that it was useless to protest as Carson was very firm and unyielding. Having once given an order, I never knew him to change it. After waiting about 10 minutes Carson prepared to leave with his force. Every man carefully examined his arms to see that they were in proper condition. Just before the order to mount, Carson was standing near me and I had an opportunity to observe him closely. He seemed to have grown two inches taller. His hat, which was a broad brimmed sombrero was thrown back from his forehead; his eyes, that were ordinarily soft blue, seemed several shades darker; his muscles seemed rigid and tense. He had filled his mouth with an aromatic herb that grew on the side hill and was chewing it with all the force of his solid jaws. He gave the order to mount and the company followed him around the point of the hill out of my sight. Knowing that Carson had seen the prospective battlefield from the crest of the hill, I determined to get there myself. Our loose stock were all tied to a lead line the end of which was fast in a picket pin. I loosened the pin, tied my own lasso to the lead line, carried the pin with me to the length of my lasso and then led the horses up the hill until I could see over the top. I could now see the

whole field that was soon to be converted into one of the most bloody battlefields in the annals of Indian warfare. I could see the Indians massed in the head of the gulch, evidently holding a powwow. I could see the force under Colonel Beale just passing behind the point. Just before, about a half mile distant, was the "Rock Pile" in whose granite fastness Apache Bill and his little company of intrepid men were hidden. While I was thus taking in the situation, I saw Carson with his force making their way cautiously up the gulch, which, being winding in its course and having steep high banks, completely hid them from the Indians. I watched Carson and his men closely until they were less than a quarter of a mile from the Indians, when they raised a terrific yell and dashed forward at full speed straight for the mass of Indians, Carson rode in the lead and as they rapidly approached the now confused and terrified Indians, he caught his bridle rein in his teeth and with revolver in either hand dashed madly toward the body of Indians. The Indians were cooped up in the head of that gulch. They could not climb its bank, the only way out was down the gulch to a point near where Carson, and his men were then, where the bank had washed away. They faced their enemy, discharged a shower of arrows at their advancing foe and then swept down the gulch meeting Carson and his men. They met in a fierce hand-to-hand conflict. That little band of 25, as brave plainsmen as ever swung a lasso, against no less than 200 fierce Apache braves. By the very force of numbers the Indians carried Carson and his men with them down the gulch, the Indians using their clubs, tomahawks and knives in the desperate conflict until they reached the place where the bank was washed away. Then they dashed up the bank and swept eastward with Carson and his men still with them dealing death with almost every shot. The Indians in their confusion came within the range of the deadly rifles of Apache Bill and his men, who dropped a number of them as they passed. They swept on, skirting the hills to the eastward, Carson, and his men gradually falling back, some wounded, and some without ammunition. Carson was the last to leave them as he had been the first to meet them, but even as he fired his parting shot, a rattling volley from Colonel Beale and his men put the Indians in a perfect panic! What few of them finally succeeded in passing Colonel Beale's force were pursued into the hills by them until not more than 50 of that fine body of 200 Indians made their escape. Thus ended one of the most sanguinary conflicts ever waged on the Arizona plains. Our loss was

three killed and seven wounded while not less than 150 Apaches were sent to the Happy Hunting Grounds!

We camped that night at the little valley camp and the next day pushed on to the Agency. Carson, himself, received a slight wound in right thigh which was quite painful for a number of days. One of our company who was killed in the fight was a fine young fellow from Iowa by the name of Douglass to whom we were all much attached. By the direction of Colonel Beale, I wrote letters to his relations informing them of his death and the place of burial. After a few days of rest, having replenished our supplies, we made a start on the next stage of our journey. We had no more trouble with the Indians; they had had enough of Carson and his Rough Riders.

Our route now lay along the general course of the Gila although we kept several miles away from the river to avoid the alkali plains and have better feed for our stock. I remember well the day we passed between Camets Peak on the North and Parkers Peak on the South, the latter standing solitary and alone like a grim and mighty sentinel keeping guard over a territory that at that time was awaiting the coming of the advance guard of civilization. Our entire trip from the Big Bend of the Gila to Santa Fe was uneventful. We saw but few Indians and no white men for a distance of 400 miles. The Indians we saw were inclined to be friendly but shy. The trip was monotonous but on the whole pleasant.

We reached a point on the Rio Grande River, 15 miles west of Santa Fe on the 17th of August. Here Colonel Beale and Apache Bill left us, going to Santa Fe, while Carson and the rest of us went up the river about 69 miles to Taos, where Carson lived when at home. We arrived on the 19th of August having been on the road 103 days. The next day I went into Taos, a little village of perhaps 500 inhabitants. I had changed my clothes before leaving camp, putting on the suit that Colonel Phelps had given me before leaving San Francisco. When I dismounted in Taos, I found myself the observed of all observers! Such togs as I had on had seldom, if ever been seen by the inhabitants of Taos. They manifested their curiosity by stopping to look at me, while some of the more curious followed me down the street. I had come into Taos for the express purpose of getting a square meal in which potatoes would figure conspicuously. I had not eaten a potato for over three months, and I was potato hungry. Seeing a sign that indicated a place where the wants of the

inner man were supplied, I entered and seated myself at a small square table. I succeeded in making a greasy waiter understand that I wanted potatoes and milk gravy with my order of bacon and eggs. In due time, my order was set before me, including two beautiful, mealy potatoes, boiled in their jackets, with a small bowl containing about half a pint of milk gravy. I at once prepared my potatoes and having mashed one of them on my plate, I covered it with about half of the gravy and proceeded with my feast. To my great satisfaction, the potatoes were fine, as also was the gravy. While I was eating, I heard the door open and the rattling of spurs on the floor. Looking behind me I saw as fine a specimen of the genus cowboy as I had ever seen. Tall, straight as an arrow, black hair and mustache, keen sparkling black eyes, he was in complete cowboy costume. He had two revolvers and sheath knife thrust in to his belt, and was altogether such a man as one would rather have for his friend than his enemy. He took a seat opposite me and gave his order which also consisted in part of potatoes. When his order was delivered to him I had just finished my first potato and was taking the jacket off the second which I prepared as I had done the first one. Then taking up the bowl of gravy I was about to deposit its contents on my potato when my friend opposite leaned forward and said, “Tenderfoot, didn’t you have gravy oncest?” I assented. “Drap it then,” said my friend. I “draped” it and continued my meal for a moment, then calling the waiter I ordered more gravy, and having finished, my meal, I was about to rise from the table when my friend again accosted me with “I say, stranger, where mout you be from?” I replied that I had just come from the pacific Coast with Colonel Beale and Kit Carson. He thrust his big hand across the table and said, “Pardner, shake! It’ll do me royal to git aholt of the hand of any man that helped to send that 150 Apache varmints to hell. Kit was a tellin’ me the hull yarn last night.” We shook hands cordially. Then my friend continued, “Pardner,” said he, I’m a catamount ef I didn’t take yer fer a tenderfoot! Yur ken hev all the gravy in the house, but tell me, whar did yer get them clothes? Them clothes was all the trouble. Don’t put it up agin me pardner, I thought that I was gwine ter hev a little sport with a tenderfoot. I reken you be the boy what Kit was a tellin’ on, but Kit sed as how you was a peach! He sed as you saved the stock and got one of them red devils. Now eny man what wipes out a Peche is a friend to Si Hopkins sure! And now pardner, I’m in somewhat av a rush, bein’ as how I’ve got

to show up in Santa Fe tomorrow mornin', I'll say so long, but if yer ever run acrost my trail yer can count on Si Hopkins." So saying he shook me warmly by the hand and as he passed out of the door he turned and said, "'And I'11 never tek no more gravy from you sure."

A week later found me in Santa Fe. I was looking around for a chance to get in with some train that was going to the East, but it was too late in the season; all the trains that were to go that season had already gone. I had begun to think that I should have to go alone or stay all winter in Santa Fe. I had secured accommodations with an American family in Santa Fe and was about to close with an offer to go into a warehouse as a clerk when one day, as I was passing up the main street in town I met Si Hopkins and Apache Bill. They both seemed glad to see me and asked what I was doing. I told them I was doing nothing but expected to go to work in a warehouse in a few days as I could find no chance to go to the States. They told me that they were to start for the Black Hills in a few days with a company of miners that had been working some mines down on the Canadian River. The mines had proved to be of no value, and they had abandoned them and were now ready to leave for a more promising field of labor. There were 22 of them in the Company and they had contracted with Si and Bill to give $100.00 each to be taken through. Si and Bill had all the men they wanted but said they would take me along if I wanted to go. I asked how much they would charge me to take me through. They said if I would go and not charge them anything they certainly would not charge me anything. I gladly closed with this offer and in a few days found myself on the way north. Si and Bill grew very fond of me as I always tried to make myself useful. After about two weeks of travel we entered the South Park in Colorado and struck the same trail over which I had traveled two years before. Soon after entering South Park Si was severely injured by a vicious horse and was unfit for duty. I took his place by day and waited on him by night greatly to Si's satisfaction. We became firmer friends than ever. We made the trip without incident or accident other than the one just related. I left the company at Cheyenne on the 10th of November for Yankton, the head of navigation on the upper Missouri and arrived there on the 25th just in time to catch the last steamer down the river that fall. In fact, we came near having to lay up for the winter as ice had already begun to form on the river and we had no little trouble in getting away. The John C. Fremont,

the steamer upon which I took passage, was a small stern wheel boat but very staunch and fast and as there was a good stage of water in the river, we made good time, arriving in St. Louis on the 2nd of December having made the trip of nearly a thousand miles in seven days. There were 16 passengers on the steamer among which were Colonel Bridger, "the old Man of the Mountains". He was accompanied by his wife and daughter who had gone up the river to meet him. Colonel Bridger had not seen his family before for five years, having spent all that time on the upper Missouri with an exploring expedition sent out by the U.S. government. I became very well acquainted with the Colonel and his estimable wife and daughter and we spent many pleasant evenings together relating our experiences in the "wild and woolly west". On the last evening before we reached St. Louis, the Colonel had been entertaining us with some incidents of his marvelous career. As we rose to separate for the night I said to him, "Colonel, I do not wonder that you are so widely and favorably known, or that you are called the 'Old Man of the Mountain"; the title is a good one. I think you will be known in history by that title." He seemed pleased with the compliment and replied, "I shall not object to the title, but if I am to be known as the 'Old Man of the Mountains' I think you should be known as 'the kid of the plains'." I told him that I did not expect to again visit the plains and had no hope of getting my name in history.

I spent a few days in St. Louis as the guest of Colonel Bridger who insisted that I should accept his hospitality while there. The holidays found me in the neighborhood of my uncle's in Warren County, Illinois. I was delighted to find that during my absence, my father and stepmother had come from Massachusetts and were settled on a farm of my uncle's near his home place. My parents were much surprised and greatly pleased at my sudden and unexpected arrival. They had heard nothing from me since my arrival in San Francisco. My uncle came to my father's house one day and after some commonplace remarks he turned to me and said that he very much regretted the unfortunate row that had made me a wanderer and that he hoped my experience in the West had toned me down and made me more conservative in my political views. I told him that he was hoping against hope, that I was a more pronounced unionist than ever, that I had no use for a rebel anywhere and would enlist for the defense of the union if war should grow out of the political conflict then being

waged, that nothing could change my loyalty to my country and the flag. He seemed to be impressed with my earnestness. He said, however, that I would doubtless have an opportunity to enlist as he felt certain that the South would go out of the Union. He invited me to his house, with the assurance that I would be treated as if nothing had happened. Not caring to cause a rupture between my father and his brother, I accepted his invitation, all the more gladly because of a young lady who had been in my uncle's family for a number of years. She was helping with the housework and attending school when I came to my uncle's three years before. I had become very much interested in her then on account of her studious habits, and her quiet and modest disposition. She had difficulties with her studies owing to the amount of housework required of her. I had taken much pleasure in helping her to master some of the more difficult problems which she encountered. She had now matured into a well-formed and good looking young woman. Her common school education had been completed and she was pursuing a course in English literature and higher mathematics. She greeted me warmly when I first saw her after my return and seemed highly pleased to see me. Our acquaintance developed into friendship and our friendship into love, and on one of my visits home during the following winter we were engaged although it was over three years after that before we were married. Her name was Rebecca Ellen Spradling. She was born in Rocky Hill, Edmonson County, Kentucky and was a descendant of one of the pioneer families that came with Daniel Boone to Kentucky when it was a wilderness. At one time the family was in quite comfortable circumstances, owning large tracts of land near Bowling Green. Her father, however, was always opposed to human slavery and consequently found himself antagonized by the people among whom he lived. His family holdings gradually dwindled away, and he died a poor man when Rebecca was two years old, leaving a wife and four children. Two years after the death of her father, her mother married Wm. Allman, a widower with five children. There was never perfect accord in the family. Allman came to Illinois in 1853 and in a short time after their arrival the Spradling children were working away from home, nor did any of them ever make their home with the Allmans again. Rebecca had gone to live with my uncle's family where I found her in 1854 when I first came from Massachusetts. She was then about 13 years of age. At the time of our engagement she was in her 16th year. We planned that I was to

complete my education, after which we were to marry and settle down for life. To carry out this plan I entered Lombard University in February 1858. After a rigid examination by the faculty I was allowed to enter as a freshman with the understanding that I was to review the studies of the first semester. Professor Standish was then the President of the University. My work was very severe and I had little time for anything else. At the end of the semester, however, I passed my examination and stood third in a class of 43. I was highly complimented by the faculty and in August entered my sophomore year.

During my connection with Lombard I became acquainted with some of the brightest men that have figured in the political and military annals of the last half century: E. H. Conger, Representative in Congress and Ambassador to China and Mexico; Judge I. M. Lindsey of the Supreme Bench of Illinois, father of Judge Lindsey of Colorado; Maria W. McBride, afterward Mrs. M. W. Wilder, wife of the celebrate Civil Engineer who, under Professor Eads, surveyed and built the great jetties at the mouth of the Mississippi River and General George A. Conger, killed at the battle of Fort Fisher, and a number of other no less brilliant personages who received their education at Lombard. My intention was to graduate at Lombard and then finish my education at the Boston Medical Institute and settle down to the practice of medicine, but I have found that in my case at least it is true that "Man proposes and God disposes." I passed successfully my examinations at the Commencement in June of 1859 and in August entered my junior year, the studies of which I pursued vigorously until in October of that year when I went home for a few days vacation, where the most important event of my career transpired. A revival meeting was being held under the auspices of the Free Will Baptist denomination. The minister was Elder Luce, a very good man and a very efficient evangelist. With my prospective bride I attended these meetings and soon found myself strangely affected. I saw myself as a great sinner, neglecting and disobeying my Heavenly Father and ignoring the sacrifice that had been made for me by the Saviour of Mankind. I was utterly miserable under the strong conviction of my lost and ruined condition. One night I went forward to the old fashioned mourners' bench, and there confessed my sins and poured out my soul in prayer. Suddenly, my burden was lifted, my fears were dispelled, my darkness became light. I immediately arose and confessed Christ as my Saviour declaring my

intention to live a new life, following the footsteps of Him who came to "seek and save that which was lost". And here, I wish to record it as my deliberate conviction after half a century of study and experience, that Jesus Christ has power on earth to forgive sins, that then and there I was made a new creature in Christ Jesus. And while my life has been far from what it should have been, there has never been a time from that day to this that I have not had access to the throne of Grace and felt myself a "Sinner saved by grace" and while I do not ask for the children that God has given me, long life, wealth, fame or worldly honors, I never have ceased to and while life lasts shall continue to pray that they may become the recipients of His saving grace and may know Him who, to know aright, is Life Eternal. Greatly to my satisfaction my prospective bride was converted at the same time; we were both baptized by immersion on the same day, by the same Minister, and thus a new link was formed in the chain of love that bound us together.

I went back to school seeing life from a different viewpoint for "old things had passed away and all things had become new". I pursued my studies with greater vigor and in the examination at the Commencement in June of 1860 I had the honor of standing at the head of my class. I spent my vacation at home, entering enthusiastically into the campaign for the election of Abraham Lincoln who was triumphantly elected in the following November. Although not a voter, being but 19 years old, yet I made a number of speeches at public gatherings during the campaign along with one of my uncle's boys who had been converted from a rabid Democrat to an enthusiastic Republican, much to the disgust of my uncle who still continued to be a radical fire eater. During the winter of 1860-1861 the political atmosphere was lurid with flashes of lightning and the deep-toned muttering of party thunder shook the State and nation. It became apparent that war was inevitable. At Lombard the students were almost to a man staunch defenders of the cause of the Union and the few Southern sympathizers had a hard time of it, for the friends of the government would brook no expression of disloyalty and any man giving expression to such sentiments was sure to get into trouble. One young fellow by the name of Zollicoffer, nephew of the Confederate general of that name, came near losing his life for giving expression to his sentiments. It was in February 1861 and Mr. Lincoln was preparing to leave his home in Springfield for Washington. A number of students,

including young Zollicoffer, were engaged in a heated argument on the campus one day when Zollicoffer said that he hoped the train upon which Mr. Lincoln should start for the Capitol would be wrecked and he would like to be the one to wreck it! This was more than the boys could stand. He was immediately seized by a number of students and firmly held, although he fought desperately until a rope was brought and adjusted about his neck, when he was given an opportunity to recant, but he persistently refused to do so saying he would die before he would take back one word of what he had said. Seeing that he would not yield, the students resolved themselves into a court, Lindsey was chosen judge and Geo. Conger, attorney for the prosecution. I was selected as attorney for the defense. The witnesses were called and to a man testified to what Zollicoffer had said. Then Conger made his argument for the prosecution, and I do not suppose he ever made a more brilliant speech in his life. His eulogy of Lincoln was one that I have never heard surpassed and in the most scathing and burning language he denounced treason, winding up with the expression so familiar to my Comrades of the G.A.R., “There is no penalty for treason but death!” I then came forward to plead for my client. I reminded the students that I did not accept my present position from choice, that they all well knew that I had no sympathy with the sentiments that had been expressed by the prisoner, but that there were other principles at stake. I reminded them that there was still law in the land to which such offenders were amenable, that they were a self-constituted tribunal, that if they took this man’s life without the warrant of law they themselves would be liable to prosecution. I spoke to them of the good name of our University that would be disgraced by such an act of lawlessness and violence. I then appealed to their feelings. I told them of the father and mother, brothers and sisters of the accused, I pictured to them the old home in the sunny South where Zollicoffer had been raised and how the news of the death of the idol of that home at the hands of a mob would send a terrible pang to the hearts of those who loved him. I insisted that the rash expression was made in the heat of a discussion that had been acrimonious and bitter and did not express the true sentiment of my client. At this point Zollicoffer interrupted me to say that he had not authorized me to make any such apologies for him, that he felt and meant what he had said and had no apologies to make either by counsel or otherwise. This settled the matter, and I notified the judge that as the

prisoner at the bar had repudiated my efforts in his behalf, I would withdraw from the case. Lindsey at once pronounced the prisoner guilty as charged and as his sentence repeated what the learned counsel for the prosecution had said in his closing remarks, “there is no penalty for treason but death.” Preparations were made at once for hanging the prisoner. He was led to a large tree near the campus, the rope was thrown over a limb and six stalwart students were assigned the task of swinging him up. They began pulling on the rope to take up the slack when the rope slipped down the limb and became fast. While the men were trying to get the rope loose and put it in a place on the limb where it would run smooth, the lynching was suddenly interrupted by the appearance of the faculty headed by Professor Standish. He immediately cut the rope and led the prisoner away amid the howls and jeers of the students who followed to the very door of the Administration Building where Zollicoffer was taken in while Professor Standish ordered the students to their rooms. The next day not only Zollicoffer but every Southern sympathizer in the institution left for their homes feeling that “discretion was the better part of valor.”

CHAPTER VI

WAR!

When the alarm of war sounded over the land in 1861, it found me a student in Lombard University in the city of Galesburg. I had gone home for a few days vacation and was staying on the farm where my father lived. I went to our little market town on the 16th of April, and found that people there were very much agitated over a rumor that had reached that place, that President Lincoln had called for 75,000 troops with which to defend the country. This rumor had not been confirmed, and with the rest, I anxiously awaited the coming of the Chicago Express train. We had gathered about the depot and when the train came in, it brought us the intelligence that the rumor was correct and the quota was being rapidly filled and men were enlisting all over the country in response to the President's call. The assembled company gave a great cheer; but as the train drew out of the depot, the old gray headed Methodist minister of the place, mounted himself upon a dry-goods box and announced to the assembled company that there would be a meeting in the church for all young men of the place to enlist under this call for 75,000 men.

The crowd dispersed with cheers and I went immediately home and told my father the exciting news and that I was going back to the meeting and he need not be surprised if I should enlist. I went back to town and arrived there just at dusk and found the church already filled with people, but boy-like I elbowed my way through the crowd and got into the vestibule. When I got into the church, I saw it as I had never seen it before. The ladies had been there and decorated the church before the meeting. (The ladies are most always there first.) The windows were festooned with evergreens, flags, and bunting. What surprised me more than anything else, perhaps, was the fact that the pulpit had an immense United States flag wrapped around it. On the top of the pulpit lay an open Bible, and on this, two naked swords crossed. It seemed strange. I had never seen a church so decorated before. I had been accustomed to the plain, severe architecture of the Methodists of that time. The pastor had already begun his address, and as he rounded the brilliant and rhetorical periods, the audience gave cheer after cheer and for the first time in my life I heard stomping in a Methodist church. The address closed with a

peroration. A table was spread between the altar rail and an opportunity was given for the young men to come forward and sign the enlistment papers. I was not the first young man to go forward, and this had been one of the evidences to me that I was not a particularly brave young man. I have seen men who could march up to the very mouth of the death-belching cannon; I have seen them charge upon the enemy's breast- works in the face of a sheet of flame; but I could never do that, at least not as they seemed to do it. I never went into an engagement in my life without having a nervous chill; I was not chilly enough to run away but I had the chill all the same. I want to say here for the benefit of any who may, suppose that a soldier gets so accustomed to being shot at that he does not mind it -- that is a mistake. However others may have felt, I had as much of a chill in the last engagement in which I participated in '65 as I did in the first skirmish in '61. This together with the fact that I was not the first to go forward are evidences to me that there were braver men in the army than myself. However, after nearly all the young men had gone forward, I arose partially to my feet and looked over the house to see who there was left to go, when to my surprise and chagrin, I discovered that all the girls in the audience were looking directly at me; I could not stand that; I might have stood the taunts and jeers of my young companions, but to have the girls look at me as much as to say, "Why in the world don't he go?" was too much for me. I went forward and scrawled my name on the elongated foolscap and went home that night to dream of the battles and sieges and all the pomp and circumstances of war.

I will not detain the reader by detailing the events of my first enlistment. Let it be sufficient for me to say that I was a member of a company of scouts that were attached to the first Regiment of Illinois Cavalry under Colonel Marshall. We went down into Missouri and after scouting around over the northern part of the state for some time, we dropped down into Lexington on the Missouri River just in time to be surrounded by General Price with an army of about 32,000 men. Colonel Mulligan with his Irish Brigade was in possession of the place. You who are students of history will remember how gallantly Mulligan defended Lexington and it was not until after we were cut off from our water supply and could get none for either man or beast that we were finally choked into a surrender. I went down into Missouri on a horse that cost me $175.00; I went home on foot. I was certainly a sadder if not a wiser boy

when I got home than when I first went to the front. But this experience was not at all satisfactory to me; I had not had enough of war yet. And when you remember that Lexington was surrendered on the 23rd day of September, and I tell you that I again enlisted on the 28th day of October, you will see that I was not out of the army a great while. My second enlistment was in company I, 11th Illinois Cavalry under the renowned Colonel Robert Ingersoll. I might use a number of pages here in telling you what I know about Ingersoll. I shall venture the assertion that few men living at the present time have been so intimately acquainted with Colonel Ingersoll as I. I heard Colonel Ingersoll plead the first case he ever pleaded before a justice court. I heard him deliver his first infidel lecture. I was with him and Wm. Kellogg in their celebrated canvass of the first congressional district of Illinois in '58. I heard their joint discussion in the more important towns of the district. I enlisted in his regiment, became his adjutant's clerk, sat in his office and was as intimate with him as it was possible for a private soldier to be with the Colonel of his regiment, until he resigned his commission. I shall not here, however, discuss the Colonel; I will say that many things that have been said about him are untrue, and there are thousands of things that might be said about him which have never been said. We rendezvoused in Peoria in the winter of '62 and in March we marched. There was a little incident on the way to St. Louis that will be interesting to young people, especially, and the older ones as well; we arrived on that march at the Sangamon River and were ordered to go into camp one afternoon. It had been raining two or three days. The ground was covered with the water from one inch to three feet in depth all over the river bottom and just where to go into camp under such circumstances was to say the least problematic. We were, however, equal to the emergency; with our axes, hatchets, and pocketknives, we cut down the brush that was growing over about one-quarter section of land and piled it up in piles. Then putting our blankets on these piles of brush, we lay down upon them and drawing our rubber blankets over us went to sleep. As is common in that country, at that time of year, the weather suddenly changed in the night; the wind whistled into the N.W. and it was soon freezing. Many of us were unconscious of this change in the weather, but along toward morning I was aroused by the comrade with whom I was sleeping, punching me in the ribs with his elbow and yelling out, "Quit pulling my hair"; "I am not pulling your hair," said I. "You are,

too," he replied. I assured him I was not and then putting his hands back on his head he felt that his hair, which was long, was frozen into the ice. I had to get up and take a hatchet and cut him loose. Forty or 50 of our men were in the same condition. But, after a time we were chopped loose and, mounting our horses, we rode to some high ground a few miles away and cooked our breakfast. We marched on to St. Louis and, after remaining a few days, we were sent to the front. We went down the river on the largest Mississippi steamers. For the benefit of the young people, I wish to tell you what we had on board that steamer. Our regiment was a cavalry regiment and consisted of 12 companies of 100 men each. We, therefore, had on board 1200 men and 1200 horses, together with all the regiment's mule teams and wagons, the Quartermaster's Store and commissary department, the hospital supplies with the ambulances and all that pertains to a complete cavalry regiment. We dropped down the river to Cape Gerdeau and took on a battalion of Infantry on the hurricane deck. And, I want to say that we were not particularly crowded on board that boat. Sailing down the Mississippi River to the mouth of the Ohio at Cairo, we steamed up the Ohio to the mouth of the Tennessee River, and thence to the Pittsburg landing. We arrived at this point on the second day of April '62. Feeling that we had been through quite a campaign already, we were glad to get on shore and prepare for a rest. We pitched the tents on a ridge of ground out near the front in Hurlburt's division. We were enjoying our camp very much. I remember Sunday morning; I was awake, however, and heard a shot out on the picket line. I listened and soon heard others and then three or four in quick succession. Soon I heard the long roll beating down in Sherman's division on the right and also in Hurlburt's and McClellan's and Stuart's divisions. Then our own bugle blew boots and saddles. Every man now leaped out of bed. We rushed to the picket rope, brought our horses in front of the tents and hastily threw on the saddles but before the horses were saddled, we could hear not only occasional shots along the picket line but the r-r-r-r of the volley and the boom--boom--boom of the cannon. We knew that a battle had commenced. We were marched out on the Corinth Road. I shall never forget the scene that met our gaze as we came out to that road. We met a train of ambulances that were coming in from the front already loaded with the dead and the dying; many were already dead, some were in the last agonies of death, others very seriously if not fatally wounded. But as we galloped down the road

past them. Those who were able to do so swung their caps or handkerchiefs and Shouted, “Go in boys, go in!” and we went in. We were taken out to the very front and as we came upon the edge of an open field, we could see the enemy in our front, moving down steadily upon us in long lines and heavy columns. While we were looking, we suddenly found ourselves in an inflating fire between two batteries and at the very first fire, 21 men of our regiment went down either killed or wounded. We were marched down to the left and supported for a time the 55th Illinois Infantry.

CHAPTER VII

CAPTURE OF BRENT

After the battle we moved slowly and cautiously toward Corinth; finally, Corinth was evacuated by the enemy and immediately after it was evacuated our company was detached from the regiment and sent to Bethel on the Mobile and Ohio R.R., 20 miles above Corinth, to form a part of a garrison there situated. The garrison consisted of three regiments of infantry, a section of artillery and our company of cavalry, all under the command of Brigadier General I. N. Haynie. This garrison was one of a series or line of garrisons stretched from Memphis on the Mississippi River across western Tennessee near the Mississippi state line almost to the Tennessee River. None of these garrisons were strong; none of them were able to sustain themselves without reinforcement from others against a general attack of the enemy. General Sterling Price was organizing a rebel army at Holly Springs in central Mississippi, the material for which was being drawn from Missouri, from Kentucky, and from northern Tennessee. These recruits were constantly passing between our garrisons and going on to Holly Springs, there to swell the numbers of our enemy. It was in an effort to capture some of these rebel recruits that I was sent out in company with a squad of 16 of our boys up in the Jacks Creek country between Boliver and Jackson. We scouted the country thoroughly but failed to accomplish the purposes for which we had gone there. We often heard of the parties we were looking for but when we arrived at the place where we had heard that they were, they had always gone. Fearing that they would succeed in getting below the Tallehatche River, and thus evade us altogether, we made a forced march of 36 miles in about three hours and took up a position at the ford of the little ‘Hatche River at a point in McNarie Co. where the two branches of the ‘Hatche River come together. The point of land between these two streams belonged at that time to a man by the name of Brent. He was an intense confederate, unscrupulous, and desperate. He had taken the oath of allegiance but had violated it and for that reason was subject to arrest at any time. After we had taken our position at the ford, we sent out scouts in various directions with an effort to learn the whereabouts of those recruits that we expected would come in that direction. Our scouts, however, returned without gaining any information, and fearing that they might possibly have passed

that point before we had reached it, I determined on a visit to Brent's house in order to gain what information I could. We had recruited a man a few days before who had not yet drawn a uniform and was dressed in the conventional butternut of the country. I induced him to exchange clothing with me and donning his butternut suit, I wrapped an old blouse in a bandanna handkerchief and swinging it over my shoulder, I made my way up the road towards Brent's. It was just at the gray of the morning when I reached the house and as I approached it I saw a man coming from the opposite direction with a gun on his shoulder. We met just at the gate. I said to him, "Is your name Brent?" He replied, Yes sir!" I said, "I wish to get over the river. I want to go to Belly Springs. I am from Missouri. I have two brothers in Price's army, and I am anxious to see them and expect to enlist and I was told up at Jack's Creek that I could get assistance here in getting across the river." He replied, "If you want to know anything about these things you will have to go and see the old man." I said, "The old man who?" He said, "My father." I said, "Where shall I find him?" "You will perhaps find him in the shop in the rear of the house." I thought it was strange that a man should be in a shop at that hour of the morning and it was with no small degree of caution that I moved around the house. As I passed around it, I could see a light streaming from the crevices of the building in the rear and I approached it cautiously. The door being a little ajar I noiselessly pushed it in and saw an old man standing at a bench with his back turned toward me. As I could not tell what he was doing, I stepped noiselessly into the room and approached him. I then saw that he was working at a gun, that he was putting a stock on it as gunsmith tools were lying on the bench about him. After watching him for a few minutes, I made a slight noise with my foot with the intention of disturbing him. Hearing the noise, he turned to me in a startled manner. I said, "I beg your pardon, but your son whom I met in front of the house a few moments ago informed me that I should find you here and told me that I could get information from you. I am from Missouri. I am on my way to Holly Springs where I have two brothers in Price's army, and they told me at Jack's Creek that I could find help here about crossing the 'Hatche River". The old gentleman looked at me sharply and then said, "Who told you up at Jack's Creek that I would help you here?" I was prepared for some such question as this and immediately replied, "At Jack's Creek, Bill Berry told me that I could find help here

and Captain Krogier at Paducah told me I would find a friend in you." When I mentioned the name of Bill Berry, the old man's countenance relaxed and he shook hands with me saying, "If Bill Berry and Captain Krogier told you, I reckon it's all right." It was somewhat difficult for me to say "reckon" as I was a Yankee and would much preferred to say "guess" any time - - but I had to conform to the vernacular of the country, at least to some extent. I entered into conversation with Mr. Brent and he stated to me that it was unfortunate that I had not arrived two hours earlier for, said he, "I just returned from the north; that is the reason for my being here in the shop at this hour in the morning." I saw that the rebel recruits for whom I had been looking had evaded me altogether and were now safely on the other side of the 'Hatche River and to console me to some extent for what he considered my misfortune, he promised that as soon as breakfast was over, he would saddle two horses, take me to the river, ferry me over to the other side and then go with me until we should catch up with the squad of recruits and then I could go on with them. I consented to this arrangement and expressed my wish that breakfast might be served soon. I entered into conversation with him regarding the guns that he was evidently repairing and learned that they were being prepared for a band of guerrillas that had been organized in the community under the celebrated guerrilla, Club Foot Ford. The barrels for these guns had been picked up on the battlefield of Pittsburg Landing some 30 miles away; and he being a gunsmith was now preparing them for the use of Ford. Ford was a desperate, unscrupulous character, dreaded as much by confederates and sessionists as he was by the unionists and he had no scruples about taking valuable property from anyone. The call for breakfast was soon heard and Mr. Brent led the way toward the house and as we crossed the open space between the shop and the house, it occurred to me that I had better not enter the house knowing as I did that his son was inside and that he was armed. I had also told the boys down at the ford less than a quarter of a mile away that should they hear a pistol or gunshot they were to come immediately to my assistance. Feeling that the time had come when I ought to have some assistance, I stooped over and drew a small revolver from my boot-leg and discharged it in the air. You should have seen the way that old man jumped when that pistol was discharged. Although 60 years of age, I am quite certain that he jumped at least a foot off the ground and turned to me in a very startled way. I immediately covered

him with the revolver and told him to be quiet as he was my prisoner. He stood trembling before me and a moment later the door of the house was opened and the son with a rifle still in his hand appeared at the door. I saw that he was about to raise the gun to his face and I shouted out to him, "Don't raise that gun, sir, or I will shoot." Seeing that I had him covered with the revolver, he did not raise his gun but stood awaiting the development of events. I held the two men under cover of the revolver until the boys came up from the ford. Upon their arrival, we had everything our own way. The first thing we proceeded to do was to eat up the breakfast which had been prepared, and I can assure you that we did ample justice to everything that we could find about the house to eat. While eating the breakfast, we sent a Negro down into the pasture to bring up from there a yoke of oxen. He attached the oxen to an old cart and then we loaded it up, putting on all the guns that we could find about the place, together with the gunsmith's tools and considerable ammunition that we found hidden under the house. Setting old Mr. Brent on top with the Negro for a driver, and 16 men for an escort, we took him into Bethel. We turned Brent over to the quartermaster, then reported the transaction to General Haynie; I went to my quarters expecting that would be the last of it, but in this I was mistaken.

CHAPTER VIII

McQUEEN

About three days after the transaction just narrated, as I was lying in my tent one afternoon reading a letter from “the girl I left behind me”, the lieutenant of my company came in and said, “Simmons, you are wanted.” “What do you want?” said I. “I don’t want anything but you are wanted down at headquarters.” “What do they want with me down there, what have I done?” “I don’t know that you have done anything,” he replied, “but I have a detail for you, so get ready and report at headquarters at once.” Brushing myself up, I immediately reported at the quarters of General Haynie. He referred me at once to his adjutant and on entering the Adjutant’s room, he exclaimed, “I am extremely glad you have come, Simmons. I was very much afraid you would not be in camp. You are nearly always out on some sort of a scout. We want you bad.” I said, “What for?” “Well,” said he, “it’s important.” I said, “I suppose so or else you would not have sent for me, but what is it?” “Well, it’s one of the most important- -” “Never mind its importance. Tell me what it is immediately.” Then taking a paper from his desk, he said, “We have a message from General Grant who is at present at Corinth. In this message, we are informed that a number of scouts who have been down into central Mississippi have just returned to Corinth bringing the information that there is intense activity in General Vilepague’s camp at Ripley. Ripley is one of the advance posts of General Price’s army. It seems evident from this activity that General Vilepague is contemplating a movement upon some one of our garrisons along this line. General Grant wishes to know if we have a man in this garrison who can be sent down into Ripley to ascertain the facts in relation to this supposed movement, that is, to find out the objective point of the contemplated attack, and the number of troops with which it will be made. Now we know of no man in this garrison that can be sent down for this purpose unless it be you.” “My dear sir,” I replied, “I never had thought of such a thing as this. I had never expected to be a spy.” The adjutant turned away from me and said, “Well, you need not go if you don’t want to.” I replied, “I did not say that I did not want to go. I said I had not thought of it. How much time will you give me to think of the matter?” “I will give you 10 minutes,” said he. I replied, “That is not much time.” He said, “That’s all I can give you. I

must answer this message at once." I walked out of the office, crossed the railroad track, went down to the spring nearby and sat down upon a bench to think. I presume I did more thinking in that 10 minutes than I had ever done before in an hour. When the 10 minutes had expired, however, I had fully made up my mind to accept the proposition to go. Returning to the adjutant's office, I so reported to him. "Very well, go ahead," said he. "How shall I go?" "I don't care how you go," said he. "Shall I go on horseback or on foot?" said I. "It does not make any difference to me how you go," said he. "What road shall I take?" was my next question. Then turning to me the adjutant said, "Now look here, Simmons, I want you to distinctly understand that I do not propose to take any responsibility in this matter. You can go as you please and how you please." Seeing that I could get nothing from the adjutant, I returned to my quarters.

I hunted up a suit of citizen's clothes that fitted me reasonably well and tried to find a horse that had not been branded, and also a citizen's saddle, neither of which I was able to find in the camp. Gathering a few of my most intimate friends about me, I made known to them the fact that I was going down into the enemy's country. I did not tell them what for or where I was going. I only gave them the fact that I was going and requested them to write certain letters and do certain things in the event that I should never return. I remember distinctly the boys that stood about me that evening, and right here I want to introduce a few of my comrades. We had in our company the tallest man in the regiment. He was an extremely tall fellow -- 6 feet, 4 ½ inches tall. His name was Eady, but we never called him Eady. He was known in our regiment as "Lengthy", and you will see the appropriateness of the name. Eady's body was not any longer than anybody else's body, but he had extremely long legs. We had also his exact opposite in the person of a diminutive French cook by the name of Tourdott. We never called him Tourdott, however, but always "Toodle" for short, for he was short, only about 5 feet in height. Now Toodle's body was as long as anybody else's body, but he had extremely short legs. When these two men were together, they were a sight to behold and a laughable one you may be sure. I remember distinctly the first time we drew horses. It was at Peoria. The company was marched out to the corral and when the company Poll was called the boys one by one marched in and selected their horses. When Lengthy's name was called, he walked into the corral and, looking carefully over the horses, picked out

one of the smallest of them all, just a little cayuse. He lead this small animal out of the corral, put a saddle on its back and having cinched it up it was said by the boys that he simply threw his leg over it and sat down. Of course, this was an exaggeration but certain it is that in the march if we got into deep mud or water Lengthy had to pull up his legs or go on foot. On the other hand, when Toodle's name was called, he walked into the corral and selected one of the largest draft horses that he could find. Proudly leading his animal from the corral with considerable effort, he threw a saddle onto its back. Having made everything ready, he assayed to mount but could not put his foot into the stirrup to save his life but he was determined to mount; so reaching up he seized the saddle and drew himself up and seated himself proudly upon his horse.

There is another comrade that I wish to introduce. His name was McQueen -- grand old McQueen. I can seem to see him now with his long carroty hair (that was about the color of it) and his freckled face and great red beard. You see by this description that McQueen was not prepossessing in appearance and he had as many blemishes about his morals as he had about his physical make-up. McQueen was born with an insatiable thirst for whisky, and he always got it. No hardship or no danger would deter him when he wanted whisky, and he always wanted it, and he always got it. As a result he was almost constantly in some stage of intoxication, I could always tell when McQueen was going to get drunk and this was quite frequently. He would come to me at such times with a request that I should write a letter to his father. (He was the only man in the regiment that could not write that I know of.) And, as I would sit down at the desk to write his letter, McQueen would begin telling about his father and mother; how his father had always been so lenient with him -- how he had many times shielded him from receiving his just desserts -- how he had even bailed him out of jail several times and how he had prevailed upon him to be a sober and respectable man. Then he would speak of his mother -- of her tenderness -- of the sweetness of her disposition - - how lovingly and tenderly she had always tried to persuade him to be respectable and a gentleman, and how, when he was a little fellow, she used to have him kneel at her knee before retiring for the night and lisp an evening prayer. As McQueen would talk of his father and mother, great tears would roll down his freckled cheeks and drop off his beard and I knew as perhaps no other man knew that somewhere down in

his anatomy he had a great warm heart. When McQueen would get about three sheets in the wind, he would begin marching backward and forward in front of the quarters wherever we might be and after having marched a while, he would give vent to one of the most unearthly yells that you ever heard and before the echoes of that yell had died away in the distance, he would get off a drunken rigmarole -- just a drunken rigmarole. You would have been disgusted. I was and I was disgusted a thousand times afterwards, but I heard it once when it sounded to me almost like angelic music, and that is the only excuse I shall offer for giving you this time something like McQueen's rigmarole. As I said before the echoes of his yell had died away, he would get off these words: "I'm a horse, I'm a mule, I'm a colt unrode, I'm a bad boy, ain't I Frank?" And then he would march backward and forward for a while and then swinging his old hat over his head he would again repeat that yell and thus he would keep on until we got so tired of it that we were compelled to put him in the guardhouse or gag him.

These boys stood by me as I was about to leave them for the front, and while the rest gave me a very warm clasp of the hand, McQueen laid his arm on my shoulder and while he clasped my hand in his, looked into my face and tears stood in his eyes as he said, "I wish I could go with you. I hope you will get back all right. God bless you." Mounting my horse, I rode to headquarters and reported to the adjutant that I was ready to go. "All right," said he, "Go ahead." As I was turning to leave, I heard the voice of General Haynie calling me in the direction of his quarters. I turned and rode near the door. I was just about to dismount and salute the general when he said, "Never mind, don't get down. I only wish to speak a word to you." Then coming up to my side, he looked into my face and said, "Young man, I suppose you are fully aware of the hazardous nature of this enterprise that you have undertaken. You certainly realize that the chances are very much against your ever returning alive. I suppose you know that if you are captured, it will be a drumhead court-martial and you will be hung." I said, "Yes, General, I think I have carefully considered all these matters and yet I feel it my duty to go." He said, "You need not go if you do not wish to. If you go, you go as a volunteer, not because you must." I saw that General Haynie, as well as his adjutant, did not propose to take any responsibility in the matter. I said to the general, "When I enlisted as a soldier, I expected to do whatever duty might devolve upon

me as a soldier. This duty seems to devolve upon me now and I accept the situation. Whatever may be its results, no blame will be attached to anyone but myself," General Haynie shook me warmly by the hand and said, "Young man, God bless you and bring you back safely."

CHAPTER IX

COL . FIELDING HEARST

I turned from the headquarters and rode rapidly toward Camden. Camden was a small hamlet about 12 miles west of Bethel. It was the home of Col. Fielding Hearst. Colonel Hearst was a loyal Tennesseean, a man of untiring energy, undaunted courage, full of patriotism and love for the country and the old flag. He had become somewhat embittered as the struggle in Tennessee advanced and when I learned the circumstances and conditions that had produced these embittered feelings, I was not much surprised. His two boys, noble young fellows, had been shot down in their father's own yard in cold blood by some desperadoes from Pocahontis. His wife and he had been driven into the swamps and forced to remain there in hiding for a number of days. The exposure and hardship was too much for Mrs. Hearst as she was a frail woman and a few days after they came from their concealment, she died. The three victims of the guerrilla warfare were buried side by side on a little ridge in front of the colonel's house less than a quarter of a mile away. Under these circumstances, Colonel Hearst was sometimes a desperate man. He was born and raised in McNary County, Tennessee. He was a slave owner and a cattle dealer. He was thoroughly acquainted with the geography of that whole country -- knew all the bridges and bridle paths and trails. It was important that I should see him and become acquainted with the country into which I was about to go.

As I approached Camden, it was in the dusk of the evening. I saw standing in the road in front of Colonel Hearst's house the colossal form of a gigantic Negress known not only in Camden but over a greater portion of the country as "Big Hannah". She was the house servant of Colonel Hearst. Hannah was the largest woman I ever saw (and I have seen the fat woman in the show) but Hannah was not fat, she was simply immense, weighing about 300 pounds. She was bony, sinewy, and muscular. Hannah was a terror to evil- doers. She had imbibed her master's love for the Union, the constitution, the flag, and for everyone who defended them. She had also imbibed her master's hatred for the Confederacy and all that pertained to it. No Union soldier ever had a better friend than big Hannah and no Confederate a more relentless enemy. I knew something of Hannah's strength. When we first came to Bethel, we were out in that

vicinity scouting. We were not then acquainted with Colonel Hearst or anyone else in that neighborhood. When we came to his house, we discovered a milk house in the rear of the plantation house which we were much pleased to see. We were in that country just then looking for something to eat. For months we had been subsisting on hardtack and pork and beans and ordinary army rations. Now we were looking for a square meal. Seeing this milk house, two of us rode down to it. Dismounting and opening the door we found just what we had hoped to find. Plenty of milk and cream, butter and eggs, and goodies of various descriptions. We were eating as rapidly as possible when the door of the milk house was darkened and we looked up to see the black face of Hannah. We had never seen her before. There was a broad grin on her face and we knew that she was not out of humor. Still she reached her long arms into the milk house and seizing each of us by the shoulder, she drew us out and then shook us as I would shake a couple of small boys. She gave us to understand that she had serious objections to our invading her milk house but if we would come to the house, she would prepare us as good a meal as could be had in that Part of the country. We immediately consented to this arrangement and soon found ourselves seated at a table enjoying a square meal.

Now she was standing in the lane in front of her master's house and as I rode toward her in the dimness of the twilight, I heard her shout, "Stop dar!" I stopped. Then she said, "Who is you?" I said,' "I am one of the boys, don't you know ma?" Then she said, "Come up here till I see who you is." I immediately rode up and when I came near enough so Hannah could see the U.S. brand on the horse's shoulder and that I rode a McClellan saddle, notwithstanding I had on a suit of citizen's clothes, she was reassured, Just then the Colonel came down the walk in front of his house and I dismounted. He gave my horse to another servant and ushered me into his house. The colonel's house was simply an ordinary plantation house, a long house with a hall through it, large rooms on either side of the hall and an immense brick chimney at either end of the house on the outside. Anyone having been in the southern country will recognize this description. I have seen hundreds of such chimneys without any houses between them. The colonel's house was afterwards burned. Leading me up the stairs to the second floor, he showed me into his private room and there we remained until nearly 3 o'clock in the morning and Hannah

served refreshments. During the hours between my arrival and 3 o'clock in the morning, the whole plans of my trip to Ripley was arranged. I learned the geography of the country and the history of the people who lived there. In fact, I was made thoroughly conversant with all that would be helpful to me in this enterprise. At 3 o'clock we went to our beds and slept soundly until 10 the next morning. When we arose, we found breakfast awaiting us and after having eaten a hearty meal, I turned to the colonel and said, "There is one more favor that I shall have to ask of you, Colonel, before I leave. I wish you would furnish me with a horse that has not been branded and a citizen's saddle." His reply was, "I can furnish you with a saddle, but I cannot furnish you a horse. I have but one horse now that is fit to ride and that one I must keep for my own use. You had best return to Bethel and get such a horse there." I informed him that I had looked carefully over all the horses in the garrison and had been unable to find any horse that was not branded. The colonel seemed to be troubled but finally turned to me and said: "I will tell you what I think you had better do. There is a man living down the road toward Bolivar, about four miles from here, by the name of O'Donnel. He is a miserable rebel and a bad man, but he has in his pasture a splendid mare, the property of the Confederate government. The mare was left there about eight months ago. Since that time she has raised a beautiful colt. If you can secure that mare you will have one of the best animals for your purpose in all this country. I know her well and know her stock. You had better go down and secure that mare." "Perhaps," said I, "O'Donnel would not give her up. Perhaps he will object seriously to my taking her." "Certainly," said the colonel, "he will object." "But," said I, "if I undertake to bring her away, O'Donnel will show fight." "Yes," replied he, "he is that kind of a man. He is a fighting man and you need not expect to secure that mare without trouble if O'Donnel is at home." "Well," said I, "I don't know about that." The colonel noticed my hesitancy and turning to me I could see a curl of scorn upon his thin lips and a sort of indignant flash in his dark eyes. As he approached me and shook his long bony finger in my face, he said, "Young man, if you have not the backbone to go down to O'Donnel's and get that mare, you had better go back to Bethel and stay there."

CHAPTER X

INTO THE ENEMY'S COUNTRY

I saw the correctness of his conclusions and without further words went to the stable and, taking my horse, rode toward O'Donnel's. I passed the house reconnoitering it as I went. I saw no one about the premises. Everything was quiet. I returned past his house into the corral, rode from the corral into the pasture and a short time had found the band of horses. Having a rope with me and being some what accustomed to the use of the lariat, I soon had a noose around the mare's neck and led her out of the corral. I was just congratulating: myself upon the success that I had met with in securing this mare without any trouble whatsoever, when I happened to cast my eye over my left shoulder and was startled at finding myself looking into the barrel of a gun in the hands of O'Donnel. With a yell that made my blood almost curdle, he shouted, "What are you doing with that mare?" In a hesitating way I said, "I was taking her." I see you are; give her up." I said, "I want her." He said, "You are not going to have her. Give her up immediately." I said, "I need her in m-my business." "You are not going to have her and that is the end of it," he said. Putting on a sterner aspect I turned to him and said, "I shall confiscate this mare in the name of the government of the United States." He said, "The government of the United States be- - (well, I won't tell you what he said). Give up that mare and give her up now." "I shall not tell you to give her up again," he said. "If you don't give her up immediately, I will shoot." I saw that he meant what he said. I had carried on the conversation with a purpose and during that time I had worked my right foot out of the stirrup. The bridle reins had been dropped on to the horn of the saddle. I had bent my right knee sufficiently to allow me to get hold of my revolver that I carried in my boot-leg. I now had it in my right hand. Turning to O'Donnel, I reached down the rope to him, saying at the same time, "I suppose I shall have to give her up although I wanted her badly." He dropped the breach of his gun down upon the ground holding it with his left hand while he extended his right hand to take the rope. I withdrew it quickly and swung my right hand over and covered him with the pistol saying, "No, you don't. Now lay down that gun," The movement was so quick that O'Donnel had no time to raise his gun and, seeing that I had the advantage of him, he lay down his gun. "Go now," said I, "and open that

gate for me." He obeyed with alacrity. Swinging the gate wide open, he allowed me to pass out on to the road with the mare. I kept him covered with the revolver all the time until I was far enough away to be out of danger and then, waving him a good-bye, I rode to Colonel Hearst's.

Arriving there, he heartily congratulated me on my success in securing the mare and, bidding him and Hannah goodbye, I rode to Pocahontis, arriving there at about 10 o'clock at night. Pocahontis is a small town on the Memphis and Charleston Railroad, also on the banks of the 'Hatche River. At that time it had a population of about 250. This population was about equally divided between Unionists and Secessionists and these who lived in Pocahontis were about the worst type of Confederates that I ever met. A large percentage of the Confederates with whom I became acquainted in the South were highly respectable people and had the honor and integrity of ladies and gentlemen. Aside from their disloyalty to the government, they were as fine a people as I ever met anywhere, but these of Pocahontis were an exception to the general rule and were the most despicable that I ever knew. I rode into the town that night and stopped at the house of a Union man. I had been in Pocahontis many times before and had become quite well acquainted with the Unionists there. After a good night's rest and hearty breakfast, I left Pocahontis for Ripley. There are two roads leading out of Pocahontis to Ripley, one by way of Middletown, another station on the Memphis and Charleston Railroad, the other, a more direct route, by way of Dover. But while the distance by the way of Middletown was nearly twice that of the other, still I thought it better to take that route as I should be less likely to meet Confederate troops and I was correct in this conclusion. I saw no troops until the afternoon before arriving at a point near Ripley. On that afternoon as I was riding up a grade, I met a troop of Confederate cavalrymen. I turned out of the road and passed them by with the usual salutation. They looked at me quite sharply but allowed me to proceed some distance. Then, I was halted. I turned and saw that their guns were pointed at me and they ordered me to come back. I rode back with alacrity when one of them said to me, "Where are you going?" I said, "I am going to Friars Point." "Where have you been?" "I have been to Savannah." "Well, who are you? Give an account of yourself," they said. "My name is Levi Weston. I belong in Friars Point. When the 2nd Regiment of Mississippi Infantry was formed, I joined Co. C under Captain Jordan and

was with the regiment at Friars Point until it was ordered out to Fort Donaldson to reinforce General Buckner. When we arrived at Hopkinsville, I found myself quite sick and unable to proceed. I was placed in the hospital there and the regiment moved on to Donaldson. They were in the battle at Fort Donaldson and the entire regiment was captured. I suppose I am the only man of the whole regiment that was not taken north to a Yankee prison. After I had been in the hospital some time, my uncle who lives in Savannah heard that I was at Hopkinsville and came to see me. He got permission from the surgeon in charge to take me home under furlough and I have been over there ever since. Now I am on my way home to Friars Point. I want to visit the folks there a while and then I shall enlist again." They intimated to me that was quite a plausible story, but they were under orders to search strangers.

They began the search. The first that attracted their attention was a bundle of letters, some seven or eight in number, which they immediately opened and began to read. These letters were all addressed to Levi Weston either at Hopkinsville or Savannah and all purported to have been written at Friars Point. These letters detailed events and circumstances that had actually transpired in Friars Point within the past few months, actual history, well known to the residents and to the surrounding country. Colonel Hearst and I had written those letters in his room that night while the plan was being laid for my trip south; the colonel being so well acquainted in that country was able to dictate those letters perfectly. The confederates were evidently satisfied so far as letters were concerned, but they took from me a dirty passbook in which a diary had been kept. This diary began with the enlistment of Levi Weston in Company C of the 2nd Mississippi Infantry and made a complete history of the regiment in its organization. It detailed the manner of life in the hospital, the coming of my uncle, the journey to Savannah and the incidents that had transpired there. This seemed to satisfy them perfectly, but one of them took off my hat and turning down the oilcloth, he discovered a paper folded there, Unfolding it he read, "Levi Weston, Company C, 4th Mississippi Infantry". This settled the whole matter and they told me I could proceed. Leaving them I rode but a short distance for I knew I was within a few miles of Ripley. I went to the house of a planter and told him the same story that I had told the rebel cavalry. I asked to stay all night, stating that I wished to go on to Friars Point the next day. He gladly consented to my remaining

overnight but informed me that it would be impossible for me to proceed by the way of Ripley, that I would have to go around by the way of Granada. I inquired the reason and he informed me that General Villepague had closed up all the roads leading north and that even the citizens who had attempted to go that way were forbidden and that no one in the neighborhood was allowed to pass through his lines. I inquired the reason of this order. He said he did not know unless there was about to be a movement made on the Yankee lines but certain it was that no one could get into Ripley from the north. He admitted, however, that there were two exceptions to this order, A doctor living in the neighborhood was permitted to enter Ripley every day as he was needed there on account of much sickness in the rebel camps. Also, a young man related in some way to one of the officers in the camp was in the daily habit of entering the lines with fruit. These two were the only exceptions to the general rule. I told him that I thought perhaps I could manage to get through Ripley; at least I should make the effort in the morning. The next day I bade my host good-bye and rode out onto the main road but did not venture down the road on horseback. Tying my horse under a bush, I discovered that the planter had told me the truth. I discovered that the guard line was a very close one. The picket posts were but a short distance apart and a great deal of vigilance seemed to be exercised by all the picket guards. Being dressed in citizen's clothes, I was safe from being shot at but was not permitted to approach the line nearer than a 100 yards or more without being halted and turned back; and although I looked along that line all day, I found no place through which I thought I could possibly enter Ripley with any degree of safety. At night I went back to the house of the planter with whom I had stayed the night before and told him that I had failed in getting into Riley and should have to crave his hospitality again. I said I would leave the next morning for Friars Point by way of Granada and, in order to make up somewhat for the time I had lost in trying to get through Ripley, I would be glad to have him get me off at an early-hour the next morning. This he promised to do. The next morning I was called at about 4 o'clock and, after eating my breakfast, I bade my host, the planter, good-bye. Thanking him for his hospitality I rode out on the Ripley and Pocahontis Road;

I was desirous of getting on the road this early so that I might be sure to intercept either the doctor or the apple boy who would probably

visit Ripley that day. On reaching the road and halting I could hear the galloping of a horse down the road toward Ripley and the sound soon died away in the distance. It proved to be the doctor who had gone into Ripley very early. I saw him there later in the day. I had wanted to meet this doctor or the peddler for I supposed they were furnished with a pass and that was what I wished to secure. I waited patiently and about daylight was gratified to hear another horse approaching from the opposite direction; soon the young man who peddled apples stood before me. I halted him and said, "Where are you going?" "Going to Ripley." "What are you going to Ripley for?" "Goin' to peddle these apples." "Do you go into Ripley every day?" "Yes, most." "Have you a pass?" "I got no pass." "Have you the countersign?" "What's that?" "Have you no word that you speak to the guard or no pass? How is it you get into Ripley without a pass or countersign and everybody else is kept out?" He replied, "I got an uncle what's a captain down thar and they never stops me." I saw that he was telling the truth and having carefully looked him over I saw that he was about my size, that he wore his hair long as I did and that it was about the same color as mine. I concluded to use that boy and so took him into the woods quite a distance from the road. And there, having him dismount, and dismounting myself, I bade him take off his clothes. He objected but when I told him that he must or I should have to do him bodily harm, he finally consented and soon disrobed himself. I took off my clothes also and in a few moments we were habilitated in each other's garments.

I looked about me and, having selected a place, I caused him to lie down on his back. I took a piece of three-quarter inch cotton rope from my saddle. Having cut off a piece two feet in length, I unstranded it and then going to where the boy was lying on the ground I tied one of his arms to a sapling, his other arm to another, and then tying his feet together I made them fast to another sapling; thus I had him securely bound. I was about to leave him in this condition when it occurred to me that if I should do so when I had gone he would make some outcry and that would attract the attention of someone passing on the road, and the fact that I had gone into the camp in a disguise would be known and I should have serious difficulty. I must prevent this somehow. I thought of tying a handkerchief over his mouth but, fearing that this might smother him, I looked around for something else. I found a piece of pine and, taking my pocketknife, I

whittled out a gag about the size of a small hen's egg. Then, making the boy open his mouth I thrust in the gag. Now I was sure he could not get away or make a noise. Mounting his old horse which was by the way a sorry specimen, I drew his old slouched hat over my head and rode out to the road and toward Ripley. I had not gone far until I was aware that I was approaching the picket line and soon saw the vidette standing on the bank about 8 or 10 feet above the level of the road at a place where the road was cut through a little ridge. As I came near to him he seemed to be looking at me quite steadily but when I arrived within about a hundred yards, he turned in the opposite direction and began to look at something that seemed to attract his attention on the opposite side. He would step a few paces in one direction and then stoop partially over as though looking at some object and then would go a few paces in another direction and stop and look. While he was going through this process, I was passing through the cut and had gone past him. He did not halt me, neither did he say any thing to me and I rode down the hill. About three-quarters of a mile from the vidette post I came upon a reserve post. This consisted of a squad of perhaps 15 men who were just in the act of preparing their breakfast. As I approached them I felt considerably alarmed. I was very much afraid they would want fried apples for breakfast and I certainly did not wish to furnish them. However, I rode steadily on and to my great satisfaction they paid but little attention to me. I noticed as I passed that there was quite a pile of old lumber lying alongside the road near their camp. Passing on, I soon found myself in the suburbs of Ripley.

CHAPTER XI

WITHIN THE ENEMY'S LINES

Before I left the boy whose horse I was riding, and whose apples I was about to dispose of, I had inquired very particularly of him what part of the town he had usually peddled his fruit in. He informed me that it was in the northern and eastern part of Ripley and that his uncle's company was located in this part of town. I was particular to avoid that part of Ripley. I had no desire to interfere with his future trade; neither did I care to cultivate the acquaintance of his uncle. So I passed on the southern and western part of town.

I proved to be quite a successful fruit peddler and by half past one o'clock in the afternoon had disposed of all the apples. While I had tried to draw many into conversation with reference to the prospective movement of Villepague's troops, I had found no one who seemed to know anything about it. I sat down on a log and reasoned. My inquiry was this. Who is there in Ripley that knows what I want to know? And the only satisfactory answer I could give was this. Probably no one in camp knows what I want to know except General Villepague and possibly some of the members of his staff and I felt sure that if I got the information desired, I should have to go to headquarters in person. With this purpose in view, I hunted up headquarters. General Villepague's headquarters were on the old Seminary campus -- an old brick seminary in the central part of the town. It was surrounded by quite a space of open ground but in front of the Seminary there were 5 or 6 very large oak trees with broad spreading branches. Under these trees in tents were the general's headquarters; his quartermaster's tent and his adjutant's tent on either side of his.

Without hesitation I moved around to the rear of these tents and there, under the shade of these large trees, I found quite a number of the citizens of Ripley gathered. Some were standing talking, others were sitting in groups on the ground, and a few were lying stretched out fast asleep in the cool shade. I passed through these groups of citizens and, finding a comfortable place about 20 feet from the tent of General Villepague, I rolled up the sacks from which I had peddled the apples; using them as a pillow I lay down and to all appearances went to sleep. But, I did not sleep. I had both ears and one eye open all the time. There I

lay all afternoon. I heard much of the conversation in the tents, but nothing that I heard gave me the desired information. The afternoon wore away. The sun went down. The citizens dispersed to their homes. Darkness came on and I was left alone. It was now dark and I had not as yet one iota of the information for which I had come. I was about to get up and leave the place and try some other means to get the information when I overheard some words in General Villepague's tent that startled me. I listened a moment and was sure that the party talking with the general was none other than his quartermaster. Creeping softly up to the tent, I had my head within a foot of the wall of the tent and listened very attentively. Within 15 minutes of that time I had all the information I wanted. I knew that General Villepague's point of attack would be Boliver, that he would move upon that place in six days from that time with a force of 4000 men and a reserve of 3500. This was the information for which I had been sent to Ripley and now, having secured it, I had nothing to do but to return to General Haynie. I arose from my place on the ground. I did not dare to pass down through the town in the way that I had come as I knew that the camp guard had been doubled when the 6 o'clock relief went on and they would be so much more likely to arrest me in the night than they would be in the daytime. I felt that it was necessary that I should move around the edge of the town and get to my horse which I had left tied in the bushes near the Pocahontis Road. I left the seminary campus, crossed the street through some vacant lots into a field. Crossing the field I came to a fence and getting over this I moved along. As I went, I heard what sounded to me at first like singing. I had been so accustomed to hearing soldiers singing that it attracted my attention at first but little. Soon, however, there seemed to be something familiar in the sound and I listened attentively. I heard a way off in the distance these words: "I'm a horse. I'm a mule. I'm a colt unrode. I'm a boy, ain't I Frank?" I was startled and surprised and listened. Again I heard it faintly but distinctly and was sure it must be McQueen. Certainly no other man ever said that in that way. I determined to make sure and hurried off across the field in the direction from which the sound came. The further I went the more distinctly I could hear it, until at last I came to another fence. Peering into the darkness I could see on the ground, about 60 yards from me, a black bunch and, as my eyes became accustomed to the darkness and the surroundings, I could see the dim outline of a sentry as he paced back and

forth on the other side of this black bunch with the musket at a right-shoulder shift. Evidently McQueen was a prisoner, but how did he come here? It was a mystery to me. Should I undertake his rescue? If I should do so, I might possibly be made a prisoner myself. In that event, what would become of the boys at Boliver? Now the boys at Boliver were simply a lot of convalescent soldier -- about 1500 of them. They had been brought together at Boliver from the various hospitals scattered over the district. There were not more than 150 effective men in the camp, and I knew that should General Villepague attack Boliver with the force that he intended to do so with, these boys would all be captured and taken down into the southern country and put in the prisons there. Not half a dozen of them would ever see home or country again. Should I be captured now, what would become of the boys at Boliver? At first I thought to leave McQueen as he was and make my way back as rapidly as possible, but upon second though I decided not to do so. I could not bring myself to desert a comrade under such circumstances when it might be possible for me to release him. My first thought was that God would take care of the boys of Boliver and that it was my duty to take care of McQueen if I could. With this thought I noiselessly slipped over the fence. Lying down upon the ground, I crawled steadily toward McQueen. The nearer I came to him the thinner I got. It is surprising how thin a man can get under certain circumstances and I assure you that before I reached McQueen, I was very thin. Coming to where I could reach him with my hand, I stopped to consider. If I touched him now, it might be that he would speak and if he should do so, it would doubtless attract the attention of the sentry who would immediately come to where McQueen was lying in order to see what was the difficulty and then he would be quite sure to see me and there would be trouble. But then I argued perhaps McQueen will not say anything. What would I do if I were in his place and someone should come carefully up to me in the darkness and touch me? Should I think it a friend or an enemy? Certainly no enemy would do that and McQueen will reason in this way if he is not too drunk to reason at all. I will take a chance but first I will be prepared for anything that may occur; so I drew my revolver and holding it firmly in my right hand I determined that if McQueen should say anything to attract the attention of that sentry and he should approach us, I would wait until he came very near and then would shoot him through the heart, cut McQueen loose and make our escape if

possible.

With this thought I put my hand out on McQueen's shoulder. I felt him move and squirm under my hand, but he did not say a word. I then whispered in his ear calling him by name, "McQueen," and he whispered back, "What?" I said, "I am Simmons," and then I felt him tremble under my hand. I said, "I have no time for explanations. I shall cut you loose, but I want you to remain here just as you are for at least a half hour so that I can have an opportunity to get away." He whispered that he would do it. I said, "Now don't forget to yell and as you have not yelled for a time you had better yell now." So he lifted up his voice: "I'm a horse, I'm a mule. I'm a colt unrode. I'm a bad boy, ain't I, Frank?" Now McQueen was bucked. Perhaps you do not know what that means. When they buck a man, they tie his wrists together with a rope or handkerchief and then make him stoop down until his knees come up between his arms then thrusting a stick through under his legs and over his arms, they tip him over on one side and he is secure. This was the condition in which I found McQueen. Taking my knife I cut the cords that bound his hands together and then crawled away from him back to the fence, over the fence, and out into the darkness. The further I went the less I could hear of McQueen until his voice finally died away in the distance.

I found the old horse just where I had left him but as I approached him, I became aware of the fact that we were about to have a thunderstorm - - a great black cloud was rising in the west and northwest. Its edge was already up at an angle of about 45 degrees. The lightning was flashing through it and the thunder rolling in the distance. I was very much pleased as I knew it would be a help to me in making my way out of the camp. I mounted the horse and rode down to the picket post. When I came to the reserved post, I discovered that the old lumber that I had seen piled up along the road in the morning, had been constructed into a sort of temporary shelter and the men of the post had taken the advantage of the shelter and had already crawled in to keep out of the storm. If any of them saw or heard me as I passed the post, they did not make it known to me. Passing on up the road, I felt certain that I should not be so fortunate in passing the vidette and when within about 75 yards of that position, I was challenged to halt. I halted. "Who comes there?" "It's me," I said, in a squeaking tone. "Advance and give the countersign," was the command. "I got no countersign," replied I, in the same voice, "Don't you know

me?" "Well, who are you?" demanded the vidette. "Well, I am that boy that peddles fruit. I have been going in and out for the last two weeks every day. Don't you know me?" "What are you doing here at this time in the night?" he asked. "Well, my horse got loose down in Ripley and I could not find her until a little bit ago and now I am getting home as fast as I can and I want to get there before it rains." "Well come on, come on," said the sentinel and I rode up on the road. There he stood on the bank and looked at me as I passed by. It lightninged several times and must have revealed me quite distinctly to him but he evidently believed that I was the boy that had been going out and in every day and he paid no further attention to me.

Riding on out into the country to the place where I had come into the road after tying up the boy, I rode into the woods and began to search for him, I felt quite anxious in reference to the boy, fearing that he might have perished and I felt that he was an innocent party and I did not want to be the cause of his death. I rode back and forth over the country trying to find him. Finally, I dismounted and tried on foot. Every time the lightning would flash, it would reveal to me the country around about me for quite a distance and I would strain my eyes in every direction trying to see the boy. Then when it would darken down as it always does after a flash of lightning, I would run as far as I could until another flash and in this way I ran back and forth, hither and yon in every direction trying to find the boy. A very vivid flash came revealing the country about me. I strained my eyes to see him. It darkened down and I was just starting to run when another more vivid flash followed and looking down I saw the boy, so near that had I stepped I should have stepped on him or over him. Waiting for another flash of lightning, I looked down to see his pale silent face upturned to the sky. I stooped over and lay my hand on his brow. It sent a shudder through me for it was so cold and clammy. I felt along his arm to his wrists for his pulse. There was none there. I stooped down, tore open his shirt, lay my ear down. upon his breast and was overjoyed when I could hear distinctly a fluttering of his heart. Tearing off some of his garments, I began chafing him and rubbing him with all my might. I turned him into various attitudes and positions. Having cut the cords that bound his wrists and legs and then prying open his jaws, I got the gag out of his mouth. Still, he was not breathing to any appreciable extent. I put my lips to his mouth and filled his lungs with air. Then pressing his chest

and sides to produce artificial respiration, and then filled his lungs again and kept doing so until at last I had the satisfaction of hearing him gasp. One gasp followed another in quick succession and after a while it became a sort of labored breathing. I got him into a sitting posture and finally onto his feet. I had kept up the rubbing and chafing process all the time, and now by supporting him, I succeeded in getting him to walk. Walking him backwards and forwards for a long time, I finally found him in a condition to be put upon his horse and having thus provided for him, sent him away to his home.

Before his departure, I told him that he should never so long as he lived tell any living person of the experience of that night and day. If he did, I would be the death of him . . . I don't know whether he has ever told or not. I have often thought that I might sometime meet that boy or someone who knew him. If I should hear of him tomorrow, if he were 500 miles away from here and I had not a nickel with which to pay my fare to him, I would start on foot in order to meet him. And, when I should do so, I would extend both hands and beg him to forgive me for that deed for I forgot to ask him to forgive me when I sent him to his home.

Mounting my horse which, of course I found when I found the boy, I rode to an old mill that I had seen on the creek that day I was looking along the picket line. Before I reached it the storm broke in all its fury. The wind blew a gale, the lightning flashed almost incessantly and the roar and crash of the thunder was constant and rain fell in torrents. When I reached the mill, I rode under the shed and tying my horse, entered the main part of the building. I was too nervous to rest and so paced backwards and forwards in the old mill. The reaction had come. My nerves that had been on a strain for hours gave and it was with difficulty that I managed to keep on my feet. I knew I could sleep should I lie down so I paced back and forth in the old mill. Every flash of lightning revealed to me the immense posts covered with gray cobwebs and dust with their great braces extending like arms of great giants. Bats fluttered out from the rafters overhead. An owl sheltered in the trees outside was making the night hideous with its hoots. I think the hours that intervened between then and morning were the most miserable I ever spent. Daylight came at last and the sun rose in all its splendor for the storm had cleared away. Looking about in the old mill, I discovered some feed for my horse and after giving her all I dared, I mounted and went away.

I did not venture near the main road but rode into the fields and through the woods. I had to ride a long distance sometimes to get around ravines. I think I did not make more than 10 miles that day toward Pocahontis, but when night came, I went out on the road. Now I had an opportunity to try the mettle of my mare and I determined to make Pocahontis before morning if possible. At 4 o'clock I found I had made upwards of 70 miles and was only about 5 miles from Pocahontis. The mare was very tired and feeling that I could get into Pocahontis without difficulty, I rode very slowly. I had not gone far before I was fast asleep -- I have ridden many miles asleep in my saddle -- I must have been asleep for when I came to myself I was startled to find myself in the midst of a camp. Some men were cooking on a fire at my right. On my left, some more men were making a fire. In front I could see men getting up off the ground and others lying stretched out upon their blankets. This could all be seen by the light of the fires. I was sure I was in danger for these men did nor have on the uniform of confederate soldiers much less the blue of the Union. They had on citizen's clothes and I had evidently ridden into a camp of guerrillas, probably that of Club Foot Ford.

Now, I never wanted to be drunk in my life nor to appear drunk. For of all the despicable objects in the world to me is that of a drunken man; but somehow it dawned upon me as distinctly as though spoken, that I ought to impersonate a drunken man and I put the thought into immediate execution. Reeling in my saddle and loping over toward the men on my right, I said in a drawling tone, "Hello here." One of them said, "Hello." Continuing the drawling, I said, "S-say is this the r-road to R-r-ripley?" "Yes," said one of them, "this is the road to Ripley but you are on the wrong end of it." I said, "Did you say this was the r-road to Ripley?" "Yes, yes," said he, "but you are going the wrong way. You must go the other way. You have got too much tanglefoot." "Y-yes, yes," I said, "I am much obliged t-to you. Goo-by." Then turning my horse slowly I left them and reeled off into the darkness toward Ripley. Evidently they supposed that I was some citizen who had been off on a tare and had imbibed too much applejack.

Riding down the road something like a quarter of a mile, I let down the fence and rode into the field. Keeping at a safe distance, I rode around that camp and came into the road on the other side of it. Then I rode quickly toward Pocahontis arriving there just at daylight. I rode to the

house of the man where I had stayed as I came through on my way to Ripley; and, there I learned for the first time what had been a mystery to me . . . how McQueen became a prisoner and was taken to Ripley.

This man informed me that on the next day after I had stayed all night with him, in fact a few hours after I had left for Ripley, our company of cavalry had come in to Pocahontis from the north and there had met Club Foot Ford's guerrillas and a squad of confederate cavalry probably the same men I met on my way down, and that they had had a brisk skirmish in which some had been injured and killed on both sides. One of our boys at least had been killed and one taken prisoner ... that one was McQueen. They had taken him immediately to Ripley over the Dover Road and as I had gone by the Middletown Road, the distance being so much greater, and as I had spent a day looking along the picket line, it was easy for me to see how McQueen had been brought to Ripley a prisoner before my arrival there. I satisfied my hunger at my friend's table but my horse was less fortunate as nothing could he found in the town with which to feed him. I was very sleepy and tired and went to bed while my friend kept a close watch. I told him not to remove the saddle from my horse but: in the event of any disturbance in the town to wake me up and I would mount and leave. I slept until 5 o'clock without being disturbed when I was aroused by my friend and was told that if ·I expected to make Bethel that night it would be best for me to start at once. My friend had finally succeeded in finding for my horse some bundles of corn fodder but aside from that she had had nothing to eat since I left the old mill, being about 36 hours.

I led the mare out on the public square to an old pump and watering trough. While she was drinking I entered into conversation with some men who were sitting there on the pump platform. While we were talking I saw another man approaching from the other side of the square. As he came nearer there seemed to be something familiar about his appearance and the nearer be came to me the more certain I was that I had seen him before. When he came close up, I recognized him. To my disappointment and no little uneasiness, I noticed that he recognized me. Neither of us, however, said anything but we watched each other quite closely. I saw him pluck one of the men by the shoulder and they stepped a few paces away and had some conversation which I was unable to hear but immediately this man that I had recognized went across the square and

into a livery stable. My horse had quenched her thirst, and I had nothing to wait for. Turning her slowly so that I could mount more readily I was just in the act of mounting when I happened to look over my horse; I saw the man who had gone into the livery stable cross a street and go toward the Ripley road on horseback. It flashed into my mind in a moment that he was going down to the camp of Club Foot Ford to inform him of my presence in Pocahontis. It occurred to me that he did not dare to undertake my capture without help for there were probably as many Union men in Pochanotis that day that knew of my presence there as there were rebels. If they should undertake to capture me then, there would be a row and somebody would be likely to get hurt; but if he could get Club Foot Ford's guerrillas after me, he hoped that they might be able to capture me before I could reach Bethel.

I must tell you here how that man recognized me. He was one of those miserable, unscrupulous bushwhackers, a resident of Pocahontis. Some eight weeks previous to this time, in a skirmish, we had wounded him and captured him. We had taken him to the hospital at Bethel and had his wounds dressed and cared for him. He lay in the hospital on a berth right alongside of the brother of the girl I left behind me. I always thought a great deal of Jim on his sister's account, and I think a great deal of him yet for he is my brother-in-law. I used to take him any little delicacy that I could prepare and as there was usually more than he wanted I would give what remained to this rebel. He learned to know me by a scar on my lip. It was much more prominent then than it is now for it had not been made so long. Now to repay me for my kindness and care of him, he had gone after Club Foot Ford's guerrillas to undertake my capture.

I mounted my horse and rode down to the river. The 'Hatche River was spanned by a long bridge. It had been torn up many times during the war and now it was covered with planks that were not spiked down. As I rode onto the bridge, the planks rattled under my horse's feet, and this gave me a brilliant idea. Riding across the bridge, I tied my horse on the other side and coming back on the bridge I threw off some of the planks into the river. "There," said I to myself, "if they do follow me, when they get here they'll stop. As they cannot get any further without filling up those gaps, they will be compelled to go up into Pocahontis to get planks with which to repair the bridge. By the time they have done this, I will be a long way on the road to Bethel. Mounting my horse, I rode along the

point and up the hill until I came on top of the hill. From this point I could see down onto the bridge which was not very far distant. I could distinctly see the gaps in the bridge. I wondered if they would follow me. I concluded to wait an see. I had not long to wait for very soon I heard them thundering down from Pocahontis to the river, onto the bridge, and when they arrived at the gap, they stopped. I was wonderfully pleased. I was so elated over this trick I had played on them that I could not resist the temptation and shouted out to them: "Why don't you came on?" It was a very foolish thing to do, and I realized it as a volley of bullets whistled around me. Fortunately, none of them hit me or my horse. Dodging behind the hill, I rode along the side hill for some distance and then came up where I could peek over and see the bridge. I was startled at what I saw. They had crowded their horses onto the bridge, and then gone back and took up some planks and brought them around and filled up the gaps and were now coming on. I had not played them half so sharp a trick as I thought I had. While I knew they had fresh horses, I also knew that mine was jaded and weak from hunger. I knew that I should have a race for life.

To use the common expression among the boys, I "lit out". Soon I heard them behind me. Then I spurred my horse up and got out of hearing of them. Then I slowed up until I could hear them again, and then on until I could hear them no more, and in this way went until half the distance to Camden was covered. It was apparent to me that they were gaining on me steadily, and if I expected to reach Camden without being caught I must put my horse out on a lope and go as they were going. I did so and on we went over the hills and through the hollows until we came within about two miles of Camden when they began firing at me from the rear. I was beyond their range, however, although they were gaining on me. About a mile and a quarter from Camden we passed an old schoolhouse on the right and, feeling that the bullets would soon be whistling about me, I determined to urge the mare on to her utmost speed for the rest of the distance. So with whip and spurs I urged her on and she responded nobly to my demands. She did her work grandly while able to go at all, but when about 100 yards from Colonel Hearst's house she began to reel and at last staggered and fell to the ground. I went off from her running. Ran down to the gate, up the walk and on to the porch, into the hall and up the stairs of Colonel Hearst's house into the very room where a few nights before Colonel Hearst and myself had arranged the plan for my expedition

south. I entered the room, closed the door, turned the key, and shoved the bolt. Standing there in the middle of the floor, irresolute, I was conscious of a dim light about me but just where it came from I did not just then realize. Afterwards I knew. I was not long in determining what course to pursue. I would wait until my pursuers should reach the house and begin to search over it for me. When I should hear them in the hallway below, I would open one of the windows in the rear and get out onto the balcony and then slip down one of the balcony posts into the garden below, through the garden, out into the meadow and so escape. Having determined on this course, I awaited developments. I had not long to wait. I soon heard my pursuers stamping up the walk. Then up the stairs and into the hall. I turned to the window and tried to throw up the sash, but could not move it. I felt for the fastenings but they were of a peculiar pattern. I had never seen any like them before. I did not know how to manipulate them, and they resisted all my efforts. I thought once to dash my fist through a pane of glass but realized at once that that would be useless as the glass was only 8 x 10 inches, and I could not get through so small a space. Just at this time I looked down under the window. I saw there two small doors, both of them being about the width of the window and that they were so arranged that when the sash was up and the doors open, they formed a space about the size of a door. I reached down and tried to open these doors. I could now hear my pursuers coming up the stairs. I was on my knees trying to open these doors. I wrenched and twisted at the knobs and handles but all to no purpose. I could now hear them thundering at the door. In an agony of despair, I wrenched and twisted again. Just then everything became dark about me. Something was thrown over me, and I realized there was a presence above me. Then the door burst open with a crash and I heard a voice above saying, “Get out of here, get out of here. What’s you comin’ in a room whar a lady’s a dressin’ herself for?” And then in an instant the covering was removed. The door under the window was opened and I was hustled unceremoniously out onto the balcony and the doors were closed.

I shall have to explain. You will remember that in the days of the rebellion that the fashion was very prevalent all over the country among the ladies of wearing extremely large hoops. This was the case both in the north and south. You also know that the Negroes are very imitative, that they like to imitate the white people and those of them who were in a

position to do so, wore large hoops as well as their white sisters. Hannah wore hoops as large in proportion as she was; larger than that of the ordinary woman, and she had simply covered me up.

Now I was out on the balcony and slipping down one of the posts I found myself in the garden. I ran through the garden down to a stone fence which was surrounded by a low picket fence. Jumping over this fence I leaped to the ground. As my feet struck the ground and before I could make any advanced movement, I felt the strong arms of two men thrown about me and a voice yelled, "Surrender you Yankee 'son of a gun'." I struggled to get my weapons but these strong men, held me very firmly and I seemed to be powerless in their grasp.

Leading me up in front of the Colonel's house, they held a jubilee, and after this there came a council of war. This was to determine what should be done with me. Some were in favor of taking me out in front of the house and shooting me on the spot; others insisted on my being taken to Pocahontis as a prisoner to Club Foot Ford's camp. As their leader was not with them on this occasion, this latter counsel was adopted and they prepared to take me away. It was arranged that three of them should take me back while the rest of the gang, some 30 in number, were to maraud the country between Camden and Bethel, there being a few Union men in that neighborhood. I was placed upon a horse, my hands tied firmly to the horn of the saddle, and my feet together under the horse. In this way, I was started down the road with two guards in front of me and one in the rear.

Shortly after leaving the town, we came to a halt and the two guards in front of me said to the one behind me, "We will take the canteens and go down to the spring in front of schoolhouse and get them full of water and then we will come up the trail and meet you on the other side of the schoolhouse and you can punch this Yankee along. So taking the canteens, they left us and the man behind punched this Yankee along. As we rode along, I gave up all hope. It did not seem possible that I could escape. With my hands tied and my feet tied firmly, without arms there seemed to be no possible hope of escape and I gave it up. I thought of the boys I had left at Bethel. Those grand, good fellows that had stood shoulder to shoulder with me in a number of sanguinary engagements and upon many a scout. I thought how they would count the days expecting my return, and as the days and weeks would go by and no tidings would

came from me they would sadly and sorrowfully report to the friends at home that I was dead. I thought of the old gray-haired father and mother whom I had left in Illinois, who had given me to the country with prayers and tears, whose only child I was, and upon whom they had hoped to be able to lean in their declining years. I thought how their gray heads would go down in sadness to the grave on account of the loss of their boy. And then I thought of the little brown-eyed, brown-haired girl out on the prairie, who would wither away like a flower on account of the soldier boy that she loved that would never come back from the war. But these sad reflections were suddenly interrupted as we came in front of the old schoolhouse by the crack of a rifle and looking over my shoulder saw the man behind me throw up his arms and fall from his horse to the ground.

Just then my ears caught the sound of that which to me was almost like celestial music: "I'm a horse. I'm a mule. I'm a colt unrode. I'm a bad boy, ain't I, Frank?" and out dashed McQueen from behind the schoolhouse.

CHAPTER XII

THE RESCUE

Rushing up to me, he cut the cords that bound me to the horse. I leaped off and we bounded out into the woods together. Soon we could hear those two men who had gone down to the spring coming up the hill, and they rode through the brush and timber in various directions searching for us, firing into the brush as they went, but we eluded them and after a while lost hearing of them altogether. Then turning to McQueen, I said, "McQueen, God bless you old boy. How did you get here?" "Well," he said, "I will tell you" - - and this is about the sum and substance of what he said. When I had left him, after having cut the cords that bound him, he had lain quiet for as near a half hour as he could guess. Then, watching his opportunity when his guard started down the long end of the beat, he slipped away in the darkness. Moving rapidly along he came upon the reserved post on the Pocahontis Road. It was now storming and he discovered that they were just turning out the 12 o'clock relief. He watched them until the relief was formed and in charge of the corporal and marched up the hill. Arriving at the vidette post, the guard was changed and the squad passed on. In a few moments, the man who had been left in charge of this post turned his musket down and leaned it against a tree to prevent the water from running into the muzzle. Then throwing the cape of his coat over his head, he stood backed up to the storm. McQueen had crawled by the post during this storm and then made his way rapidly down the Dover Road toward Pocahontis. He had arrived at that place about the same time on the previous morning as myself but he came into town on the Dover Road and I on the Middletown Road. It will be remembered that after releasing the boy I had gone down to the old mill and remained there until daylight and that I did not make more than 10 miles during the next day, and that I came by the Middletown Road which was a much greater distance than by the Dover Road, hence McQueen's ability to reach Pocahontis at about the same time with myself. On his arrival he had gone up the river to the house of an acquaintance with whom he had remained until about 2 o'clock in the afternoon of that day at about which time his friend had ferried him over the river in a skiff. He gave him an old rifle and three or four rounds of ammunition and started him on the road to Camden. McQueen had plodded on through the afternoon and into the

evening stopping frequently along the road to rest. When near the old schoolhouse, he heard firing down the road. He also soon heard the clatter of horses' feet and dodged behind the schoolhouse and there saw us go by, I in the lead and the gang of guerrillas after me. McQueen was not certain that the fugitive was I, but he felt almost certain that it must be. With a determination if possible to know the worst, he followed on after the gang. Arriving at Colonel Hearst's house, he had crawled up among the trees until he had reached a position within a short distance of the house. He had just settled himself to listen and see when they led me out from behind the house, a prisoner. He was not more than 50 yards distant from us when the guerrillas held their jubilee over me and decided what should be done with me. He listened attentively to it all and saw them put me on a horse and tie me there. He said that then he registered a vow to high heaven that they should never take me to Pocahontis while he lived. He would sell his life and sell it dearly or he would rescue me. With this determination, he slipped away and out on to the road and down the road in advance of myself and captors. As he went toward the old schoolhouse he made up his mind what he would do. He determined to go to the old schoolhouse, conceal himself behind it, and when my captors came in front of it he would shoot one from his place of concealment. Then he expected that the other two or one of them at least would undertake a dash at him and he determined to run around the schoolhouse, loading his rifle as he went and try to keep out of the way until he could shoot another. And, so picking them off in detail, he hoped to rescue me. He carried out his plan so far as secreting himself was concerned. Soon he heard us coming and peering out from behind the building what was his joy and satisfaction to discover that there was but one guard with me. He said he never was so happy in his life before and never expected to be again. He rested his gun against the corner of the house and took a long, steady, deliberate aim at that man's heart and pulled the trigger. You know the result. It was not long before the whole gang had been apprised of my escape and were scouring the country in every direction for my recapture. We kept out of the way, however, and about daylight crawled up into a tree and lay upon the broad branches.

During the day quite a number of our pursuers were within 50 yards of us, but failed to find us as they did not think of looking up into the trees. Thus passed the day and when night came, we descended to the

ground and determined to separate, I to make my way if possible to Bethel -- McQueen to do his best to notify Colonel Hearst.

I made several efforts to move in the direction of Bethel. Every time I found I was cut off. Squads of guerrillas were yet scouring the country in every direction. The whole country seemed to be aroused and looking for me, and I do not think that I succeeded in getting a mile nearer Bethel that entire night. When daylight came, I again went into concealment. This time I crawled into a hole made by the uprooting of a tree and pulled some brush in over me. I lay there all day. When night came I crawled out. I had been 50 hours without anything to eat. I was hungry and weak and nervous and discouraged. I felt sure it was useless to try to get into Bethel. The only course left me was to go in the direction of Corinth which was on my right and more than 25 miles away. I remembered an old stockade down on the river which was about nine miles away. I knew that this stockade was sometimes occupied by a part of our company of cavalry as an advanced post. I knew also that sometimes it was used by the rebels, who might be there at this time was a question in my mind, but I determined to get there if possible. With this determination I set out through the woods over logs and stumps and rocks through the brush. Very discouraged I made my way through that long, long weary night. Many times I fell down and many times my hands and face were cut and scratched and bleeding. I lost my hat. Toward morning I came to the opening overlooking the little valley in which was the stockade. Going down to the foot of the hill I lay down behind a log not more than a hundred yards from the stockade and awaited the coming of daylight. It seemed to me that daylight would never come. After a time I saw the welcome gray of morning creeping up the eastern horizon. As daylight approached I could look out over the stockade. I could distinguish the forms of men going to and fro in the stockade, but whether they were rebels or whether they were our boys it seemed difficult to determine as a sort of mist or fog hung over the camp, At last I saw a man come out from the quarters with a bundle in his hand. He moved directly up the hill where the Jack Staff was and I knew he was going to put up a flag. I should soon know whether they were friends or enemies. It seemed to me that he would never reach the top of the hill but after a time he did and then attaching the bundle to the halliards, he began hauling it up hand over hand, I watched it eagerly and anxiously as it moved up. He

gave the halliards a peculiar shake and the old Stars and Stripes floated out on the breeze.

It is possible you have seen your flag when it seemed beautiful, but I can assure you that you never saw it when it looked to you as it did to me that morning. It seemed to me that every stripe was silver and every star was gold. It was certainly a thing of beauty and a joy forever and it made such an impression upon me that nothing but death will ever efface it. I leaped up on the log where I had been hiding and yelled with all my might. I know not what I yelled.

Within a few minutes the boys were all around me and I said, "Boys, have you a horse?" They replied, "Yes, plenty of them." I said, "Get an escort ready for me as rapidly as possible. I must be taken to Bethel or Corinth at once. I have very important information for General Grant." They saddled horses and soon we were ready to go. They gave me something to eat, and I took it in my hands and ate it along the road. I want to tell you what it was simply two large hard-tacks with a piece of raw pork between them. I want to say that it was the most delicious sandwich I ever tasted. We rode rapidly in the direction of Bethel but had not gone far, not more than two or three miles, when we encountered the rebels and a running fight began. Two of our boys went down and were never heard of again, but we succeeded in cutting our way through and at last reached Bethel. I remember riding down by the old church, down to the railroad depot, of leaping from my horse and rushing up to General Haynie s quarters. I stopped not for the usual introduction to an officer's quarters, but opened the door and rushed in without ceremony. General Haynie was much startled when I dashed into the room and jumped up from his desk very quickly. I said, "General Haynie, I have important information. General Villepague will strike Boliver with 4000 men and a reserve of 3500 and he will strike at day after tomorrow and the boys must be saved!" A moment later, I heard the telegraph in the adjutant's room clicking the news to General Grant, and that was the last I knew for I had fainted dead away. The reaction was too much for me.

Three hours later I was sitting upon the porch in front of General Haynie's quarters with the general and some of his staff when a train of boxcars came thundering up the road, loaded inside and on top with as many soldiers as the cars would hold. Train after train followed in quick succession and as they whirled by Bethel, they rent the air with their

cheers and hurrahs. On up the Jackson and then down the other road to Boliver they went and Boliver was reinforced. When General Villepague struck Boliver, he got most gloriously whipped.

I received the personal thanks of General Grant for this expedition and made several others of a similar nature under his personal direction during his stay in the West. I have never taken any glory or honor upon myself on account of these things. I simply did a soldier's duty. I wish to say before I close that McQueen on leaving me went back to Camden and there was secreted by big Hannah and cared for until after our boys heard of the fact of his being there, when our whole company went out, driving the guerrillas below the river, and brought McQueen to camp.

Colonel Hearst afterwards organized the 6th Tennessee Cavalry which did excellent service during the war. Club Foot Ford met a deserving fate a few months later at the hands of Haynie's men and was buried not far from Camden. The place of his burial was for a long time marked by his crutches, one being erected at each end of the grave.

Thus ended one of the most trying efforts of my life. It took me several weeks to recover from its effects. While I was recuperating, I remained at Bethel with my company under the care of our mess cook, "old Mariah", and here is as good a place as I could probably find to tell the story of "old Mariah"

Shortly after our arrival at Bethel in the spring of '62, while in company with one of my comrades, I was making a little trip outside our lines when we came across a mulatto woman with her daughter, an octoroon aged about 12 years. They were on their way into our lines and the mother was in hopes of securing employment. We asked her what she could do and found that she had been a house servant and cook all her life. We immediately took charge of them and took them to camp. Our mess consisted of 16 men, and I at once called them together and suggested that we employ Mariah as our cook. The boys were all highly delighted with the idea for none of us liked to cook. It was agreed that Mariah should be paid one dollar per month by each of us, and she was to do our cooking and washing. Mariah entered at once upon her duties. So satisfactory was the arrangement to all parties concerned that Mariah remained with us until the close of the war.

Neither Mariah nor her daughter Zoa ever lacked for clothing, for the boys always had them in view when they were raiding the country. We

took a great interest in Zoa. She was a very bright child and we conceived the idea of giving her an education, which we began at once to do; and when the war was over there were few young ladies of her age that had a better education than Zoa. When the regiment was finally mustered out at Vicksburg, it was determined that Mariah and Zoa should be taken North with us. On arriving at Macomb, in Illinois, after our discharge, we were banqueted at the Randolph Hotel. While there, and the banquet was at its height, I told the story of Mariah and Zoa and introduced them to the company. A great deal of enthusiasm was aroused. When we undertook to raise a fund with which to secure furniture, etc., with which to set Mariah up in housekeeping, the businessmen of the place took the matter out of our hands and on the spot raised $750.00,‘with which a little cottage was bought and furnished so that Mariah and Zoa had a comfortable home. Zoa had grown to be a very comely young lady. She had been very carefully guarded by the men of Company “I”. Occasionally, some unprincipled fellow from some other command would make some insulting suggestion to Zoa. Whenever anything of that kind occurred and we knew it, the guilty party could be found shortly afterward at the hospital undergoing treatment for abrasions of the scalp and other bodily injuries received as a punishment for being too smart.

The company was soon scattered to their homes but none of us left Macomb without bidding Mariah and Zoa an affectionate good-bye. Mariah had indeed been like a mother to us, and we had come to regard Zoa as our especial charge. Never while Mariah lived did I pass through Macomb without calling on them. I would knock on the door of their little cottage, and it would be opened by Mariah who would exclaim, “Lor’ bress you life honey, is dat you? Come to see yo’ old Aunty? Come right in heah an’ I make yo’ a cup o’ de fines’ tea yo’ eber tas. Yo’ old Aunty never ferget how you all tek sech good care ob yo’ ol Aunty and de little chile.” Then, if Zoa was at home she would call, “Zoa, Zoa, cum right heah - - you unc Wess he cum to see us ‘ens.” Then Zoa would come in and receive a cordial clasp of the hand and would extend warm words of welcome in the purest English, so different from the dialect of her mother.

Zoa was married in the spring of ‘67 to a young mulatto barber of refinement and education by the name of LaPluce. Mariah died in ‘69 and was followed to her last resting place by all of the members of Company “I” that could possibly attend. Zoa’s husband became quite wealthy. He

was very charitable. The poor never knocked at his door in vain, and his wife was loved and respected by all who knew her. She died in 1904, mourned by the entire community in which she had lived for 39 years.

To return once more to the thread of my narrative. While recovering from the effects of my trip to Ripley and something like a month after my return from the trip, I was summoned to Corinth. The summons came in the form of a letter from Adjutant General Rawlins commanding me to report to him. I repaired to Corinth on the day appointed and presented myself at General Rawlins' desk. He told me to take a seat, that he would be back in a short time and would then inform me why I had been sent for. He then withdrew and did not return for more than an hour. When he came he said that he would accompany me to General Grant's headquarters as he wished to see me. On arriving at the general's room, I was surprised to find myself in the presence of General Rozencrans and a number of General Grant's staff officers. I lifted my hat in salutation to all present. General Grant entered from an adjoining room and, walking straight up to me, extended his hand which I clasped warmly. He said, "Private Simmons, I am glad to take you by the hand. I have sent for you in order to thank you for the splendid work you accomplished in connection with the Ripley and Boliver incident. I have had a medal prepared which, while it is not what I wish it was at all, will serve to remind you of the appreciation of your services which I entertain. General Rawlins will now present it to you." General Rawlins then came forward and, in a few earnest words, set before the officers present, the great importance of my services. He said that it was comparatively easy for them in the hour of battle to discharge their duty, as the excitement of battle and the presence of comrades gave courage and assurance, "but the man who goes alone into the enemy's country, penetrates the lines, gains access to the private councils of the officers in command and secures information that saves a detached post of 1500 men from capture, deserves the admiration of his comrades in the army and the lasting gratitude of the country for which such services were rendered, and a mead of praise far beyond our poor words to express." And in such strains he proceeded until I felt very much embarrassed as everyone in the room seemed to be looking at me. When he closed and came up to me and pinned a bronze badge on my breast, I was near breaking down. I rallied, however, and in the best way I could thanked General Grant for his kind expressions of

appreciation, and General Rawlins for his eulogy in which I felt that he much exaggerated my services which had been voluntarily entered upon without a full knowledge of the risks assumed; that I had entered the Army with the expectation of performing any duty that might devolve upon me. I assured General Grant of my sense of pride at having discharged my duty in such a way as to meet with the approval of my commanding officer and that in the future as in the past, he had but to command and I would obey.

I still retain the badge then presented and expect to hand it down to my posterity. The "Badge" is in the form of a St. Andrews cross, suspended from a bar. On the bar is inscribed the word "FIDELITY". On the face of the Badge is a shield with the letters L. W. S. at the top, U. S. at the left, S. S. at the right. On the reverse side is the inscription "Presented to Private L. W. Simmons, Co. I, 11th Ill. Cav. Vol. for meritorious service U. S. S. S., U. S. Grant, Maj. General Commanding, John H. Rawlins, Adj. General, Campaign '62. While this badge has no intrinsic value, yet John D. Rockefeller has not money enough to buy it. I prize it above all earthly possessions, and, as coming from the hand of the greatest military genius of the nineteenth century. And while I would not boast of my achievements, I am strongly of the opinion that I honestly earned it.

The inscription on the back reads:

Presented to
PRIVATE L. W. SIMMONS
Co. I, 11th Illinois Cav. Vol. For
Meritorious Service U.S.S.S.
U. S. Grant
Maj. General Commanding
John H. Rawlins
Adj. General
Campaign '62

CHAPTER XIII

IN THE ENEMY'S COUNTRY

Early in the fall of '62 I was sent down into the neighborhood of Jackson, Mississippi, on a mission that required my absence for several weeks. My duties were such as getting in close contact with the military authorities at Jackson, and, in order to do so, I conceived the idea of becoming a stock-buyer for the Confederate government. I again assumed the name of Weston, had a number of letters and recommendations prepared, purporting to be given by prominent citizens of Fryers Point recommending me as a reliable party and a good judge of stock. As the Weston family was a large one and well known in the neighborhood of Fryers Point, and the signers of my letters had proved their loyalty to the cause of the Confederacy by taking positions in the 2nd Mississippi Infantry and were now serving time in some northern prison for, as I have said before, the 2nd Mississippi Infantry was captured at Donaldson, I had little fear of being detected. With these letters in my pocket and dressed in a suit of citizen's clothes, riding a good horse, I made my way into Jackson and took up my residence at the Jefferson Hotel, then the leading hotel in Jackson. Within the next few days I had formed the acquaintance of Colonel Quackenbush, the Quartermaster of the Division of Price's army then occupying that locality. As I was liberal in the use of confederate money, of which I had an abundant supply, I soon became a favorite with the officers who frequented the hotel. And while I never drank myself, I had no hesitation in frequently calling these officers up to the bar for a social drink, always taking a cigar myself. It was in this way that I became acquainted with Colonel Quackenbush. One day I approached him on the proposition of stock buying and was gratified to learn that he was anxious to get someone who was acquainted with stock business to take up that line of service. I at once presented my letters and he read them with great satisfaction and said that he would at once communicate with his superiors in Richmond and he had no doubt that a satisfactory arrangement could be made. In a few days the colonel met me at the hotel and told me that my offer was accepted and that I could begin operations at once. The next day I was supplied with a pass that would take me through the lines at any hour of the day or night and a blank order book which I was to use in my business.

During the ten days that I had been in Jackson, I had, in conversation with officers I met at the hotel, picked up some information that I considered important, and that was that a movement was being planned to attack our outpost at Corinth. General Grant had removed his headquarters from Corinth and was now at Memphis. I felt that it was necessary for him to be made acquainted with the facts, so telling Colonel Quackenbush that I knew of some fine stock toward the Tennessee line that I would try and get and that I might not be back for several days, I took my departure for the North. I lost no time in making my way to Holly Springs where I knew a young fellow that I could trust to take the information to General Grant at Memphis. When I arrived at Holly Springs I went at once to the hotel and at the proper time retired to bed. At about 3 o'clock in the morning I arose and slipped quietly out the back way and made my way to the home of my friend. The family were all intensely loyal and I knew that I was perfectly safe in their house, so had no hesitation in knocking at their door. Mr. Meredith, the father of my friend, came to the door and I asked him if Sam was at home. He replied that he was. I asked him to call his son and tell him that a member of Co. I, 11th Ill. Cavalry wanted to see him. Mr. Meredith asked me to come in and was about to make a light when I requested him not to do so as I did not care to have anyone know of my presence in his house. He called Sam, who at once arose and came to the room where I was. He scratched a match and looked me in the face. A glimpse was enough to convince him who I was, when he immediately extinguished the match and we shook hands. I then told him what I wanted him to do. He was delighted to be able to be of service and said he would go at once. I told him to tell General Grant that I would keep him posted regarding movements in that district so far as I could. We again shook hands and I quietly returned to my bed in the hotel. I met Sam Meredith on the street the next day and no one who saw us would have supposed that we had even seen each other before.

I made some inquiries in the neighborhood of Holly Springs regarding stock and then pushed on down into the country south of Holly Springs to the valley of Yellowbushy River where I felt sure I could find some stock, for I knew that if I was to be of any service to General Grant I must make good in my stock-buying operations. Suffice it to say that I succeeded in buying some very fine steers and took them into Jackson.

Colonel Quackenbush was highly delighted and I became more popular than ever with the officers of the Confederate Army.

I continued these operations for several weeks, sending whatever information I was enabled to pick up to General Grant by the hand of Sam Meredith. A few days later I was up in Tarpa County, Mississippi on one of my regular stock buying expeditions and was riding up the road leading from Halls Mill to Ripley, when on reaching the top of the hill, I suddenly came in view of quite a body of confederates. I knew that offensive operations were contemplated by the confederate generals Price and Van Dorn against our lines at Corinth and knew that their forces were being concentrated for that purpose about one hundred miles east of Jackson, and had so notified General Grant, but as other secret service men were operating in that territory, I had not become acquainted with the fact that an attack had been made on Corinth, nor did I learn the particulars of the attack, and the defeat of the confederate forces there and the subsequent disaster at Hatchie Bridge until I fell in with these troops who were in full retreat from the disastrous encounter with Hurlburt's Division of our Army at 'Hatchie Bridge. They seemed to still fear that the Federal Cavalry would follow them up and annihilate them before they could reach Jackson, toward which they were making their way. I fell in with these troops and making myself known to General Winters, who was in command of the retreating force, as connected with the Quartermaster's Department at Jackson, I had no trouble. We traveled on as far as Halls Mill, the point I had started from in the morning and went into camp. After supper while talking with some of General Winter's staff, I was told of a number of prisoners that they had captured just before the battle of 'Hatchie Bridge, and that they were under guard down below the Mill; I expressed a curiosity to see them and so the officer with whom I was talking said we would walk down that way. We soon arrived at the prisoner camp and found them under a strong guard. By permission of the sergeant in charge we were allowed to pass in among them. I noticed one tall, slim fellow lying on his face, seemingly asleep. As we approached him, however, he arose to his feet and turned full upon us and the next instant he had thrown himself upon me with an expression of delight and was shaking my hand with great vigor.

It was Pete McFarland, a member of my company and a very dear friend. I scowled at him and shook my head and then said, "I don't know

you, sir, you are mistaken in your man." He instantly saw the point and began to apologize. While I was usually very cool and collected, I have to confess that I had been confused and embarrassed by this unexpected event and I doubtless showed it, for the officer who accompanied me immediately ordered my arrest and took me to headquarters where General Winters was informed of the occurrence. I was thoroughly searched but nothing of a suspicious character was found on my person. The next morning McFarland was brought to headquarters and put through a sweating process. He got along very well until he was asked where he had thought he had met me, when he got mixed up in his places and dates and became hopelessly confused. Of course, I insisted that it was a case of mistaken identity, but the officer who had seen us come together swore that I shook McFarland's hand with much more cordiality than one would be likely to shake the hand of a stranger and that he saw me shake my head at McFarland as if to warn him.

I was put under a strong guard and the next day was sent, together with the rest of the prisoners to Florence, Alabama where the confederates had a prison established. It took us three days to make the trip. I had not been used to walking and the trip was a hard one on me; my feet were blistered and I was very sore and tired when we reached Florence. I was put under ball and chain and assigned to a room that had been a cotton bin, the prison having been an old cotton warehouse. The bin had been lined with boiler iron and supplied with a grated door. There was a bunk about two feet wide and filled with straw and two or three pieces of coarse burlap constituting the bedding. I had been confined in the cell about a week and had seen no one but my guards when one day there suddenly appeared at the door of my cell a rather good looking middle-aged woman. She spoke kindly to me and said she was the wife of Lieutenant-Colonel Bond who was then in command of the prison; that she was in the habit of visiting the prisoners and hoped I would not be offended at her intrusion. Her coming was a great pleasure to me and I told her that I hoped her visit would be repeated frequently. We talked for perhaps 15 minutes and while doing so I had walked close up to the grated door. On taking her leave I noticed that she looked at me very closely. After she had gone, I sat dawn on the edge of my bunk to think over the pleasure that the visit of this stranger had given me and somehow the thought came to me that I had seen her before, but I dismissed the idea as unreasonable and excused

myself for entertaining it upon the grounds that it had been induced by the pleasure that her visit had given me.

She came again the next day and I was delighted. We talked for a time upon general topics and while doing so I tried to get in a position where I could see her in the best light. I finally asked the guard if he would kindly open the door to give me some fresh air, but in truth I wanted more light. When the door was opened the light fell full her face. She saw me looking intently at her - - she turned to me and said in a low voice, “Are you trying to recognize me?” “I am,” said I, “but I am utterly unable to do so and yet I feel confident that I have met you before.” Waiting until the guard had passed down the corridor, she said, “I thought I recognized you yesterday and now I feel sure that I am not mistaken. Are you not Weston Simmons?” For a moment I was bewildered -- I knew not what to say. Seeing my dilemma, she hastened to say, “You need not have any fear confiding in me. On the honor of a loyal woman and before God, I promise not to betray your confidence. There are many things that I can do and will do for you if you will only trust me.” I replied, “There is one condition upon which I will answer your question and that is that you tell me who you are and where I have seen you.” She hesitated moment and then said, “Do you remember Mary Hosington?” The mists were cleared away, the wonder to me now was that I had not recognized her at first. Just then her husband, Colonel Bond, entered and called her away and I did not see her again for a number of days. I must now go back a few years in my story in order to make this very pleasant episode in my prison life to the reader clear. When I came from Massachusetts to Illinois in 1854, there was a young lady who was a frequent visitor to my uncle’s house by the name of Mary Ellen Hosington. The family having recently come from the East were intensely loyal and the only bond of unity between them and my uncle’s family was the fact that my cousin, Zoa, was a schoolmate and very dear friend of Mary’s; they were inseparable companions so that while I had been at my uncle’s I had seen Mary almost every day. In the fall of 1854 a young man by the name of Bond had been sent to that neighborhood from Louisville to buy hogs for that market. He took up his residence in the community and plied his vocation. He soon made the acquaintance of the young people and paid marked attention to Miss Hosington. The following winter when he again came to the neighborhood, young Bond and Mary

were married. He took his bride to Louisville and there they lived happily together until the war broke out. Young Bond, while opposed to human slavery, was nevertheless a loyal son of the South and when the climax came, raised a Company for the 4th Kentucky Infantry and had risen to the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel and was now in command of the prison at Florence.

When Mrs. Bond and I had satisfied ourselves of each other's identity, it was not long before we were planning for my escape. Mrs. Bond was as loyal now as she had been in the years gone by. She would do anything for the government she loved that would not endanger her husband whom she loved devotedly. She told me that she had assisted a number of prisoners in making their escapes. Our plans were soon laid and we began putting them into execution. One day Mrs. Bond brought me a copy of the New Testament, bound in cloth and told me to study it carefully as I would find something within it that would do me good. She made this remark in the presence of her husband who was with her at the time. As she spoke, however, she gave me a knowing look and a nod of the head that I thought I understood. After their departure I made a very careful examination of the book and found in the back, concealed within the folds of the binding, a beautiful steel saw about six inches in length. I returned it to its place of concealment and turned to the Word itself for comfort. The first words that met my eye were these -- "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation." I determined not to neglect it and from that time until I used it for my final deliverance, I never took it from its place of concealment. A few days after this, Mrs. Bond visited me again and was accompanied by a young lieutenant. Her conversation was largely upon religious topics. She asked me if I had found anything in the New Testament which she had given me that had been of interest. I replied that I had found what I considered "the pearl of great price". Just then the waiter came to my cell with my dinner which consisted of corn bread and sweet potatoes. Mrs. Bond asked me if they fed me well -- I told her I was much in the same position of the young man who went see his girl and arrived just after the family had dined; the girl insisted upon getting him something to eat and when it was ready she called him and remarked as he seated himself that she was afraid the meal was not very good. "Ah," said he, "it's good enough what there is of it," and then seeing that he had made a blunder undertook to square himself and said,

"there is plenty of it such as it is!" Mrs. Bond and the lieutenant laughed heartily at my joke. A few days after this interview I was much pleased to receive at the hands of the same officer that was with Mrs. Bond on her last visit to me, two beautiful leaves of bread, sent by my benefactress with her compliments. As I had no knife with which to cut it, I was compelled to break it-- as I broke off a piece from the end of one of the loaves I discovered it contained something which was not bread. I immediately laid it aside to await a time when there were no prying eyes to see my secret. When at last I found an opportunity to investigate my loaf, I found that it contained a half bladder of Scotch snuff. I hid this among the straw in my bunk and awaited instructions for I had not the slightest idea what I could do with it. I had not long to wait for that same afternoon I was favored with a visit from Mrs. Bond and during the conversation she imparted to me the information I wanted regarding the use of the snuff. She told me that in the event of my being able to make my escape, I would no doubt be followed by bloodhounds, a pack of which brutes were kept for that purpose, and that if I found myself being trailed, I was to scatter the snuff in my tracks. The trailing dogs when they came to the snuff would immediately be set to sneezing and would soon give up in disgust. She also said that her plans were working well and in a few days I would be given an outing. She had planned to have me taken to the landing and had arranged with parties there to assist me, and then she told me that she might not see me again and would give me my final instructions. Some day soon I would be taken to the landing some six miles distant in an ambulance. I would wear my ball and chain and be in charge of two soldiers. If everything was all right when we arrived at the landing, I would see the young lieutenant who had accompanied Mrs. Bond on several of her visits to me, and if I saw him, he would be riding a gray horse and would wear a Panama hat. He would meet us on our arrival and relieve the guard, take me to a room near the riverbank and lock me in. I would then have an opportunity to use my saw, get off my shackles and be free to act. I was to lift the matting that covered the floor and would find a trap door which I was to open and let myself down into the cellar, out of which I was to go by a side window and would find myself on the bank of the river. I was to follow the river down about five hundred yards and would find a small boat moored there. I would find two oars hidden in the brush nearby and the rest would be easy for a time

at least. I thanked my benefactress heartily and told her that if she ever needed a friend and could communicate with me, I would do everything within my power to assist her. She said she was doing nothing but her duty to her country and needed no thanks. We parted with a warm clasp of the hands and as I looked into her face my eyes filled with tears as I thought of the possibilities to her, the risks she had taken and what might be the results if she were ever detected. Brave, noble Mrs. Bond, one of a type of American women, of whom there were thousands in those days of the Nation's peril, but I learned later in the war that she and her husband were suspected of assisting prisoners to escape and that on account of it Colonel Bond was removed from Florence, tried and dismissed from the service. Realizing that she had been the cause of her husband's disgrace, Mrs. Bond became despondent, went into a decline and died at their home in Louisville toward the close of the war. Two days after my last interview with Mrs. Bond, I was called from my cell in the Florence prison and taken in an ambulance for a trip to the landing. I wore my leg ornaments -- as the guard called my ball and chain -- and was under the care of two guards.

We left Florence about 9 o'clock one morning, the morning after my 21st day in prison. I enjoyed the fresh air and sunshine, both of which were unknown quantities in prison. We were rattling along on a fairly good road and had proceeded perhaps two miles when we met the young lieutenant that I expected to meet at the landing. He was not riding a gray horse nor was he wearing a Panama hat and I knew from that that our plans had miscarried, and that it meant a trip to the landing and then back to the prison for me. My courage fell many degrees; my hopes died out and in a fit of despondency I threw myself down in the bottom of the ambulance and lay there utterly discouraged. My guard noticed my actions and inquired if I was sick. I told them that I was and would be glad if they would stop. They were willing to do so but the teamster wanted to go on. It was finally decided that they would take me out and stay in the vicinity until the teamster's return when he would pick us up and take us back to Florence. Accordingly, I picked up my ball and was assisted from the ambulance and the vehicle went on its way. We looked about us and seeing some large trees about 200 yards away from the road that would afford us shade, we walked up to them and prepared to pass the time as best we could until the return of the ambulance. One of the guards

produced an old and well-worn pack of cards and we started in for a three-cornered game of old sledge. We had been playing for perhaps half an hour when we heard the rattle of a wagon to the right of us on a road that ran at right angles to the one over which we had come. The guards at once recognized it as a huckster's wagon that frequented that locality. One of the guards said that he believed he would go down to the road and see if the peddler had anything that we wanted, so, leaving me in charge of his companion, he left us. We saw him stop the peddler and after some parley the peddler took from under the seat a gallon jug. Passing it to the guard, he received his pay for it and drove away. Our friend soon returned and announced that he had a gallon of old peach brandy. They each took a liberal drink from the jug and then passed it to me. I turned up the jug and pretended to take a hearty drink but, in fact, I did not swallow a teaspoon full of the liquor.

We resumed our game and the jug was passed frequently, so that my guards soon began to feel the effects of it. Tiring of the game, one of the men said that he was going to have a bath, so leaving me with his comrade, he went down to the creek to our right, a distance of about 200 yards, and began to disrobe for his bath; his comrade had seated himself at the base of a large tree with his gun across his lap. I suggested that it was a long time between drinks, so we took another. My guard's tongue was getting very thick. I asked him if he had a girl at home and he said he had and that she was a peach. I told him I had one, too, and suggested that we drink to the health of our sweethearts. He was ready although he was so drunk that he could hardly get the jug to his mouth. I drank first and said before doing so, "My girl is a big one - - she weighs 175 pounds -- so we will have to take a big drink to her," and I held the jug a long time to my mouth and pretended to take a long drink. I then passed it to him and said, "Remember, she is a big one!", and he took a long, deep draught. He nearly let the jug fall as he took it from his lips, but I rescued it. He looked at me with his bleared eyes for a moment and then stammered out, "I shay, Yank, your a shore good un - - yer shay you gal's big un, mine'sh bigger. Sal weights two hundred poun shore - - we'll take a bigger drink ter her."- - and we did. In a few minutes my guard was dead to the world. I took my Testament from my pocket, whipped out the saw and fell to with all my might on my shackles. It was but the work of a moment to cut through the small rivet that held them together, but when the head of the

rivet was sawed off still I could not get the band apart. I reached forward and detached the bayonet from my guard's gun and inserted the point between the folds of the band and pried it apart; my chain fell off and I was free. The guard who had gone to the creek to bathe had left his gun and, looking down to the creek, I saw the guard just getting ready to put on his clothes; I raised his gun to my shoulder and shouted to him. He looked up and saw me. I told him not to put on his clothes but to go back into the water or I would shoot. He obeyed at once. Reaching for the gun of the man who was dead drunk at my feet, I took his knife out of his pocket and took the screw out of the hammer of the gun and put the hammer in my pocket, I kept a close watch on my man in the creek - - I knew there was a large Navy revolver with his clothes and I had no intention of letting him get possession of it. I stepped slowly back to a tree nearby and got behind it, being sure to keep my man covered with the gun. There was a piece of fence rail standing by this tree. I adjusted it so that it would point directly at the man in the creek, having removed the hammer of this gun also, and, keeping the tree between us, I walked backward down the hill toward another little stream, on reaching which I stepped into it and waded up the stream.

It was not far from noon when I left the two guards -- how long they remained in the position I left them in I do not know. I walked rapidly, shaping my course down the Tennessee River in the direction of Savannah, some 30 miles away. I steered clear of all plantations and kept to the woods and at sunset had made probably 10 miles. I hurried on through the darkness of the night not daring to stop. It must have been near 10 o'clock at night. I had seated myself on a log to rest and was near falling to sleep when I was startled by the deep baying of hounds. I was on my feet in an instant, hastily unbuttoning my clothes. I got out my Scotch snuff. Running in under a large spreading oak, I scattered some of the snuff in my tracks and then made for another tree and did the same, and so on for a half dozen times. My reason for scattering the snuff while under a tree was because in the open the dew had fallen on the grass and the snuff would be dampened and therefore not so effective. The hounds were approaching rapidly and I started on a run at such a pace as I thought I could keep up for a while. The hounds were still coming and I had begun to think that my snuff had done no good when all at once their baying ceased and I heard no more of them. The snuff had done its work,

thanks to my dear friend, Mrs. Bond. About midnight I came to a plantation and being very hungry and weak I determined to make an effort to get something to eat. Quietly slipping around among the plantation buildings, I soon found the Negro quarters. Here, if anywhere, my wants would be supplied. I saw smoke ascending from the chimney of one of the cabins. Approaching it softly, I sat down on the step and listened. I soon heard someone moving about inside the cabin. There was flickering light in the single room. After a moment's waiting, I tapped lightly on the door. All was silent for a moment and then I could hear a whispered conversation going on. Soon the door was gently opened a few inches and a low voice said, "Who's dar?" I immediately replied, "A Yankee soldier." Then came the inquiry, "What you want?" Again I replied, "I am hungry and want something to eat." "You jes wait bout two minutes, Marsa Yank," came the voice. In about five minutes the door again opened and a small bundle was thrust out and the same voice said, "Is you scaped from de prison?" I replied in the affirmative. "Whar you gwine?" said the voice. "To Savannah if I can get there," said I. "Wor de dogs arter yous last night?" asked the voice, "Yes," said I. "Wal, youse listen what Ant Debby gwine to tell yous, chile. Yous keep down clos by de ribber coz dar is sogers all long on de road waiitin' fer yous an Ant Debby powerful feared dey cotch yous. Gawd bless you chile, now get out o'here quick as you kin caze de aberseer be roun here fo long wakin up de niggers. Goodbye." "Goodbye Aunt Debby," said I, "and may the Lord bless and keep you."

Taking my bundle I made my way to the road and after following it for about half a mile, I struck off to the left through the timber in the direction of the river. Just as the gray of morning began to appear in the east, I came out on to an open field which I soon saw was a piece of meadowland. There were ricks of hay in sight and I made for them. I had eaten my lunch as I walked and now, feeling very tired and sleepy, concluded to take a rest. Moving around the hay ricks, I discovered a rough ladder leaning against one of them. Climbing up this ladder, I went to about the middle of the rick and dug a hole deep down into the hay, then getting into the hole, I pulled the hay over me as best I could and, thrusting my feet out into the hay, I found myself in a very comfortable sitting posture and soon fell asleep. How long I had been sleeping, I do not know, but I was awakened by hearing voices. I was instantly on the

alert. I heard someone say, “There’s nobody round here, Cap, shore.” “Well,” said a commanding voice, “climb up that ladder and take a look,” After a moment I heard the first voice say again, “No, Cap, thar shore ain”t no one here.” “Punch around there with your bayonet -- he might be hid in the hay,” said the one called “Cap”. And then I heard the noise of the gun as it was thrust down deep into the hay with its murderous bayonet attached. I could hear it coming nearer and nearer -- my blood ran cold! I should surely be thrust through! What was I to do! Every nerve in my body seemed to quiver as I heard the chug-chug-chug of the bayonet as it was thrust into the hay, so near that a few more steps would surely find me. I was just on the point of rising up and surrendering to escape death or mutilation when I heard a voice that seemed just above me say, “Aw Cap, that’s no use punching roun here -- there ain’t nobody up here,” Then the Cap replied, “Wal, all right, get down off er thar an we’ll go on down the road.” I was delivered again. I fervently thanked God as I heard the voices of my pursuers die away in the distance. Making myself as comfortable as I could for the rest of the day, I did not leave my hiding place until the sun had set and darkness again sheltered me from observation. I then made my way cautiously to the river and followed its bank as near as I could. Weary and hungry I plodded on through the night. I was certain that the west bank of the river was being patrolled by our troops - - in fact the last time I had been with my Company, details were being made from it for this duty so that I felt sure that when morning should dawn, I would be able to see some of our men and attract their attention. But the swampy condition of the ground near the river made it necessary for me to turn off from the river so that when morning appeared it found me on the high land above Savannah which I could see below me on the river bank about a mile away.

I came to the main road leading into the town which I followed for some distance but not caring to enter the town, I made for the bank of the river above the town. As I turned from the road into the field at my left, I looked back up the road and there not more than half a mile away was a squad of Confederate cavalry about 20 in number just emerging from the belt of timber that crowned the crest of the hill. They evidently saw me at about: the same time that I saw them for they started down the road at a rapid pace. I struck out for the river with all speed. They dashed down the road to a point where it swung to the right to enter town. Here they

stopped and let down the fence in order to get into the field where I was. This gave me a little time and I reached the bank of the river not more than 200 yards in advance of them. Here at the river bank some large cottonwood trees had been cut so that their tops lay out in the river while the butts still hung to the stumps. This had been done to prevent the bank from washing away in time of high water. I did not hesitate a moment but dived headlong into the stream coming up near one of these fallen trees; I slipped under it, pulled myself down to the point where the body of the tree met the water and there with nothing but my nose and mouth out of water, I awaited developments. My pursuers were soon on the spot. They had seen me go over the bank and knew that I could not be far away, but they could not see me nor did they have long to search. It seemed but a few moments; some of them had dismounted and were out on the logs making a careful investigation when I heard the report of a heavy gun, then the shriek of a shell, and then the explosion very near me. Then I heard the clatter of their horses' hoofs as they scurried away to escape another shell. I thrust my head out of the water and, seeing the coast was clear, drew myself up onto the friendly log that had been my protection. I looked in every direction for the gun from which the shell had come. I could see nothing. Finally, as I looked far down the river, I saw a puff of smoke followed by the report and then the shriek of another shell and then the explosion this time far up back of the town, in the direction in which my pursuers had fled. Standing on my feet and shading my eyes with my hand, I could see the dim outlines of a gunboat lying close in under the river bank about two miles away. Looking across the river, I saw four cavalrymen galloping down the road that led along the river bank. I waved my hand at them to attract their attention. They saw me and, riding up opposite where I was, they shouted to me, asking who I was. I made them understand that I was an escaped prisoner and needed help. Two of them jumped into a skiff that was moored nearby and pulled over to me. When they got within about a hundred yards of me, I recognized them as two men of my own company, Henry Howell and Frank York, but they did not recognize me until they were very close. I had lost 20 pounds of flesh since they had seen me and had not had a shave for a month! When they did recognize me, they were delighted beyond expression for I had been reported captured and hung as a spy. They took me into the boat and as we pulled off we saw the gunboat coming up the river. They signaled us

to come alongside and we went aboard. I was greeted warmly by the captain and his officers and when I had had a bath and some dry clothes, we sat down to a fine breakfast. While we ate, I told my adventures to the captain and his officers who congratulated me heartily on my miraculous escape. The captain said he was on the bridge of his ship making an observation with his glass, and had seen me and the rebels when they first took after me on emerging from the timber. He had watched me as I ran to the river closely followed by my pursuers; had waited until he thought he could do so without danger to me and had then dropped a shell among them. After breakfast we went ashore and Howell who had a strong horse, took me on behind him and we made our way to Bethel. On reaching camp the boys held a jubilee in commemoration of my return. My health had been very much impaired by my constant and trying service and I found myself on the point of a nervous breakdown. Dr. Gaslin, the post surgeon at Bethel, advised me to retire from the Secret Service for a time at least.

About this time, Colonel Mann, who was in charge of the Northern District of Illinois under Colonel Baker of the U.S. Detective Bureau, came to Bethel on official business. I met him at the headquarters of General I. N. Halnie, who was then in command of the post at Bethel. General Hainie had evidently told Colonel Mann of me for he seemed familiar with my career and, after making some inquiries as to my methods, said he would like to have me on his district as it was difficult to get men that were qualified for the work there. I told him that what I needed was a complete rest for a time at least. He urged me to take a discharge from the army and said if I would do so he would put me in a position where my duties would be light and would not necessitate the nervous strain to which I was subjected in my present position, and that in the position he offered me, I could be of as much service .to the country as in my present position. After consulting with General Hainie, Dr. Gaslin, and my company officers, I finally decided to take that course. Accordingly, I made application for a discharge, which was granted and I arrived at home in time to enjoy a Thanksgiving dinner with my parents in Illinois. I was to have a month or two of complete rest before being assigned to any duty whatever.

CHAPTER XIV

AMONG THE KNIGHTS OF THE GOLDEN CIRCLE

In February of ‘63 I reported to Captain Clark at Monmouth, Illinois who at once communicated with General Mann at Chicago, and in due time I was assigned to duty right in the neighborhood of my home. Not a soul in all that locality, not even my own father, knew that I had any connection with the U.S. Secret Service, I purchased 40 acres of land a few miles west of my father’s home and proceeded to harvest the corn crop that was on it. This was my work by day, but almost every night found me disguised in some way or other on horseback or on foot at public meetings or in private families, seeking information regarding the operations of the Knights of the Golden Circle, a clan of which order was organized in the neighborhood. This Order was organized for the purpose of giving aid and comfort to the Confederate government by discouraging enlistments in the Union army and in encouraging enlistments in the Confederate army; in securing information and forwarding the same to the enemy. They also met and drilled for offensive operations and hoped for the time to come when they could with safety attack their neighbors of Union sentiments.

These clans were made up largely of men who were too cowardly to enter the Confederate army and fight like the brave men of the South who, although misled and misinformed and mistaken, still had the courage of their convictions and showed the elements of courage and fortitude characteristic of the American soldier. But these “Copperheads” were the most despicable crowd that ever infected the country or .polluted the soil of a free country with their presence. It was with this class of cattle that I had to deal and it required all the ingenuity of which I was possessed, all the courage that I could muster to operate against them with any degree of success. I often found myself in peril and often felt that certainly I should be found out, but the same Providence that had guided me and protected me in my operations in the enemy’s country was still my guide and protector and for nearly two years I lived among these skunks, frustrating their plans, sending some of the more daring of them to prison and others below the lines.

There were three men in our community against whom the Knights of the Golden Circle were extremely bitter. At one of their secret meetings

held in a barn belonging to one of their members, they planned the hanging of these three men and had it not been for the fact that I was hidden under the barn and heard enough of their deliberations to satisfy me of their intentions, they would have carried their diabolical plan into execution. The time set for the hanging came. The executioners assembled. They prepared the ropes and started for the home of one of their intended victims when, on the way, they encountered a half dozen U.S. Cavalrymen. The meeting was unexpected upon the part of both parties. The Knights were halted by the Cavalrymen, but they turned and fled and, being aided by the darkness of the night and their familiarity with the country, they made their escape. I had planned their capture carefully. I had asked Captain Clark to send from Monmouth six U.S. Cavalrymen by the way of Greenbush and have them arrive at a certain place at 7 o'clock in the evening where I could meet them; from that point I expected to take them to the homes of the intended victims, stationing two at each place as I did not know which one of them was to be attacked first. Captain Clark read my message and acted promptly, but on account of my poor penmanship, understood that I wanted the men at 9 o'clock. They had made unusually good time and were within a mile of the place appointed for them to meet me at about 8 o'clock when they encountered the Knights. My plan had miscarried. The Knights knew that someone was on their trail and that their schemes were known. They evidently suspected one of their own number as having given information that exposed their dastardly scheme. Within two weeks of the time of their intended murder of the Union men was exposed, one of their number was found dead with a bullet in his heart. He was evidently suspected of having betrayed the secrets of the Klan as they were sworn to take the life of any member who should divulge any of their plans. The leader of this Klan was a prominent farmer and aside from his pronounced disloyalty and his hatred of loyal men, was a respectable citizen and it seemed singular that such a man should become the leader of a gang of cutthroats who were organized for the express purpose of giving aid and comfort to the enemy of their country; and to resort to any means, however nefarious or unscrupulous, in the accomplishment of their purposes. When these members of the Klan met the cavalrymen on that eventful night and made such an inglorious retreat, they scattered in all directions, only two of their number remained in the community -- the rest fled to parts unknown. The

leader made all haste to his home, gathered his family, consisting of a wife and three small children, ate a hasty meal, bundled a few articles of wearing apparel into a wagon, drove rapidly to the nearest rail road station, and took the first train for Chicago, thence for Canada from which sure retreat he did not return until after the war was over. Their leader gone, their plans exposed, the Klan never met again so far as I know. They, however, killed the man they suspected of betraying them, little dreaming that the little man on the 40-acre farm on the west prairie was the sole cause of their discomfiture. While I had succeeded in breaking up one of the best organized and dangerous companies of the Knights ever gotten together in the State of Illinois, yet I felt very much disappointed that I had not succeeded in capturing that part of the gang who were on the point of committing one of the most daring and dastardly deeds ever attempted by Copperheads in that part of the country. I have given the names of none in connection with this event for the reason that I would not injure the relatives of these misguided men for they are innocent and should not be held in any way responsible for the acts of their reprobate fathers and brothers.

After this event I was sent into the southern part of McDonough county to look after a company of Knights that were threatening the locality. I went to McComb and from parties there learned of a German farmer living in the southern part of the county who was intensely loyal and could be implicitly trusted. I went to his place and arranged with him to make my home with him and to cover my real purpose went to work for him at the nominal price of $13.00 per month. After operating there for two months, I succeeded in locating the place of meeting of the Knights. They had a different plan of organization from the one I had dealt with in Warren County, and did all of their business and planning through an executive committee. I learned that this committee met at stated intervals at the house of the leader of the gang. He occupied a story and a half house, the upper part of which was unfinished, but which had a spare bed in it that was only occupied when there were visitors. The leader of this gang was stepfather to the wife of the son of the man with whom I was living. She was an in- tensely loyal little woman and ready at all times to do any thing she could to help the cause of the Union. She hated her stepfather most cordially. I took advantage of these conditions and enlisted her sympathies in my enterprise.

Failing to secure any definite information regarding their plans, which I was very anxious to learn, as I felt confident from what I had seen and heard that they were about to attempt same overt act, I determined upon a scheme that would necessitate using my little friend. I called her to my room one day and plainly set before her my plan. She at once consented to do her part as I should direct. She was to have a pretended quarrel with her mother-in-law with whom she was staying in the absence of her husband who was a lieutenant in the army, and leave the place and go back to her mother. She would, of course, occupy the bed upstairs in the house of her mother. The executive committee of the Knights of which her stepfather was the leader never met until midnight when all the members of the household were in bed and presumably asleep. She was to look out for a meeting of the committee, which I felt sure would take place soon, and when they did meet she was to slip out of bed, crawl to a stovepipe hole through the floor over the room in which the committee met, remove the cover of the hole and listen to what was said. Day after day passed and I saw nothing of my little friend. I had begun to think that my plan had been suspected and that the committee had changed its place of meeting when one day I was called from the barn where I was doing some work and found my little friend anxious to see me. She had a wonderful tale to unfold. During the period of the Civil War many prisoners were sent forth by the way of St. Louis to Quincy, thence to Camp Douglas over C. B. & O. RR. Trainloads of prisoners were sent up usually every Saturday. Their scheme was this: place an obstruction and then signal the train on its approach, cause it to stop to remove the obstruction. Having removed the same, the train would proceed on its way, but before it could get under good headway, would arrive at the siding, the switch to which was to be open, when the train by its own impetus would run on the siding. The train crew and guard were to be captured and the prisoners released. Such was the scheme that I was called upon to meet.

Prompt action was necessary. My information came on Tuesday - - the following Saturday the trainload of prisoners would leave Quincy on its usual time, 10:30 p.m., and, unless something was done, the carefully prepared plan of the Knights would be successfully carried out. But something was done! I took the train that night at Macomb and at 2 o’clock the next morning, knocked at the door of Captain Clark in

Monmouth. I told him what was on foot and, after together arranging a plan to thwart the scheme of the Knights, Captain Clark and I took the morning train for Chicago. When we arrived at Galesburg, I returned to my home and Captain Clark went on to Chicago to lay our plans before Colonel Jones, then in command of the Secret Service of the State, Colonel Jones approved of our plan and the result was that two battalions of infantry were sent down the Chicago, Wabash & Western Railroad to its junction with the C. B. & O. There they were switched onto the latter road and sent to a point about two miles below Coalchester where they disembarked and sent in two columns up the road toward the siding. Captain Clark guided the column on the left of the road and I the one on the right. We arrived at the siding at about 8 o'clock and immediately formed a strong cordon around the siding at the distance of about 200 yards, leaving an opening at the Enterprise road over which the Knights would approach, and an opening down the track to allow their men to go down and fix the obstruction. Every thing was in readiness by 10 o'clock. The men were all lying down and had strict orders not to converse and under no circumstances to light a match. At about 10:45 the Knights came up the road from the direction of Enterprise in columns of fours. There were about 60 of them well mounted and armed to the teeth. They rode quietly up to the railroad and halted. Four of their number were detailed to go down the track to a point indicated and place the obstruction. I had watched their movements and the four men started down the track. I kept them in view, moving in the same direction at about 100 yards distance. When they reached the point indicated they fell to work with a will with a pick and spade and soon had a tie set between two other ties with the end pointing in the direction in which the train was coming at an angle of about 45 degrees. I had crawled up in the thick brush to within 50 yards, moving with great caution so as to make no noise.

It seemed but a few minutes after they had completed their work before I heard the whistle of the oncoming train at a crossing two miles below. One of the men lighted a lantern and they hastened down the track. When the headlight of the locomotive came- in sight around a curve in the road, they began swinging the lantern as a signal for the train to stop and an instant later I heard the engineer whistle down brakes. The train came to a standstill and the four men went up to the engine and while I was not near enough to hear what they said, I was' told by the engineer afterward

that they said they were going home from Coalchester and had found an obstruction on the track and had signaled them to stop to save life and property. The conductor now came up and when he had heard the story took a part of the train crew and together with the engineer went forward to the place where the obstruction had been placed. They swore terrible oaths as they looked at the death trap that had been set, as they thought, for them. They thanked the men heartily for the service they-had rendered. The conductor took their names or such names as they gave him promising to report their humanitarian act to the superintendent of the road. They all went to work and soon had the tie removed and after examining the track carefully in the vicinity, went back to their train and soon came on.

As soon as they started for the train, I slipped down the track abreast of them and when the train moved slowly up, I caught on to a car and rode up the track. They had gotten under good headway when the engineer discovered the open switch of the siding and reversed the engine and whistled down brakes, but, as the track at this point was on a slightly down grade, the heavy train did not stop until it had run full length onto the siding. Their plan had worked like a charm and by the time the train had came to a stop, the engine and caboose were surrounded by a crowd of determined, well-armed men. The train crew and the 10 or 12 guards in the caboose made very feeble, if any resistance, but were bunched together and marched up the track about 100 yards ahead of the engine and left under guard while the rest of the Knights began to try to unfasten the cars, the doors of which were securely locked. They were all on the west, or left-hand side of the train. As I have said, Captain Clark was in command of our force on that side of the track. We had an understanding that he was not to move forward to the attack until he heard a shot from our side. When the train struck the siding, I jumped to the ground and went rolling down the embankment. I was unhurt and ran out to our men and passed the word along to advance, closing in from the right and left of the Enterprise road, thus filling in the gap that we had purposely left open for the Knights to pass through. When we had reached a point only about 25 yards from the train, I shouted, “Halt” and instantly fired a pistol in the air. Almost immediately I heard the ringing voice of Captain Clark as he gave his orders: “Forward - Guide right-quick step” - - and then a moment later -- “Fire at will. Fire!” - - and then a rapid discharge of musketry and a

rattle of bullets against the cars and the yells and curses and groans of the Knights. They were taken completely by surprise. Not a dozen of them had their guns in hand but had laid them down and had moved two or three telegraph poles and were using them as battering rams to force open the car doors.

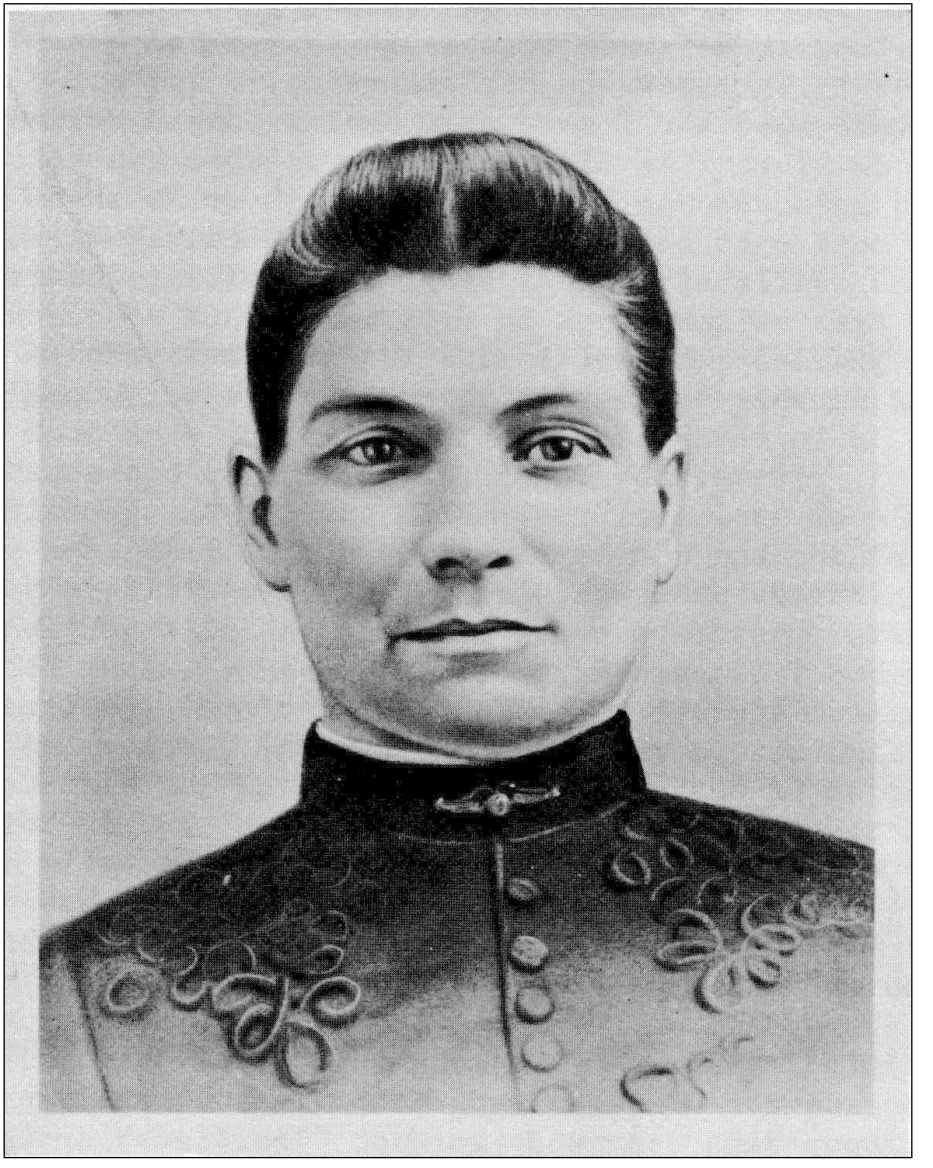
Captain Clark and his men were upon them shooting right and left. They made but a feeble effort at resistance firing less than 20 shots altogether. Some crawled under the cars, only to fall into the hands of my men and not one escaped in that direction. A few got away down the track but not more than half a dozen of the entire gang got away. Twelve were killed, 23 were wounded, and the rest were take prisoners.

As soon as Captain Clark had things well in hand on his side of the train, he came over on my side and took charge telling me to take one of the Knights" horses and get home as soon as possible as he did not wish me to be seen by any of the Knights. Not a man of ours was killed and only one slightly wounded. Not a prisoner escaped but several of them were wounded by bullets that went through the side of the cars.

Taking a loose horse, I rode rapidly down the Enterprise road and reached the vicinity of that hotbed of the Knights just before daylight, where I abandoned the horse and by a cross cut through the timber, made home in less than an hour. In a few days after this event Colonel Jones sent for me to come to Chicago. On arriving at his quarters there I was most heartily congratulated upon the work that had been accomplished. I told Colonel Jones that I had done nothing more than my duty and deserved no special commendation, but that there was a loyal little woman down near Enterprise that deserved all the thanks that he could give her and that as a favor to me, I wished him to write her a good strong letter commending her services to me and to the country. The colonel thanked me for the suggestion and sat down immediately and wrote such a letter as any woman might be proud to receive. But such services were not to be paid for by letters of commendation or thanks. They were priceless! They emanated from hearts filled to overflowing with patriotic devotion to the cause of liberty and human rights. Such, however, was the almost universal spirit of the heroic women of the most heroic epoch of American history. The story of their lives of sacrifice, love, and devotion will not be told in this generation for the historian of today is engrossed in lauding to the skies the deeds at arms of the men of that period, while they give but

scant consideration to that noble army of women without whom the war for the Union would have been a dismal failure. But, in the years to come, someone with a heart of love and pen of fire will record in imperishable story the record of their unwavering devotion, their indomitable courage, their tireless energy, their uncomplaining sacrifices, all cast upon the altar of our common country and given freely for the flag we love. Oh, glorious generation of magnificent womanhood! When shall we see its like again? Earth may run red with other wars, but no nobler generation of heroic women will stand forth to live and love and sacrifice and die for the downfall of treason and the enthronement of human rights.

The period was now approaching when I was to take to myself the dear girl whom I had loved and for whom I had waited for three long years. We had been in constant correspondence and had met as often as circumstances would permit.



REBECCA ELLEN SPRADLING
WIFE OF LEVI W. SIMMONS

We began our arrangements for our wedding. I secured a house near my German friend with whom I had been staying for some months and made it as comfortable as I could with the limited means at my disposal. Rebecca was teaching a school at Colfax in Warren County near my 40-acre farm from which I had operated against the Knights in that locality. Her school would be out on the 2Oth of April and we were to be married on the 2lst. On the 20th I left for Colfax, passing through Macomb, where I procured a marriage license and then through Good Hope where I secured the services of a Justice of the Peace and on April 21st, 1863, yours truly, Levi Weston Simmons and Rebecca Ellen Spradling were made husband and wife according to the ordinance of God and the law of the State of Illinois. This marriage was an exceedingly happy one. My wife had grown to be an educated, refined and cultivated woman. She had a strong, symmetrical body, a round, smiling, comely face and I never for one moment regretted my choice. She was the mother of my six children, and they could not have had a more tender and painstaking mother for she was all that a mother should be. For 30 years we lived together in perfect harmony, when she went to live with the angels.

I carried forward my work in the Secret Service in the locality in which we lived, being able to secure an occasional arrest or obstruct the Knights and Copperheads in their efforts to assist the South. They were tireless in their exertions to thwart the government in its purpose to put down the rebellion. Nothing, however, that requires special mention occurred until the fall of ‘64 when Clement L. Valadingham of Ohio was nominated by the Democratic party of that state for governor. He was a pronounced Copperhead whose disloyalty and determined opposition to the government became so offensive and flagrant that it became necessary to send him below the lines. In the fall of ‘64, however, the disloyal element not only in Ohio, but all over the North, was doing everything possible to see him elected as governor of his state. To this end colonizing schemes of every kind were resorted to in order to fill Ohio with men who would cast their votes for Valadingham. Political meetings were held presumably in the interest of local candidates, but at these meetings there were always emissaries of the democracy of Ohio, who, assisted by the local Copperhead contingent, were enlisting men to go to Ohio and vote for Valadingham.

Such a meeting was announced to be held at Elerson, a small town in Hancock County about 20 miles from Colfax where I was now living. I had learned that a number of young men of our community had declared their intention of going and, feeling sure from what I knew of their political proclivities that they were ripe for anything that would be in opposition to the war for the Union, especially if there were any promise of financial assistance connected with it, I determined to attend this meeting myself. Removing my mustache and having my hair cut short, I disguised myself with a red wig and long red whiskers and went to the house of my nearest neighbors and asked for a meal. I was told that dinner would be ready in a few minutes and if I would wait I would be accommodated. While the meal was being prepared, I sat on the porch of my neighbor's house and talked with him on the current topics of the day. When dinner was served, I sat down and ate a hearty meal talking all the time with the family, and not one of them had the slightest suspicion that the sandy stranger was their nearest neighbor. When the meal was concluded, I tendered the lady of the house 25 cents in payment for the same and thanking them for the accommodation, took my departure. So well satisfied was I with the completeness of my disguise that I had no hesitation in going the next day to the meeting at Elerson.

I started on foot feeling sure that I should be able to secure a ride most of the way at least with some of the many parties that I knew were going to attend the meeting. I was not disappointed in this for I had not proceeded on my way more than a couple of miles before I was overtaken by a company of six men in a farm wagon. They asked me if I were going to Elerson to which I replied that I was on my way to Burlington but intended to stop in Elerson that night. The driver asked me to ride and I climbed into the wagon. I was well acquainted with every man in the company. Two of them had worked for me only a few days before in helping to move a barn on my place. The conversation was altogether of political topics and, of course, for the time being I was a radical democrat. The driver, who was least acquainted with me, at last asked one of the young men who had worked for me, what he thought of that ex-soldier Simmons. "Oh," said he, "he would be all right if he wasn't such a d - - d Black Republican and, by the way, I hear that he is talking of reenlisting." After this and a number of other remarks regarding me, none of which were very complimentary, the talk drifted again to more general topics, I

felt perfectly sure that not one of them had the slightest suspicion of my relation to the Secret Service.

When I reached Elerson at about 11 o'clock a.m., I offered to pay the driver for my ride but he declined payment but intimated that if I felt inclined, they would take a drink at my expense. We went to the hotel bar. I took a cigar and they each had corn whiskey. After dinner the crowd gathered in a grove just at the outskirts of town and listened to a typical democratic speech by a lawyer from Monmouth by the name of Davison. It consisted of abuse of the administration, denunciation of the soldiers on the field who, he declared, were there wholly for rapine and robbery. Sympathy for the oppressed and downtrodden patriots who were battling under Stars and Bars for protection a their homes and firesides. Eulogy of that sterling patriot Clement L. Valadingham who, in Ohio was rallying the hosts of freedom around him in a glorious effort to wrest the state from the grasp of Black Republicanism, etc. At times my blood fairly boiled! Had I not been situated as I was, should certainly have resented the insults to the President the false and scandalous detraction of my comrades in the field, and the wholesale denunciation of the Union sentiment of the country. But I smothered my wrath and held my peace well knowing that any demonstration upon my part would be fatal to the success of the scheme I had in hand.

While the speaking was going on I had noticed some of the active Copperheads moving about in the crowd each accompanied by a stranger. I watched them carefully and soon discovered that the strangers were Ohio men and that together with a local Copperhead, they were approaching every man that they thought they could use. After the meeting adjourned, I saw that many of the younger men were going with the Ohio men across a field to some timber nearby. I followed and soon found myself halted by an ugly looking fellow who wanted to know where I was going. I replied that I was with the push. "Well, then," said he, "Give me the password." I thought I would try a word that I thought ought to put me through the line. I approached him and whispered in his ear --"Valadingham!" I had struck it! No more trouble for me! I was told to go ahead. Following the others that were hurrying into the timber, I soon found myself in quite a crowd. Nothing was done for a few minutes as they were evidently waiting for all that were expected to get there. Pretty soon a small man carrying a satchel, accompanied by the speaker of the

day, came on the ground and Davison at once proceeded to business. He explained to the crowd that they were to sign a contract to go to Ohio and vote for Valadingham, and in consideration of such service they were to receive $40.00 -- $20.00 of which was to be paid at once and the balance when they had returned after casting their vote. Some 20 or more signed and received their $20.00. Leaving the ground as quickly as possible after this business was completed, I started for home. I took a different route on my return trip as I wanted to avoid any of those with whom I had gone in to Elerson in the morning. I walked rapidly after leaving the town and soon after dark was overtaken by a fellow with a spring wagon who was singing and talking to himself as he came along. I asked him for a ride and he took me in. He said he was going about eight miles in my direction which would bring me within about six miles of home. Soon after I got in the wagon, he produced a bottle and asked me to take a drink. I pretended to acquiesce, but in fact did not swallow a spoonful of the liquor. We tapped the bottle quite often and my friend got quite mellow. He got very careless about driving and finally ran off the end of a culvert and threw us both out of the wagon. I was uninjured, but my friend seemed dazed and after we took our places in the wagon again asked me to drive. I very willingly complied with his request and we drove rapidly on. Soon after getting started, my friend said he believed he would lie down in the bottom of the wagon. This pleased me very much as he was so badly under the influence of liquor that I was in constant fear that he would fall off the seat and be badly hurt or killed. Soon after lying down he was dead to the world and I was left in complete control of the rig. I now determined to take advantage of the conditions and take myself home as quickly as possible. So when I arrived at the crossroads where I should have turned to the right in order to go to the home of my friend, I drove straight ahead in the direction of my own home. When I arrived within about a half mile of my home, I turned the team up to the fence and tied them to it and left my friend sleeping the sleep that knows an awakening with a headache. I afterward learned that he slept till after sunrise the next morning.

Leaving my friend alone in his glory, I hurried home, awoke my wife, and while she prepared me a hasty meal, I saddled a horse and prepared for a rapid ride to Monmouth. It was about midnight when I kissed my wife good-bye and took the saddle. I knocked at Captain

Clark's door at 5 o'clock in the morning and told him the news. He was a jolly sort of fellow and slapping me on the back he shouted, "Simmons, you're a brick! We'll get the whole bunch!"

This was on Thursday and on the following Wednesday the "colonists" were to start for Ohio. We laid our plans for the capture of the whole gang. The day came and Captain Clark, in perfect disguise, boarded the train with some 20 others at Monmouth, There were a number who had taken the train further down the line, some at Gainesville, some at Young America, so that with the number that got on at Monmouth there were about 100 of the "colonists" already enroute. At Camden ten more joined the company and when Galesburg was reached the number was swelled to fully 150.

Clark was in his element. He had provided himself with several bottles of whisky and was treating everybody on the train. So popular did he become before reaching Chicago, they had made him their captain by unanimous consent. They were to change cars at Chicago and take the Fort Wayne road from that place. Clark advised that they scatter when they reached Chicago and come together again at Fort Wayne depot singly or in groups of two or three so as not to attract attention. They felt that this was wisdom and that they had made no mistake in selecting Clark as their leader. They took the train on the Fort Wayne road in the afternoon and at midnight were well into Indiana. At Chicago, Clark had telegraphed in cipher to our agent at Richmond, Indiana, to be prepared to take care of the crowd. When, therefore, the train reached a small station about 10 miles from Richmond, Clark left the train for the purpose, as he said, to get some more whisky. His real purpose, however, was to ascertain if everything was in readiness at Richmond. He was assured that they were ready. The train pulled out and 30 minutes later rolled into the depot at Richmond. A file of soldiers surrounded the train and all the passengers were held until Clark had pointed out to the major in command every man that was on his way to Ohio to vote for Valadingham, all of whom were marched away to the jail and kept there until after the election. Thus ended another signal defeat of Copperheadism in the Middle West. Had I been a civil detective, my name would have found its way into the papers and in line for promotion. But being simply an ex-soldier, a sort of nondescript, neither one thing nor the other, I was commended for doing my work and told to go right on and do it again.

CHAPTER XV

AGAIN AT THE FRONT

But I was tired of the life I was leading and longed to rejoin my comrades in the field. I talked over the situation with my wife and found that she, too, would far rather have me go to the front than remain at home doing the disagreeable and dangerous duties devolving upon me in my present position. I therefore sent through Captain Clark my resignation to Colonel Jones and severed my connection with the U.S. Detective Bureau. The State of Illinois was at that time paying $600.00 bounty for recruits and I determined to enlist. Just as I was ready to start, however, I was called upon by a committee of citizens in the interest of a neighbor who had been drafted. He was quite a decent sort of man but had a sickly wife and a family of small children. These citizens who called upon me were for the most part his relatives and were anxious that I should go as his substitute and were willing to give $1,000.00 if I would do so. I consented upon condition that I should be enlisted in my old company and regiment (Company I 11th Ill. Cavalry). The committee went with me to Quiacy, the nearest recruiting station, and when I was allowed to sign enlistment papers for my old company I took the $1,000.00 and went as a substitute.

We were taken at once to Camp Butler, near Springfield. Several efforts were made to get me into infantry regiments, but I absolutely refused to accept service in any of them, maintaining that I had enlisted in Co, I, 11th Ill. Cavalry, and would serve in no other organization. At this time we were informed that we were all to be furloughed home to vote. My furlough, after giving my description, ordered me to return at the expiration of 10 days. We left for the front by way of the Illinois Central Railroad to Cairo, thence to Vicksburg on the Steamer “Belle” of Memphis, where I arrived in due time and reported for duty. I could not be regularly mustered in as I had no enlistment papers, but I had a horse and equipment issued to me, was assigned to my old mess, and went on duty with the boys just as though I had been properly mustered. Captain Hayes, of my company, made application to the Provost Marshal at Quincy for my enlistment papers and I settled down to the routine of camp life. All went well for a time but I soon tired of the monotony of such a life and became restless and uneasy. One day I stepped into the Provost Marshal’s office and paid my respects to Captain Willson of the 4th Iowa

Cavalry who was then Provost Marshal at Vicksburg. I had met Captain Willson before - - n fact, he had been on General Grant's staff when, at Corinth, I had been presented with my Badge of Honor. He seemed pleased to meet me and we enjoyed a cigar together as we talked over old times. On taking my departure, I asked him if he had anything in the line of detective work that he could put me at. He replied that while there was no opening so far as his office was concerned, he should take great pleasure in commending me to General Washburn who was then in command of that district. I thanked him for his kindly interest in me and went to my quarters. Two or three days later I was summoned to company headquarters and informed by Captain Hayes that I was wanted at district headquarters. I immediately prepared to go and at 1 o'clock presented myself at General Washburn's office.

The general looked me over with a critical eye while at the same time he expressed pleasure at meeting me. He said he had been told of my Ripley exploit by Captain Willson who had spoken very highly of me. After some commonplace conversation, the general came to the matter on account of which he had sent for me. He said that large quantities of quinine were being shipped to Memphis, vastly more than could possibly be used at that place and its dependent territory in years to came and that it was quite certain that it was being smuggled outside the lines into the Confederacy where, owing to its scarcity, it was worth its weight in gold. He felt sure, he said, that there was an organization in Memphis that had this business in hand and he wished me to accompany him there and enter at once upon an effort to break up any schemes that might be on foot, and to bring all persons who might be implicated in such schemes to justice. I accepted the proposition and within one week found myself comfortably quartered in a good and comfortable room in the same building with General Washburn and staff. I immediately began laying plans to carry out my instructions. Competent druggists' clerks were hard to get in Memphis and all the wholesale drug houses in town were trying to secure competent men. Within two weeks I had placed a man in each of the four drug houses in town who could be relied upon to do good work for his firm and also to look carefully after the transactions of the house in quinine. Only a few days elapsed before I was informed that one of the houses had sold a quantity of quinine to a Dr. Murdd, an old practitioner in Memphis. Dr. Murdd had a pass that would take him outside the lines at

any time. As he was supposed to have several patients outside the lines, he went out frequently. One day I followed the doctor out. He took the Pigeon Roost road and I kept him in view. He passed the picket post all right and soon after the vidette halted him, read his pass which had been O.K.'d by the sergeant at the reserve post and let him pass. I came out a little later; still keeping the doctor in view, I followed him for about four miles, when he turned into an arched gateway and rode up to the door of a plantation house. I rode past, paying but slight attention to the place or those around it, only observing that there were several horses hitched to the rack and the doctor's horse added one to the number. I rode on for a half mile or so and then turned into the timber on a by road, skirting the plantation. I found a darkey mending some fence that had blown down and engaged him in conversation. I found him quite an intelligent fellow and, after talking to him about other matters for same time, I asked him who was sick at the plantation house. He at once told me that no one was sick there. I then said I had seen Dr. Murdd stop there and supposed that someone was sick. He replied that the doctor was a frequent caller but that his visits were not of a professional character. I then inquired who the horses belonged to that I had seen tied to the hitching rack at the house. At first he said he did not know. Then giving me a peculiar look, he said, "Is you a Yankee sojer?" I told him I was and that if he would tell me all he knew about the men who owned those horses, I would give him a pound of coffee. "Well, Marsa," said he, "I tell you dem men be rebels and dey meet dat doctor here ebery few days, and dis chile don know why for. But one day when I was washin winders in de big room, I seed dat doctor man gib one of dem rebs a little bottle what had some white like chalk into hit and den de ·reb he gib de doctor man two pieces ob rale gold money. Yes, sah -- reglar old fashion gold money, sech as dis chile haint seed afore fer a long time. Now den Marsa, dat all I knows about hit an I lake to hab dat coffee what youse spoked about!" I at once opened my saddlebags and produced the coffee. In all my experience in the South, I had never found a Negro nor a poor white man or woman who could not be made to talk with coffee and I usually carried a few small packages for that purpose. Hearing the sound of horses' feet on the main road, I turned and rode rapidly in that direction, leaving my colored friend in the midst of a profusion of thanks. When I reached the main road, I was just in time to see two men riding rapidly away to the south on the horses that had

been at the hitching rack at the plantation house. I rode slowly back to Memphis. When I passed the house the horses were all gone. I felt sure that an exchange of quinine had been made for gold and that Dr. Murdd was the man I wanted.

Two days after this, as I was leaving the U.S. Theatre after the play, one of my friends in the employ of a wholesale drug house tapped me on the shoulder and, taking me to one side, told me that Dr. Murdd had that day bought a dozen two-ounce bottles of quinine at their store. The next day I watched the doctor's house and when I saw his horse brought out, I immediately threw the saddle on my own horse and rode rapidly out of town on the Pigeon Roost road. Reaching the Picket Post, I passed outside the lines and drew up about a hundred yards below the vidette and awaited the coming of my friend, the doctor. I had waited perhaps half an hour when I heard him coming. When he got within a short distance, I rode out onto the road to meet him. When we were close together, I said, "Is this Dr. Murdd?" "It is," he replied, "and who are you?" "My name, Doctor, is of little consequence to you, but as you have asked me for it, I will give it to you. My name is Simmons and I am connected with the Secret Service of the U.S. Government. I will trouble you to hand over all the quinine you have in your possession." "I have no quinine in my possession," he replied. "I wish," I said, "that I could believe you, but unfortunately I cannot, and if you do not immediately hand it over, I shall be compelled to take it by force." He again declared that he had no quinine. I ordered him to dismount, which he did, and I proceeded at once to search him, fully assured in my own mind that I should find a quantity of the article on his person. I first examined his saddlebags and found in a medicine case a bottle, containing about a half ounce of the drug. I then examined his person, going carefully through all of his pockets, but not a particle of quinine did I find. The doctor pretended to be very indignant, but I told him that I was simply in the discharge of my duty and that if he was an honest man he had nothing to fear. As I left him he growled something about reporting the matter to General Washburn to which I replied that that was his privilege, but that it would do him no good, I was greatly disappointed. I had felt sure that I had the right man and that I should have the pleasure of taking the doctor back to Memphis as my prisoner, but it was not so to be. The next day General Washburn called me into his room and said that Dr. Murdd had reported the incident to him

and expressed great indignation that he, a patriotic citizen, could not be allowed to practice his profession without being suspected of being a quinine smuggler! The general said that he had told the doctor that my failure to implicate him in the smuggling that was going on would no doubt satisfy me and that I would not repeat the effort. I held my peace, but at the same time I was determined to try again which I did on the following day and with identically the same results. The doctor again reported to General Washburn and I came near losing my position. I subsided reluctantly for I still believed that Dr. Murdd was the guilty man.

One day not long after my second effort to implicate Dr. Murdd, I was lying on a couch in my room. I had picked up a work by the celebrated French detective, Jacques de Lespie, and was reading that part of the work which describes the capture of a German spy who had been seen with tissue paper plans of the fortifications of Paris, yet when captured seemed to have nothing about him that would prove his guilt; but how de Lespie had accidentally discovered the hiding place of the coveted plans and secured them. I jumped from my couch and exclaimed "Eureka! Dr. Murdd is mine!" I embraced the first opportunity I had to intercept the doctor at the Picket Post and this time I did not stop to search him but took him immediately back to town and directly to my room. I had determined to risk everything on this effort. I knew what my fate would be if I failed. When we reached my quarters, I took the doctor immediately to my room, turned the key in the door and put it in my pocket. I then compelled the doctor to disrobe to the last stitch. L'ayued oblige a se courter en avant, j'apercees un petit morceau ete rubon qui pendant a son anus; je ce jaises immediatement a retirai si paeses de long a d'un poesce de diameter exturement rempli de quinine.

I allowed the doctor to sit down on the couch and, putting his clothes outside the door, I passed out of the door, locking it. I went direct to General Washburn's room. He was seated at his desk at work on some plans that lay before him. I laid the tube on his desk. He looked at it for a moment and then, turning to me, he exclaimed, "What in h- - - is that?" "Quinine," said I. "And where in D-mnation did it come from?" said he. "General," said I, "I regret very much to tell you that I took it from the person of your esteemed friend, Dr. Murdd, whom I have at the present time a prisoner in my room." "Take me to him at once," said the general. I at once led the way to my room. On reaching the roam I inserted the key

in the door. While doing so I remarked to the general that our mutual friend the doctor was not in a very presentable condition as I had his clothes out here. “What did you do that for?” said the general. “Well,” said I, “the doctor would hardly care to crawl out of the window and make his appearance on the street without his clothes.” I then opened the door and just in time for the doctor had found an old chisel in the room with which he had forced open a chest in which I had some clothes and had dressed himself. He had removed the screen from the window and was just in the act of climbing out when I had opened the door. I sprang forward and seized him by the coat, pulling him from the window through which in another moment he would have passed. I think I was not very careful in handling the doctor as he went to the floor with a thud and lay there not attempting to get up as I stood over him with a revolver in my hand. Then the vials of General Washburn’s wrath were uncorked and he poured a hot stream of the most bitter vituperation upon the trembling wretch that lay before him, unmasked, and exposed in one of the most daring and deeply planned schemes to defraud the government that has ever come under my observation.

“To think,” said the general, “that you should abuse the confidence I had reposed in you and of the protestations of loyalty that you have made to me, while at the same time you were giving aid and comfort to the enemy. Dr. Murdd, you are the most damnable reprobate I ever knew. And to think that you came near causing me to dismiss the faithful agent of the government who, thank God, has brought you to where you will receive the punishment you so richly deserve!” All this speech was, you will remember, amplified with a profusion of great round Saxon oaths such as would burn the paper if I were to write them here. Calling in a guard I sent Dr. Murdd to the Irvin Block Prison and thus closed another of the interesting incidents in my eventful career. The capture of Dr. Murdd was a crushing blow to the business of quinine smuggling in Memphis. Those who were associated with him in the business -- and there were several -- immediately flew to cover and so far as I know, none of them were ever captured.

CHAPTER XVI

SI HOPKINS AGAIN

Only a few days after Dr. Murdd was comfortably housed in Irvin Block Prison, General Washburn sent for me and, on presenting myself at his office, I was told that I was to go to Helena, Arkansas, and was there to receive instructions from Colonel Stark who was in command at that place. I took my departure on the Steamer Imperial and on arriving at Helena reported at once to Colonel Stark. The colonel in- formed me that he was in an effort to capture a desperate character who had been terrorizing the country in the neighborhood of Smartsville, about 30 miles in the interior. The party wanted was no less a personage than the celebrated Bill Morgan, brother of John Morgan the famous Raider. His field of operations had been for some months in the Ozark Mountains and along the Missouri state line where he had gathered a company of kindred spirits about him and had made himself the terror of that region. A number of Union families had been living in that vicinity at the outbreak of hostilities and some of the young men of these families had enlisted in the Union Army. Morgan and his gang had preyed upon these families until they were utterly dispersed, their stock stolen, their fields laid waste, their houses burned and many of the men killed. On several occasions Morgan had captured Union soldiers at home on sick furlough and had burned two of them at the stake. Such was the information that had come to Colonel Stark.

Morgan had a wife living at Smartsville and it was his practice to come down from the field of his usual operations occasionally and remain a few days with his wife at Smartsville. He was at home at this time and Colonel Stark was particularly anxious to take advantage of the fact and effect his capture if possible. Several times when Morgan had been at home, Colonel Stark had sent out a squad of men to capture him, but he was always apprised of their coming and when the troops would arrive at Smartsville, Morgen could never be found. The colonel said he had a Secret Service man in his employ who was a first-class man and who had wanted to go out to Smartsville alone and attempt the capture of Morgan, but the colonel said he thought “the undertaking too hazardous and did not wish to sacrifice so brave and valuable a man.” “And so,” said I, “you have sent for me and will lay me upon the altar from which you would

save your friend?" The colonel's face assumed an injured expression and he was silent for a moment. I came at once to the relief of his embarrassment. "Colonel Stark," said I, "forgive me for that unkind remark. I have no disposition to misjudge you. We who are engaged in this nerve-racking occupation become cranky and sometimes speak before we think. I was too hasty. I am here, sir, to carry out your instructions and shall be only too glad to be of service to you." "Mr. Simmons," said the colonel, "from what I have been told of you, I am not surprised at your being a little touchy. My wonder is that you are not a nervous wreck. My words were not well chosen," and extending his hand, he said, "Let it pass." We shook hands cordially. "Colonel," said I, "would you kindly give me the name of the Secret Service man to whom you referred a few moments ago?" "His name," said the Colonel, "is Si Hopkins." At the mention of that name, I sprang to my feet. "Tell me, Colonel," said I, "is he a plainsman? - - and what is his age?" "He is 35 or 40 years or age and has spent most of his life on the plains," said the Colonel "Can I see him?" said I. "Certainly," answered the Colonel. "I will send for him." Calling a guard, the colonel directed him to go Hopkins' quarters and tell him to report at once to him. While the messenger was gone, I made inquiry of the colonel as to the condition of the road from Helena to Smartsville and the sentiment of the people living on the road. I learned that the road was a fairly good one after the first two miles out from Helena and that there were a few Union families living on or near the road that could be depended on to do what they could for the cause.

In about 10 minutes after the messenger left to notify Hopkins, we heard the clank of Mexican spurs on the plank walk outside and the guard opened the door and announced Hopkins. "Send him in," said the colonel. The door opened and the stalwart form of Si entered the room. He saluted the colonel as he advanced to his desk and awaited action of the colonel. "Mr. Hopkins," said the Colonel, "you know my anxiety to secure the person of Bill Morgan and my unwillingness to allow you to attempt his capture alone. I have, therefore, sent to Memphis for a man to be associated with you in an effort to capture that arch fiend who richly deserves the worst punishment that can possibly be inflicted. Are you willing to be associated with another man in this enterprise?" "Well, Colonel," said Si, "that thar depends; ef this cove that alludes you to are a cowpuncher an kin ride a Mustang an hev smelt powder when it come

from the end of a gun under his nose, I wouldn't mind being hitched up with him in this job; but ef he be a counter jumper from NooYork, er a cow milker from Ingiany, I'd rather be excoosed." Hopkins had not looked in my direction since he had entered the room. He had changed but little since I had seen him last in the Black Hills country in the fall of '57. "Mr. Hopkins," said the colonel, "you need have no fears regarding the qualifications of the man I speak of. If he were not present, I could tell you more about him. Allow me to introduce Mr. Simmons of the U.S. Secret Service. Mr. Simmons - - Mr. Hopkins." At the sound of my name, Si had wheeled and looked at me and as I advanced with my hand extended, Si's piercing black eyes were fixed steadily upon me. When I had approached within about six feet of him, he suddenly threw his hat on the floor and gave vent to a regular war whoop and shouted as he came forward, "Ef this arn't the Kid, I'm a catamount." -- And seizing me in his strong arms he waltzed me around the room as if I were a girl. Holding me at arm's length and looking me straight in the face, he said, "Kid, I was never more tickleder to see anybody in my life nor I be to see you, do yer believe Si Hopkins?" I assured him as I shook his hand warmly that his feelings were fully reciprocated and that it gave me the greatest pleasure to know that I was to be associated with him in this important undertaking. Si now turned to the colonel who had been silent but an interested spectator of this reunion of old-time friends, and said, "Colonel, you'll excoose me for making such a fuss here in your office but I jest natural couldn't help it. Ef you had looked from Noo York to Frisco an from the hed of the Misoory to the Gulf you couldn't ha found a man what Si Hopkins would rather be hitched up with nor this Kid. He are the boy what helped to wipe out about 200 red devils down on the Big Bend of the Gilia, long with Kit Carson an Apache Bill. I ha never fergive myself fer playing a mean trick on him in a hash house in Taos when I shore thought he war a tenderfoot cose he war togged out in store close." Si and I had a hearty laugh at the recollection of that incident.

"And now," said the colonel, "I will leave the matter for which you two men have been brought together to work it out in your own way, only urging you to be as expeditious as possible as Morgan is not likely to remain at home many days. Anything that you may need to ensure the capture of Morgan is at your command if it is within my power to supply it." We shook hands with the colonel as we left the office. As we left, Si

explained, “You bet your sweet life Colonel, Bill Morgan will be in Helena within a week or my name are not Si Hopkins.”

We repaired at once to Si’s quarters and began to lay plans. I learned that Morgan occupied a small cottage in the outskirts of Smartsville; that, having no children, he and his wife were usually alone, especially at night. I also learned that there was a one-legged shoemaker living there that could be trusted to do anything to help us that did not involve his exposure as a Union man. I learned also that there was a free Negro living about 10 miles out from Helena who could be used, and a German family about 20 miles that were friendly. Making a mental memorandum of these facts, I told Si that I would like to be left alone for a while and would try and have a plan formulated within an hour, and would be ready to submit it at that time. Si at once left me and I set about my task. Long before the hour had expired, I had the plans complete. Going to Colonel Stark’s office in the anteroom of which I had left my valise, I got it and brought it over to our room. In my valise I had a number of disguises. I selected one and put it on and then lay down upon a couch awaiting the return of Si. I had put on a red wig and long bushy red whiskers; my clothing consisted of a homespun shirt and pair of butternut jeans pants; an old slouch hat lay beside me. I had hardly straightened myself out on the couch when I heard Si coming along the walk. He opened the door and stepped in with the expression, “Wal Kid,” and then as his eyes rested on me, he stopped and gazed at me in speechless wonder. Then, approaching the couch, he said, “Mought I hev the distinguished honor of knowin who in h--l you be?” Assuming an Irish brogue, I replied, “Yes sor, me name is Pat Mooney and sure I was very tired meself sure and thart I’d just be takin a little rist meself while oi’d be waiting.” “Wal, Mr. Mooney, I don’t savvy who you be or what the h- -l you want but, as a special accommodation ter you, I’m gain’ to show you suthin -- I’m going to show you how ter git through a door d--n quick.” And, seizing me by the shoulders, he stood me on my feet as though I had been a child. Swinging me to the door, he opened it and thrust me through; as he released his hold of me, I sprang quickly forward just in time to escape his heavy boot which followed me like, a catapult. When I landed on the walk in front of the door, I turned and removed my whiskers and wig, saying as I did so, “Let us call it off, Si -- I am satisfied with a disguise that you cannot penetrate.”

Si was very much pleased after the whole thing dawned on him for he saw that I was able to assume a character and carry it through, and after we were seated, he said, “That was all right Kid -- you are shore a brick but allow me to advise yer ter be a little keerful how yer trys them dodges onto me because as how sometime, I might hurt yer bad, see?” I then laid before him the plan that I had formulated, and as I explained it to him in all its details, he became very much interested. When I had finished, I said, “And now Si, if you have a plan or can suggest any changes in this one, just speak right out and I am ready to listen.” “Kid,” said he, “I’m no good at anything except a rough and tumble fight. I couldn’t make no plan; you jest tell me what ter do and Si Hopkins is ther ter do it.” It was then agreed that Si was to act under my instructions and I assumed all responsibility in the case.

We repaired at once to Colonel Stark’s office and I laid before him the details of the plan. He heartily approved them and again assured me that I could depend upon him to render any assistance he could give, I told him the first thing I wanted was the poorest and worst looking mule in the garrison. He at once wrote an order on his Quartermaster for any available stock that we might need. I went at once to our quarters to get ready to start while Si went to the Quartermaster’s to get the mule. I was all ready when Si made his appearance on the back of one of the worst looking mules I had ever seen. I had noticed an old jockey saddle in the back room of our quarters. I had Si bring it out and we fixed it up. It had but one stirrup and that was a brass one but we found a wooden one for the other side and made it fast with a piece of wire. We then made a cinch of bale rope and got it on the mule together with a bale rope bridle. I now had an equipment in harmony with the character I was to assume. Everything being ready we went to the mess room and ate a hearty supper, after which I went to our quarters and assumed my disguise. Telling Si to follow me to the colonel’s office and see the fun, I walked over there and, saluting the guard, I asked to see Colonel Stark. The guard said it was past office hours and the colonel could not be seen. “But,” I said, “I must see him - - I have something of great importance to tell him.” “Well,” said the guard, “you can see him tomorrow but not tonight, so move on.” All this time, I had been using my Irish brogue. I now said, “Misther guard, let me whisper a word in your ear.” He inclined his head and I said in a low tone of voice, “Tell him it’s reguirdin’ that spalpeen, Bill Morgan, that I wish to

spake." Just then Si made his appearance and stood waiting for the guard who had stepped to the office door and was saying to the colonel, "There is a strange looking Irishman, out here who says he has something of great importance to tell you about Bill Morgan."

The colonel came to the door and seeing Si he said, "Good evening, Mr. Hopkins." Then turning to me, he said, "Who are you and what do you want?" Removing my slouch hat I bowed respectfully and said, "My name sor, is Pat Mooney at your service sor, and it's not for the likes of me sor to be sayin it, but I'd be suggestin that what I hev to say would best be said in private sor." "Well, come in," said the colonel. Then, turning to Si, he bade him to come in also and we followed the colonel into his office. The colonel seated himself and said, "Now go on and tell me what you have to say." "Will sor," said I, "it is this that I hev to say. Me wife, Biddy, God bless her fer she's the Moother af me siven children was intoised away from me bed an board, be one Sam Carrington -- the spalpeen who is the lootenent av Bill Morgan and the two av thim is now livin together in Smartsville, and sure I am wantin yee to be sendin a throop wid me till I'd be afther gettin Biddy back to me home and childer." "Mr. Mooney," said the colonel, "did your wife voluntarily leave you or was she forced away?" "Will sor," said I, "me oldest gurl, that's Kathleen, was a tellin me sor that whin I was away from me home, the spalpeen wint ther; sor, and he was afther tellin Biddy as he had no wife and had a foine house in Smartsville an how ef she'd be gain' wid him she'd be an ilegant leddy an she'd hev nothin to do all the day long but to play the pianny an now sor, I wanten to get her back and now, sor, if ye'd be afther sendin' a throop wid me I'd go to Smartsville for me darlint." "Mr. Mooney," said the colonel, "it seems clear from your own statement that your wife willingly eloped with Carrington and I can do nothing for you. Guard, show Mr. Mooney out.·" "An you'll do nothin?" said I. "Nothing, Mr. Mooney," said he. "Then bad cess to yez, say I. I thought ye wuz a decent sort a man sure." "Mr. Mooney," said the colonel, "will you get out of this office at once to prevent the necessity of my kicking you out?" "No, sor," said I, "I'll not go tell yez give me some satisfaction." The colonel rose to his feet and advanced toward me exclaiming, "I'll give you the satisfaction of an introduction to the toe of my boot!" "Hold on, Colonel," said I, assuming my natural dialect and,

removing my wig and whiskers -- “I beg your pardon for this little deception. I simply wished to try my disguise. Do you think it will pass?”

Si burst out into a horselaugh as the colonel looked at me in astonishment. “Well, Mr. Simmons,” said the colonel, “I never for a moment would have suspected your identity - - you certainly make a fine Irishman!” “Colonel,” said Si, “the Kid are shore a smooth one!”

“And now, Colonel,” said I, “I am ready to start for Smartsville. Kindly call the Officer of the Day and instruct him to pass me outside your lines. I hope to be here to report within three days.” It was now about 7 o’clock in the evening and quite dark. I was quietly escorted to the outpost on the Smartsville road and, bidding the Officer of the Day good-bye, I rode as rapidly as my mule would carry me toward my destination. I had instructed Si to secure six of the best horses in Helena and to get two of them out to the free Negro’s place there to be kept until called for and two of them to the German’s to be kept in the same way. Si was to instruct the Negro and the German to take the best of care of the horses, and they were to be where Si could find them any time, day or night. He was to have the other two horses especially cared for at the stables in Helena. This would give us a relay of horses 10 miles apart for a dash that I expected to make from Helena to Smartsville within the next few days. I arrived in Smartsville on the following day about 9 o’clock a.m.

I went to the hotel and put up my mule in the stable connected with the establishment and awaited developments. Just before the dinner hour there came to the office where I was sitting, a man of striking personal appearance. He was tall and straight as an arrow, about 6 feet in height, and would weigh near 200 pounds. He had long black hair, piercing black eyes, and was altogether such a man as one would not care to come up against in personal encounter. He was dressed in well-fitting heavy black beaver pants, a heavy grey flannel shirt, open at the neck; a large red silk handkerchief hung loosely around his neck and was tied in a knot in front. He had a couple of heavy revolvers in his belt and carried a Winchester rifle in his hands. Without looking in my direction he walked directly to the bar and called for whisky. “Mr. Morgan,” said the clerk, “I am sorry to say we are out of whisky but we have some fine old peach brandy,” “All right,” said Morgan, “give me any kind of rot gut you have. I only hope you have plenty of it for I’m dry today.” He filled a common drinking glass to the brim and emptied it at a gulp. I now noticed for the first time

that there was a large mirror on the wall behind the bar and that he was looking straight into it. In doing so he could not have failed to see that I was looking at him. I instantly turned my eyes in another direction but it was too late. He turned to me abruptly and said, "Sorrel top, what are you gazing at me for?" I rose to my feet, removed my hat and said, "I beg the gintleman's pardon, sor, it's been a long toime since Pat Mooney has seen the loikes of yez, the foine looking gintleman that ye are to be sure, an I'm hopin I hav give no offence sure, but does a man's eyes good to see the loikes of yez."

"Well, Pat," said Morgan, "since you like my looks so well perhaps you'll take a drink with me."

"Sure," said I, "I'd be proud av that honor." As we filled our glasses he looked at me sharply and said, "Where are you from, Mr. Mooney?"

"Sure," said I, "I have me little place jist ferninst the big hill on the other side av Kemptown about 15 miles from Helena and sure I had a couple of foine cows at me place and tin days ago all at onct they was gone and sure I hunted the whole country over and niver a hide or hair hev I found av them an sure I begin to think thim Yankey spalpeens at Helena bad cess to thim, has driv them off. Sure I've rid and walked and rid and walked till the shoes is nearly off me feet intirely and by thet same token could yez be tellin me where I could be findin a cobbler where I could git me shoes fixed a bit?" "Yes," said Morgan, "there is a shoemaker living down near the bridge -- he'll fix you up all right. Let's have another drink." "Sure, it's much obliged ter yer thet I am the foine gintleman that ye are but it's not fer the loikes av me ter be drinkin at your expince but as ye hev asked me and the brandy is very foine. I'll be drinkin to the hilth av yoursilf and Mrs. whatever your name might be and thin I'll get me shoes fixed and be gettin' back to Biddy and the childer. (I raised my glass and said) "Here's to you and the lady." "Thank you," said Morgan. "Here's hoping you may find your cows."

Leaving the hotel I made my way to the shoemaker's who lived near the bridge at the east end of the town. I walked to his establishment and immediately entered upon negotiations for the mending of my shoes. He at first declined to attempt to fix them as he said there was nothing left to work on. All this time I had been talking to him in my Irish brogue. Suddenly changing into my natural dialect, I said to him, "Mr. Mitchell, it

is not so much to get my shoes fixed as for far more important matters; I am not what I seem but am assuming this character in order to get in touch with you. I am a U.S. Secret Service man and have been informed by Colonel Stark at Helena that you can be fully trusted." He looked at me in a hesitating way and made no reply. Seeing a back room I asked if it was vacant, to which he replied in the affirmative. I asked his permission to enter it to which he consented. I went into the room and, seeing that: the window was carefully blinded, I removed my hair and whiskers and then called him. He took one of his crutches -- for he had but one leg -- and hobbled to the door and looked at me. "You see," said I, "that I am not what I seemed to be. I hope this will convince you of my identity. I am L. W. Simmons of the U.S. Secret Service." Then, replacing my disguise, I walked back into the shop and took a seat near Mr. Mitchell. At first he was disposed to be shy and secretive but, as I went on to unfold to him the details of my plan to capture Morgan, he laid aside his cautiousness and listened in rapt attention, occasionally interjecting the term "Good – good!"

When I had finished, I asked him plainly if he was willing to take any part in the enterprise. He at once said that he was, that he would be more than glad to render any service that would not make his longer residence at Smartsville an impossibility. He explained to me that he had an invalid wife who could not be moved and he felt compelled to remain with her and his three children. I assured him that we would ask nothing of him that would in any way jeopardize him or his. As we talked he worked at my shoes. The bell at the hotel now rang for dinner. There were a half dozen rough looking men at the table when I entered the dining room. They looked at me sharply as I seated myself among them but said nothing to me.

I listened carefully to their conversation but heard nothing of interest until they were about to rise from the table when, from what they said, I learned that they were Morgan men and, further, that they and Morgan expected to leave for the Ozark Mountains within a week. They went out of the dining room before I had finished as I was eating a very hearty meal. I followed, however, shortly afterward and found them seated in the office smoking their pipes. I stood around for a moment and, approaching the bar, I said to the clerk, who also acted as barkeeper, "Wul yet lind me the loan av a knife, pipe and tobaeky - - I have a match

meself." "Yer don't want much," sad he, "but if I can find a pipe around here yer can hev it." While he was looking for a pipe, I went on to say, "I'm sorry to be troublin yez but the first night I wuz out after me cows I lost me knife and last night I lost me pipe, and sure I'm thinkin' I'll be loosin meself entirely ef I'm not afther foindin thim cows soon." In the meantime the clerk had produced an old corncob pipe; handing me a knife and plug of tobacco, I proceeded to fill and light the pipe.

"And now," said I, "I'll be going down to the shoemaker for me shoes, and I'll be giving yez the pipe whin I'm comin back sure." I left the hotel and went at once to Mitchell's and arranged with him for the part he was to take in the enterprise. I had learned from Mitchell that Morgan and his wife occupied a little four-roamed cottage about 200 yards east of the bridge on the road to Helena. When coming in to town I had noticed the cottage and also remembered that on the other side of the street opposite the cottage there was some timber with heavy underbrush. I arranged with Mitchell to go that afternoon and set some traps for rabbits in the brush opposite Morgan's house, which would give him an excuse for visiting the brush patch frequently. This was on Monday. On Thursday night I proposed to make the dash. On that night Mitchell was not to visit his traps until after dark when he was to stay within full view of the cottage until our arrival, which I hoped would be about 11 o'clock at night. Mitchell told me that from where his wife lay in bed at their own house, she had a clear view of Morgan's cottage and that she could be trusted to watch during the day. I wanted to know just how many persons there were in Morgan's cottage when we should reach it on Thursday night. Having all my arrangements made with Mitchell and, my shoes being fixed, I went at once to the hotel, paid my bill, secured my mule, and left for Helena. I did not go out of Smartsville on the Helena road but went north up the creek for a couple of miles and there forded the creek, coming to the Helena road some five miles east of Smartsville. I rode all night, reaching the free Negro's at daylight on Tuesday morning where I fed my mule and had breakfast. I reached Helena at about 9 o'clock. I asked Colonel Stark to send the company of cavalry that was quartered there, down the river to Bolton, 15 miles, and then to Kempton, 25 miles from there. Twenty of the best men and horses were to leave Kempton for Smartsville, a distance of 12 miles at about 9 o'clock Thursday night, ride at a rapid gait to Smartsville and, on reaching that place, to await

developments just outside the town. Everything was in readiness at about 4 o'clock and the Company took its departure.

On Thursday evening, after a good rest, I was fresh and ready for the start. Si also was in fine spirits and, as we rode out to Helena at 7 o'clock, we felt confident of the success of our enterprise. We made the first 10 miles in about an hour when we arrived at the free Negro's and found our horses all ready for us. Changing our saddles to the fresh horses, we mounted and were away on the second stage of our journey. When we arrived at our German friend's, we found the man, his wife, and eldest daughter up and expecting us. A hot meal was ready to serve and, while we satisfied the wants of the inner man, our friend was changing our saddles. We had made excellent time and were not compelled to ride quite so hard on the last lap as on the first two. We arrived at the junction of the Kemptown and Smartsville roads, a half mile out of the latter place, at 10:45 p.m., having made the 30 miles in about three hours and a half, over a southern road and on a dark night. We now moved carefully forward to within about 200 yards of Morgan's, when we dismounted and tied our horses in the brush. We examined our arms and lighted a dark lantern, and walked forward to a place immediately in front of Morgan's house. Here we stopped and I gave a low whistle, the signal agreed upon with Mitchell. A moment later the dark form of Mitchell was seen hobbling on his crutches from the brush at the roadside. We held a whispered conversation in which he informed us that Morgan had gone home from the hotel at about 4 o'clock in the afternoon, very much under the influence of liquor. That there was no one in the house but Morgan and his wife, and that there had been no light in the house since about 8 o'clock. Having done all that was required of him, I told him to get home as quickly as he could. We thanked him heartily for what he had done for us and bade him good-bye. I slipped a $20.00 greenback into his hand as I said the parting word. Si and I now moved cautiously forward. We had supplied ourselves each with a pair of rubber shoes and had put them on when we left our horses. Stepping softly onto the front porch I tried the front door but found it locked, as was also the back door. We tried all the windows but found them all fast. Morgan's house had a cellar and at the rear a cellar door -- trying this we found this door not fastened. We softly opened the door and descended into the cellar; by the light of our dark lantern we found our way to the stairs leading to the floor above. Si slowly crept up these stairs

and found, to our great joy, that the door was not locked. There were four rooms in the house. We examined the other three before going to the bedroom from which there came the sound of someone snoring loudly. Having satisfied ourselves that there was no one in the house except those in the bedroom, I went to the front and rear doors and threw them open wide, putting the key of each in the lock from the outside. When I returned to Si he gave me a knowing nod and patted me on the back. We now approached the bedroom door which we found slightly ajar; pushing it softly open we stepped inside and made a survey of the room. The head of the bed was against the wall about midway in the room, leaving about four feet of space on each side of the bed. On a stand at the head of the bed near to Morgan's hand there lay two heavy Navy revolvers, and on the other side, near to Mrs. Morgan, there stood a Winchester rifle and a shotgun leaning against the wall. It was but the work of a moment to secure these. I shoved one revolver into my bootleg while Si did the same with the other. I then set the guns outside the door.

Having made all secure, as far as weapons were concerned, we took up our positions - - Si on one side of the bed, next to Morgan, and I near the foot of the bed on Mrs. Morgan's side. I then brought the light of the lantern around so that its ray would fall upon their faces. They did not awake. As we stood there over the sleepers, Si, with revolver in hand covering Morgan, and I with lantern in one hand and revolver in the other, presented a tableau of wonderful interest. I motioned Si to wake Morgan up. He laid his hand on Morgan's shoulder and shook him. His snoring eased, his eyes slowly opened. In a firm voice I said, "Bill Morgan, you are a prisoner. Move one inch except as I shall direct and you are a dead man!" My voice awoke Mrs. Morgan and she uttered a piercing scream. "Silence, woman, said I, "you will not be harmed if you are quiet. Now Morgan, sit up." He slowly kicked the covers off and made as though he would sit up, but instead he made one mighty spring and landed on the floor near me. He had leaped completely over his wife. As he came, I fired and stepped back ready to fire again. I had missed him the first shot and dared not fire the second for fear of hitting Si who was exactly in range. I had the lantern in one hand and the revolver in the other. Before I could do anything he was upon me. He seized me by the throat and bore me to the floor! His grip tightened around my windpipe and I felt my breath leaving me. He was strangling me to death. Suddenly I felt the

weight of his body gone from me, his hand was wrenched from my throat, and I was free. I struggled to my feet still gasping for breath. The room was in inky darkness while the noise of crashing furniture, the heavy breathing of the two powerful men as they fought for supremacy, and the piercing screams of Mrs. Morgan created a bedlam such as I had never experienced before or hope to ever experience again. I could do nothing! I could only wait and for at least two minutes the battle went on. They had fought their way to the door of the room. As I stepped in that direction my foot struck something on the floor which proved to be my lantern. I proceeded at once to light it. While doing so I heard a heavy fall, soon the noise of the struggle ceased, and I heard the voice of Si. "Kid," said he, "bring the light. I've got the cantankerous varmint and I want ye ter see me finish him." I hastened to the spot and there lay Morgan flat on his back. The massive form of Si Hopkins was crouched on his breast; his left hand had a firm hold in the long black hair of Morgan while his right, with its long bony fingers, held the windpipe of the villain in a grip of steel. Morgan's eyes were bulging from their sockets and his tongue was hanging from his mouth. "All right, Si," said I, "let's turn him over and clap the irons on him." "Not much," said Si, "this cuss dies right here." Morgan began to struggle. I felt that the end had come and unless Si's grip was relaxed he would be dead in two minutes.

"Si," Said I, "you promised to act under my direction and you are going back on it." "Mid," said he, "Si Hopkins never goes back onto his word and ef you say so I'll let the breath into him again but ud do me good ter watch him kick his last kick.

"Let go, Si, let go," said I. "We want to take this chap to the camp." "Well, Kid, all right ef you say so," and so saying Si relinquished his hold on Morgan's throat and with a quick movement turned him on his face. We pulled his hands up behind his back and I snapped a heavy pair of handcuffs on his wrists. When Si straightened up I held up the light and looked at him. His face was covered with blood, one eye was nearly closed, and his lips were swollen and bleeding; and all together he looked like an amateur prizefighter after a 20-round contest with a professional. Mrs. Morgan still lay screaming in the bed. We went to the bedside and at last succeeded in quieting her to some extent. I told her that we should be compelled to make her a prisoner in her own house and so we proceeded to tie her hands behind her with some strips of a towel. Then seating her

in a chair, we made her fast to it and then made the chair fast to the bedpost. Seeing that she was secure we went to Morgan who was still having trouble to breathe and stood him up on his feet, but he would not walk. He swore that he would not move an inch and no coaxing or threatening could induce him to move. Seeing that he would not move Si turned his back to Morgan's; suddenly throwing his arms over he seized Morgan by the shoulders, raised his feet off the floor and carried him bodily from the house into the yard.

Leaving Si with our prisoner I went for our horses and was just bringing them to the road when I heard the sound of horses' feet coming down the Helena road. I withdrew into the shadow of the trees and awaited the approach of the horsemen. The moon was now rising and from my position I could see them as they approached. When they got within 50 yards of me I could see that they were our men, so without hesitation I stepped into the road and when they came up I hailed them. We selected a good strong horse and the sergeant and four men accompanied me into Morgan's yard where Si was waiting with our prisoner. A couple of men were sent down the road a few yards to stand guard while we got ready to leave.

Putting Morgan on the horse we tied his feet together under the horse and then we moved out. The man whose horse we had taken was accommodated behind one of his comrades and so we made a start. We could not travel very rapidly and did not reach our German friends' place until daylight. The German and all his family pretended to be much frightened and refused to give us anything to eat until we threatened to burn the place if they did not. They then gave us a very good meal, after partaking of which we went on our way.

We arrived in Helena that evening about 7 o'clock and after seeing Morgan safely locked up I reported to Colonel Stark. The colonel was delighted at the success of the enterprise and thanked me over and over again for my part in it. I told him, however, that great praise was due Si Hopkins as I could never have carried it through without his cool head and strong arm, "Yes," said the colonel, "muscle is all right and necessary in its place but it requires brains and nerve to plan and carry out a scheme like that, and now, Mr. Simmons, I hope you will take a few days needed rest before returning to Memphis; and when you go I shall send Morgan with you to be turned over to the Provost Marshal at Memphis, as that is a

much safer place for him than this. I shall be glad to have you and Mr. Hopkins take your meals with the officers mess while you remain. Kindly send Mr. Hopkins to me at once as I have something to say to him. "

I went at once to our quarters and, finding Si there, told him to report to headquarters. "Oh, He-l," said Si, "don't want to see anybody till this blinker of mine gits in better shape and the scratches that da-d catamount left on my mug gits sum ut healed up." "Well," said I, "orders are orders and you'll have to see the colonel." Si, growling and grumbling made his way to Colonel Stark's headquarters. When he returned he was in somewhat better humor and said the colonel had given him "a whole lot of taffy". But it was several days before Si was himself again. As for myself I never felt the need of rest more in my life. We did nothing in the next week but eat and sleep and lounge about.

The first time I went to the guardhouse to see Morgan after our return, he cursed me with bitter oaths, calling me all the vile names known to his criminal vocabulary, and swore that if he ever had the chance he would chop me into inch pieces and feed me to the hogs. I have not the slightest doubt he would have carried his threat into execution had the opportunity presented itself. After a week's rest, finding time hanging heavily on my hands, I announced to Colonel Stark my readiness to return to Memphis. Morgan was fitted with a ball and chain and taken on board the steamer bound for Memphis and, accompanied by Colonel Stark and Si, I repaired on board. I had a detail of eight men turned over to me by the Officer of the Guard and at once gave them their instructions. They were divided into four watches, two men to the watch. They were never to lose sight of the prisoner, and under no circumstances to allow him to go on deck or outside the cabin to the toilet. As my room was near to the one assigned to Morgan I instructed the guard to call me every time the watches were changed. Having made all necessary arrangements, and the hour for departure having arrived, I repaired to the gangway to bid good-bye to the colonel and Si. As the colonel took my hand, he said, "Mr. Simmons, I want to express to you great satisfaction at the success of this enterprise and my admiration of the marked ability with which you have conducted it. It will be my highest pleasure to commend you in the highest terms to District Headquarters. I shall always be pleased to meet you and hope it will not be long until I have that pleasure." I thanked the colonel for his kindly expressions of confidence and, shaking hands

heartily, we separated. With- in two months he was killed in a skirmish with Kirby Smith's forces in western Arkansas. Si lingered a moment after the colonel had gone. He came up to me and, laying his great hand on my shoulder, he looked down into my face with an expression of sadness that I had never seen on his face before. As I looked up into his face, still bearing the marks of that fierce midnight encounter in which he had saved my life, I saw that his eyes were watery. With a voice that had tears in it, he said, "Kid, we've rid over the plains together. We've slept under the same blankets and under the same stars; we've fit the same red devils and the wus white devils. Si Hopkins never had no brother, leastwise it mout be you. And now, Kid, suthin inside sez, Si Hopkins ye'll never see the Kid no mo. I arnt no saint, Kid, but I never tuk a cent from no man cept on the squar. I never ruffled the har on no man what wuz straight an after the rough and tumble of life is threw Si Hopkins hopes ter see yer whar thar'll be no Pachies ner Morgans an sich, and say, Kid, that speach aint no make up but it comes right out of the middle of me. Good-bye, Kid, so long." He turned and walked down the gangplank, never looking back once, and passed out of sight around the nearest corner. I watched him through blinding tears until he disappeared. I turned and went to my room to recover from the effect of the deep tide of emotion that flooded my soul. Brave, noble, generous Si Hopkins. No man ever had a better friend than he was to me I never saw him again. When Colonel Stark took the Brigade of which he, was in command to western Arkansas a few days later, Si was attached to his staff as Chief of Scouts. In the same skirmish in which Colonel Stark lost his life, Si Hopkins fought the fight of his life and lost. When his body was found it was surrounded by more than a score of dead men, some of whom had been brained by blows from the clubbed revolvers of Si who, when found, still grasped an empty revolver in each hand, So perished one of the most noble of these giants of the plains who, in the hour of the Nation's peril counted not their lives dear unto themselves, if only the Nation might live and liberty be perpetuated, They should long live in the memory of a grateful people.

CHAPTER XVII

THE GREARSON RAID

On reaching Memphis I turned my prisoner over to the Provost Marshal, and he went to the Irvin Block Prison to keep company with Dr. Murdd. There being nothing of importance on hand, I asked Colonel Grimes, who was temporarily in command, General Washburn being absent on leave, to rejoin my company. My request was granted. In less than a week we received orders to be ready to march the next day. So on the morning of January 1st, 1865 we found ourselves filing out of camp near Fort Pickering. We were marched to the outskirts of town where we soon found that we were to be a part of a force that was to move against Corinth, then occupied by General Forest of the Confederate Army. Our force consisted of a brigade of infantry, two batteries of artillery, and Grearson's brigade of cavalry which consisted of the 4th Iowa, 10th Missouri, 2nd Wisconsin, 2nd U.S. Colorado, and our own Regiment, the 11th Illinois.

Everything being in readiness, the column moved at about 10 o'clock and, the weather being cool, we made good headway. It was not until we went into camp at about 4 o'clock p.m. that I discovered that we had no wagons accompanying our brigade, but that instead of wagons, the Quartermaster's Department was supplied with pack mules only. The next day we moved steadily on and at night reached a point on the Hatchie River about 10 miles from Corinth. The next day would find us in conflict with the enemy. We crawled into our dog tents in order to get a good night's rest before the coming conflict. I slept soundly until I heard the shrill blast of the bugle blowing "Boots and Saddles". My watch told, me it was 4 o'clock. We sprang up at once, rolled our blankets, and mounted our horses and were soon in line. We went column right and soon found ourselves on the road. From a walk to a trot and then to a gallop we went, which indicated that haste was demanded. On, on we went over a rough country road - - on, on until daylight began to show in the east. Just then we heard firing at the front. We were ordered on right into line and advanced. We soon came in sight of a railway station and could see a cluster of houses in the vicinity. Firing had ceased and we found ourselves in possession of Guntown, a small station on the Mobile and Ohio Railroad, about 20 miles below Corinth. The wires leading to Corinth had

been cut - - intelligence of our arrival had been sent to Corinth. After securing the few prisoners we had captured, we got breakfast. We had found quite a quantity of feed and provisions and so were well supplied.

After breakfast we learned that the movement of troops toward Corinth had been only a feint, its purpose being to compel Forest to draw all troops stationed below Corinth for 100 miles or more to reenforce his position there against the expected attack. The feint had been a success. Forest was at Corinth with all the troops of his District and we had a clear road for more than 150 miles to the south, with no opposition to encounter. The plan was to push south, into the very heart of the Confederacy. Our route lay through a rich farming country upon which the Confederate troops were dependent largely for supplies, great quantities of which were collected at every station on the road. We were to destroy these supplies and to wreck the railroad that transported supplies and troops through that part of the country. We began operations at once by burning a large bridge just north of Guntown, and at about 10 o'clock started on our way south.

Soon after starting, an orderly from General Grearson rode up to the head of our company and asked if there was a man in the company by the name of Simmons, to which Captain Hayes replied in the affirmative. The orderly left for the front but soon returned and said that I should be sent to General Grearson. I was at once ordered to report to General Grearson and followed the orderly to the head of the column. I saluted the general and said - - "I am here for orders, sir." He looked at me a moment and then said, "Are you the Simmons that invaded Ripley alone at one time under the direction of General Grant, and were you ever known in this region as Lee Weston?" I replied that I was the same individual. Turning to a long, lank cadaverous looking man who was riding near, he said, "Captain Burton, come this way please." Captain Burton at once rode up when the general said, "This is Mr. Simmons, Captain, and he has quite an intimate knowledge of this part of the country and I am sure can be of great service to us. You will enroll him with your men." And, turning to me -- "Captain Burton is my chief of scouts; you will take orders from him." The captain and I shook hands and I accompanied him to his position in the marching column.

I have no intention of giving at this time all the details of the Grearson Raid of which this was the beginning. I shall simply give some of the most interesting incidents. For the first week we moved slowly but

steadily southward, the main force following the line of the railroad while scouting parties scoured the country for some distance on either flank. I think it was the third day after leaving Guntown that I was put in charge of a squad of six men and sent on the left flank to find, if possible, a large drove of fat hogs that had been gathered up in the neighborhood of Booneville for the Confederate Quartermaster at Jackson. They were to have been shipped from Booneville, but as we had cut the line and left the cars upon which they were to be shipped in the neighborhood of Corinth, they had been suddenly driven into the country and up to this time we had not been able to locate them. It was on this business that I was sent out.

It was near 9 o'clock a.m. when I received my orders and we immediately left the column and pushed out into the country. We reached a point about 10 miles from the railroad at about 11 o'clock a.m. Here was a crossroads. An old building that had once been occupied as a store, a blacksmith shop, a roadhouse, and two or three vacant dwellings constituted the hamlet. We made application at the roadhouse for dinner but were told that they were out of provisions. I engaged the lady of the house in conversation and, in speaking about the scarcity of provisions, I remarked that they had doubtless been a long time without the smell of coffee in the house. She replied that she had not tasted coffee for two years and that she would give anything for a good cup of coffee. "Well," said I, "if you will get: us a lunch, I will give you a pound of coffee." It was a bargain; she at once set about preparing the meal and we had a very good one. It consisted of corn bread, bacon and eggs, fried cabbage, and baked yams. The dessert was stewed plums and cookies. I gave her the coffee as promised, for which she was profuse in her thanks. As we prepared to leave, I took her aside and said to her, "Now, if you will tell me where that drove of hogs is that came through here a few days ago, I will give you two pounds more of coffee." She hesitated a moment and then said, "And you won't never tell who told you'" "Never," said I. "Well, then," said she, "I'll tell ye. I know jist whar they be cause my ole man he hope to drove 'em frum Booneville. You go down the road suthin like two mile and you'll see a lane what turns off ter the right. Down that lane bout a mile is a openin whar they usened to be a plantation. Thars where, they hev a heap of corn, and thars whar them hogs be." I gave her the coffee and, telling her we would not go for the hogs for a few days, we started back toward Booneville. After traveling a short distance, I

selected three men to remain with me. I then ordered the other three men to ride posthaste to the column and report to Captain Burton, giving him a written message which I had prepared. In the message, I had told the captain of the finding of the hogs and suggested their cremation. I also suggested that a company of the boys would be sufficient for the work. I also told them to guide the company to the crossroads where we had taken lunch and that I would meet them there.

Sending the men away at once, I took the three men I had selected to remain with me and taking a by-road leading south, we soon found ourselves in a body of heavy timber through which we made our way slowly until we reached a point as near as I could judge not more than a mile from the old plantation . . . where the hogs were reported to be.

Here we dismounted and waited for darkness. At about 7 o'clock in the evening I left the three men, first agreeing with them upon certain signs and signals of recognition, and pushed out into the darkness to find, if possible, the old plantation. After traveling for half a mile or such, I suddenly came to an opening and after a careful examination, concluded that I had lost my bearings as the opening did not contain over 10 acres and there were no buildings of any kind in sight. I listened intently for some time but nothing could be heard but the hooting of the owls and the screams of the nighthawk. The night was clear and cold and I unstrapped my overcoat from my saddle and put it on. I moved slowly toward the east. Soon after leaving the opening, I was conscious of a peculiar sound coming from the direction in which I was moving. I stopped frequently to determine if possible its origin. For some time I was uncertain but as I drew nearer, the sound developed into a combination of hog squeals such as is often heard of cold nights when hogs are disposed to pile up and crowd each other for warmth. I was glad of the noise for two reasons. First, it told me that the object of my search was at hand and, second, the noise would drown out the sound of my approach.

Riding up to the edge of the opening, I left my horse tied, putting on him a nose bag in which was a little corn -- this to keep him interested during my absence so that he would not get lonesome and whinny.

I moved quietly into the opening, keeping in the shadow of a fence until I reached the corral. I was standing looking at the mass of porkers as they steamed and crowded and squealed. I did not hear the approach of anyone but suddenly felt the hand of a man laid on my shoulder from

behind. I sprang forward and put my hand in my pocket for a revolver that I had there for emergencies when the man said, “Now, Bill, I didn’t mean to skeer ye, ‘n the d--d hogs made so much fuss yer didn’t hear me comin up. But say, Bill, I was jest thinkin I’d like ter drap a d--d Yank like you did an git er overcoat like that un. I’ll hev ter hev one ef hit gits much colder, an say, Bill the Cap was a tellin me jist now as how ole man Sikes told him thet thar wus er lot uf Yanks to his house ter day er lookin’ fer these hogs and they tried ter get his ole woman ter tell em whar they wus at, but Sikes sed as how they didn’t git nuthin out’n her. But Mis Sikes sed as how the Yanks sed they was a comin back in a few days ter find the hogs. Cap sez they won’t cause he allows ter start em out frum here jist as soon es the Major gits back with the men an he reckons tha’l git here bout termorrer night. Jist think of hit Bill, spose them Yanks what wuz up to Sikes Corner had hev come down here yesterday an found these hogs an only us four here, they’d hev gut us an the hogs too. Wal, Bill, say I’m powerful cold, think I’ll go up ter the house and git a quilt er suthin ter put round me. Hit’l be gittin colder an colder; wisht I hed bout er quart uv red eye, but Cap he’s gut hit all in his room, an he’s layin thar snorin in his warm bed while us uns is out here in the cold. Cus the luck eny how. I’ll be back in a minit.” And, so saying, my loquacious friend turned on his heel and walked away. I followed slowly, keeping him in view until he entered the house. I waited outside until he came out with an old blanket over his shoulders and passed on in the direction from which we had come.

After he had gone I walked into the house. I had a bunch of matches with me and, lighting one occasionally, I was able to make quite a satisfactory examination of the premises. I satisfied myself that there was but one man in the house. Making my way as rapidly as caution would permit to my horse, I mounted and rode quickly back to the place where I had left my men. I had but little difficulty in finding them as they had built a fire for comfort. I told what I had discovered and then laid before them a scheme I had in mind to capture those men at the plantation. They readily assented to my plan and we proceeded at once to carry it into execution. We rode hastily back to the vicinity of the plantation and, dismounting, we carefully approached. I left the three men behind a smokehouse about a hundred yards from the residence and crept softly up to the building. All was quiet. Entering, I again satisfied myself that the

house was unoccupied except by the one sleeper called “Cap”. Returning to my men I had them get busy in putting all kinds of dry stuff that they could find under the front porch of the house ready to be ignited quickly. Having finished this job, we quietly entered the house and made our way to the room occupied by the sleeping “Cap”. Opening the door softly we approached the bed and stood over the sleeping man. We had found a tallow dip in the kitchen as we came in and I directed one of my men to light it, which he did. Holding the revolver in the face of the sleeping man, I had the light brought so that we could have a good look at our victim. He was a large man with bushy red whiskers and hair. Notwithstanding the light which shown in his face, he slept soundly on. I leaned forward so as to be able to smell his breath and was soon in possession of the secret of his deep slumber. His breath told the tale. He had been drinking. Seizing him by the shoulder I shouted, “Cap - - Cap.” He slowly opened his eyes. I said, “Captain, you are a prisoner; don’t make any trouble or this gun might go off.” Taking the captain’s right hand I proceeded to loop a piece of cotton rope around his wrist. As I did so he said in a trembling voice, “Be ye goin to tie me?” As I brought his left hand over and made it fast I said, “Yes, Cap, we have a lot to do and it will be much to our advantage to have you in a condition where you will make no trouble. Of course, if you prefer it we can shoot you, and then we’ll be dead sure you will make no trouble.” “Oh, don’t shoot me, don’t shoot me, please,” cried the captain. “I’ll shore make no trouble.” I completed the task of tying our prisoner and, taking him to the rear of the house, I left him in care of one of the men while we went to the front and set fire to the kindling we had placed there under the porch. It soon flared up into a bright flame. We hid ourselves, two of us on each side of the house, and awaited developments. We had not long to wait as we soon saw the man with the blanket over his shoulders running toward the house. As he came up he threw aside the blanket and dashed onto the front porch and entered the house shouting, “Cap, Cap, ther house is afire! Cap - - Cap get out’n thar -- get out’n thar.” A moment later, he came dashing out of the front door with a large water bucket, ran around the corner of the house, passing very near my comrade, and went to the well nearby. The well was rigged with an old-fashioned sweep. Attaching the bucket to the rope, he lowered it into the well. While he was in the effort to sink it, I directed the man with me to make him prisoner while I kept watch for

anyone else that might approach. My man stepped quickly to the side of his unsuspecting victim and, placing a revolver to his head, demanded his surrender. The Reb's surprise was complete, so much so that he let go the rope and the empty bucket came up with a bang. He surrendered without a struggle and was marched to the rear and tied as the captain was. We still had two more men to account for but we were not kept long in suspense. We soon heard a man running up the road from the direction of Sikes Corners. This proved to be the man for whom I had been taken earlier in the evening. He was about my size and wore a heavy U.S. Cavalry overcoat. As he came up to the house and saw the whole front in flame he threw off his overcoat and ran around the west side of the house and entered the side door. He soon returned with a piece of rubber hose and, going to an outbuilding which I had supposed to be a smokehouse, he threw open the door and connected the hose at the bottom of what proved to be a rain water tank, and, turning the faucet, began playing a stream on the fire. He was so intensely interested that he did not observe the two men who were so quietly coming up behind him, nor did he notice them until one of them thrust a revolver in his face and ordered him to surrender. Of course, he at once complied. We now had three of them but where was the fourth? The fire had now enveloped the entire front of the building and was casting a bright light over the place for quite a distance.

While we were debating whether or not to leave with the men we already had, we heard the door of a cabin to the right of the house shut with a slam and, looking in that direction, we saw our fourth man come at full speed toward the burning house. He had nothing on except a cotton shirt. He had evidently been suddenly aroused by the bright light of the burning building and, without stopping to put on his clothes, was coming pell-mell for the scene of disaster. Close up to the house on the west side it was still dark and two of us were standing watching our man. He was evidently blinded by the bright light of the fire for he ran directly up against us before he saw us. As I held a revolver in his face, I said, "My friend, it don't look well for a man to be running around in his shirt--you might be taken for a lunatic; with your permission, we will accompany you to your apartments and you can make your toilet before taking your departure with us." He looked at me with an astonished stare and said, "How?" We turned him about and took him to the cabin and hurried him

into his clothes. When he was in a presentable condition, we hurried him to his companions and then started for Sikes Corners.

It was now about 1 o'clock and I felt sure that Captain Burton and his troopers should be there as they had had an abundance of time to reach the place appointed. The building was now in full blaze and, if they were at the crossroads, they could not fail to see the light of the fire. I argued that when they saw it they would conclude that we were in some way responsible for it and would perhaps begin an investigation. My conclusions proved to be correct for we had not proceeded more than a half mile until we met a squad of our men. When they saw us, they stopped and someone shouted, "Halt--who goes there?" I immediately replied--"Friends with the countersign." The challenge came promptly, "Advance and give the countersign." I at once rode forward and found a squad of about 20 men of the 4th Iowa under command of a lieutenant. I rode up and gave the countersign and then told the lieutenant that we had four prisoners and were on our way to meet Captain Burton at the Corners. He told me that Captain Burton and the rest of the company had been at the Corners for more than an hour, that the captain was very much annoyed when arriving there that he did not find us; that when they had seen the light of the fire, the captain had sent him and his squad out to investigate. We all hurried on to the Corners. When we arrived I at once sought out the captain and reported the whole matter to him. He listened attentively and when I had finished said, "Simmons, you are a good one, sure! Turn your prisoners over to Lieutenant Kelsey, the officer who met you, instruct him to send them at once to the main column under a guard of six men, and then return to me as I wish to consult you regarding further operations." I obeyed his orders and on returning found the captain had waked up the people in the road house and ordered breakfast for three -- Captain Hansen of Co. B, 4th Iowa Cavalry, who was in command of the company that Captain Burton had brought out, was with him. We went upstairs into a room that had been prepared for us and immediately began our consultation. The men had been ordered to feed their horses, eat their breakfast, and be ready in an hour to march, as I had told the captain that there was no time to lose. Captain Burton said that he had submitted my suggestion regarding the cremation of the hogs to General Grearson and that the general had approved it. "But," said the captain, "the details are what trouble me. How are we to burn five hundred

hogs within any reasonable time? Captain Hansen, have you any suggestions?"

Captain Hansen replied that it looked like a week's job to him -- that he thought the only thing to do would be to kill the hogs and leave them to rot. "Now, Simmons," said Captain Burton, "you suggested the cremation of the hogs -- how would you propose to do it?"

I then laid before them a plan of operation which I said I believed would not require more than six hours at most to finish the job. When I had finished, they both admitted that they believed it could be done and Captain Burton announced his intention to carry out my plan. "And now, Simmons, you are to be Master of Details and Captain Hansen will see that your ideas are put into execution."

Breakfast was announced and we went down to the dining room. We had an excellent breakfast considering the place and conditions, After breakfast the troops were put in motion and we proceeded at once to the plantation where the hogs were. On arriving we put out a guard in various directions and went immediately to the work in hand. There were a number of corrals and yards about the one in which the hogs were confined. These were torn down and made into 10 platforms each about 20 feet square and two feet high. When these were all completed, I had two men set to work splitting kindling wood and fixing it under the platforms so that the platforms could be fired when all was ready. The men were then ordered to shoot the hogs. They were drawn up in line on two sides of the corral and in a few minutes there was not a living hog on the place. The fence was then thrown down and with four men to a hog -- one to each leg -- in less than an hour the entire drove of hogs was piled upon the platforms ready for cremation. The torches were applied and in a short time, the smell of burning bristles and hog flesh burdened the air. As the heat increased, the lard began to fry out and heat became intense. It was a sight such as few persons ever beheld. Great towers of flame and smoke rose to great height in the still morning air. The heat was hardly endurable at a distance of 100 yards from the fire. Everything inflammable on the place was soon ignited and when we mounted and rode away, not a building, shed, crib, or pen but what was in process of destruction. Over $10,000 worth of property which would have been used to prolong the great struggle was, in a few moments, converted into smoke and ashes. Was not this wrong?- - you will ask. Wrong? Yes, of course, it was wrong

and so is everything else that enters into human conflicts. General Sherman's laconic expression, covers the entire ground -- "War is Hell!"

We reached the main column late that night and without waiting for anything, I rolled up in my blanket and almost instantly fell asleep. I was never more thoroughly exhausted in my life. I knew nothing until the column was in motion the next morning when I was awakened by one of the men who said that if I wanted to eat anything, I would have to do so at once at the rear as the rear guard would soon be along. I ate a hasty meal and then reported to Captain Burton. The captain did not seem cordial but in a cool distant sort of way said he believed General Grearson wished to see me. I immediately rode to the front and, as I saluted the general, I said, "Captain Burton informed me that you wished to see me - - I am here, sir, at your service." "Mr. Simmons," said he, "I wish you to ride with me for a while. I want you to give me every detail regarding the destruction of those hogs and the incidents that led up to it. I could not get much information from Captain Burton except that which pertained to his part of the affair. I want to know what part you played in it." I then gave him a full and complete account of the matter, not forgetting to give due credit to the three men who were with me, as well as to the efficient work of the company that worked in the cremation of the hogs. The general, who had listened with marked attention to the whole narrative turned to me and said, "Mr. Simmons, I want to compliment you upon the very efficient manner in which you have carried out every detail in this remarkable piece of work and when I make my report of this expedition, I shall take great pleasure in giving you honorable mention. You deserve great credit, sir, and I thank you! You may now report to your company and when needed I shall be glad to avail myself of your valuable services." I met General Grearson many times after that and he always greeted me warmly, but while I met Captain Burton frequently during this raid, he never recognized me in any way. There was something about me that Captain Burton did not like. What it was, I do not know. I was never called for again during the raid and thereafter my services were confined wholly to company duty. This, however, was not without incident, and a few of the more interesting of these will now be related.

Up to the time we reached Tupelo, we had met with no opposition but here, we were overtaken by General Forest who had followed us with his cavalry. Our progress had necessarily been slow as we were raiding

the country on each side of the railroad for a distance of 10 miles, destroying everything that could possibly be made use of by the Confederates. Burning railroad bridges and tearing up tracks were everyday occurrences. But here at Tupelo, the monotony was broken by a sudden attack in the rear by General Forest's cavalry. We were compelled to turn about and give him battle. It was but a short job to send him and his half-starved troopers scurrying to the north. Our ability to do this was largely due to the fact that the 10th Missouri had two Mountain Howitzers, carried on the backs of two mules. This was known as the Jackass Battery. It was but the work of a few minutes to unship these guns and send a few shells into the ranks of our pursuers, when they were at once panic-stricken and precipitately fled. We came to look upon our Jackass Battery as the most efficient arm of service with us on this raid. After a few attacks upon our rear with disastrous results, Forest kept at a safe distance but still hung upon our rear.

Reaching the Yellowbushy River, we found ourselves confronted by a serious obstacle. General Goldsen, of the Confederate Army, stationed at West Point, 40miles south, had sent a force of three regiments of infantry and a battery of artillery to this point and had taken up a strong position on the north side of the river. He had planted his guns to cover the only approach to the bridge and was fully prepared to successfully dispute our further progress. But here the wonderful strategy of General Grearson came into play. Leaving a single company of the 2nd Wisconsin Cavalry to skirmish with the Golden force, General Grearson, guided by some loyal citizens who volunteered their services, took the main force two miles up the river where there was an island in the river and, crossing over to the island by a ford, made a safe crossing to the south side. Moving quietly down the river on that side, aided by the darkness which had now favored him, he gained a position within a half mile of the bridge. Here 20 men under the direction of Captain Burton were supplied with 10 canteens each -- these canteens were filled with kerosene. With this peculiar weapon of warfare, Captain Burton and his men stealthily approached the bridge. When they reached it, they were challenged by the guard -- then with a rush, Burton and his men made for the bridge. The guard discharged his gun and precipitately fled when Burton and his men dashed on to the bridge emptying their canteens of kerosene over the wooden structure and setting it on fire. Before Goldsen and his forces had

realized what had taken place, the bridge was burning furiously precluding the possibility of their extinguishing the flames. When the bridge was in flames, the company left to skirmish with Golden in the front, withdrew and followed the main force to the south side of the river. This left us a clear road to Egypt Station and we arrived before that place at 4 o'clock a.m. The pickets were driven in and a strong skirmish line advanced while the rest of the force fed their horses and themselves.

After breakfast the skirmishers were withdrawn and the main force advanced and invested the place. There was a good strong stockade near the railroad depot which was manned by a small force of Rebs and about two thousand galvanized Confeds. This latter term will need explanation. Union soldiers sometimes, when taken prisoners, would, rather than go to Andersonville or Libby prison, agree to do garrison duty for the Confederacy- -these were called galvanized Confeds. We never had a very exalted opinion of this class of men and they were treated as prisoners of war whenever captured. I have no idea that one of these men fired a shot at us, but nevertheless the garrison gave us a warm reception. Our regiment was in reserve when we first attacked the place but after the engagement had been going on for an hour, we were ordered in. We marched in column to the south end of the town, then column left until we crossed the railroad then on right into line and advanced through a thick grove toward the stockade. As we emerged from the grove, we came in full view of the stockade at a distance of not more than 100 yards. We found ourselves immediately under fire. There was in our immediate front, a high stake and ridered fence. While each fourth man dismounted to let down the fence, the fire of the enemy was galling. The color sergeant held the Guidon, at which the hottest fire seemed to be directed. He was shot through the right arm but shifted the Guidon to his left hand and passed it to the next man, who had hardly received it when he was shot through the index finger of the right hand which grasped the Guidon staff. He passed the Guidon to the next man and his horse was at once shot in the head and horse and rider went down but the brave fellow held the Guidon up until it was seized by the next man. The fence now being open, we dashed through and went into column by the right for about 100 yards then column left until our left rested at the fence when we went on left into line, thus facing the stockade from the east. Here the regiment was dismounted, every fourth man holding horses, while the rest advanced

on foot toward the stockade. Colonel Funk, who was in command, was walking backward steadying the men as they advanced when he was struck by a bullet in the back. He fell forward on his face and was immediately picked up and carried to the rear. Major Ball at once took command and the regiment continued to advance. When within 20 yards of the stockade, the Confederate flag was pulled down and a white flag took its place and the fight was over. When we took account of stock our regiment had lost four men killed and 12 wounded. The total loss was 17 killed and 43 wounded. There were 2370 prisoners. Before we had our prisoners fairly in hand, a couple of flat cars pushed by a locomotive were seen coming up the line from the South. On each of the cars was a piece of artillery. Arriving within about a half a mile of the town, the train stopped and they began to make ready to shell us. In the meantime, General Grearson had sent the 4th Iowa to make a circuit to the left with the hope of their being able to get below them, thus cutting them off and capturing them. Unfortunately, the rebels saw them before they had reached a point where they could do effective work and the train was hastily withdrawn and the effort to capture them was unsuccessful. We had now reached the end of our journey southward. We were facing a heavy force of Confederates at West Point only about 12 miles south of us. We could not return as every bridge and all supplies had been, destroyed on our march southward and we were cumbered with a crowd of prisoners, numbering nearly as many as our entire force. General Grearson determined to strike across the country and reach some point on the Mississippi Central Railroad. The prisoners were put in charge of the 2nd Wisconsin, the dead were buried, all the wounded that could ride were taken along, and the rest, 13 in number, were left in charge of a surgeon. All this took time and it was near 3 o'clock in the afternoon of the following day before the column was ready to move. We reached Houston, 12 miles west of Egypt Station, but long before we reached this place we were being harassed by Forest's Cavalry on our right and on our left by a cavalry force from West Point. We went into camp in a little valley north of the town about a mile. Our orders were to loosen our horses' girths to feed and get our suppers. A heavy picket line was thrown out and we were almost immediately engaged with the enemy. A heavy picket fire was kept up until dark after which the firing ceased except the occasional shots.

The little valley where we were was almost entirely surrounded with high steep hills and from nearly all of these, after darkness came on, we could see the picket fires of the enemy, revealing the fact that we were completely surrounded. To us the situation looked serious. Our men were worn and exhausted by constant marching and the fighting of the past two days. We were cumbered with a host of prisoners and contrabands all to be looked after and provided for and surrounded by a force far superior to our own in point of numbers. The outlook was far from encouraging. We sat about our campfires and ate our suppers with serious faces. Desperate fighting or surrender seemed inevitable. At about 9 o'clock a ray of hope broke on our night of anxiety. General Grearson passed along our line and gave us encouragement. I well remember his words as he passed along our line, "If I can have the implicit obedience of every man in this command tonight, we are safe -- otherwise, we are lost. Obey orders!" The first order came in less than an hour. "Gather all the fence rails and dry wood possible and build your fires." We worked with a will and soon had great fires burning. Then came the order, "Fall in," -- we fell in. Then the captains rode along the lines and instructed the men to lead their horses with their right hands, holding the saber close to their bodies with the left in order that there would be no unnecessary noise. Then in a few minutes, the order, "File right -- march." We began to move. Stopping and starting for a time, we at last got into a steady movement. As we moved steadily and quietly on, we could see the picket fires of the enemy, one on our right and one on our left, high above us but no more than a quarter of a mile apart. We realized that we were passing through a deep gulch between two of the enemy's picket posts. In fact we could see the men sitting and standing about their fires, probably talking of what they would do for us in the morning. While we could see them, it was impossible for them to see us down in the deep gorge through which we were so stealthily making our way. By a bend in the gulch we soon lost sight of the picket fires and in a short time we were ordered to mount and fall in by twos. Then came the order, "Trot march" and then "Gallop march" and away we went over a fair road to the westward. On, on through the darkness of the night sometimes at a walk, sometimes at a trot, and, whenever the nature of road would admit, at a gallop. Just as the grey of morning began to show in the East, our advance swept into the town of Winona, on the Mississippi Central railroad, 30 miles from Houston where

the Confederate Cavalry were still watching the little valley where we were supposed to be but were not. The small garrison at Winona were taken completely by surprise and surrendered without a struggle. Here we captured six locomotives and their accompanying train of cars, many of them loaded with supplies for the Confederate army. All were destroyed together with warehouses of munitions of war and a vast quantity of corn. By noon we were again moving southward repeating the work of burning bridges behind us on railroad and wagon road. We moved steadily on our march of devastation and destruction for about 40 miles down the Central Railroad when we turned abruptly to the right. We were compelled to do this on account of the presence in our immediate front of a large force of Confederates that had been concentrated at Mechanicsville to dispute our further progress. Our road now lay almost due west, in which direction at a distance of about 20 miles lay the town of Franklin. Here General Wert Adams of the Confederate army had taken up a strong position to intercept our march to Vicksburg. General Grearson instructed General Osbourne, who was in command of our brigade to move toward Franklin while he, with the prisoners, took a side road to Ebinezer, a town about 10 miles southwest from Franklin. General Osbourne was ordered to advance upon Wert Adams' position at Franklin but not to bring on a general engagement but to skirmish with Adams until he could move his force to the westward of the town, then to withdraw hastily to Ebinezer and force Adams to fight us outside his own chosen position. We advanced upon Franklin about 8 o'clock in the morning, the 2nd U.S. Colored Cavalry in the advance, then the 4th Iowa followed by the 10th Missouri with our regiment in the rear.

As we came near Franklin our advance guard was driven back upon the main column when we went right into line. As we came into this formation the Rebs retired into Franklin and were drawn up in line along the single street of the town. General Osbourne ordered the 2nd U.S. Colored to charge their position, which they did in gallant style. The Rebs retreated in column to the east at the first fire of the 2nd. In order to follow them, it became necessary for the regiment to go into column which they did very quickly and soon had the Rebs flying down the road to the east toward the bridge at a gallop, not a quarter of a mile in advance of the 2nd. As the 2nd approached the bridge they went into column of twos in order to cross. Just as the head of the black column of the 2nd reached the farther

end of the bridge, the Rebs opened a murderous fire upon them from a battery of four pieces of artillery that had been concealed in the timber on either side of the road at a distance of less than 600 yards. The column of brave Negroes melted like tissue paper in the flame of a lamp. General Osbourne, seeing the trap into which he had been drawn, ordered the 4th Iowa to the right of the road from the town to the bridge, and the 10th Missouri to the left. The two regiments went sweeping into position and were soon at the river which proved to be no obstacle to these veteran raiders. They immediately plunged into the river. Some horses were compelled to swim, but all gained the opposite shore and, regaining their formation, pressed on toward the enemy. The four guns had ceased their murderous fire upon the 2nd on the bridge, and they were in full retreat by the time the 4th and 10th had gained the east bank of the river. The bugle sounded the recall and none too soon as another quarter of a mile would have brought them into an ambush of Adams infantry of which there were three Texas regiments. The 4th and 10th recrossed the river, followed closely by Adams' cavalry, and then began a duel between the two opposing forces with the river between them. It did not last long, however, as the superior fire of our veteran troopers soon made it too warm for the Rebs and they sullenly withdrew.

The bridge over the river was a fearful sight. It was literally piled up with horses and men that had been killed and wounded by the terrible withering, enlaiding fire of the enemy. General Osbourne, when he saw he had been drawn into a trap and that an engagement was inevitable, had drawn our regiment - - which was in reserve that day - - up in line in the town and prepared to have a line of defense in the event the 4th and 10th were driven back. He had also sent a message to General Grearson apprising him of the condition of affairs. For this purpose, he ordered Captain Hayes of our company to select eight of his best men and horses to take the message to General Grearson.

I was one of the eight selected and we started at once in command of a sergeant. We had difficulty in getting out of town as we knew nothing of the road or where it was. At last, having tried two or three different routes and failed to get anywhere in particular, I saw a Negro boy, about 16 years old, standing in front of a mansion back from the road. I opened the front gate and rode up to the boy. I asked him if he knew where Ebinezer was. He replied that he did as he went there frequently. I rode

up to the porch and ordered the boy to get on behind me. He did so reluctantly, but when I assured him that no harm would come to him if he piloted us to Ebinezer, he was satisfied to go. We pushed rapidly on after we got on the right road and soon found ourselves at the summit of the divide between the Yellow- bushy and the Tombigby Rivers.

As we gained the summit and looked down the road toward Ebinezer, now about five miles distant, we saw a number of Confederate cavalrymen in the road ahead of us not more than half a mile away. We halted and held a short consultation. The sergeant was in favor of returning as he said we did not know the number of the enemy in front of us. But I argued that there could not be many of them as all the available men had been called in to make up the force of Wert Adams, and, as we had appeared at the top of the hill they would suppose us to be the advance of a larger force and would get out of the way as rapidly as possible. The Confederates had now withdrawn from sight and I suggested that we charge down the hill, every one of us yelling at the top of his voice, and make them believe there were 100 of us, if possible. This plan was finally adopted. Relieving my horse of the extra load he had been carrying, by leaving the Negro boy to make his way home, we filled the chambers of our carbines and revolvers with cartridges and, everything being in readiness, we started down the hill at a gallop and raised a fearful yell as we dashed ahead. When we reached the place where we had seen the Confederates, we found ourselves in front of a large plantation house and about 50 Confederate cavalrymen, going at full speed for the timbers on the other side of the pasture. We sat on our horses and watched them until they disappeared in the friendly cover of the woods. We then pushed on to Ebinezer and found that the main column had passed through the town and the rear guard was just leaving. This compelled us to leave the road, for the main column could not get out of our way, and progress was necessarily slow. It was nearly 3 o'clock p.m. before we reached the head of the column, where we found General Grearson. Riding up to him, we delivered our message. He read it slowly and said nothing. The sergeant said, "Is there any return message?" "No, sir," said the general, "General Osbourne has my orders. You can go into camp at any time as the column will halt in a few minutes for the night and you and your men are doubtless very tired." We immediately took advantage of the suggestion and went into camp. At about 3 o'clock the next morning, the force under

General Osbourne came up with the main column and bivouacked for the rest of the night. General Osbourne's loss at Franklin was 63 killed and wounded, all colored but two. Wert Adams' loss was never known by us but must have been considerable -- 11 were found dead in town and between town and the bridge. This loss of life might and would have been avoided had General Osbourne obeyed orders, but his desire to gain notoriety overcame his judgment and he thus became the cause of much unnecessary slaughter. He was censured in the most emphatic terms and took no active part during the rest of the Raid. We were now passing through a region of country over which the Union and Confederate armies had marched and countermarched until it was as bare of supplies as the Sahara. Mechanicsville was on the north bank of the Black River. Here quite a force of Confederates had been concentrated. General Grearson marched straight for the place and on reaching it threw out a heavy skirmish line. The force in the town consisted of two regiments of cavalry and when our skirmishers pressed them they retired across the bridge with a view evidently of repeating the tactics of Wert Adams at Franklin, but they did not have General Osbourne to deal with but one of the keenest cavalry raiders that the great Civil War developed. General Grearson had anticipated this move upon the part of his wily enemy and even before the enemy was crossing the bridge, the coal-oil squad was ready and when the enemy retired across the bridge, the coal-oil squad was already on its way to a point about a quarter of a mile away up the river from which they could approach the bridge without being seen by the enemy. The last of the enemy had not left the bridge 10 minutes before the coal-oil squad was there and doing its sure and destructive work. The whole of the west end of the bridge was saturated and set on fire. When the wooden structure was in full blaze, General Grearson turned with his skirmishers and followed the main column which was already several miles on its way toward Vicksburg, now 40 miles away.

The next morning breakfast consisted of cornmeal only and we had at least two days of marching between us and more food. General Grearson selected four of the best horses in the command and mounted them with four of the lightest men we had and sent them posthaste into Vicksburg for provisions. The boys rode to Vicksburg by 4 o'clock that afternoon and in less than two hours, 20 ambulances were loaded with provisions and on their way to meet us. We met than about 9 o'clock the

following morning. We were nearly famished as the last of our cornmeal had been eaten at noon the day before. We soon had a good meal of bacon, delicated potatoes hardtack and coffee and went on our way rejoicing. We reached Vicksburg at about 4 o'clock that evening in the midst of a drenching rain, notwithstanding which nearly all of the troops in the place were out to give hearty welcome to Grearson and his Raiders who had in 32 days marched 650 miles through the heart of the Confederacy; had destroyed over 40 railroad bridges and 20 other bridges; captured and destroyed six locomotives and over 100 cars; destroyed Confederate stores and supplies valued at over a million dollars, and brought in 2270 prisoners with a loss of less than 100 men, killed, wounded, and missing. The annals of the Civil War show no more brilliant achievement. I have always been proud that I had a part in it.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE OSBOURNE RAID

After a few days rest at Vicksburg, we were shipped on transports to Memphis where we went into camp near Fort Pickering. But we were not long to remain at rest. Toward the last of February, General Osbourne was ordered to take his brigade, consisting of the 10th Missouri, 4th Iowa, 2nd Wisconsin, 11th Illinois, and the colored 2nd U.S. to the vicinity of Camden, Arkansas, and hold General Price of the Confederate army there, while a movement was made against Shrevesport, then occupied by the Confederate Kirby Smith. To carry out these orders, we were shipped on transports to a point on the Arkansas side of the river, some 80 miles below Memphis. We landed at the point indicated and at once took up our line of march inland. Here we were delayed for 25 hours in crossing the Bayou as there was no way of crossing but by one flat boat, and we worked that steadily until we were all across. Then a day's marching brought us to the swamps bordering Bayou Bartholomew on the east. When we reached this swamp, General Osbourne gave us a part of the afternoon and all night to rest but had us in the saddle by daylight in the morning. He drew us up in a hollow square and made a speech to us. He said, "Boys, since the war began there have been three efforts made to penetrate the Bayou Bartholomew by cavalry at this point, all of which have failed for the reason that they have all tried to cross in column formation. These failures have satisfied me that it cannot be done in that way. I therefore determined to let you go as you please, every man for himself. The Bayou is 20 miles due west from here. I expect to reach it before dark. I shall hope to see you all there tomorrow. Break ranks - - march." So saying, he wheeled his horse and plunged into the swamp.

There were four of us who agreed to stay together and help each other if help should be needed. We soon learned the wisdom of this peculiar order. The swamp was full of quagmires and quicksands and, while a few might be able to pick their way so as to avoid disaster, no column of cavalry could have possibly penetrated that swamp for any considerable distance as the rear would have found itself floundering hopelessly in the mud and quicksand. As it was, we lost several valuable horses and equipment. When a horse would go down in a quicksand hole and we found it impossible to extricate him, he was simply shot and would

sink quickly out of sight. If I remember correctly, we lost 10 horses and two men in that horrible swamp. These last were probably alone and got caught with their horses in the quicksand and met a terrible death by suffocation. The party that was with me, reached the Bayou at about 4 o'clock in the afternoon. We had walked over half the way in order to save our horses as much as possible. When we reached the Bayou, we found about 100 men who had got through in advance of us. The rest of the force came straggling in in twos and threes until the next morning, when we were all together again with the exceptions noted. We remained on the bank of the Bayou for two days, hoping that our lost comrades might possibly get through, but we never saw them again. While thus waiting, it was learned that a small sidewheel steamer was some 10 miles up the Bayou loading corn. General Osbourne sent for me and put me in charge of a squad of 20 men to make an investigation of the rumor. We left camp at an early hour on the morning of the second day after our arrival at the Bayou, and at 8 o'clock we came in sight of the steamer as she lay moored to the bank. We watched her for a while from our place of concealment and finally decided to make a dash for her. Moving quietly out on the road, we formed in column of fours and dashed up the road at double-quick time. There was a guard of eight men in charge of the steamer and they were at breakfast in a house near the landing. They were taken completely by surprise and surrendered without a struggle. Putting the prisoners under guard, I at once took charge of the steamer and as she was about loaded, I ordered the engineer to get up steam. By noon we cast off the lines and steamed down the Bayou. I remained on board with four men while the rest of the men with the prisoners in charge rode along the bank of the Bayou to be on hand in case they were wanted. At about three o'clock we reached headquarters and tied up the steamer to the bank. General Osbourne at once came on board and I gave him a full report of the capture of the steamer. There was a fairly good cabin on the vessel of which the general immediately took possession and for the next week the steamer was Brigade Headquarters.

We moved slowly down the Bayou until we reached Barstrap in Morehouse Parish, Louisiana, where we used the steamer for a ferryboat and then set her on fire. We struck out across the country for Camden, then about 80 miles distant. After two days of travel through a fine country, we were met by a messenger from the force that had started up

Red River to attack Smith at Shrevesport with the information that the expedition had been abandoned and that we were to return to Memphis. We were greatly disappointed as we were in a country where supplies were abundant and we could have put Camden in a state of siege and lived on the country for months. General Osbourne resolved to take a different route in returning to Memphis and we began our return march in a northwesterly direction. We were moving slowly, reluctant to leave the fine country through which we were traveling. On the second day after we started to return, I was sent out on a foraging expedition with instructions to gather what hams, bacon and chickens I could and take them to a certain crossroads that was described to me. I had a squad of eight men and four pack mules.

We rode to the left of the column and were soon several miles away from it. We were quite successful and by three o'clock p.m. we had our mules loaded down with provisions and started for the main road and to the place indicated for leaving the supplies. When we reached the crossroads, we found that the column had passed on, the rear guard having been gone some time. My orders were without qualification and I had no discretion in the matter. Our mules were very heavily packed and could carry their load but little further, so I ordered them unpacked and, stationing a guard about 200 yards out on the four roads centering there, we proceeded to get our supper. After eating we relieved the guard and prepared to spend the night as best we could. About 8 o'clock I visited the outposts and, while talking to the men on the road opposite the one upon which we had come to the corners, we heard someone down the road who was evidently driving cattle -- we could hear his "Who-Ha-Tige" and "Jee Buck." We soon discovered that the party was approaching for we could hear the creaking of the wagon. I told the guard to stay out of sight until the rig should reach his station and then to halt it. In the meantime, I slipped into the brush and moved quietly down the road until I was opposite the rig when I came out behind it on the road. I moved quickly to the rear end of the wagon and looked over the end gate. I saw nothing but a pile of quilts. The driver continued on his way with his "Whoa-Haw-Tige and Jee-Buck," until he reached the picket post when the guard suddenly stepped in front of him and shouted, "Halt!" The driver dropped his whip and turned to run; in doing so he ran squarely up against me. I seized him by the collar and tripping him

with my foot threw him on his back. He arose in bewilderment but made no further effort to get away. In the meantime, the cattle had been stopped by the guard several yards up the road. I asked the driver where he was going. For some time he seemed unable to find his tongue but at last stammered out, "I say, Mister, be you a Yank?" I assured him that I was and that if he answered my questions promptly and truthfully, he had nothing to fear; but if he did not, I should at once proceed to cook him and eat him. He assured me that he would answer me and would tell the truth. "Well," said I, "I asked you a moment ago where you were going." "I was gwine up ter Uncle Jim's." "What are you going up there for?" "Mam's sick up thar an sent fer Mimy ter cum up thar an take care uv her." "Well," said I, "Why did you not bring Mimy along?" "I did," said he, "she's thar in the wagon asleep." "Come on," said I, taking him by the shoulder, "I want to see if you are telling the truth. We went up toward the wagon but before we reached it, I heard the voices of the guard and a female in conversation. The guard had climbed into the wagon to investigate and in pulling the quilts about had uncovered a human form. He had struck a match and was nearly paralyzed when he discovered that the form was that of a comely young woman sleeping soundly. He had at once covered the girl's body with a quilt and then, lighting another match, had shook the young lady into consciousness. She had been very much startled when her eyes opened and revealed the burly form of a uniformed Yankee soldier bending over her. She did not scream, however, but began calling for Bud, the driver. The guard had assured her that she would not be hurt and had descended from the wagon as I approached with the driver. The girl began calling, "Bud, oh Bud, whar be ye?" I told the driver to tell her that she was perfectly safe, that no harm would come to her. He proceeded to do so in this manner, "I say, Mimy, these here is Yanks an we uns is captured. Yo jest be good an make no fuss an they uns'l do usuns no harm." Mimy was pacified and, ordering the driver to drive on, we moved slowly up the road to the camp leaving the guard on duty at the picket post. Arriving at the crossroads I called one of the boys -- they were sleeping about the fire -- to assist me. The first one to respond was a man of my own company, Pete McFarland by name, a true son of Erin, but as good a soldier as ever wore the blue. He threw off his blanket and came forward. In coming up the road I had learned from the driver that his name was Bud Smith and the girl was his

sister, Jemimy. As Pete came forward, rubbing the sleep from his eyes, I said, “Mr. McFarland, I wish to introduce Mr. and Miss Smith who will be our guests for the night and, knowing your partiality for the ladies, I commit Miss Smith into your special care and shall hold you strictly responsible for her safety!” Pete came forward with the conventional movements of a Chesterfield. Removing his hat he bowed courteously to Miss Smith and said, “Miss Smith, sure and it gives me profound pleasure to meet yez and it is meself that’l be afther taking the best of care of yez an bad cess to the spalpeen that would be harmin a hair av your swate head sure I’d black the two eyes av him or me name isn’t Pete McFarland. So Miss Smith, ye’l be comin this way and I’ll be satin yez by the fire sure.” Then turning to the driver he looked him over and said, “It’s meself that don’t mind sayin that I’m not impressed with yez. Sure it’s a blatherskite that wud be having his swate sister out here at this time o’night where the blasted rebels stale her away. Sure it’s meself that thinks yed look better standin in the ranks av McColoughs Ragmuffins as a target fer Yankee bullets.” Having delivered himself thus, he again lifted his hat to Miss Smith and led her to the fire. Here he pulled a saddle up against a log and, throwing a blanket over both, he seated her in the most comfortable position possible to the conditions. Then stepping back he again raised his hat and said, “And coffee, Miss Smith?” She looked at him in wonderment, “Coffee--coffee? We uns haint had none uv that fer more than four year. Uv course I’d like some coffee.” Pete immediately proceeded to brew a cup of coffee for Miss Smith. I do not know but I have always suspected Pete of putting a little whisky in Miss Smith’s coffee for that young lady soon became very talkative and Pete was kept at his best to keep up with her and the conversation became decidedly interesting. What the final result might have been I cannot say but their conversation was suddenly interrupted. Down the road over which the column had passed some hours before, we heard the guard shouting, “Officer of the Guard!” I at once aroused the boys and ordered them to saddle the horses, saddling my own horse in the meantime. I stationed them across the road just back of the fire and then rode down the road to where the guard was still shouting, “Officer of the Guard!” On reaching the outpost I found the guard had halted a body of our own men and had refused to allow them to come forward without instruction. The officer in command of the squad was Lieutenant Colonel Barry,

acting Brigade Quartermaster. He was the same officer who had given me my instructions in the morning. When the column had reached the crossroads and he found that I had not yet reached that point, he had instructed an orderly to remain there with instructions for me to follow the column. The orderly had stayed until the rear guard had passed and then finding himself alone had followed the column into camp, which had been made about two miles down the road. At a late hour he had reported to the quartermaster that he had remained until after dark and as I did not appear he had come into camp to so report. The quartermaster had at once put himself at the head of a detail of men and started back in search of me. As we rode toward our camp I informed him of the fact that we were entertaining Mr. and Miss Smith and how they became our guests. Barry was greatly pleased when on reaching camp he found my four men drawn up in line of battle across the road prepared to fight or run as circumstances might require. Telling Mr. and Miss Smith that they could go their way to their "Uncle Jim's" we packed up our provisions and proceeded on our way to camp.

We took a somewhat different route from that traveled by the main column in order to avoid the mud. This road took us around the point of a high bluff overlooking the valley where the troops had gone into camp. When we reached this point a scene spread out before us of wonderful beauty. The full moon was just rising in the East -- shedding a sheen of light upon the placid water of the river that flowed at the foot of the bluff, while the bright lines of the campfires stretching out in regular order over the valley produced a picture of fascinating beauty such as one seldom has the privilege to behold.

While we stopped for a moment to contemplate the beautiful scene before us there suddenly arose a volume of song from the contraband camp which was just below us. Before retiring, the religious leaders among them had assembled them for worship. While we could not distinguish the words the melody was perfect. These poor dusky sons and daughters of toil had taken what of their earthly possessions they could carry and were leaving the only place they had known as home and were following the soldiers of the Union, out from under the taskmaster's lash to freedom. They were fleeing from the ills they had endured to those they knew not of but for them slavery was at an end and their songs of praise and thanksgiving were earnest and heartfelt. We reached camp about 10

o'clock and rolled up in our blankets and were soon asleep. The next few days were spent in making our way northward, but each day found our enemy in stronger force, hanging tenaciously on our rear. Day by day it became more difficult to drive him back and it became evident that something must be done or we would soon find ourselves in a pitched battle with a force equal to ours in point of numbers. General Osbourne determined to put Bayou Bartholomew between himself and the enemy, if possible, not wishing to take the chances and suffer the loss which would inevitably follow a battle. We received orders one evening to be ready with scouting parties of 10 men from each company to scour the country on each flank and gather all the axes, hatchets, saws, and augurs that could be found. We followed instructions and as a result had a large supply of tools on hand. The following day a Point was selected where the country along the road was open and where the enemy could be seen for a long distance if he should attempt to approach. Stationing a heavy guard on the road which was about a quarter of a mile from the Bayou, the rest of the force was taken to the bank of the Bayou and dismounted and ordered to cut down all the dead cottonwood trees from 8 to 14 inches in diameter that could be found. In less than half an hour more than 1,000 men were carrying out this order. The rest of the force were engaged in gathering this timber together. The trees after being cut down were logged off in eight four lengths, split in two and three holes bored in each, one in the center, and one at each end equidistant from the center hole. Smaller trees were cut and flattened on one side, three of these were laid out into the Bayou and then the split logs were laid across them and made fast by driving pins through the holes, thus pinning them firmly together. In this way a floating bridge was constructed. For the benefit of those who have never seen a southern Bayou, let it be said that the water in these Bayous is shallow except at the channel and where the water is shallow great cypress trees are growing, so that there is a forest of magnificent timbers growing out of the water of the Bayou. At the channel, however, the water is deep with quite a current running, and here and there are no trees. We experienced no difficulty in constructing our bridge where the water was shallow as we had bearings for it against the numerous trees in the Bayou, but when we reached the channel some difficulty was encountered but this difficulty was overcome by making ropes fast to the center of the bridge at the channel and then running them at angles up the stream and making

them fast to the trees on either side of the channel. I have been thus explicit in the description of this unique bridge as I believe it to have been the only one of the kind built during the war. On the second day of our bridge building, just as we were closing up the last few feet on the eastern side of the Bayou at about 3 o'clock p.m., the enemy suddenly made his appearance in heavy force. Our bugles sounded "boots and saddles" and in 20 minutes the whole body of bridge builders were in the saddle and had been transformed into a sturdy force of cavalry ready to meet the approaching enemy. Our pickets were driven in and heavy skirmishing began. Our force was soon in line of battle facing an enemy of more than equal numbers. General Osbourne sent the 2nd U.S. Colored which was on our right, forward under cover of a low line of hills to operate against the enemy's left. Seeing this move upon our part, the enemy swung around on his left and charged over the hills thinking to annihilate the 2nd. This exposed his right and rear and General Osbourne took instant advantage of the situation. The 4th Iowa and 10th Missouri were ordered to charge the enemy's right while the 2nd Wisconsin and the 11th Illinois were thrown into column and dashed down the road at double-quick speed and were soon in the rear of the enemy. Here we went on right into line and prepared to charge the enemy's rear. The Rebs had made a great blunder. They evidently expected to fall upon the 2nd U.S. Colored with their full force and anticipated an easy victory when they would sweep around and attack our right, but they did not know the mettle of the Colored troopers. Major Bates, who was in command of the 2nd, was a cavalry officer of marked ability -- when ordered forward on the right by the column, he had sent several scouts to his left and was at once advised when the enemy prepared to charge him. He at once threw his regiment into line and was ready when the first of the enemy appeared on the brow of the hill. The 2nd was armed with Spencer carbines and they poured such a deadly fire into their ranks long before they got to where their inferior weapons were effective that they were checked in their advance. Their line was finally halted and, seeing themselves surrounded on three sides, they broke in hopeless confusion. The rout was complete. They were followed for several miles and we were not troubled with them further. The enemy left over 100 dead and wounded on the field while not a man on our side was killed and but five were slightly wounded. The next morning we completed our floating bridge and by noon were all safely on the east side

of the Bayou Bartholomew. A party was then sent to the west end of the bridge and at that point began the destruction of one of the most unique bridges ever built for the passage of troops. It took nearly as long to destroy the bridge as it did to build it as but few men could work at a time.

Our journey from this point to the Mississippi River was without event but was exceedingly disagreeable as it was accomplished in mud, rain, and sleet. Many times we were drenched to the skin and at times nearly frozen in our saddles. Altogether it was one of the most disagreeable experiences of the war to me. It was a disastrous expedition and accomplished nothing. While we lost not a man by the enemy's bullets, we had 40 men drowned and smothered to death in the horrible quicksands and quagmires with which the country abounds. In due time we were picked up by some river transports and taken to Memphis where we arrived after an absence of 36 days.

For a month we lay near Fort Pickering, recuperating from the effects of the Osbourne Raid. It was now about the middle of April '65, and we were tiring of camp life when we received orders to get ready for a march to Meridian, Mississippi. While preparations were being made for the march, I was ordered to report to the Provost Marshal for special duty. I at once complied with the order. On arriving at Captain Wilson's quarters (Captain Wilson was still Provost Marshal at Memphis), I was greeted cordially by the captain who told me that he had a very pleasant duty for me to perform. I was to take some very noted prisoners from Memphis to Alton, Illinois, and turn them over to the authorities there. I was very much interested and surprised when I learned that these prisoners were my old friends Dr. Murdd and Bill Morgan and a fellow by the name of Carlin who was under sentence for burning the Memphis and Charleston depot some months before. My prisoners were under ball and chain and I had a detail of 18 men so that I had no fear of having any difficulty in safely landing the trio in the Alton Penitentiary. Murdd and Morgan remembered me well and had no hesitation in expressing their dislike for me, both of them refusing to shake hands with me.

My prisoners were soon ready for the start and under their heavy guard were taken on board the "Belle of Memphis", a steamer then plying between New Orleans and St. Louis. I made my prisoners as comfortable as possible and, dividing my squad into three reliefs, we were ready for our trip. Just as the gangplank was being taken in, another prisoner was

brought on board and given into my hand for safekeeping with instructions to leave him at Cairo with the Provost Marshal there. His crime was publishing treasonable literature. His name was Perkins, a very brainy fellow full of wit and good humor. He was placed with the other prisoners but was not put under ball and chain. Our trip was without incident until the night before we reached Cairo, when I was awakened by one of the guards who informed me that Perkins had disappeared. I arose immediately and a diligent search was made of the steamer but nothing could be found of the missing Perkins. On careful investigation, I learned that the six men on guard at the time of Perkins' disappearance had been derelict of duty as only two of them were on watch at the time, the other four being deeply interested in a game of poker. Perkins and one of the two who were actually on guard were on the starboard side of the steamer pacing backward and forward on the main deck. The mate informed me that at this time the steamer was running close into the shore on the Kentucky side of the river. The guard reported that as he and Perkins were passing the wheelhouse just aft of which was the toilet, Perkins had said that he wanted a drink of water; he turned back, passed around the corner of the wheelhouse and, as the guard supposed, had entered the toilet. The guard had followed a moment later and was surprised to find the toilet vacant. He had looked hastily about the immediate vicinity and not finding Perkins, had reported to me. Perkins had doubtless stepped around the wheelhouse, but instead of entering the toilet had slipped over the rail and slid off the wheelhouse into the river. If able to swim, he could have easily reached the shore, which he doubtless did as nothing more was seen or heard of him. On reaching Cairo, I reported to the Provost Marshal. He came on board the steamer and made a thorough investigation of the matter. He ordered the six men who had been on duty at the time of the escape of Perkins, under arrest and sent me forward with the remaining prisoners. When we reached St. Louis, we transferred to an Upper Mississippi steamer, and as it was some eight hours before sailing time, I allowed four of my remaining 12 men leave of absence for two hours. When the two hours had expired, I expected them to return but they did not. I waited another hour and as they were still missing, I sent the other four out in search of their absent comrades. I waited anxiously for their return but neither the first four nor the second four put in an appearance; the pleasures of civilization had been too much for them and when the

hour for sailing came, I was compelled to go without them. The run to Alton was a short one and in due time I turned over my prisoners to the authorities at the penitentiary, taking a receipt for them, and then, with my remaining guardsmen, hastened by rail to Springfield where I reported to General I. N. Hainey, then Adjutant General of the State of Illinois. General Hainey recognized me at once and greeted me very cordially. After a talk over old times, the general sent me to Camp Butler to remain for a few days when, he said, he would send me down the river again with special messages to General Washburn, who was still in command at Memphis.

I remained at Camp Butler until the last day of May when, by an order of the War Department, all the troops there were discharged and I with the rest. This ended my career as a soldier -- henceforth my feet were to tread the peaceful paths of civil life. I have always been proud of the part I took in the great struggle for the perpetuity of American institutions. When discharged, I went to St. Louis and there fell in with my company, which had also been discharged and was on its way home. When we arrived at East St. Louis and were all on board the cars, we found that there was a strike among the employees of the railroad company, and the engineer and fireman had left the engine and refused to pull out the train. After waiting an hour or more, Colonel Funk, who was then in command of our regiment, went to the Office of the Superintendent of the Road and protested. The superintendent said he had made an effort to secure a non-union engineer and fireman to run the train but had failed to do so. Colonel Funk told him that he need look no further as he had a dozen men in his regiment who were as good locomotive engineers as ever pulled a throttle. The superintendent was delighted to learn this and at once told the colonel to produce his men. They passed through the cars and called upon every engineer and fireman to follow them. When they reached the end of the train, there were 19 men following them. An engineer and fireman were selected who had been running on the Mobile and Ohio Road from Columbus, Kentucky to Corinth, Mississippi, for the past year. They mounted the cab and in less than a half hour we were on our way. Colonel Funk was very proud of this incident in history of his regiment and said he could run any business or profession in the country with men from his regiment. We reached home in due season and were feasted and banqueted to our hearts content, but the greatest pleasure to me was to feel

that I was once more with my dear wife and little boy, a beautiful child, now 17 months old. To feel that the war was over, that the Union had been preserved, that the foul stain of human slavery had been wiped from the escutcheon of the Nation and that Old Glory was floating from the St. Lawrence to the Gulf, and from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and that henceforth I was to take my place in the ranks of civil life and be numbered among those who had saved the nation but were now to enter into those activities that would place our beloved country in the forefront among the nations of the earth, was a cause for pride and gratitude in my heart as well as in that of every soldier of the Union.

CHAPTER XIX

IN KANSAS

With my little family I established myself in the teaming business in Bushnell, a small town in McDonough County, and began hauling coal from the mines to town. I followed this business during the Fall and Winter and made a comfort able living, but I was not satisfied and determined to go to the thriving state of Kansas and grow up with the country. I packed a few household goods and my library consisting of about 200 volumes, a very choice selection of literature, and a few agricultural implements into a wagon, with my wife and child I bid good-bye to relatives and friends, and on March 17, 1866 started on the long journey to Kansas. We were in company with a family by the name of Harris who were journeying to the same land of promise. We crossed the Mississippi River at Quincy, Illinois and the next day reached Palmira in Missouri. From this point to St. Joseph, on the Missouri River, the whole country was familiar to me as I had passed over it time after time while scouting during the summer of ‘61.

While at Palmira a little incident took place which may be of interest. My companion, Harris, had never been a soldier; although he had been drafted at one time he had hired a substitute and had steered clear of the great conflict. I had always supposed that the reason for this action upon his part was because of his delicate wife and a family of three small children, but I soon learned that he was an arrant coward. When we left home, I was wearing an old suit of soldier’s blue I had when discharged from the army, and soon after we entered Missouri Harris began to importune me to take off the old uniform. I had declined to do so and when we reached Palmira, Harris had gone to the U.S. Marshal, an old veteran of the war, and complained that I was endangering his life as well as my own by wearing my uniform. The marshal had accompanied Harris to our camping place where he had introduced the marshal to me. The marshal looked me over and then inquired in what regiment I had served. When I told him the 11th Illinois Cavalry he grabbed me by the hand, and said, “I was in the same brigade with you. I was captain of Co. B, 10th Missouri Cavalry. Now then, comrade, did you ever disgrace that uniform?” I replied, that to my knowledge, I never had. Then said the marshal, “By G-- sir you wear it through Missouri or in any other place on

earth." And I did, greatly to the discomfiture of Harris, who was in constant fear that we would be attacked.

We reached St. Joseph without having any trouble of consequence. We crossed the Missouri here and passed through Kansas City. On the evening after leaving Kansas City we camped by a large spring a few miles out from Weston. In the morning, while preparing to resume our journey, I unfortunately dropped a box in which my wife had some Pinks of a choice variety which she hoped to transport to our new home in Kansas. In dropping, the box had been broken to pieces and, fearing that we would not be able to take them through, my wife and I carefully planted them around the spring which was enclosed with a rough fence. Years afterward I heard of the Pink Springs, as they came to be known, on account of the perfect mass of Pinks growing around them.

In due time we reached a town called Willmington on the old Santa Fe Trail. I had passed this way in 1854 but this was the first place that I recognized. Here we met a man by the name of Woodward who told us of good government land near his place on Elm Creek in Waubaunsee County and invited us to inspect it and rest our teams for a few days, while doing so. He offered to supply all the grain our horses could eat while we wished to remain. We accepted his offer and drove to his place.

After examining several tracts of land that were open for homestead entry, I selected an 80-acre tract near Mr. Woodward's place. Harris was not satisfied and after staying a few days drove off in the direction of Topeka and we never saw them again. We had our camp on a low piece of ground which, when the water was high, was entirely surrounded by water.

Soon after Harris left us I unloaded my wagon at the camp and went to a sawmill some 20 miles distant for a load of lumber with which to build a shack on my land. As I was on my return, and nearly home, I saw a very black cloud to the northwest and could distinctly hear the peals of thunder and realized that heavy rain was falling up the creek from our place although no rain had fallen on me. When I reached our camp, I found my wife and the Woodward family standing on the bank of the creek which was running bank full, watching our household effects as they floated around in a sort of eddy made by the peculiar formation of the banks of the creek at that place. I at once threw off my outer garments and, plunging into the swirling waters, swam out to where our goods were

floating about. The water was not deep and as there were some piles of cordwood near, I gathered what I could of our effects and piled them on this wood. Our goods were all soaked with water and my library, which I prized very highly, was an utter ruin.

I built a shack to shelter my family and began plowing. I soon discovered that I had made a mistake in the selection of my land. I found that the bedrock was close to the surface and that the land would be of no use to me. I immediately abandoned the place and bought another that was partly improved near Waushara in Lyon County. During the winter I taught the public school in my district and had a very pleasant time. The following Spring I planted 20 acres of sorghum. I had a splendid crop and made in the Fall from this crop 61 barrels of syrup which I sold in Council Grove at about $75.00 per barrel, making about $3,000.00 clear of all expenses.

In August of this year our second child was born, a fine baby girl. We were very happy with our little family and our comfortable bank account. I had done so well in the sorghum business that all the farmers for miles bought lots. The real estate firm that was handling this proposition were particularly anxious to sell lots and offered me corner lots for $50.00 each. Had I taken my $4,000.00 and invested there and then, my fortune would have been made, for within three years from that time, one could go out of Emporia in five different directions on a railroad, and the lots that were selling for $50.00 each were worth $500.00 and $1,000, and even as high as $5,000 each. But it was not so to be.

Soon after this I went into partnership with a young man by the name of French for the purpose of working a big ranch at the head of Elm Creek which was owned by my partner's father. This ranch consisted of about a thousand acres of land, two hundred of which were of the very best alluvial soil, twenty head of horses, two hundred head of cattle, including twenty-five head of milch cows, a few fine hogs, poultry, etc. We employed seven men on the ranch and my wife, with the assistance of a girl, attended to the household and dairy while I took charge of the outside work.

In May we had our crops all growing and in fine condition. We had 140 acres of small grain, 80 acres of corn, 15 acres of beans and 10 acres of potatoes. I had purchased a piece of timber land on Rock Creek near Council Grove for which I had paid $2,000.00 in cash. Having paid

out nearly $1,000.00 in the purchase of machinery, seed and labor, I had but a small balance in the bank. It was therefore a great temptation when the owner of the ranch on returning from a visit to the East offered me $10,000.00 in cash for my timber land and my interest in the growing crops on the ranch. I, however, declined to accept his proposition as I could see nearly that amount in the crops when they should be harvested. My wife urged me to accept the proposition, but I persistently refused.

It would have been well for me had I listened to her advice. This was not the only time that I had reason to regret not having listened to her. She was a very clearheaded, practical woman and, although my refusal to hearken to her advice at this time wrought disaster, she never upbraided me or complained amid the hardships and suffering which my action entailed upon us.

Soon after Mr. French's offer had been refused, one of the hands, Bailey by name, was taken with malaria fever and after an illness of three weeks died. The doctor's bill and the funeral expenses devolved upon us, as Bailey had just before his sickness sent every cent he could spare to his invalid mother in Chicago. Doctors' bills were very heavy as there was no doctor nearer than Burlingame, twenty miles distant, and $25.00 per trip rounded up into quite a sum.

The second day after we buried Bailey, as all hands were busily engaged in the erection of a stone stable on the place, we were much surprised to find it growing dark al- though but a moment before the sun had been shining brightly. Looking up we discovered that the sun was obscured by a great cloud of grasshoppers. They seemed to be settling down and we soon saw them descend upon our field of corn, which had been the pride of the ranch. The corn was just tasseling out, and bid fair to give us a yield of 80 to 100 bushels to the acre. In 24 hours after the hoppers alighted there was nothing left of our beautiful corn crop but a lot of stubs about six inches in height. Sadly we looked at our devastated corn field and gladly we saw the hoppers depart without doing further damage to the ranch.

Our little girl had been showing indications of a malaria attack for some days before the coming of the grasshoppers and, as we were compelled to keep the house tightly closed during the visit of these pests, it had had a damaging effect upon the child and I found it necessary to send for the doctor. The messenger had not been gone an hour before

Carl, our eldest, then five years of age was suddenly taken with a congestive chill, and in less than three hours was a corpse.

We were grief-stricken. To see this beautiful child who but a few hours before had been the joy and pride of the household now cold in death was a stunning blow from which it took many years for us to recover.

Angie, the little girl, was very sick and the doctor gave us little encouragement. Finally after lingering for days between life and death, she was given up by the doctor who, as he ordered his horse, told me that nothing more could be done that the child would die before morning. This seemed more than I could bear and when the doctor had departed I sought a secluded spot and poured out my soul in an agony of prayer for the life of our child. I arose from my knees, with the assurance that my prayer would be answered. I returned to the house and tried to comfort my grief-stricken wife. We watched over the little form burning with fever and seemed to be hoping against hope.

As the hours went by, each one found us hovering over the unconscious form of the child. At midnight old Mr. French came into the room and tried to speak words of comfort and consolation, and kindly offered to watch with us until the end should come. At midnight we detected a change in the appearance of the child. Her breathing, while not so difficult, seemed shorter. As the pallor of death seemed to come over the emaciated face of the dear one, my wife buried her face in her hands and threw herself upon the bed and gave way to the unassuagable grief that was burdening her heart.

I was left alone to continue the vigil. A few minutes after my wife left my side I was kneeling beside the cradle in which the child lay. I saw her turn her head toward me and open her eyes and yawn. Impulsively I said loud enough to be heard by all in the room, “Thank God, the child will live.” Instantly my wife was at my side and listened with eagerness as I told her of the favorable inclinations I need not extenuate. The child lived and is still living, the wife of Reverend L. P. Walker of the M. E. Church and has been loved and respected in every community where the vicissitudes of a Methodist preacher’s life has brought her, -- a loving, helpful wife, a devoted mother, and an earnest, efficient worker in the field of Christian labor.

We harvested our wheat crop and as a result had over two thousand bushels of fine wheat. We had this grain in rail pens covered with slough grass as a roof to keep out the rain. This was the usual way of temporarily storing grain in that country. Toward the close of August our section was visited by a terrific tornado which tore the roof from our wheat pens and exposed them to a drenching rain, ruining the entire crop; and, as if this were not enough, in the early days of September the valley was visited with a killing frost, utterly destroying our crop of beans and potatoes.

This closed the chapter of disasters. I sold my timber land, paid up all my bills and bid a last farewell to Kansas the state of disasters for me and returned to Illinois. On arriving I took account of stock and found that I had a sick wife, a baby girl, and $80.00 in money with which to begin life anew.

Two years of hard work at a variety of employment from farming to restaurant keeping found me in, possession of a good team and farming outfit. With this outfit I removed to southwestern Iowa. I made the trip in February leaving my wife to follow in the Spring. Here I bought 80 acres of land from the railroad company and spent the summer in preparing a part of it for cultivation and the following Spring planted a portion of it to sorghum, thinking to repeat on a smaller scale my experiences with that industry in Kansas. But conditions were different. The soil not being so well adapted to the cultivation of sorghum the prices were low and at the end of the season I found myself but little better off than at its beginning. This was too slow for me and having an opportunity to do so I rented a farm of 160 acres of land, went in debt for another team and more farming tools and prepared to do business on a larger scale.

My wife had entirely recovered her health and in May of 1873 had presented me with another fine baby girl. With my little family I took up my residence on the big farm and began operations. I never worked harder in my life and on the 4th of July 1874 some friends who came to visit us declared that I was good for a profit of not less than $1,000 for my year's work. I had disposed of my 80-acre tract and, as I had paid but little on the purchase price, I got but little for it, and had used the proceeds in the purchase of seed, feed and living expenses on the big farm.

On the 5th of July I went to the house of my brother-in- law who lived nearby to assist in putting up a reaping machine which we had bought jointly with which to harvest our wheat crop. While engaged at

this task, there suddenly appeared in the northwest a heavy black cloud, and in a very short time as we watched its approach we saw by its threatening appearance that we had reason to fear both wind and hail. We had barely time to reach the house and get the family into the cellar before the storm struck the house with great fury. There was a window at the north side of the house out of which every light of glass was broken by the hail within a minute, and the hail was beating upon the roof with a deafening roar. The house rocked and creaked and seemed ready to go to pieces. The wind was coming in the broken window with mighty force and, seeing the danger from this, we seized a square table and held its square surface up against the window for what seemed to me then like a half hour but which in reality was but a few minutes. The wind suddenly ceased, the hail no longer pelted the roof. We lowered the table from the window, opened the door and looked about.

My brother-in-law's corn field which was near the house was flat upon the ground. Not a stalk was left standing. His beautiful field of wheat just ready for the harvest was beaten into the earth. The entire season's work had been wiped out in less than 10 minutes. Hastening to the stable, the roof of which had been blown off, I secured my horse and hastened toward my home. It was with feelings of great anxiety that I rode to the top of the ridge that hid my home from view. On reaching the summit of the ridge, a fervent "Thank God" escaped my lips as I saw my house still standing. But between me and my home there had stood that morning the house of a neighbor, Davis by name, now lying flat upon the ground. Realizing that my own family were probably unhurt and that some of the Davis family might need my assistance, I rode hastily to the scene of the wreck. On reaching it I could see no one. I dismounted hastily and ran around the fallen dwelling looking for any sign of life about the place. While passing over a part of the wreck, I heard the sound of voices and, on approaching the spot from which the voices came, I found that Davis and his family were in a milk cellar that had been dug just south of the house over which one side of the house had fallen. They begged piteously for me to release them from their prison as they were nearly suffocated; the dirt roof of the milk house had been mashed in when the house had fallen on it. I found an ax and fell to with a will and soon had Davis and his wife and their four children out of their prison. Mrs.

Davis was prostrated and nearly dead from fright and suffocation but none of them were seriously injured.

Having done all that I could for my neighbors, I hastened home to relieve the anxiety of my own loved ones who although uninjured were badly frightened and very anxious for my welfare. As I passed along the side of my corn field I saw that it was a limitless ruin, that my wheat was a thing of the past, and that financial ruin swift and terrible had come to me out of the bosom of the clouds. But I thanked God that my loved ones were still spared to me.

That evening as we stood at the door of our windowless house looking at the devastation and ruin about us, I said to my wife, "This is my last experiment in the land of tornadoes and hail storms. As soon as I can do so I shall remove to California and take no more chances in this country which seems a prey to the elements." She replied in the language of Ruth, "Where thou goest I will go and the Lord do so to me and more too if aught but death part thee and me." In a few weeks my wife and children were on their way to Illinois to visit her mother while I settled up my affairs as best I could.

I engaged in the organ business during the fall and winter and was so successful that I was able to pay all my debts and had enough remaining to take me to California. I arrived in San Francisco in March 1875.

CHAPTER XX

A METHODIST PREACHER

It is not my purpose to relate in detail the incidents of my career in California. I shall, however, in the following chapter give some of the most interesting incidents. I have not accumulated a fortune here - - in fact have made no effort to do so. Most of the time we have lived in comfort, and have been happy and contented. I have tried to be honest and straightforward in my dealings with my fellow men, and helpful to those about me, always feeling that "it is more blessed to give than receive" and that "they that follow after riches fall into many hurtful lusts, that war against the spirit." I look upon the mad rush of the American people to "get rich quick" as one of the greatest curses that threatens the land, and which I fear will eventually result in war between the masses and the classes which, if it shall ever come, will be far more disastrous than any war with which the country has ever been cursed.

For two months after my arrival in California I worked at the carpenter's trade in the thriving and beautiful town of Santa Rosa, after which I went to Gurneyville where I entered the employ of Murphy Bros. as yard clerk at their sawmill. I found myself surrounded by conditions with which I was entirely unfamiliar. The crew, consisting of about 40 men, were a rough, hardy lot made up as I soon learned of men from various walks of life. The majority of them were uneducated laborers earning the money that was necessary to supply them with whisky and tobacco, and to satisfy their inordinate propensity for gambling by the very hardest of manual labor. There were, however, a few men of education and native refinement among them; the incident that I am about to relate will serve to illustrate the conditions which were not uncommon in the milling and mining camps at that time ... the period in the history of California when conditions were changing from the wild and woolly to the more staid and satisfactory conditions of the present day.

The Bull Puncher in this camp was a State of Maine man who had a family consisting of a wife and four small children. One day as these children were playing near the shack in which the family lived, the youngest, a little boy about two years old, became suddenly very sick, and was carried to the shack in a condition of great suffering. A man was immediately dispatched for the doctor from town. Upon his arrival the

doctor pronounced it a case of poisoning, and at once set about to ascertain what the child had been eating. He soon learned that the little fellow had been eating the leaves of a plant growing on the ground where the children had been playing. Rushing to the spot the doctor secured some of the leaves of the plant, but, not being a botanist, he was unable to arrive at a conclusion as to the nature of the poison. With the leaves of the plant in his hand he ran at full speed to the cook house where we were at that moment eating our lunch.

The cook house was a long, low building, one end of which was used as a kitchen while the other end was fitted up with two long tables without covering of any kind. The meals were served in large tin pans, not an earthen dish of any kind graced the table. The plates and cups were tin and the cutlery was of the cheapest kind. The food was abundant such as it was, and we were doing full justice to this noonday meal when the door was suddenly opened and the doctor stood before us. He ran his eye over the crowd of men seated at the table until he saw the one he was looking for who happened to be sitting exactly opposite me. Rushing up to this man the doctor threw a leaf of the plant on the table before him and shouted, "Analyze that for me quick for God's sake." The man adjusted a pair of old steel-bowed spectacles to his eyes, picked up the leaf, began and went through with a complete analysis of the plant, giving its genus, its series, its number, and its Latin name. He wound up by saying, "It is a deadly poison, antidote" -- but what more he would have said I don't know for the doctor had turned and made for the door, exclaiming as he went, "D-'n your antidote. When I know the nature of the poison I know the antidote." On reaching the bedside of the little sufferer, who was now in great agony, he quickly administered a potion that soon relieved the patient and in half an hour the child was sleeping quietly.

The scientist, who was now pulling a crosscut saw in the logging camp, had once been a professor in one of the universities of the East, but had fallen a victim to drugs and drink until he had disgraced himself and his family and had fled to the far West and hidden himself away from all the conditions that had conspired to bring him down. He tried hard to overcome the power of the demon that had bound him as with manacles of steel, but all to no purpose. One night just before the close of the season, he suddenly rushed into the bar room of a hotel in town. He had a butcher knife in one hand and a revolver in the other. He had no hat, his woolen

shirt was open in front, his eyes were blazing with madness. He made straight for the bartender, shooting as he went, and exclaiming, "I will put you in a condition where you will cease to supply to men that which destroys both body and soul. Die thou destroyer of thy fellow men." But his shots flew wild and before he had reached the bartender he was seized by strong men and disarmed. He was a raving maniac and was shortly after taken to Stockton where he died in the asylum.

For the next two years I continued in the milling camps. The summer of '78 found me in Anderson Valley at work at my trade as a carpenter. For a number of years I had felt that duty called me to the ministry and when the Quarterly Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church at Boonville offered to license me as an exhorter, I accepted the license and exercised whatever gifts and graces I had in that capacity.

In the fall of '78, Rev. Geo. Clifford, then the Presiding Elder of that District, asked me to supply the Stewart's Point Circuit in the northwestern part of Sonoma County. I accepted the place and with my family moved to Fisherman's Bay where I remained for three years, traveling one of the hardest circuits in the California Annual Conference.

My wife was a very efficient helper in my work as a minister. Her sweet and loving disposition endeared her to all those with whom we mingled. Her intellectual ability was of a high order which made her a helper in the study as well as in the work of the church.

In the summer of '79 we lived in a little vine embowered cottage overlooking the broad Pacific whose blue waters loved the rocky shore in times of calm, but whose thundering billows broke in foam and spray upon the same rocky shore in times of storm, casting showers of brine over our cottage. Here in this romantic spot there came to our home one soft summer evening a little stranger. This time a boy to replace the one we had laid away out upon the prairies of Kansas. I am confident that the place and conditions of his birth had a powerful influence upon the after life and character of that boy. He has been as restless as waters of the sea and as quickly changed from a condition of peace and calm to one of storm and tempest as the ocean by which he was born.

During the autumn months my wife and I would often take this boy baby down to the shore and cradle him among the rocks; while his mother would ply her needle and I read aloud to her, the murmur of lapping waters on the rocks would lull the child to sleep. Sometimes, in the

following winter, when the storm king was on the deep, we would wrap ourselves warmly and go and stand upon the edge of the cliff and watch the angry billows as they dashed themselves in pieces upon rocks. The little fellow would clap his hands in childish glee as the mighty billows broke upon the shore, shaking the solid earth by their force. He was never afraid and seemed to love the sea. More than a quarter of a century has passed and since that time the boy has crossed the Pacific scores of times. He has seen it in all its moods, from the perfect calm when not a ripple disturbs its placid surface, to the dread typhoon when waves run mountain high and toss the great steamer like a cork upon its raging surface. And as I write he is:

"Sailing, sailing over the stormy main,
Many a heart will leap with joy when Geo. Comes home again."

At the Conference of '81 I was sent to Round Valley to take charge of the Indian Mission. At the end of my first year on this work I was ordained a Deacon and was returned to Round Valley for another year. Our work at this point, although pleasant in many respects, was made difficult on account of the constant differences of opinion between myself and the Agent who was disposed not only to run his own business but mine as well. As a result, there was discord and the work of the year was largely lost on account of it.

The work of civilizing and Christianizing the Digger Indian is one of the most difficult imaginable. In fact it is almost a hopeless task. A few interesting incidents will illustrate this statement. About the year 1865 a young man and his wife, newly married, were living at Petaluma. They took into their home a little half-breed Indian girl whose mother was dead and father unknown. The little girl was bright and quite pretty for a half-breed. They named her Mary Butte as her mother was of the Butte tribe of Indians. She was educated in the public school, was given private lessons in music, was well taught in the art of cookery and general housekeeping, and developed at the early age of 15 into a very comely and attractive young lady, although showing her Indian blood.

At the age of 16 conditions arose which made it necessary that Mary Butte should be transferred to some other locality. She was sent to the Round Valley Indian Reservation. This was some two years before my

appointment to that work. On my arrival there I. found Mary acting as housekeeper for the Agent and his family. The old buildings at Fort Wright in the southeastern part of the Reservation were being reconstructed and made into school buildings, dormitories, etc. for the reservation school. Mary Butte was made assistant matron of the school and was very efficient in that capacity.

There was a young man, also a half-breed, by the name of Hopkins who had been well raised by a white family who at this time was the assistant carpenter on the reservation working on the new buildings at Fort Wright. Hopkins and Mary Butte became very much attached to each other and were duly married by me. We built them a neat little cottage at Lower Quarters, about a mile from Fort Wright and in the midst of the Ukie tribe of Indians, feeling that their presence there would be an object lesson to those Indians. My house was less than a quarter of a mile from the cottage occupied by the Hopkins'

It was about 11 months, I think, after the wedding that I went one morning quite early to see Hopkins as I wished to have some changes made in my house and wanted him to do the work. Although Mary had a good stove in her kitchen, I found her preparing the morning meal over the coals of the fireplace. I asked her if her stove was out of repairs. She replied that the stove was all right but she preferred to cook over an open fire. I was not pleased with the indications and urged Mary to use her stove and not go back to the primitive way of cooking.

Some six months later I had occasion to again visit the Hopkins' cottage at an early hour one morning. I found Mary rolled up in a blanket lying upon the floor. When I remonstrated with her, she said that she had tired of the restraints of civilized life and had decided that the end did not justify the means. And by no argument or persuasion was I able to alter her determination. In less than a year from that time, Hopkins and Mary were living in a miserable wigwam and were as dirty and filthy as those around them--a perfect illustration of the law of degeneration.

The Digger Indian has a peculiar mind. He has no powers of analysis or of synthesis; mathematical processes, while easily learned are as easily forgotten. We had a young fellow in the school, Billy Johns by name, who was quite an apt scholar. He had mastered "Rays Third Part" in arithmetic. Shortly after my arrival, he was taken from the school and given a team and did the hauling from the sawmill to the yard, a distance

of 10 miles. He followed this occupation for nearly two years. One day he was delivering a load of lumber near my house and I went out to talk with him as I had always felt an interest in him. I asked him how many feet of lumber he had in his load. He replied that he did not know. He said, however, that he had a hundred pieces. As the dimensions of the lumber were 2 x 6 in. by 14 ft. in length I was surprised that he was not able to tell me the number of feet of lumber in the load. He had brought a box of eggs from the miller's wife to be taken to Covelo and exchanged for sugar. The box contained 12 dozen eggs worth 20 cents per dozen and, as sugar was then selling at 10 cents a pound, I asked Billy how many pounds of sugar he would be able to take back with him. To my astonishment and regret I found that he was utterly unable to tell me. I at once changed the subject as I saw that it was embarrassing to Billy.

Before I went to Round Valley I had entertained the idea that the Indian had one characteristic at least which entitled him to be called "The Noble Red Man" but my experience at the reservation removed that hallucination, at least as far as the Digger Indian is concerned. John Brown, the Chief of Ukie tribe, was taken very seriously ill at one time. Indeed his sickness assumed such an alarming condition that the surgeon despaired of his recovery. But John had a very strong constitution and finally found himself on the road to recovery. My youngest daughter, Hattie, then about eight years of age, used to take little delicacies prepared by my wife over to John Brown's house nearly every day to hasten the recovery of the convalescing Chief, and in a few weeks John was himself again. In the Fall, two of my children, George and Hattie, were attacked with typhoid fever and for a time were quite sick. Dr. Bellomey, the Post Surgeon, was a splendid physician and under his care they soon passed the crisis and slowly recovered. They developed peculiar and abnormal appetites. Hattie, in particular, craved watermelon.

For a time the doctor refused to grant her the delicacy but at last consented to allow her a very little. John Brown had a fine patch of melons so I called on him one day and told him that Hattie was on the road to recovery and wanted watermelon. John and I repaired to the melon patch where I selected a good melon and we left for the house.

As we came to John's house, and I was about to pass out of the gate, I noticed that John seemed disturbed about something. I had often seen him appear so when he had encountered some difficult problem in

administering the affairs of his tribe. Thinking that something of that nature was troubling him, I turned and said, "Did you wish to speak to me about anything, John?" John kept his eyes fixed upon the ground while he delivered himself thus. "Me takum melon Covelo, him givum me ten cent." I saw the situation at once and handed him a quarter of a dollar which he took without lifting his eyes and without an expression of thanks. As I walked home, I was deep in thought regarding the possibilities of elevating these hopelessly degenerated and degraded specimens of humanity into a condition that had the semblance of civilization.

At the Conference of '82 I was appointed to the Lake County Circuit which embraced at that time the entire county and took up my residence at Kelseyville. I had a good team and was almost constantly on the road. I enjoyed my three years in the midst of the magnificent and inspiring scenery of that "Switzerland of America" and left it with regret.

In the Spring of '83 I removed from Kelseyville to Lower Lake where I remained during the remainder of my pastorate in Lake County. The circumstances that induced this move are of some interest and will be briefly related. Lower Lake was a typical California town. While there were a number of cultivated, refined and well-to-do families living there, the population was largely made up of a rather rough element, good people in their way but who had little care for the conventionalities of life and sometimes violated proprieties. While the town was being built up through the impetus given it by the opening of the Sulphur Banks and other mines in the vicinity, they had conceived the idea that it was not best to have any denominational churches in the place but that one grand "Union Church" would answer every purpose, and they strenuously resisted the establishment of any denominational organization. After a few years of unsuccessful effort along these lines, they gave it up and the Presbyterians effected an organization and occupied the Union Church for a number of years.

During the year of '82 the Presbyterian minister then occupying the pulpit fell into disfavor with the larger portion of the community and the breach finally widened to such an extent that the minister was told to leave the place and not to return under penalty of suffering bodily injury. I was told of these unhappy conditions and suggested taking up the work there myself. My friends, however, tried to dissuade me assuring me that

the people of Lower Lake wanted no preacher among them, least of all a Methodist. Notwithstanding the expostulations of my friends, I determined to make the effort. Leaving Middletown one Friday in the fall of ‘82, I drove to Lower Lake, reaching the place at about 5 o’clock. I put my team up at a livery stable and went to the hotel and secured a room. After dinner I visited several of the business houses during the evening and met with such a courteous reception that I was much encouraged. The next day being Saturday and the children not in school I had an opportunity not only to meet a number of the scholars of the higher grades but the principal as well. I visited a number of families and had quite a pleasant time. I determined to make the effort to preach there on the following evening. So, after posting some notices to that effect, I drove back to Middletown for my Sunday services, preaching there in the morning, and at Guynock in the afternoon, reaching Lower Lake at about 6 o’clock Sunday evening. After a rest of an hour and a half, I took my way to the church. As I turned the corner one block from the church, I saw that there was quite a crowd of men in front of the building. Was it possible that they had gathered there to prevent me from holding a service? I feared that such was the case. I determined, however, to make the effort. I put on a bold front and advanced upon the crowd. As I came to the outskirts of the company, I began saluting the men, heartily shaking the hand of all within my reach. I pushed my way to the door and opened it. The house was packed to the walls and, as I pushed my way through the crowded aisle, the choir arose and sang, “Hold the Fort”. I joined the chorus as I made my way to the pulpit.

I was happy in the selection of a subject and had the undivided attention of the congregation from the first. I never had greater liberty and when the service was ended and I stepped down from the platform, I found myself in the midst of a kindly disposed and pleasant people. During the remainder of that year and the next year I always had a good congregation.

After about six months I moved my family from Kelseyville to Lower Lake where soon began the erection of a Methodist Church which was completed in due time and still stands as a monument to the self-sacrificing devotion of a fair-minded and generous community.

One or two incidents which happened during my stay in Lower Lake will be of interest. Something near six months after I began preaching at Lower Lake, while I was in the midst of a service one

evening, a young man by name of Billie Ham made quite a disturbance by talking out loud to a companion. I stopped in the midst of my talk and waited for him to get through. When he found the eyes of the people fixed upon him, he ceased his talking, but when I resumed he again began talking aloud. I did not stop my discourse but stepped down from the pulpit and walked down the aisle to where Billie was sitting, and took him by the ear and led him to the door and put him out. I had not ceased my discourse during this time and returned to the pulpit where I finished the service.

Billie made his boast that when he should catch me alone he would administer the chastisement which he felt that I richly deserved. His opportunity soon came for only a few days later I met him on a lonely road between Lower Lake and Sulphur Banks. He rode behind me and shouted in a loud tone of voice, "Now then, Preacher, I have wanted to get a chance at you, and now is my time. You get off your horse and I will give you the damndest thrashing you ever got." I drew up my horse and when he had come alongside I said to him, "Billie, I hope you have given this matter due consideration and are fully prepared for the work in hand." "I don't need anything but my fists to knock you out," Said he. "But," said I, looking him squarely in the face, "have you brought along plenty of sticking plaster and bandages to do your head up with when you get through?" "If so," I continued, "we will at once settle this matter." So saying I dismounted from my horse and laid off my coat, put my hat on top of it and, turning to Billie who was still on his horse, I said, "Now young man get down here and finish up your job as quickly as possible as I have no time to waste." He hesitated and finally said, "I hate to have the name of having whipped a Preacher." "There is not the slightest danger of your gaining any such notoriety," said I, "for in the first place you would not last three minutes in a contest with me, and in the next place you are too cowardly to attempt it." I at once put on my hat and coat; mounting my horse and riding up alongside of Billie I proceeded to give him a good fatherly talk. After I had said what I wanted to and given him the advice which I thought he needed, I said to him, "Now, Billie, if you will promise me faithfully that you will never disturb another religious meeting, and that you will try to behave yourself in the future, I will promise not to mention this incident which is wholly between us; otherwise, I shall take every opportunity to make it known." He promised and I think kept his

promise for as long as I was in Lake County, Billie Ham behaved himself in church.

During the Spring of ‘86, one Sunday afternoon I was administering the rite of baptism to a number of candidates at Kelseyville, in the creek that runs near that place. A man came dashing up on horseback and dismounting hastened to my side and told me that I was needed at home at once. I readily understood why I was wanted. Dismissing the crowd that had congregated to witness the baptism, I at once prepared for a hasty drive to Lower Lake, where I arrived less than two hours later.

I found the doctor, a nurse, and one or two neighbor women in the house. When I hurried to the bedside of my wife, she threw back the cover and disclosed to my gaze a little red specimen of humanity. As I kissed her, she said, “It is a boy.” While I was congratulating her on her seeming strength and vigor, she covered the babe that I had been looking at and threw the cover off on the other side. I was wild with excitement and joy when I realized that my dear wife and both infants were all right and out of danger. My wife soon recovered her usual health and strength, and the boy babies were as nice a pair as ever gladdened a home.

At the Conference of ‘86, I was sent to Biggs where I remained for three years. This was a large and difficult Circuit with seven appointments. The extent of the work kept me on the road most of the time. While we found ourselves in the midst of an intelligent community who were generous and friendly, yet somehow the fates seemed to be against us all the time we were there. Our first great bereavement was the loss of one of the twins who died of some organic throat trouble that the doctors did not seem to be able to control. We were grief-stricken but bowed submissively to the Divine will. We buried little Roy in the cemetery at Biggs and were just recovering from the shock of the bereavement when my father, who with his wife and one child had been with us for some months, was suddenly stricken with pneumonia. After a few days of struggle for life, he passed away at the age of 75, He was a Christian gentleman, a respected citizen, an indulgent father and loving husband, and was deeply mourned by all who knew him.

In ‘87 the work of the Circuit had become so difficult and exacting that I found it necessary to ask for an assistant. A young man by the name of Walker was sent to me from the University of the Pacific. He took an

active interest in the work of the church and was very helpful to me, He also took a deep interest in my eldest daughter, now a comely and highly intelligent young lady, 19 years of age. She was well educated and a fine musician, and had been a great help to me in my ministry. They were married in the Fall of ‘87 . . . soon after the Annual Conference, and removed to a point near Red Bluff. Walker is still a member of the California Conference and at this writing is pastor of the church at Sutter near Marysville.

The church grew in numbers and in influence at Biggs under my administration and late in the Fall of ‘88 we began the erection of a beautiful brick church which was completed and dedicated in the Spring of ‘89. I am very sure that I broke the record in the number of marriages solemnized in one day by any minister in that region. It was one Sunday in the Spring of ‘89. A young couple who were anxious to take the Overland train for the South, which passed through Biggs at 4 o’clock a.m., were married by me at 3 o’clock in the morning. I then hired a team at the livery stable and drove to Honcut 16 miles away, where I changed teams and drove to a point six miles east of Bangor where I married another couple at 9:30 a.m. I then drove back to Bangor where I held services at 11:00 a.m., then back to Honcut where I again changed teams and drove to Live Oak; there I again changed teams and drove eight miles west where I married another couple at 4:30 p.m. I then drove home, reaching Biggs at 8:00 p.m. On reaching home my wife informed me that a young couple who were to have been married at 6:00 p.m. had been disappointed by the minister who was to have officiated and had left word for me to come immediately upon my return and perform the ceremony, which I did. My fees for the four weddings were $50 . . . a good day’s work.

In direct contrast was another experience when I paid three dollars for a horse to go to Brown’s Valley and marry a couple--a distance of 25 miles. I went through mud and rain to perform the ceremony. The bridegroom handed me a sealed envelope after the wedding was over which contained a single piece of money. From its size I took it to be a 20-dollar piece and I thanked him heartily for it and put it in my pocket. I then drove home through the darkness and the rain and mud. On reaching home I handed the envelope to my wife. She opened it and exhibited to

me a large new silver dollar. It is said that preachers never get mad, perhaps not, but I had an emotion at that time that clearly resembled anger.

In the fall of ‘89 I was sent to Colfax on the Central Railroad above Auburn. Here I began what promised to be a very pleasant and profitable work. We were well paid and very comfortable. During the winter there was a great snow blockade, three eastbound overland trains being detained at one time for more than a week at Colfax. Together with other citizens of the place I visited the snowbound pilgrims and did all that I could for their entertainment and comfort during their involuntary stay. As Sunday approached, I conceived the idea of getting these people out to church. I got the boys and young men to help me and we dug a path from the train to the church through four feet of snow. On Saturday evening I went on board the cars and extended a personal invitation to all to attend Divine Service at the church at 11 o’clock the next day. When I reached the church at about 10 minutes of 11 the next day, I found it packed to the doors -- not a vacant seat remained and at least 100 men were standing in the aisles. This was encouraging. I had previously instructed my stewards not to take the usual morning offering as I did not think it right to take advantage of the conditions.

I was happy in my selection of a subject, and had a good time myself, and the people seemed to enjoy it very much. When the services were ended, and I arose to pronounce the benediction, a man arose in the congregation and said, “I beg pardon for the interruption but I feel that a very important part of this most enjoyable service has been omitted. We have not forgotten the assembling of ourselves together, but we have forgotten to bring our tithes into the storehouse. I feel, Sir, that the collection should not be omitted. If my friends, Judge Mason and Colonel MacMan, will assist me, with your permission, Sir, we will take the usual collection.” And they did. The collection was over a hundred and fifty dollars. The gentlemen who had officiated in the matter were General Mosby, the celebrated Confederate raider, who was so prominent in Virginia during the war, Hon. John J. Mason, of the Supreme Bench of Illinois, and Col. Mark A. MacMan of the 14th Iowa Infantry.

In the Spring of ‘89, my wife’s health began to fail, She had contracted malaria during our residence at Biggs, and it seemed impossible to relieve her of it. In April she began to have nasal hemorrhages and every effort to check them proved unavailing. Our

physician finally told me that it would be impossible for my wife to live at Colfax on account of the altitude and that the only thing to do was to take her to the seashore where it might be possible to check the hemorrhages. While my work was a very promising one and I had a large number of influential friends on the charge, yet my dear wife's health was of more importance than all else and I prepared to follow the physician's advice. We left Colfax in June and took up our residence at Pacific Grove. Here I followed various pursuits for a year. For a time my wife's health seemed to improve but she finally developed a nervous difficulty that baffled the skill of the local physicians and I was advised to secure the services of a specialist. Through the advice of our physician I sent to San Francisco for a specialist who on his arrival pronounced the disease to be spastic paripleagia and that it would be necessary for him to see her at least twice a week. This, at his price of $25 per visit, would cost me $200 per month which would soon leave me without means.

I determined to remove to San Francisco and so reduce the expense of treatment. I therefore made application for a position in the U.S. Customs Service. Fortunately, there was to be a competitive examination at once and I hastened to the city to enter it. I arrived in the evening and the following morning at 10 o'clock I entered the examination room at the Customs House. I found the examination far more difficult than I had expected, especially as I had not looked in a textbook for 30 years. I, however, applied myself diligently to the work in hand, used every moment of the time allotted to me, and, when the examination closed, I walked out of the room with my 50 competitors, standing at the head of the eligible list. My standing was 86.

For three long, weary years my noble wife kept up the fight for life. Every means that I could command, and every dollar that I could secure, were used in her behalf, but all to no purpose. She grew steadily worse and on the 16th day of March, 1893, she passed peacefully to her rest. She was one of God's noble women, a faithful, affectionate and dutiful wife, a loving, patient, and indulgent mother, a thoroughly consistent Christian. She lives among the Angels.

THE LEVI W. SIMMONS FAMILY
Taken in 1888, at Pacific Grove, California

Standing (left to right): Rev. L. P. Walker, Angie Simmons Walker, Rev. L. W. Simmons, Rebecca Ellen Simmons, Hattie May Simmons.

Seated: George Simmons, Ralph W. Simmons.

CHAPTER XXI

STILL A PREACHER

A short time before the death of my wife, my youngest daughter had married, and it now became necessary to break up the home. This was a terrible blow to me. For 29 years I had been accustomed to home life and always looked upon the home as a place of refuge from the storms of life, where I could lay aside the cares and vexations that sometimes perplexed and annoyed me in the rough and tumble of active life. Placing my older son, George, in Haytts School for Boys at Burlingame, and the younger, Ralph, with his sister, Mrs. L. P. Walker, I resigned my position in the Customs Service and went to the southern part of the state where I lectured during the summer months in nearly every town of any importance. I filled 25 engagements. The activities and constant change of scenes incident to this occupation soon relieved my mind of the melancholy that had settled upon me after the death of my dear wife, and in the following September I returned to the North invigorated in body and mind and just in time to attend the Annual Conference of my church.

From this conference I was sent to the Madison and Guinda Circuit in Yolo County where I remained for one year, living among the people and building as best I could in the good old Methodist style the Kingdom of Christ in the hearts of the people. I was happy in my work and left the charge with regret as I had made many delightful acquaintances and had learned to esteem the people of the circuit very highly for their work's sake. They not only took good care of me but they raised about $500 for the purpose of building a new church at Guinda which was completed during the following year.

A little incident that transpired here may be of passing interest. There were a number of families, old residents in the locality, that were regular copperheads, They did not seem to realize that the war was over and from the first had no use for me as I wore very proudly the little bronze button of the Grand Army of the Republic. This emblem to them was like a red flag to an angry bull and when at the next election of school directors held after my coming to the place, a majority of the Board were of that kind, I was notified that I could no longer hold services in the schoolhouse. This was a body blow. There was no other place in the town where services could be held except a small hall which was without seats

or any furniture. I hired it, however, and with the aid of some friends made some rough seats and here we held our next service while the proprietor sold whisky in the room below. The legislature of the State, the previous winter, had passed a law providing for flying the U.S. flag over all schoolhouses during the hours the schools were in session. I waited upon the directors and asked them to comply with the law. They said they had no flag and that there was no money available in the treasury to purchase a flag. I at once, went to Woodland and bought a flag. There were some eight or ten old soldiers within the bounds of the charge, I called on these comrades and it was determined to hold a campfire at Guinda and get all the old soldiers together that we could and have a flag raising and present the school with the flag. Judge Buckles of Fairfield was secured to deliver an oration, local talent to furnish the music, and the loyal ladies of the community to furnish the material for a banquet. When the day arrived, the town was filled with old soldiers and loyal people from all parts of the county.

When I had made application to the chairman of the board for the use of the schoolhouse for the occasion, he had told me that he would refer the matter to the county superintendent. Now it happened that the county superintendent of Yolo County at that time was the commander of the G.A.R. Post in Woodland and, as I knew just what he would say, I went forward with my preparations.

On the morning of the day upon which the campfire was to be held, I went to the house of the chairman of the board of directors to get the key of the schoolhouse. His wife informed me that he had gone to San Francisco and would not be home for a week. . . . that the key of the schoolhouse was in his safe and he had the key of the safe with him. I saw the scheme at once. He had determined to prevent our using the schoolhouse for our campfire.

When I returned to Guinda I found that the schoolhouse was open, and there were about 40 old soldiers and citizens in and about it. I asked no questions and it was many weeks before I learned how the schoolhouse was opened. It seemed that the chairman had not gone to San Francisco at all, but had told his wife to so report. Instead, however, he had gone to his son’s place about two miles from town, intending to stay out of sight. He had told his son what he was doing. The son was a cowardly fellow, and had prevailed upon his father to change his mind; he had coaxed him to

give him the key to the building which he brought to town and opened the house himself, doing so before my return.

We had a splendid time. Judge Buckles delivered a fine oration, a number of patriotic airs were rendered, several of the old soldiers related reminiscences of the war. The flag was presented, I having the honor of making the presentation speech, after which we repaired to one of the lower rooms where a bountiful supply of good things had been prepared by the ladies, to which we did ample justice. The affair was a decided success and is still remembered by the people of Guinda.

About two weeks after the campfire, the school opened and my attention was called to the fact that there was no flag flying from the pole in front of the schoolhouse. I at once repaired to the building and inquired of the principal why this was the case. He said he had seen no flag and knew of none about the building. I at once got my horse and rode to the residence of the chairman of the board of directors. I asked him about the flag. He acknowledged having it but said it was not necessary that it should be used except upon special occasions. I drew a copy of the law from my pocket and read it to him. I then said that the law clearly specifies that the flag shall be displayed every school day and during the sessions of the school and "unless you see that it is done, you are guilty of a misdemeanor and are punishable by law, and I propose to see that the law is obeyed. Unless that flag is displayed at once, I shall institute proceedings against you." He went into the house and returned in a few moments with the flag. Reaching out to me he said I could haul the d- -d thing up if I wished to. I frankly confess that I was mad. I wheeled upon him and said, "Sir, you are an infernal rebel and you know you are. No man can call that flag a d- -d thing in my presence. You will at once take that remark back or you and I will come together and you want to be quick about it, too!" As I dismounted from my horse I stepped between him and the door of his house and laid off my coat. He turned very pale and finally stammered, "I guess I was too hasty; I recall the words." "Now, then," said I, "Will you comply with the law or not?" He said be would and, calling a boy from the house, he ordered his horse and we rode together toward the town. As we approached it, he pulled up his horse and said, "Mr. Simmons, I have acted the fool in this matter, and if this is all known I shall be the laughingstock of the community. I wish you would say nothing about it." I said, "Sir, you deserve the contempt of all loyal

people and the ridicule of your friends, but I have no desire to humiliate you and if you will promise me that the flag shall be displayed at the schoolhouse during your incumbency as a director I will say nothing about it. Do you promise?" "I do," said he, "and I will keep the promise." And he did, for while I remained on that charge the flag was always in evidence. And I kept my promise as well and never mentioned the affair to anyone.

In September of '93 1 removed to the Vacaville and Winters Circuit. This had been another hotbed of Southern sympathizers during the war, and the community at large had no love for the Methodist Church and much less for an old soldier. The work was an entirely new one, and I met with a very cold reception.

At Vacaville they allowed me to preach in the schoolhouse for a time, but my "friends the enemy" soon induced the school board to close the house against me. I then got permission to use the I.O.O.F. Hall. But the enemy proved to have a majority in the Order there and I was soon informed that I could use the hall no more. It looked as though I was defeated and I had about given up the fight when one day as I was passing along the main street I saw this placard on the front of a building. "The stock in this Saloon for sale and the building for rent cheap." Without a moment's hesitation I walked in and asked the proprietor his price for the stock. He said he could not tell exactly as he had not taken an account of stock, but if I meant business he would do so and let me know the next day. I told him I would call the next day and get his price. That evening the I.O.G.T. met, and I secured admission during a recess. I laid the matter before them, and asked their cooperation in ridding the town of one of its saloons. A committee was appointed to cooperate with me in the matter with full power to act. The next day we called upon the vendor of liquid death and negotiated a purchase of the stock and outfit. We paid $150 for the whole concern. We poured the liquor into the creek, sold the furniture and glassware to a secondhand furniture store, leased the property for a year, fitted it up with seats and a platform, secured an organ, and from that time to this the Methodist Episcopal Church has been a fixture in Vacaville. We had a great meeting a little later and a large number were added to the church. I secured subscriptions during the next summer with which lots were bought and during the following year a church was built.

In 1893 I was married to Mrs. A. M. Duffy, an old acquaintance and friend of the family. At the time of our marriage she was living in San Francisco with an only daughter, Mrs. Lucy Johnson. Immediately upon our marriage we furnished a comfortable home in Vacaville, brought my two boys home, and began again the family life that had been broken up for two years. We were very happy in our new relation and my wife exercised much good judgment and tact in managing my boys who were lively and carefree young fellows and gave her some trouble. She was patient and kind to them, and they soon grew to love and respect her so that our home life was very pleasant.

From the Conference of ‘95 we were sent to Bloomfield. This was a quiet, old-fashioned country charge, and we expected a quiet and pleasant year. Our expectations would have been realized but for the fact that my wife’s health failed during the winter and long before the end of the conference year she had developed that terrible disease, Locomotor Ataxia. The disease was slow in its development and she was able to move about and at times was quite hopeful.

In the fall of ‘96 we were sent to Guerneyville. Here we found some old friends and made a host of new ones and, but for the fact that my wife grew slowly but steadily worse, our experience at this cozy little burg on the banks of the Russian River and in the heart of the Redwoods would have been a delightful one.

About the middle of this conference year I made application for reinstatement in the Customs Service at San Francisco. I hoped to get favorable action on this application before the close of the conference year as I felt that it would be very difficult, if not impossible, for my wife to stand another year in the pastorate. She, however, was very reluctant to give up the work. She loved the work of the ministry and was never happier than when engaged in religious work.

At the end of the conference year, September 1897, not having received my appointment in the Customs Service, I reluctantly accepted a place at Kelseyville. I had served this charge once before for a period of three years. My wife had lived here for a number of years while she was Mrs. Duffy, so it was like coming home. The charge was, however, very much run down, and had I not edited and published a local paper while there, we could not have existed. I visited all the resorts in the county, of which there were many, every month to collect for the advertising in the

"Kelseyville Star". On these trips, in pleasant weather, my wife was always my companion, and so we passed the summer months amid the most charming and inspiring scenery in California.

Toward the close of the conference year, September '98, I received my appointment as an Inspector of Customs in the District of San Francisco and ended my work as an itinerant Methodist minister. The life of an itinerant Methodist minister is one peculiar to itself. There is nothing like it in all the world. There are few, if any, in that honored profession who could not have made a marked success in almost any calling in life. They are an intelligent, well informed class of men who have denied self and all self-interest to respond to a call that they apprehend as divine, and the world is infinitely better for their having lived in it. They will go down in history as among the active factors in the building of the Republic. The time may come when they will cease to wield the influence which has marked their existence for the past 200 years, but no man of intelligence who is a lover of righteousness will rise up in the future to say that they have been anything but a blessing to the race. While I am separated from them in thought and in fact, I shall never cease to have the most profound respect for them as men, and for that marvelous organization of which they are the bone and sinew.

I am no longer a Methodist, either in thought, conviction or name. I do not feel that the change has made me better than they but different. "As a man thinketh so is he." I am glad that I was a Methodist. I am glad now that I am not. God bless the Methodist ministry. They deserve that blessing and the considerate judgment of mankind.

CHAPTER XXII

IN SAN FRANCISCO

My position as an Inspector of Customs has brought me to a new field of activities and associated me with a different class of people. I have become acquainted with "those who go down to the sea in ships" and do business on the great deep. With the Master, who at sea is the autocrat, having a little kingdom all his own, and who says to one, "Go," and he goeth, and to another "Come," and he cometh. With the sailor, who is the bond servant of the Master at sea, the prey of the land shark when in port, and the slave of his own depraved tastes and appetites at all times. The teamster and the stevedore who are remarkable only for their vitriolic and sulphurous vocabulary which knows no limit. With the Agent and Shipper, most of whom are accumulating colossal fortunes as "Masters of Industry" and largely at the expense of the before-mentioned classes. No class of men anywhere needs the uplifting influence of the Christian religion more than the classes named above, but in the rush and swirl of modern business life there are none harder to reach, or more difficult to move when reached. My life on the water front has moved on in the regular routine. Monday has been a prophesy of Tuesday and Tuesday has been a copy of Monday.

My wife's health continued to fail. Every treatment known to science was tried until in 1900 when Dr. N. C. Scanlon brought to San Francisco the Roberts Hawley Animal Lymph Treatment. Under this treatment the terrible disease that had tortured my dear wife for seven long years was checked in its progress and, while she never recovered her former health and strength, she never again suffered the agonies and tortures from which she had not been free for all those years.

In 1904, my wife having relatives in Alabama where she was born and raised, whom she had not seen for 30 years, we decided to take advantage of the low rates offered to the World's Fair at St. Louis and make a trip to the East and South. I secured a leave of absence for 30 days and on October 8th we left San Francisco for our long trip. We had a delightful journey of three days over the Sierra Nevada, crossing the Great Salt Lake over Lucine Cutoff through Salt Lake City where we visited the great Mormon Temple, taking in the magnificent scenery of western Colorado that can only be seen as one travels over the Rio Grande and

Western Railroad, reaching Denver on the morning of the 11th. Here we remained one day. We spent the time in riding about the beautiful and busy city. I could hardly convince myself that this was the spot where more than 48 years before I had picketed my horse a little way from a cluster of cabins which at that time constituted the trading post of Denver.

From Denver to Omaha was a night's ride. In the morning we crossed the Missouri River and after an hour's ride reached Malvern in Iowa. Here we visited many of my relatives and old-time friends with whom we spent this delightfully pleasant day, after which we journeyed to Galesburg in Illinois where we were splendidly entertained by old friends of my boyhood days. Here, too, was the site of my Alma Mater; as I walked through the old halls and corridors of the buildings, I seemed to anticipate meeting the friends of my college days, but only one was left to greet me. He was Professor Parker who had led me through the intricacies of the calculus and conic sections. He was old now and grey and bent, but still covering the blackboards of Lombard with the cabalistic characters that represent the exact science of mathematics.

Grand old Lombard. I love her still. In one of the halls I stood before a splendid tablet
brought from China and presented to the institution by Hon. E. H. Conger, at that time ambassador to that distant country. He, too, was a graduate of old Lombard. His brother, George, was a student with me and entered the army at about the same time that I did. We were great friends. Grand old Cateline (that was his college name) fell at Fort Fisher, nobly fighting for the flag he loved.

Reluctantly we turned from these scenes, flooded with the memories of bygone years, and took our journey to St. Louis where we arrived on the 17th. We spent but two days at the great World's Fair and then left for the old home of my wife in Alabama.

We passed through southern Illinois, crossed the states of Kentucky and Tennessee. The train stopped for a moment at Bethel where my Company had camped for a year and a half in '62 and '63. I stepped from the car and took a drink from the spring near the depot from which I had drunk hundreds of times in those days when war was the business of life. On to Corinth where General Grant had once presented me with a medal which I still have and prize above the wealth of a Rockefeller. On down to the little old dilapidated town of Point Rock. Five miles over a

rough, rocky road brought us to the old plantation where my wife was born. Here we spent a very pleasant week and were feasted and banqueted to our heart's content. I was forcibly struck with the fact that although 40 years had elapsed since I had been a frequent visitor to this region of the southern country, yet very little change had taken place. No improvement had been made. The same old life, the same old methods that were in vogue at that time were still in evidence, and so they will continue until some more enterprising and thrifty class of people takes their place and utilizes the wonderful resources of the country.

After a week of delightful visiting with my wife's relatives in Alabama, we bid them good-bye and started on our return to St. Louis. At Corinth, our train being delayed, we were compelled to lay over for six hours. We went to the Cox Hotel where I soon became acquainted with the proprietor, Mr. J. C. Cox, a typical Southern gentleman. He had been in the Confederate Army for four years during the Civil War. He saw my bronze button and recognized me at once as a Union veteran. He introduced us to his wife and daughter and took us to his own private table for lunch where we spent an hour talking over the days when we faced each other on several occasions in the roar of battle.

After lunch, Mr. Cox took us in his carriage about the town which had changed so much that I was unable to recognize the points that had once been very familiar to me; for I was among the first of the troops that entered Corinth after its evacuation by Beauregard in May of '62, and was also there a number of times during that summer. A great deal of Northern capital has been invested in Corinth and a large number of Northern people have made their homes there so that it is now one of the liveliest manufacturing centers in the South.

Mr. Cox induced us to stay over a day and took us to the old Battlefield of Shiloh, 20 miles distant. Shiloh is now a national cemetery and has beautiful boulevards and gravel walks, imposing monuments, and memorial tablets, and is one of the finest government parks in the United States. I could but mark the difference between peace and quiet and loveliness of the place as I saw it then and its appearance on the 6th and 7th of April '62 when the air was full of whistling bullets and shrieking shells, the shouts and cheers of the struggling forces, the cries and groans of the dying, and all the horrors of sanguinary conflict.

Returning to Corinth we bid good-bye to Mr. Cox and his family who had shown us so much attention and kindness, feeling sure that there were at least two soldiers of the Civil War who had faced each other in mortal combat who now entertained the most profound regard for each other. I believe that there are thousands of such men in the South, mistakenly disloyal once, but who are as loyal to the old flag today as any that live north of Mason's and Dixon's line. We reached St. Louis in due time and spent several days in the enjoyment, the beauties, and wonders there on exhibition. On the 24th of October we left St. Louis for Texas over the M K & T Railroad.

We reached Fort Worth at 5 p.m. on the following day, having traveled 750 miles in about 20 hours. From Fort Worth we journeyed to Comanchee where my wife had a sister residing. A pleasant week was spent here and then we started on our journey homeward, passing through and stopping for a day at the historic old town of San Antonio. Here we visited the national cemeteries and the Alamo. We saw the spot where David Crockett shot and stabbed Mexicans until, when he was at last killed, his enemies were so thick around him that when found he was in an upright position; and the place where Colonel Bowie was bayoneted as he lay in his sickbed. In this contest between 150 Americans and 4,000 Mexicans, not an American surrendered and when the fight was over, not one American was left alive to tell the story.

We reached home on the 7th of November having been absent 30 days and traveled over 7,000 miles. My wife was none the worse for the journey which to her had been a very pleasant one as it had afforded her an opportunity to visit her old home and to see those once more that she could never see again in life.

I settled down to the regular routine of work in the Customs Service which was not seriously interrupted until the great earthquake and fire of April 1906. My duties in the Customs Service required me to rise at about 5 o'clock in the morning. On the morning of the 18th of April I was just in the act of leaving my bed when I was suddenly thrown with great force against the door of my room some six feet away, and then back over the same space on to the bed again. My impact with the door was so great as to cause my nose to bleed profusely. I sat on the edge of the bed holding a towel to my bleeding nose and watched the furniture dancing about the room while the house swayed and rose and fell with the

undulations of the earth in the grip of that mighty, mysterious force called an earthquake.

It seemed to me several minutes before the quaking of the earth subsided and we felt secure in attempting to make a survey of the premises, although, as a matter of fact, the trembling of the earth lasted but 46 seconds. We first made a survey of the parlor, the floor of which was covered with broken bric-a-brac of every description. The piano was standing in the middle of the floor while at the west end of the room two large pictures were hanging with their faces to the wall, having been turned completely around. In the dining room, the table had been set for breakfast the evening before; not a dish upon the table had been moved. Even a tall, slim pepersouse bottle remained erect as though no disturbance had occurred, while the pantry, less than 20 feet away, was a scene of the wildest confusion; hardly a dish of any description remained on the shelves. But all and singular of every description of edibles lay on the floor in a conglomerate mass. By the time we had completed the survey of the premises the fire alarm was heard, and we hastened to the street to see that smoke was rising from various parts of the city, showing that the conflagration would be general.

The horrors of the next 60 hours will never be adequately described. I cannot attempt to give even an imperfect description in the limited space at my command in this volume which has already extended far beyond my expectations. Suffice it to say that we were not burned out at our residence, 2695 Howard Street. I had, in connection with the rest of the members of the Reliance Mining and Smelting Company, of which I was then the president, just fitted up a fine office at 306 Pine Street which was totally destroyed, my loss being in the neighborhood of $600, which amount would cover all my losses in the great disaster.

As the year 1906 drew to a close, it became apparent to me that my wife's days on earth were numbered. She had developed Bright's Disease of the kidneys and the disease was making rapid headway in spite of every effort made to check it. My wife's granddaughter was very low at the same time with quick consumption. In trying to care for her, my wife contracted a severe cold which prostrated her, and in a few days it became evident that the end was near. On January 6, 1907, she passed to her reward. She had been a loving companion to me in the years of our married life, although during most of that time she had been an invalid; yet

she had patiently and uncomplainingly borne her afflictions and was often heard to say, “Though He slay me yet will I trust in Him.” This was a sad blow to me as I had loved her dearly. Her granddaughter died at almost the same time, breathing her last but a few hours before my wife. They were both buried from Grace M. E. Church at the same time and lie side by side in Cypress Lawn Cemetery.

For several weeks my life seemed a burden. My children were all grown and away from me and I was lonely indeed. Some time in May 1907 I renewed my acquaintance with a family by the name of Boyd, with whom I had been acquainted at Bloomfield, California, while I served the church there. The head of the family at that time was the minister of the Presbyterian Church, a cultivated and educated gentleman. We had been very good friends. The fact that Mr. Boyd was very fond of music had brought us together frequently and we often sang together in church entertainments. He had died in January 1906, leaving a widow and four children, two boys and two girls. The widow was 46 years of age and, although she had been through the furnace of affliction, she still retained much of her youthful vivacity and energy. My visits to the family became quite frequent and the widow and I became very fond of each other’s society and on the 25th of July ‘07 we were married.

As I close these pages, it has been nearly two years since we were married. There has never been a word of disagreement between my wife and myself. I was never happier or more contented in my life and I look forward to many years of happy companionship with her who is the third to share the vicissitudes of life with me. May God help us to “so number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom” and to be a blessing to all with whom we come in association.

It has been suggested to me that this autobiography would be incomplete without some reference to my connection with the Grand Army of the Republic. I am certainly proud that my name is enrolled among those who, in the time of our country’s dire need when red-handed treason clutched at the nation’s vitals, were willing to make any sacrifice even to life itself to uphold the national honor and maintain the flag unsullied. Who marched under the banner of the Union down into the very jaws of death in order that Republican Institutions might not perish from the earth. They deserve all that a grateful nation can do for them. It

would be a burning shame if anyone of those noble men should ever want: for the comforts of life in their declining years.

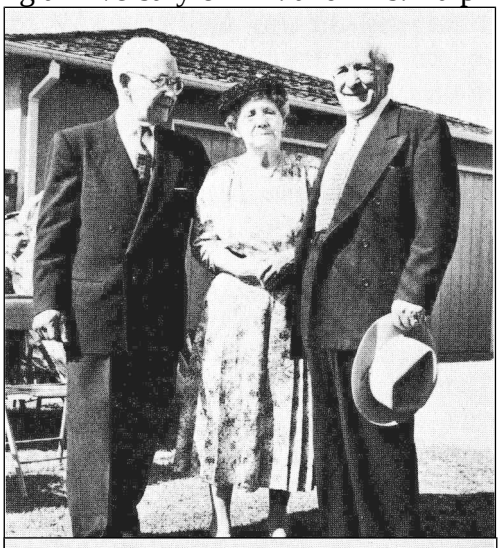
My first connection with the GAR was in 1883 when I took an active interest in recruiting Rouseau Post No. 64 at Kelseyville. The Post was mustered by General Warfield, afterward Department Commander of this Department. In ‘84, I was elected Department Chaplain. During my residence at Biggs I was a member of the W. T. Sherman Post at Oroville. Afterward, while at Pacific Grove, I was a member of John A. Dix Post of San Jose, then transferred to Liberty Post, San Francisco, of which I was a member until the Post surrendered its charter in 1903 when I joined Gen. Geo. G. Mede Post No. 48 of which I have been a member ever since. I was for two years Chaplain of the Post and for the past two years I have been its Senior Vice Commander. At the encampment at Santa Barbara, in 1907, I was made Department Patriot’s Instructor, in which office I was continued at the encampment at Santa Ana in 1908.

In the spring of 1908 I organized the Patriotic Instructors’ Association of the Bay Cities and was elected its president. The association is in a flourishing condition and bids fair to become a factor in carrying forward the work of Patriotic education in the cities around San Francisco Bay. There is no nobler work in which men and women can engage than in the inculcation in the minds and hearts of the children of the land, those principles of civic and national righteousness, and that love of Country and Flag that can alone insure the perpetuity of American institutions.

APPENDIX

REUNION PHOTOS

Pictures taken at the fiftieth wedding anniversary on Mr. and Mrs. Ralph W. Simmons, April 22, 1956



Ralph W. Simmons
Angie Simmons Walker
George Simmons

R. W. Simmons
Neil Simmons
Ralph W. Simmons
Verna Simmons Wing

REBECCA E. SIMMONS

Rebecca Ellen Spradling was born at Hockey Hill, Ky., August 11, 1843. In 1853 she removed with her mother to Illinois. She was converted to God in 1860 at the same meeting and was baptized the same day that he who afterwards became her husband. She was married to L. W. Simmons in March 1863 while he was home from the army on furlough. They removed to Kansas in 1866 and entered earnestly upon Christian work, organizing Sunday Schools and doing what they could for the Master. Driven from Kansas by Indians, cyclones, and drought, they returned to Illinois in 1870. Immediately after their return Sister Simmons was seriously ill with congestion of the brain and no doubt there were sowed the seeds of the disease that finally caused her death.

In 1871 they moved to Iowa where in company with others, Sister Simmons organized a Sunday School which later became the nucleus of a Methodist church. In 1875 Brother and Sister Simmons came to California. Here in 1877 she began her labors as the wife of an itinerant minister. In 1885 her health began to fail but she did not break down entirely until 1888.

Three years ago, when appointed to Pacific Grove, I became her pastor. She gave me a hearty welcome and was faithful in her performance of all her religious duties. In poor health she attended church only occasionally but highly appreciated the services. She became very sick and for a long time expected at any moment her death. She rallied at length and was taken to San Francisco for medical treatment where she lingered for months, hovering between life and death. March 16th, 1893 she entered into rest and received the crown.

Sister Simmons was a good woman, faithful in all her relations in life. She has left to her loved ones and to the church the best of all legacies, a well-spent life. “Well done, thou good and faithful servant. Thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make Thee ruler over many things. Enter thou into the joys of thy Lord.”

S. G. Gale

From the minutes of the California Conference of the Methodist Church, 1893.

TO MY GRANDCHILDREN

The flag of the United States of America is not only a thing of beauty but every item of its construction is significant. The story of its evolution, its birth as the emblem of a new nation, its long service without defeat or dishonor, should be familiar to you and through you to all of the young people that you meet. Especially should you be familiar with the salvation of the flag - - how for a time its stars were wrenched and torn by dissension and strife, how when the work of its defenders was done not a star was missing from its field of blue; how today all of this great nation enjoys peace and prosperity under its folds.

Let this flag be an inspiration to you, not only to resist all foes to our national well-being but to acquire those civic virtues which will be the foundation of the ideal patriotism- -the patriotism of peace. Then twine every thread of the glorious tissue of our national emblem around your heartstrings and, catching the inspiration that breathes upon you from the battlefields of the fathers, highly resolve that come weal or woe, come life or death, you will now and forever stand by the flag of our country as the emblem of righteous peace and civic purity. With this admonition I envoke the blessing of the Almighty God upon it and you.

Grandpa Simmons

LETTER TO DAUGHTER ANGIE

Dear Angie:

It was with great pleasure I received and read your letter of recent date. I am thankful for your kind expressions of interest in my welfare in my advancing years. Those expressions are just like you. You have always been a kind, tender, and loving daughter as you have been a devoted wife and mother. I have no disposition to flatter you. I could not if I would for you will not be flattered, but God has made few like you. If the crowns worn by the redeemed in the Heavenly Kingdom are bright in proportion the worth of those who wear them yours will be a brilliant one indeed. I have always been proud of you and as the years go by your intrinsic worth and beauty of character become more apparent. God has given you a life of great usefulness. Only eternity will reveal the amount of good you have accomplished.

I have never written this way before but I want you to know the esteem at which you are held by a father who thanks God every day for giving him such a child.

L.W.S.

FAMILY TREE

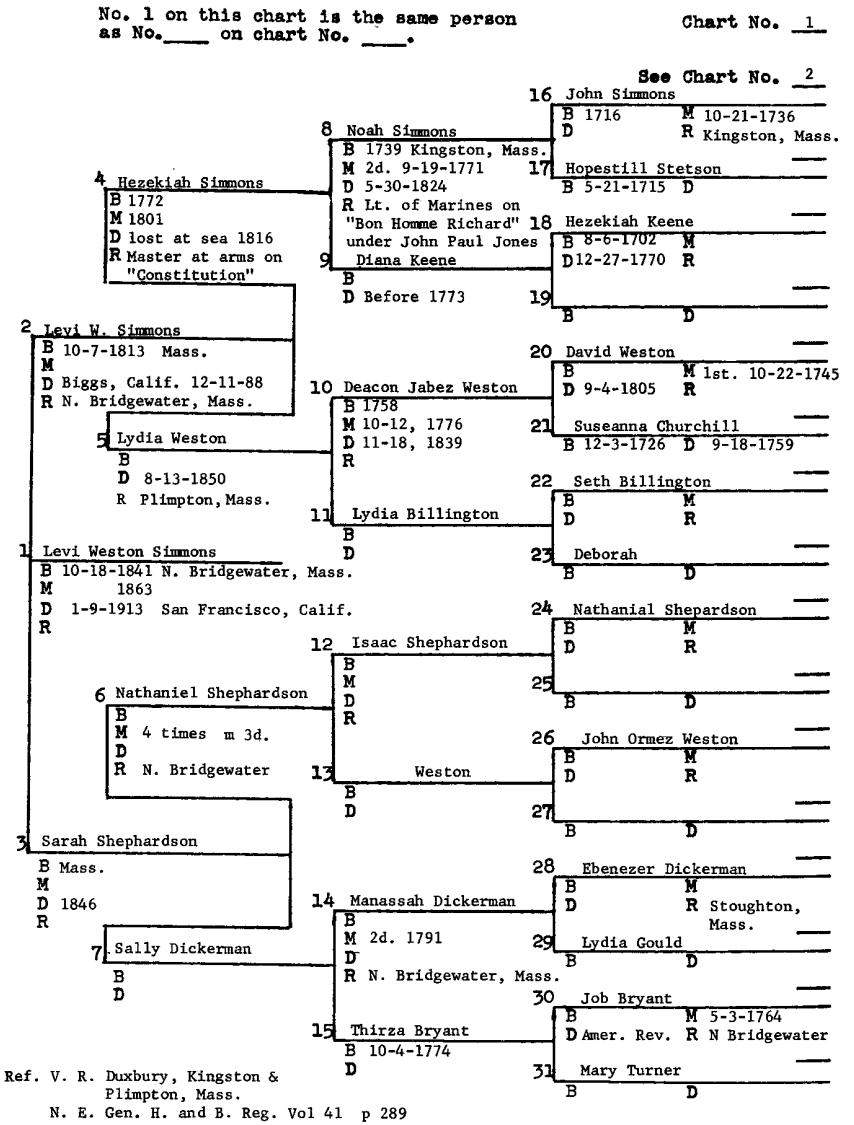

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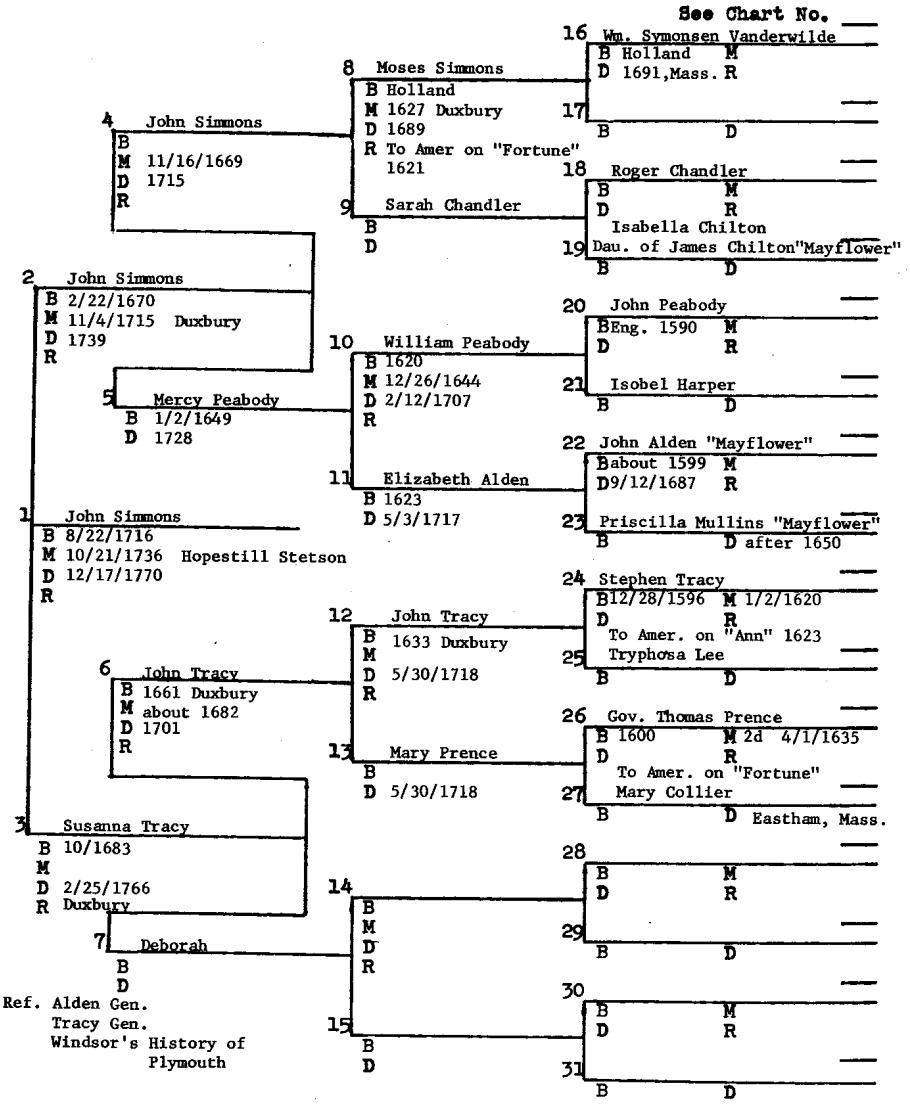
Chart No. 1
See Chart No. 2
1 Levi Weston Simmons
B 10-18-1841 N. Bridgewater, Mass.
M 1863
D 1-9-1913 San Francisco, Calif.
R
2 Levi W. Simmons
B 10-7-1813 Mass.
M
D Biggs, Calif. 12-11-88
R N. Bridgewater, Mass.
3 Sarah Shephardson
B Mass.
M
D 1846
R
4 Hezekiah Simmons
B 1772
M 1801
D lost at sea 1816
R Master at arms on "Constitution"
5 Lydia Weston
B
D 8-13-1850
R Plimpton, Mass.
6 Nathaniel Shephardson
B
M 4 times m 3d.
D
R N. Bridgewater
7 Sally Dickerman
B
D
8 Noah Simmons
B 1739 Kingston, Mass.
M 2d. 9-19-1771
D 5-30-1824
R Lt. of Marines on "Bon Homme Richard" under John Paul Jones
9 Diana Keene
B
D Before 1773
10 Deacon Jabez Weston
B 1758
M 10-12, 1776
D 11-18, 1839
R
11 Lydia Billington
B
D
12 Isaac Shephardson
B
M
D
R
13 Weston
B
D
14 Manassah Dickerman
B
M 2d. 1791
D
R N. Bridgewater, Mass.
15 Thirza Bryant
B 10-4-1774
D
16 John Simmons
B 1716
D
M 10-21-1736
R Kingston, Mass.
17 Hopestill Stetson
B 5-21-1715 D
18 Hezekiah Keene
B 8-6-1702
D 12-27-1770
M
R
19
B D
20 David Weston
B
D 9-4-1805
M 1st. 10-22-1745
R
21 Suseanna Churchill
B 12-3-1726 D 9-18-1759
22 Seth Billington
B
D
M
R
23 Deborah
B D
24 Nathanial Shepardson
B
D
M
R
25
B D
26 John Ormez Weston
B
D
M
R
27
B D
28 Ebenezer Dickerman
B
D
M
R Stoughton, Mass.
29 Lydia Gould
B D
30 Job Bryant
B
D Amer. Rev.
M 5-3-1764
R N Bridgewater
31 Mary Turner
B D
Ref. V. R. Duxbury, Kingston & Plimpton, Mass.
N. E. Gen. H. and B. Reg. Vol 41 p 289

No. 1 on this chart is the same person as No. 16 on chart No. 1.

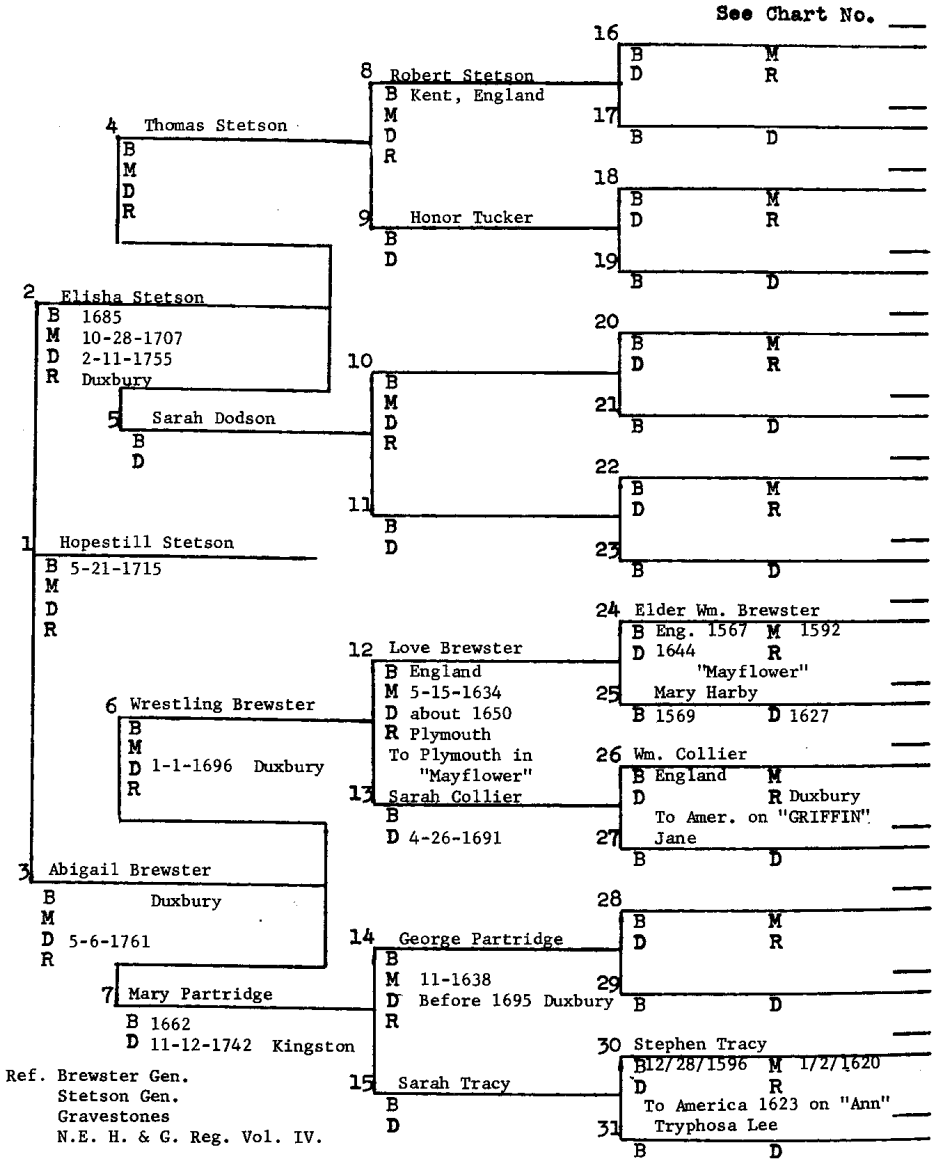
Chart No. 2



Ref. Alden Gen.
Tracy Gen.
Windsor's History of Plymouth

No. 1 on this chart is the same person as No. 17 on chart No. 1.

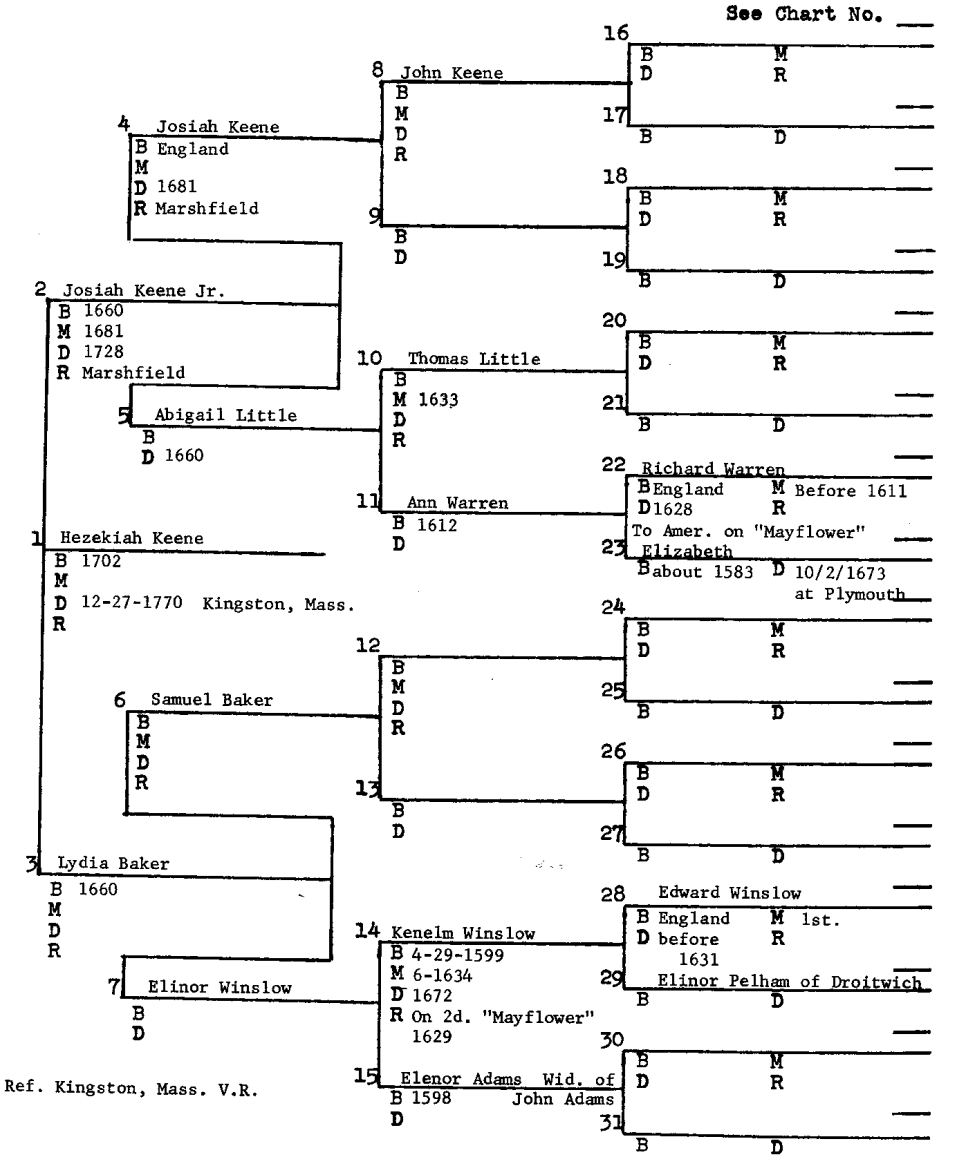
Chart No. 3



Ref. Brewster Gen.
Stetson Gen.
Gravestones
N.E. H. & G. Reg. Vol. IV.

No. 1 on this chart is the same person as No. 18 on chart No. 1.

Chart No. 4

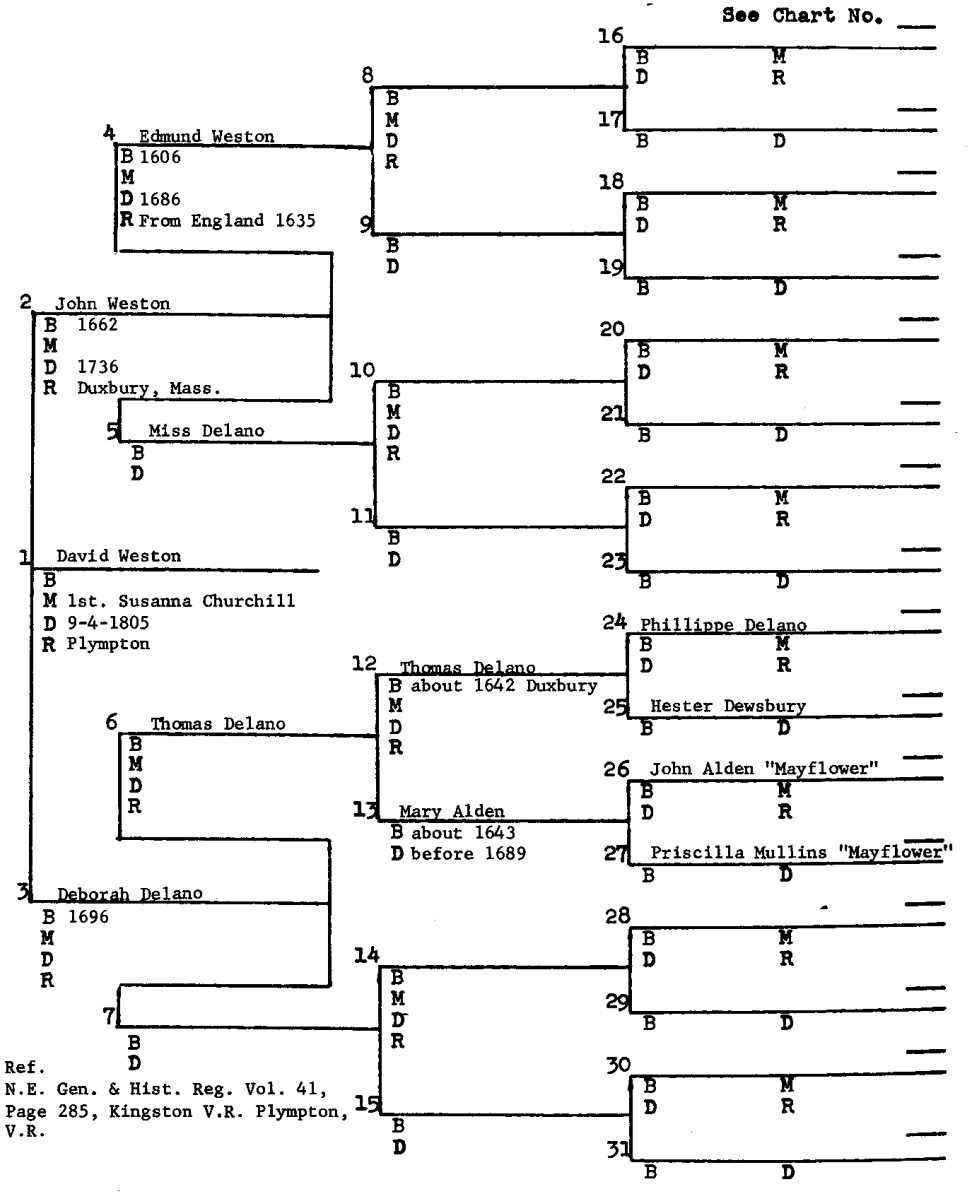


Ref. Kingston, Mass. V.R.

No. 1 on this chart is the same person as No. 20 on chart No. 1.

Chart No. 6

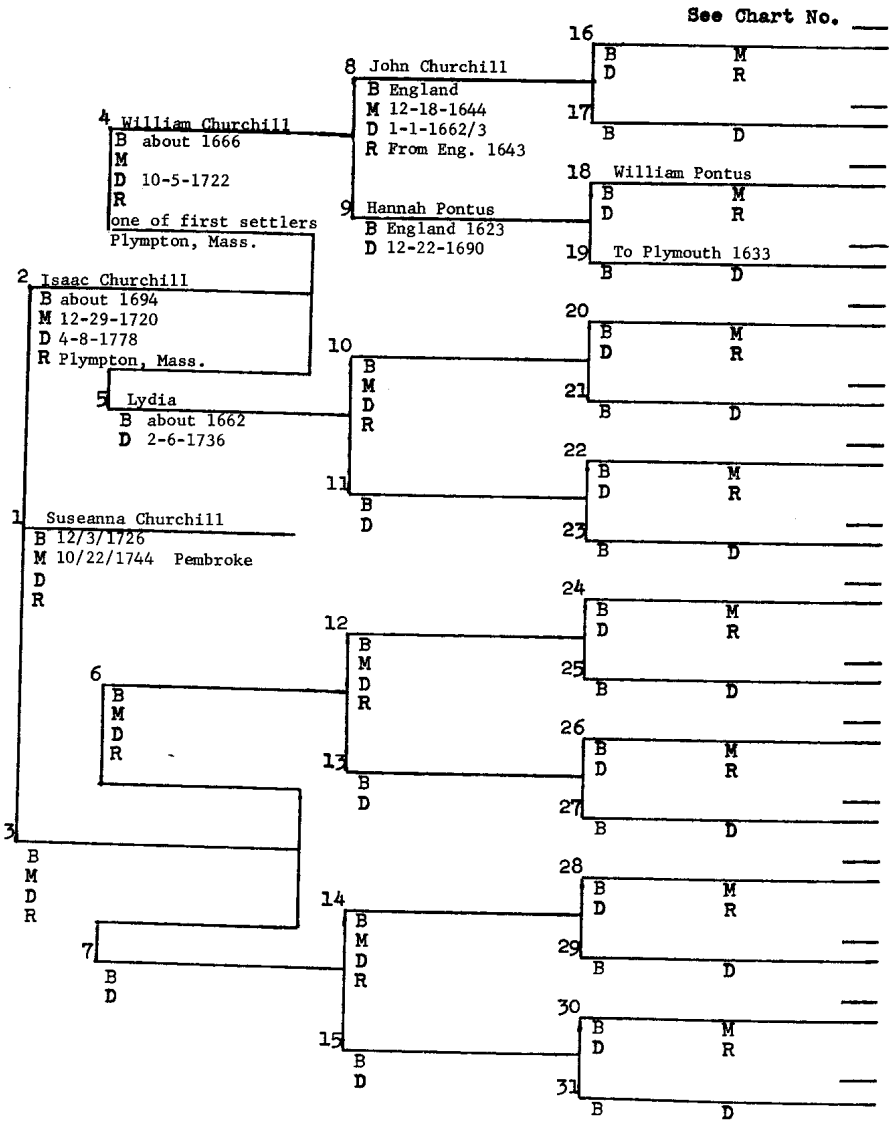
See Chart No. ___

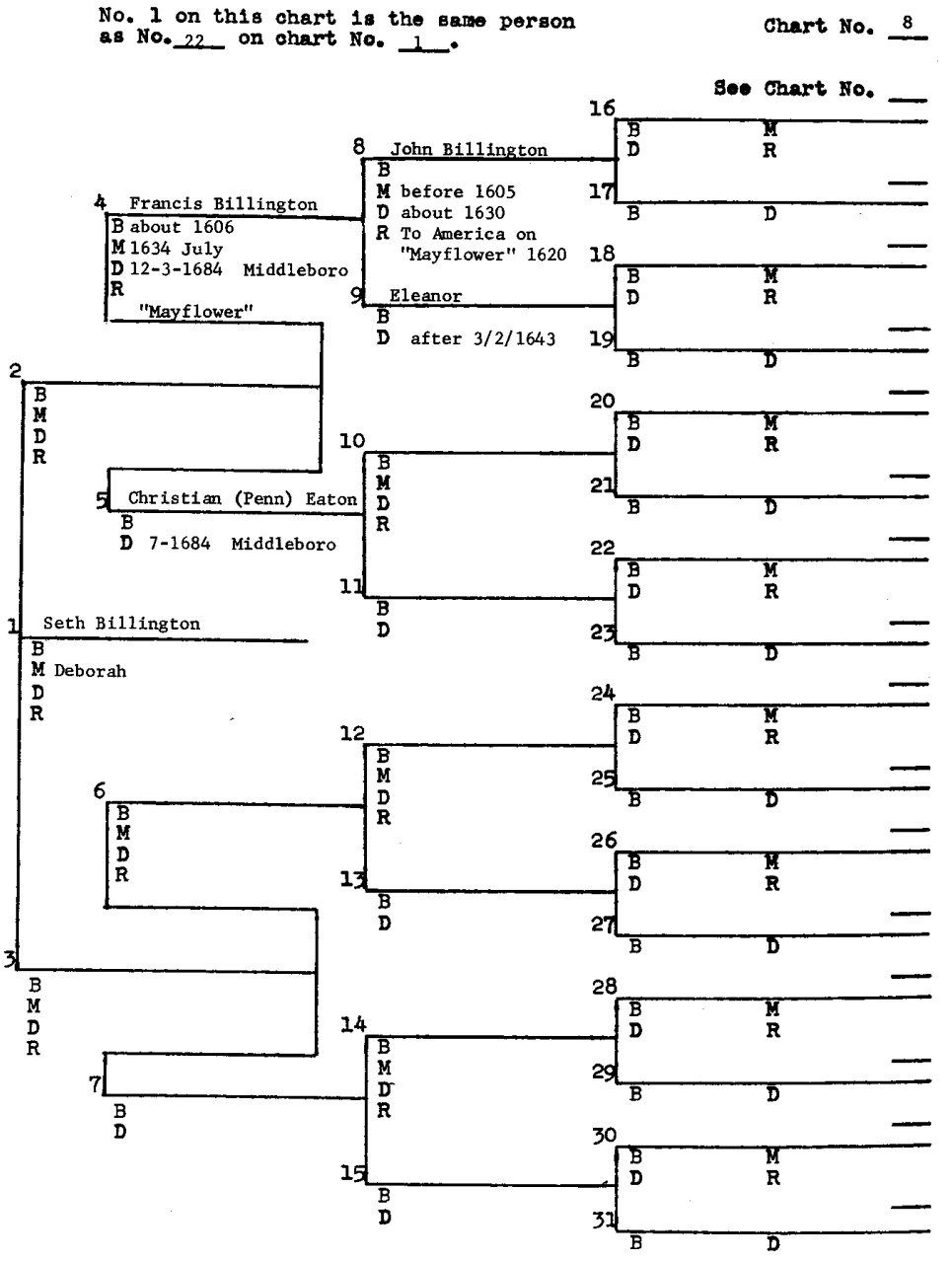


Ref.
N.E. Gen. & Hist. Reg. Vol. 41,
Page 285, Kingston V.R. Plympton,
V.R.

No. 1 on this chart is the same person as No. 21 on chart No. 1.

Chart No. 7




No. 1 on this chart is the same person as No. 22 on chart No. 1.
Chart No. 8
See Chart No.
1 Seth Billington
B
M Deborah
D
R
2
B
M
D
R
3
B
M
D
R
4 Francis Billington
B about 1606
M 1634 July
D 12-3-1684 Middleboro
R
"Mayflower"
5 Christian (Penn) Eaton
B
D 7-1684 Middleboro
6
B
M
D
R
7
B
D
8 John Billington
B
M before 1605
D about 1630
R To America on
"Mayflower" 1620
9 Eleanor
B
D after 3/2/1643
10
B
M
D
R
11
B
D
12
B
M
D
R
13
B
D
14
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M
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27
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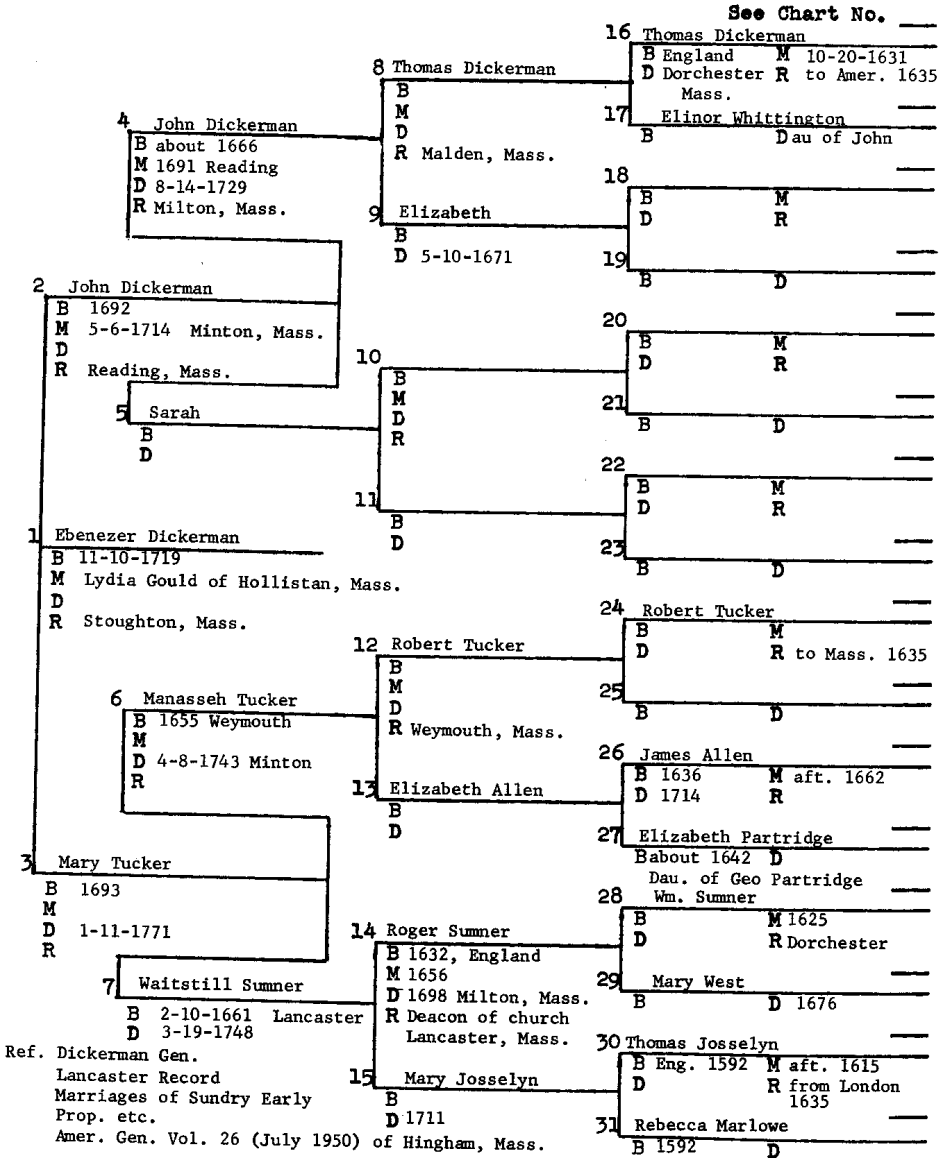
28
B
D
M
R
29
B
D
30
B
D
M
R
31
B
D

No. 1 on this chart is the same person as No. 28 on chart No. 1.

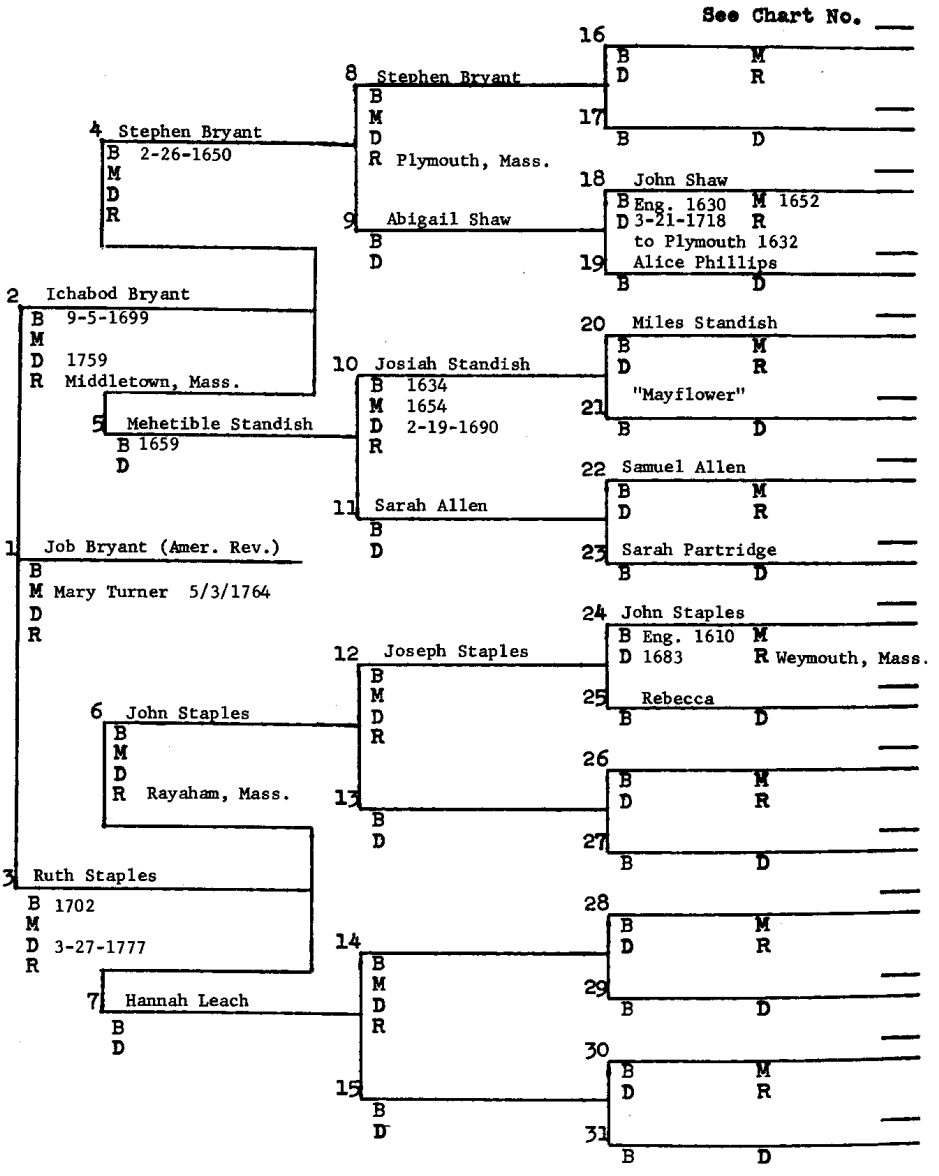
Chart No. 14



Ref. Dickerman Gen.
Lancaster Record
Marriages of Sundry Early
Prop. etc.
Amer. Gen. Vol. 26 (July 1950)

No. 1 on this chart is the same person as No. 30 on chart No. 1.

Chart No. 16



This marks the end of the contents of the original book. The following items are provided for historical interest.

THE COLUMBIA RIVER

By L. W. Simmons

Oh Columbia: Majestic Columbia:
Fairest of all the fair streams of the earth:
Thou art matchless from delta to fountain
From the sea to the land of thy birth.

Proud Hudson may boast of her Highlands-
St. Lawrence, Niagara grand-
But none can compare with Columbia
Proudest stream in all our fair land.

On thy swelling bosom the mountains
Look down from their regions of snow,
And the hills resplendent in beauty
Nestle close where thy bright waters flow.

On thy sweet flowering banks are bright meadows
And piney woods silent and grand-
And city and village and hamlet
Tell tales of a prosperous land.

As on thy proud surface we ride
With comfort and luxury blest
We think of the time when no keel
Cleft thy silently tremulous crest.

When from fountain to sea thy dark tide
Knew no sound save Nature's refrain-
And in silence thy waters rolled on
To their home in the roaring Main.

Then the Indian Brave shot his light canoe
O'er the foaming and dashing cascade
And deep in the wildwood and Nature's retreat
Wooed sweetly his fawn-footed maid.

The deer leaped the crags - the bear roamed the glades
The quail whistled deep in the glen
And peace reigned supreme in thy deep solitudes
Oh; Matchless Columbia, then.

The Indian Brave no more wooes his maid-
The deer leaps the wild crags no more-
But shrill whistles echo thy pine woods among
And we listen to commerce dull roar.

But in silence of Nature or traffic's loud clang
Thy beauties are ever the same-
And poet and songster in rapturous strains
Will send down the ages thy fame.

Farewell sweet Columbia - not soon shall my heart
Swell with rapture at beauties like thine;
But wherever I go until death lays me low-
Thou wilt in my memory entwine.

NEWSPAPER ARTICLE and NOTE from EDNA SIMMONS

By contrast is the story of the most famous edifice now under the protection of the historical commission. It was the first to be certified as a Massachusetts historical landmark under the new law and be protected, presumably, forever, from future improvement. It came close to being improved out of existence?

The Back Bay was then new and religious groups were moving west like lemmings. The congregation of the Old South Church could not resist the fat price offered for; its prime downtown real estate and the opportunity to get a church for nothing in a fashionable district. Wreckers brought tall ladders and were scaling the tower to begin the clock

But **before the clock struck 12, a forgotten hero, George W. Simmons, rushed up with a temporary restraining order. A huge banner was hung out, "Shall the Old South be saved?"** Wendell Phillips made a speech. The meeting house was jammed to the aisles, as it had not been since Warren orated on the Boston Massacre or Sam Adams arranged his famous tea party. And, an emergency-created Old South Assn., within a few months, raised the enormous sum of 400,00 pre-inflation dollars to buy off the office building developers.

It is the first case on record where public conscience outbid private greed to save an historic monument. It has become a guide and a symbol of the direction the Massachusetts Historical Commission should take. As Madison pointed out at the convention that produced the nation's Constitution, it is representation of diversity of interests that makes democracy work.

The commission has settled to the task of guiding and supporting, in every town or city, those groups, private or publicly organized, that are dedicated to preserving what gives character and beauty to the scenes of daily life. It has built up an inventory of historic sites in the state. It helps organize conservation groups. It works to discover alternative uses for threatened buildings.

The majority of the commission, all serving without pay, are nominated by various non-profit organizations such as the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities. With impartial mind they evaluate needs and distribute such funds as state and nation see fit to

appropriate. They help keep such great buildings as the Boston Public Library alive. A recent matching grant by the commission made possible a survey of the interior of the McKim wing in preparation for restoration of its famous works of art.
The 11th of September is a day to remember. Perhaps it should be, called Heritage Day.

*Thomas Boylston Adams is treasurer of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and author of **A New Nation**, a collection of his columns. He is on the committee seeking a new director for the Boston Public Library*.

Photo Caption:
An early photograph of the Old South Meeting House, Washington Street, Boston. (Photo courtesy of SPNEA)

Additional handwritten note from Edna Simmons:

> Did the family show you this -- I sent it last Xmas in my card to them. She is an old friend from Boston & I asked George's Dad about them when she wrote years ago as she lived in Boston Mass. then & lived on Weston St. & Simmons Ave. So you have some prominent forbears –
>
> Edna

Newspaper Editor's additional information gleaned from the Web from the Boston National Historical Park, Virtual Visitor Center:

> When the Old South Meeting House was built in 1729, its Puritan congregation could not foresee the role it would play in American history. In colonial times, Ben Franklin was baptized here. Phyllis Wheatley, the first published black poet, was a member, as were patriots James Otis, Thomas Cushing, and William Dawes. In the 19th century, Old South was one of the first buildings in this country to be preserved as an historic site. Today, Old South is at the forefront of

America's history museums with a nationally recognized permanent exhibition.

But perhaps the Meeting House played its greatest role in the years preceding the Revolutionary War. When rumblings started to shake the colonies and the Revolution was imminent, patriots flocked to Old South to debate the issues of the day. They argued about the Boston Massacre, and they protested impressment of American sailors into the British Navy. And then, on the night of December 16, 1773, they acted. Over 5,000 citizens of Boston and surrounding towns gathered at Old South to rally against the tax on tea. After hours of debate, Samuel Adams gave the signal that launched the Boston Tea Party. From Old South, the Sons of Liberty sneaked to Boston Harbor where, dressed as Indians, they threw over 400 chests of tea into the water.

Several years later, when the city was occupied by British troops, Old South was used as a riding school by the British cavalry. The building sustained enormous damage but was restored as a place of worship by its congregation in March 1783.

A century later the Meeting House was scheduled for demolition after it was sold by its congregation, who moved to Boston's Back Bay section. If it were not for the great efforts of such leaders as Wendell Phillips, Julia Ward Howe and Ralph Waldo Emerson, Old South certainly would have met that fate. But the building was saved, thus ushering in the nation's historic preservation movement which has led to the preservation of thousands of historic buildings nationwide.

After its preservation, the Old South Meeting House stood as a museum, historic site and educational institution, as well as defender of free speech. In the early 1900s the Old South Association voted to grant use of the building to groups denied access to other public auditoriums. Old South continues this tradition

today by sponsoring public forums and debates on controversial subjects.

Today, Old South's rich history springs to life through special exhibits, rare colonial artifacts and a scale model of early Boston. Throughout the year, Old South also sponsors lectures, concerts, and live theater presentations, and collaborates with other organizations to round out a full schedule of quality programming.

Old South Meeting House reopened to the public in October of 1997 after undergoing its first major rehabilitation in nearly 100 years. The work included comprehensive preservation of the historic architectural fabric, lighting and sound system improvements in the main hall, and an enlarged museum shop. A new permanent exhibit is scheduled to be completed in Spring of 1998.