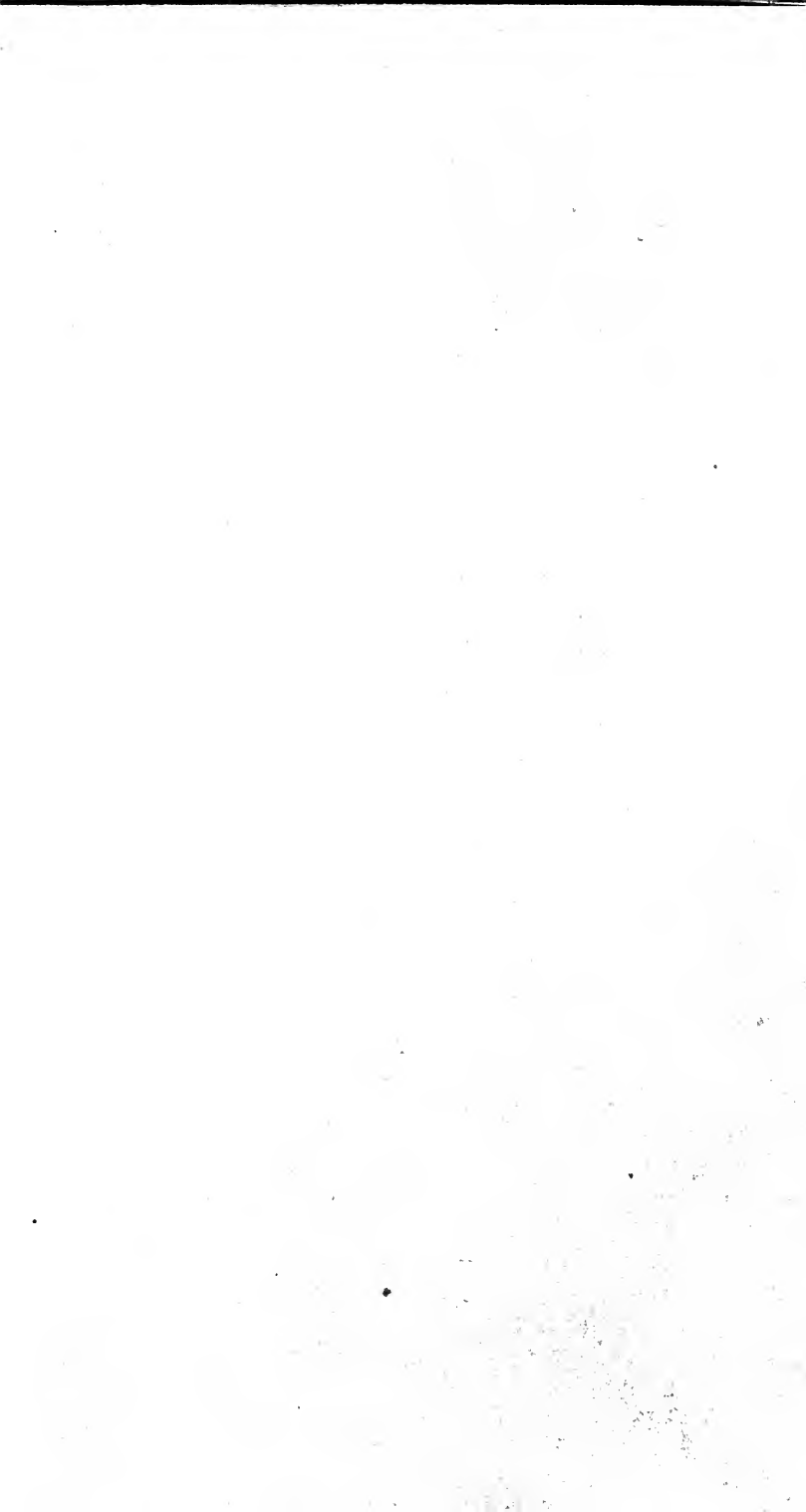




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**General Edward Fitzgerald Beale**  
From a Woodcut

# Edward Fitzgerald Beale

**A Pioneer in the Path of Empire**

1822-1903

By

Stephen Bonsal

UNIV. OF  
CALIFORNIA

*With 17 Illustrations*

G. P. Putnam's Sons  
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Faint stamp or mark in the upper right corner, possibly containing the number '1721'.

*Journal*

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## INTRODUCTORY NOTE

**E**DWARD FITZGERALD BEALE, whose life is outlined in the following pages, was a remarkable man of a type we shall never see in America again. A grandson of the gallant Truxtun, Beale was born in the Navy and his early life was passed at sea. However, he fought with the army at San Pasqual and when night fell upon that indecisive battlefield, with Kit Carson and an anonymous Indian, by a daring journey through a hostile country, he brought to Commodore Stockton in San Diego, the news of General Kearny's desperate situation.

Beale brought the first gold East, and was truly, in those stirring days, what his friend and fellow-traveller Bayard Taylor called him, "a pioneer in the path of empire." Resigning from the Navy, Beale explored the desert trails and the mountain passes which led overland to the Pacific, and later he surveyed the routes and built the wagon roads over which the mighty migration passed to people the new world beyond the Rockies.

As Superintendent of the Indians, a thankless office which he filled for three years, Beale initiated a policy of honest dealing with the nation's wards

which would have been even more successful than it was had cordial unfaltering support always been forthcoming from Washington.

Beale was, rare combination! both pioneer and empire builder. He was also a man of catholic interests. He was beloved by Carson and by Benton, a scout and a senator, and was esteemed by men as widely apart as his life-long friend General Grant and the Emperor Francis Joseph, at whose court Beale represented all that was best in his native land.

As a boy the writer worshipped the great Indian fighter "Who won California" and held it against innumerable Mexican lancers, and who had brought home the gold in the Patent Office we used to gaze at with wide-open eyes on Saturday afternoons; but, for whatever intimate touches the following pages may reveal the reader is indebted, as is the writer, to Rear-Admiral John H. Upshur and to Rear-Admiral David B. Harmony, Beale's distinguished shipmates, to Hon. Truxtun Beale, a son of the pioneer and of California, and to the late Mr. Harris Heap who wrote the narrative of Beale's journey across the plains in 1853.

STEPHEN BONSAI.

BEDFORD, N. Y., January 6, 1912.

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**Edward Fitzgerald Beale**



## EDWARD FITZGERALD BEALE

## CHAPTER I

## EARLY DAYS

Beale's Birth and Parentage—Born in the Navy—A Fistic Encounter and its Consequences—A Jacksonian Midshipman at Fourteen—On the Schoolship *Independence*—Passed Midshipman and Ordered to the *Congress 44* as Acting Master—Secret Mission for Commodore Stockton—Tradition of the Service—British Designs on California.

**E**DWARD FITZGERALD BEALE was born on his father's estate in the District of Columbia on February 4, 1822. He was the son of Paymaster George Beale<sup>1</sup> who served with distinction under McDonough in the Battle of Lake Champlain and of Emily the youngest daughter of Commodore Truxtun of the *Constellation*. As the son and the grandson of distinguished naval officers, young Beale had what was regarded in the old Navy as a prescriptive right to enter the service and this was also his wish from earliest years. With the advent of Jackson and

<sup>1</sup> See note on next page.



TO MR. ADAMS  
2  
ANNALS  
Edward Fitzgerald Beale

with Democracy installed in power as never before since the foundation of the Government, the prescriptive rights of the old naval families were, however, being brushed aside and the claims and hopes of young "Ned" Beale might also have been overlooked but for a fortunate and characteristic incident which I shall relate as it is recorded in the family archives.

The boys at the Capital, where the Beales spent their winters at this time, were much given to politics, and their ranks were divided by allegiance to antagonistic statesmen.

Fortunately for himself, our hero at this moment was a stalwart Jacksonian. There were many adherents of Adams at the Capital and after hot disputes it was agreed to have all political differences settled by the ancient test of battle.

"Ned" Beale was chosen by the Jacksonians, while the Adamites were represented by a boy named Evans, who has since become a distinguished citizen of Indiana. A day or two later, the fistic encounter took place under a long white

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NAVY DEPARTMENT,

Feb. 10, 1820.

SIR:

In compliance with a resolution of Congress, I am directed by the President to present to you a silver medal as a testimony of the high sense entertained by Congress of your gallantry, good conduct, and services in the decisive and splendid victory gained on Lake Champlain on the 11th of September, 1814, over a British squadron of superior force.

Yours most respectfully,

SMITH THOMPSON, *Secretary of the Navy.*

To GEORGE BEALE, Esq., *Paymaster U. S. Navy.*

arch which at that time marked the southern entrance to the grounds of the White House. While the battle raged and the enthusiastic spectators shouted encouragement to their respective champions, a tall figure appeared on the scene, scattered the boys, and seizing Beale by the collar asked him what he was fighting for. He replied that he was fighting for Jackson and that his opponent, the Adams boy, had expressed a poor opinion of the President's politics and personality.

"I am Jackson," said the newcomer. "I never forget the men or boys who are willing to fight for me, but of course I do not wish them to do it all the time. Now put on your coats."

Several years now elapsed which Beale spent at Georgetown College, but when he reached his fourteenth year, the desire to enter the Navy became overwhelming. One afternoon he called at the White House with his mother to see General Jackson and put in an application for a midshipman's warrant. Mrs. Beale told her story, insisting upon the fact that her boy was the son and the grandson of men who had served their country and had been wounded in battle.

Jackson listened with courtesy and with interest, but seemed somewhat uncertain as to how he should act upon the request. Suddenly the boy interrupted his mother and said, "Mother, let me speak to General Jackson in my own behalf." He then approached the General, in a moment reminding him of the fight and the promise he

had made, at least by implication, to serve him should the opportunity present. Without a word, General Jackson tore off the back of a letter lying near him (this was before the days of envelopes) and wrote to the Secretary of the Navy, "Give this boy an immediate warrant," and handed it over to Mrs. Beale. A few hours later, Ned Beale's name was on the Navy list and soon he was on his way to the receiving ship at Philadelphia, which then served as a Naval School.

The Widow Beale now returned with her triumphant boy to Chester, Pa., when suddenly the problem presented itself, in what guise should the youngster make his first appearance at the Naval School? She called in her kinsmen, the Porters and the Farraguts, who both were neighbors at Greenbank on the Delaware, and at their suggestion Aunt Polly was called in. Aunt Polly was well known in Chester as an impoverished gentlewoman who had seen better days. She did needlework, and it was thought that with care and by the advice of several of the young officers of the family, who were at home on leave, she could bring together something resembling a uniform, and indeed a most wonderful coat was produced, which was fitted out with the buttons of the great Truxtun, large metal buttons about five times as large as those which were ordinarily worn in this day. In this guise, three days later, Beale presented himself on board the receiving ship. His future mess-

mates made great fun of the wonderful coat. Many fights ensued, and as a result, the treasured heirlooms, the buttons which Truxtun had worn, it is said, on the occasion of his famous battle when in command of the *Constellation*, disappeared. The essential had been achieved, however, and "Ned" Beale had fought his way into the Navy.

Beale's career on the schoolship *Independence* was creditable and gave promise of his later performance. Before he was sixteen, he had twice risked his life in saving from drowning the lives of others; he was regarded as pugnacious by his classmates and by his teachers but not excessively so for a midshipman who owed his appointment to the personal selection of Andrew Jackson. Beale made a cruise to the West Indies on the *Porpoise* and another to the Mediterranean on the *Ohio*. Returning to the Naval School in Philadelphia he faced his examinations bravely, was commended for seamanship and his ability to write good lucid English, and then received his commission as Passed Midshipman.

In August, 1845, Beale was ordered to the frigate *Congress 44* fitting out in Norfolk, Virginia, for the Pacific Coast. He was commissioned Acting Master, a grade since abolished, and now the boyish days were over, and the serious business of life began.

We now approach an episode in Beale's life which is certainly somewhat unsatisfactory to the

historian. Few youngsters have been entrusted with secret missions, still fewer have proved so reticent as to carry the secret to their grave, yet this was the case with our young Acting Master. Little is known of the episode beyond the general tradition in the service, of which I shall speak later, and for this I am indebted to Rear-Admiral Harmony and Rear-Admiral Upshur, Beale's shipmates, who happily survive. We must also do what we can with the information which the Reverend Walter Colton, the Chaplain of the *Congress*, supplied in his book descriptive of this cruise, which was published in New York in 1850 under the title of *Deck and Port*. One month out from Hampton Roads he makes this entry in his log:

We discovered this morning a brig on our weather bow, standing down for us, and we hove to with our main topsail to the mast. She ran up Danish colors and in an hour hove to at a cable's length under our lee-quarter. We lowered a boat and boarded her. She proved to be the brig *Maria*, forty days out from Rio Grande in Brazil, and bound for Antwerp. The Captain wished to correct his reckoning, and well he might, for he was seven days out of his longitude. Mr. Beale, our second Master, took passage in her for the United States with despatches. It was arranged between him and the Captain of the brig that he should be put on board the first vessel that they might fall in with bound for an American port, and that if they fell in with none, that he should be landed at Dover, England.

As a matter of fact, the *Maria* sailed for many weeks through an empty ocean, and without meet-

ing a sail. Young Beale was finally landed somewhere on the English coast. He went directly to London, and after a few weeks stay there proceeded to the United States. After twenty-four hours in Washington, he set out to rejoin his ship, which he finally overtook in Callao harbor in Peru on the 8th of May.

Neither the Beale papers nor the records of the Navy Department shed any light whatsoever upon the purpose of Beale's mission, or the purport of the despatches which he carried. It is merely stated that he arrived with information from Commodore Stockton who commanded the *Congress* and was going out to the Pacific Coast to take command of all the naval forces there. Stockton's orders were to do all within his power to prepare for what the inevitable conflict with Mexico meant.

Beale never enlightened his family as to the details of this mission. He merely answered proudly when repeatedly questioned, "I was a bearer of secret despatches. Commodore Stockton never removed the seal of secrecy from my lips."

The tradition in the service is that while still in the West Indies Commodore Stockton secured information in regard to the movements of a British squadron which he deemed of the greatest importance and detached Beale to carry the news to Washington. It must be borne in mind that at the time in many circles our British cousins were credited with a design to anticipate the course of our manifest destiny and to acquire California them-

selves. When Stockton reached the Pacific Coast in the summer of 1845 with the return instructions which Beale brought him, covering the contingency of British intervention, Admiral Seymour was there with a large and powerful fleet. However, Seymour behaved in a very friendly manner, observed a waiting attitude, and never by word or action betrayed the fact that American annexation of the coveted territory was not agreeable to his Government.





**Commodore Robert F. Stockton**

From an Engraving by H. B. Hall  
After a painting on ivory by Newton, in 1840



## CHAPTER II

### THE WAR WITH MEXICO

Secretary Bancroft's Instructions to Commodore Stockton upon Taking Command of the Pacific Squadron—The Situation in California—The Army of the West at Fort Leavenworth—General Wool—Kearny at Santa Fe—The Meeting with Kit Carson—Kearny Pushes on to California—Battle of San Pasqual—Beale Commands the Guns—Mexicans in Overwhelming Force—Kearny in Straits—Beale and Carson Undertake Desperate Journey Bringing News to Stockton—The Relief Column—Benton's Speech in the Senate—His Tribute to Beale—Beale's First Visit to San Francisco Bay in the Fall of 1846—His Letter to Fremont.

THE purpose of the Administration at this juncture and the situation in Mexico is well described in the instructions of Hon. George Bancroft, the historian, then Secretary of the Navy, to Commodore Stockton when this distinguished officer was on the point of sailing from Norfolk, Va., on the *Congress* to take command of the Pacific Squadron.

It is the earnest desire of the President [writes Mr. Bancroft] to pursue the policy of peace, and he is anxious

that you and every part of your Squadron should be assiduously careful to avoid any act which could be construed into an act of aggression. Should Mexico, however, be resolutely bent on hostilities you will be mindful to protect the persons and the interests of citizens of the United States, and should you ascertain beyond a doubt that the Mexican Government has declared war against us, you will employ the force under your command to the best advantage.

The Mexican ports on the Pacific are said to be open and defenceless. If you ascertain with certainty that Mexico has declared war against the United States you will at once blockade or occupy such ports as your force may admit.

When Stockton reached the California coast, however, the situation was somewhat different. By June, 1846, war had been declared, and after driving the Mexicans at Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma, General Taylor lay at Matamoras awaiting definite instructions from Washington which were slow in coming.

In the meantime, a small force, somewhat pompously styled the Army of the West, assembled at Fort Leavenworth. It was commanded by Colonel Kearny who was instructed as soon as his preparations were made to march into New Mexico, capture Santa Fe, and then proceed to California. The Army of the Centre, a much larger force under command of General Wool, had assembled at San Antonio, and was making ready to march into Chihuahua.

Kearny, apparently oppressed by the fear that the war would be over before he had fairly placed



**The City and Harbor of Rio de Janeiro**

From a Lithograph



his men in the field, left Leavenworth without awaiting the arrival of one thousand men that the State of Missouri had been called upon to furnish him. Kearny entered New Mexico, and meeting with little or no resistance, reached Santa Fe on the 18th of August. After raising the flag over this ancient Spanish stronghold, he issued a proclamation absolving all the inhabitants of New Mexico from their allegiance to Mexico, and declaring the country an integral portion of the United States.

Leaving word for the Missouri volunteers to join General Wool on his expedition into Chihuahua, Kearny now pushed on toward California, his force of regulars being reduced to three hundred dragoons. When eleven days out from Santa Fe, Kearny met Kit Carson, the famous scout, who with an escort of sixteen men was on his way to Washington with despatches. In these despatches Commodore Stockton and Colonel Fremont announced the conquest of California by the forces under their command, and the institution of a form of civil government throughout the conquered territory. This information was correct in every sense of the word, but as Kearny's force was soon to experience, the Californians, that is the Mexicans of California, encouraged by the sight of the slender force which the United States then had on the Pacific Coast, revolted and took up arms. Ignorant of the reception that was awaiting him, Kearny sent back East several squadrons, and taking Carson for his guide pushed on with the

remainder to the Colorado River which he crossed, and marching northward reached the rancho of Agua Caliente on December 2d.

Kearny had made Carson turn back with him, and had sent another scout on to Washington with the despatches because he desired the services of the best guide. It was not a wise step thus to interfere with the plans of his brother officers, and indeed Commodore Stockton was his superior. From this incident, in itself most trivial, dates the jealousy and the discord which fills the history of the United States for several years with that unseemly wrangling that is known under the name of the Stockton-Fremont-Kearny controversy. In the court-martial which Fremont demanded as a result of Kearny's criticisms, Lieutenant Beale was summoned as a witness. His testimony was most favorable to Fremont, and not helpful to Kearny's reputation. Here his connection with the unhappy affair ended, and there will be no further reference to the controversy in this narrative.

From Agua Caliente, Colonel Kearny sent a letter to Commodore Stockton at San Diego announcing his approach, and three days later, when Kearny was but forty miles distant from the American naval base, he was met by a small force of volunteers under Captain Gillespie, and a score of bluejackets and a field-piece under Midshipman Beale. Though in anything but a secure position himself, Stockton had generously des-



patched this small force to apprise Kearny of the changed conditions, to warn him of the general revolt of the Californians, and to assist him upon his now perilous march to the coast. The insurgent Californians were at this time encamped at San Bernardo and Stockton contemplated attacking them when reinforced, or when Kearny was out of his dangerous position.

The next news came through a Mr. Stokes, an English pioneer of California, who rode into San Diego and announced that Kearny had attacked the Californians and been worsted. Upon cross-examination Stokes admitted to the anxious commodore that the battle was no concern of his, and that he had left the field while the result was in some doubt because he was convinced that his position as spectator was becoming dangerous. Great uncertainty and anxiety prevailed now at the naval base in San Diego harbor. It was heightened by the arrival of Alexis Godey, the famous scout, who had come through from San Pasqual, where the battle was fought, with a letter from Captain Turner upon whom the command had devolved when Kearny was wounded. Turner stated that eighteen men of the small force had been killed, and that there were many wounded. "General Kearny is among the wounded, but it is hoped not dangerously. Captains Monroe and Johnson, 1st Dragoons, are killed, and Lieut. Hammond, 1st Dragoons, is dangerously wounded." In conclusion, Turner asked that a considerable force be

despatched to meet him on the road to San Diego, via Soledad and San Bernardo.

Commodore Stockton was impressed by the gravity of this news and it led him to believe that the Californian-Mexicans were in much greater strength than had hitherto been reported. Godey came in with Turner's letter on December 7th, and Stockton was pushing preparations to march with his whole force, when on the afternoon of the 9th an Indian who was known as a body-servant of Beale's came into the lines and reported that as a result of the battle Kearny's force was in desperate straits. The Indian had hardly completed his story when Beale appeared with a more circumstantial and intelligent report. "Kearny has been defeated," he said, "and his whole force is besieged on a small hill of rocks, or mesa, so completely surrounded by the enemy that it seems impossible for them to escape, or to long maintain their position." Beale also reported that the Californians were commanded by Don Andres Pico, the brother of the Governor, who had proven himself to be a very capable and energetic officer, and that Kearny's men, when he started out on his mission to obtain relief, had been reduced for some days to eating mule flesh, and had been without water for sixty hours.

That was a busy night in San Diego. Beale was taken to the hospital where for days he was near death. While the young sailor was raving in the hospital, three hundred marines and blue-

jackets, sent by Stockton, pushed on through the dark night, and at dawn on the morning of the eleventh they reached their beleaguered countrymen. The enemy, baffled of their prey, disappeared with the mists of the morning. The march to the sea was resumed, and that night the little band of dragoons, that had looked down the very jaws of death, entered San Diego in safety.

Benton's speech before the Senate describing the battle of San Pasqual and the resulting controversy between Stockton, Kearny, and Fremont, which practically disorganized the American Army and Navy for months to come, lasted I believe for four days and would I know fill several volumes of this size. Those were spacious days in the Senate. However, I cannot refrain from quoting the following paragraphs from the speech of the second day. They deal very intimately with our young hero and as The Missouri Tribune stated to the open Senate, the information concerning Beale's heroism had been secured by him from Kit Carson who was at the time a guest in Benton's house.

The four days' siege of the hill was the period of interesting events, which it was the duty of the General to have told, and which he suppressed to keep up his assumed character of victor. [Said Benton] First, there was the capture of the generous and daring Godey, with his two companions, in full view of Kearny's camp, after his adventurous run to San Diego, forty miles, to get aid for Kearny, and rapid return with the tidings that it was coming—tidings which he could not deliver because he was captured in view of Kearny by his besiegers. This fact had

to be suppressed, or the illusive cry of victory was at an end. It was suppressed—doubly suppressed—not noticed in the official report, and not confessed on interrogation before the court-martial. Then there was the chivalry of Don Andres Pico, worthy of Castilian blood, in his conduct to his enemies. He treated the captured men with the utmost kindness—Godey as a brother, because he knew his renown, and honored heroism in his person. He inquired for the killed, and especially for Gillespie, whom he personally knew, and whom he had reported among the dead. Godey told him that he was not dead, but badly lanced, and that his servant in San Diego had made up some supplies for him, which he had brought—sugar, coffee, tea, fresh linen. Pico put the supplies under a flag, and sent them to Gillespie, with an invitation to come to his camp, and receive better treatment than he could get on the dry rocks of San Bernardo; which he did, and was treated like a brother, returning when he pleased. The same flag carried a proposition to exchange prisoners. Kearny was alarmed at it, and saw nothing in it, or in the noble conduct to Gillespie, but a trick and a lure to perfidy. He was afraid to meet the flag. None of those for whom he reserved the honors of his report to the Government would venture to go. There was a lad present—one of those sent out by Stockton, a midshipman, the son of a widow in sight of this Capitol, the grandson of Truxtun, and no degenerate scion of that illustrious stock: his name, Beale.

This lad volunteered to go and hear the propositions of exchange. Great was the alarm at his departure. A six-barrelled revolver, in addition to the sword, perfectly charged and capped, was stowed under his coat. Thus equipped, and well-mounted, he set out, protected by a flag and followed by anxious eyes and palpitating hearts. The little river San Bernardo was crossed at a plunging gallop, without a drink, though rabid for water both the horse and his rider, the rider having a policy which the horse could not

comprehend. Approaching a picket-guard, a young *alfarez* (ensign) came out to inquire for what purpose. The mission was made known, for Beale spoke Spanish; and while a sergeant was sent to the General's tent to inform him of the flag, a soldier was despatched to the river for water. "Hand it to the gentleman," was the Castilian command. Beale put the cup to his lips, wet them, in token of acknowledging a civility, and passed it back; as much as to say, "we have water enough on that hill." The *alfarez* smiled; and, while waiting the arrival of Don Andres, a courteous dialogue went on. "How do you like the country?" inquired the *alfarez*. "Delighted with it," responded Beale. "You occupy a good position to take a wide view." "Very good: can see all round." "I don't think your horses find the grass refreshing on the hill." "Not very refreshing, but strong." There was, in fact, no grass on the hill, nor any shrub but the one called wire-wood, from the close approximation of its twigs to that attenuated preparation of iron which is used for making knitting-needles, card-teeth, fishing-hooks, and such small notions; and upon which wood, down to its roots, the famished horses gleaned until compassionate humanity cut the halters, and permitted them to dash to the river, and its grassy bands, and become the steeds of the foe.

By this time three horsemen were seen riding up, as all Californians ride, at the rate the famous Gilpin rode when he made the last mile to Islington. Arriving within a certain distance, they halted, as only Californians and Mamelukes can halt: the horse, at a pull of the bridle and lever bit, thrown back upon his haunches, fixed in his tracks, and motionless as the equestrian statue of Peter the Great. One of the three advanced on foot, unbuckling his sword and flinging it twenty feet to the right. The *alfarez* had departed. Seeing the action of the gentleman, Beale did the same—unbuckled his sword and flung it twenty feet to his right. The swords were then forty feet apart.

But the revolver! there it stuck under his coat—unmistakable symptom of distrust or perfidy—sign of intended or apprehended assassination, and outlawed by every code of honor from the field of parley. A stolen sheep on his back would have been a jewelled star on his breast compared to the fixed fact of that assassin revolver under his midshipman's coat. Confusion filled his bosom; and for a moment honor and shame contended for the mastery. To try and hide it, or pull it out, expose it, and fling it away, was the question; but with the grandson of Truxtun it was a brief question. High honor prevailed. The clean thing was done. Abstracted from its close concealment, the odious tool was bared to the light, and vehemently dashed far away—the generous Californian affecting not to have seen it. Then breathed the boy easier and deeper.

The business of the parley was soon arranged. Pico had three Americans, Kearny had but one Californian, sole fruit of the victory of San Pasqual. Pico offered to exchange man for man. Having but one man, Beale was anxious to redeem Godey, but would not name him, only described him. Pico smiled. "That is Godey," said he. "You can't have him; but he will be treated well. Describe another." Beale, supposing he was to be refused again, and so reduced to the one which he least wanted, described Burgess, a brave man, but the least intelligent of the three. Pico smiled again. "You shall have him," was the ready reply. "Send our man, and he shall redeem Burgess." It was done, and the exchange effected.

The results of the astuteness of Pico, in giving up the least intelligent of his prisoners, was soon visible, and lamentably so, in the American camp. Burgess could tell nothing about the mission to Stockton—nothing about his response in answer to Godey's mission—nothing about help; for he was only one of the escort for the personal safety of Godey, in his dangerous mission, traversing eighty

miles (going and coming) of insurgent country, filled with a hostile population, and rode over by fleet cavalry, flushed with victory. The secret of the mission asking for aid was confined to Godey—not to be committed to others, for fear of multiplying the chances of its getting to the knowledge of the enemy.

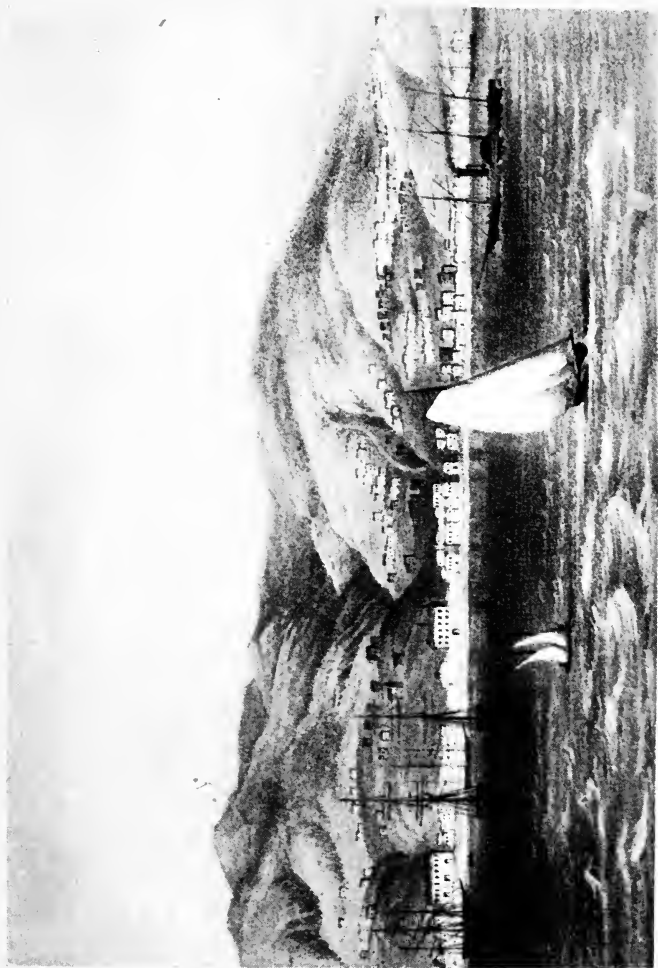
Burgess could tell nothing. Then it was that black despair fell upon the American camp. Without provisions, without power to move, besieged by conquerors, without the hope of relief—a surrender at discretion, or death in a vain effort to escape, were the only alternatives. In this mournful dilemma, American spirit rose to the level of the occasion. Men and officers, one and all, the unhappy wounded with the rest, demanded to be led forth. Then the mournful preparations were made. All the baggage was burnt—everything that could encumber the march. The helpless part of the wounded were put on ambulances. At one o'clock the devoted column began to move—Pico, on the watch, observing the movement. In a moment his lancers were in the saddle, mounted on their fleet, docile, daring, and educated horses, such as the Mameluke never rode. He was then in front, in the open and beautiful valley through which the road lay down the river to San Diego. Suddenly the lancers defiled to the right—came round into the rear of the hill—halted and formed at six hundred yards distance; as much as to say, "We open the road to you; take it." Then Kearny halted his column, and consulted his officers, *and others*—Carson knows who.

The question was, to go or not? The solution seemed to depend upon the possibility of getting relief from Stockton; if there was a chance for that relief, wait for it; if not, go forward. Stockton was thirty-five miles distant, and nothing heard from him; for Burgess, as I have said, could tell nothing. To send another express to Stockton seemed hopeless, the distance and dangers were so great. Besides, who would venture to go, seeing the fate of Godey and

knowing the state of the country? It was a moment to find a hero; and one presented himself. It was the lad Beale. It was then one o'clock; the column fell back into camp; early dark was fixed for the departure of the daring messenger; and he was asked whom he would have for his companion. "Carson and my Indian servant," was the reply. The General answered that he could not spare Carson—*that general* who swore before the court-martial that he had never seen the *man* before or since who brought him Fremont's letter of the 17th of January—*that man* being Carson! He could not spare him. He wanted a counsellor, as well as a guide and a hero. Then said Beale, "No other can help me; and I will go with the Indian servant." General Kearny then said Carson might go. Carson has since told me that Beale volunteered first.

The brief preparations for the forlorn hope—*les enfans perdus; los hijos perdidos*—were soon made; and brief they were. A rifle each, a blanket, a revolver, a sharp knife, and no food; there was none in the camp. General Kearny invited Beale to come and sup with him. It was not the supper of Antony and Cleopatra; for when the camp starves, no general has a larder. It was meagre enough. The General asked Beale what provisions he had to travel on; the answer was, nothing. The General called his servant to inquire what his tent afforded; a handful of flour was the answer. The General ordered it to be baked into a loaf and given to Beale. When the loaf was brought, the servant said that was the last, not of bread only, but of everything; that he had nothing left for the General's breakfast. Beale directed the servant to carry back the loaf, saying he would provide for himself. He did provide for himself; and how? By going to the smouldering fire where the baggage had been burnt in the morning, and scraping from the ashes and embers the half-burnt peas and grains of corn which the conflagration had spared, filling his pockets with the unwonted food. Carson





**The Harbor of Valparaiso**  
From a Lithograph



and the faithful Indian provided for themselves some mule-beef.

The darkness of the night fell upon the camp, and the moment arrived for descending from the hill and clearing the open valley, two miles to the nearest cover. It was a perilous descent; for at the approach of night it was the custom of Pico to draw a double chain of sentinels around the hill, and to patrol the valley with mounted lancers—precautions more vigilantly enforced since he learnt from the captured men that Carson was on the hill. "Be on the alert," he said to his men, "Carson is there"; and applying to Kearny's command one of the figurative expressions so common in the Spanish language—*se escapa el lobo*: the wolf will escape the hunters if you do not watch him close.

The descent was perilous and painful, all done by crawling; for the upright figure of a man could not be exhibited where the horizon was watched for all that appeared above it. Shoes were pulled off to avoid cracking a stick or making a sound, which the ear of the listener pressed upon the ground could catch, and the naked feet exposed to the prickly pear. They passed between sentinels, waiting and watching their time to move an inch. They heard them whisper, and smelt the smoke of the cigarito. At one time, Beale thought it was all over with them. Pressing Carson's thigh to get his attention, and putting his mouth upon his ear, he whispered into it, "We are gone; let us jump up and fight it out." Carson said, "No, I have been in worse places before, and Providence saved me." His religious reliance encouraged the sinking hopes of Beale. The hill cleared, two miles of prairie in the open valley, all covered with prickly pears, remained to be crawled over, for no one could stand upright without detection where the mounted vidette observed every object that rose above the level plain.

Clear of the valley and gaining the first woods, they travelled all night without shoes, having lost them in the

dark. Rocks, stones, pebbles, prickly pears, there of exuberant growth, were their carpet. At daylight they took a gorge of a mountain, and laid by, for movement by day was impossible to them; the whole country was on the alert, animated to the highest by the success over Kearny, and all on the search for fugitives. At nightfall the expedition was resumed, and within twelve miles of San Diego the three adventurers separated, each to take his chance of getting in, and thus multiply chances for getting relief to Kearny; for San Diego also was surrounded and invested, and Stockton had not a horse (having sent all to Kearny) to scour the country a furlong in front of his infantry pickets. The Indian got in first, Beale next, Carson third, all in a state of utter exhaustion, and Beale only getting into the town by the help of the men who carried him, and with injuries from which he has not yet recovered.

When the Mexican rising took place under Flores and Pico, or to be quite frank about it when the Californians attempted to wrest their country from the hands of the invaders, Fremont with his small force was encamped in the Valley of the Sacramento. He was apparently endeavoring, with but slight success, to induce the emigrants to take part in Stockton's expedition against Old Mexico. The Mexican uprising, as it was called, cancelled all previously held plans and Fremont was ordered to come forthwith to San Francisco "with" as Fremont writes in his Memoirs:

all the men and saddles I could obtain. To bring my command to San Francisco [continues Fremont], Commodore Stockton had sent a fleet of boats in charge of Mid-

shipman Edward Beale whom I had met in Monterey in July. At our meeting now commenced intervals of agreeable companionship on interesting occasions that resulted in a family friendship which has continued for forty years.

Gen. Beale at the date to which I refer was a real midshipman of the old type, happy and spilling over with uncontrolled good spirits as mostly midshipmen are used to be when away from the restraints of the ship. . . . The delta of the San Joaquin and Sacramento Rivers and the bay and its sloughs at that time were not familiar to sea-going men, or indeed to men of any kind. Of his navigation through the Tulares in search of me I will let Beale speak for himself.

"I remember the lovely spring-like morning,"<sup>1</sup> writes Gen. Beale, "I think it was autumn but it ought to have been spring because I was so happy when I was ordered to command a squadron of boats (what is the Presidency to that at 19 or 20!) and go to find Fremont. . . . Wide and beautiful before us was the splendid and lonely bay. We looked curiously at Red Rock, passed La Isla de las Yeguas and met the furious tide of Garquinez Straits, my remembrance is *it* steered us and we camped for the night.

"The next day we looked over the vast ocean of tules and toward where the Sacramento and the San Joaquin come together in the great middle mere of that wonderful delta. There was everything curious to us that sunset, Monte Diavolo with double peaks, a long white line very distant which told of the Sierra Nevada and the bewitching contour of the nearer coast range and the quiet and lovely valleys lying close aboard. . . . We pulled in and next day we discovered a man on horseback whereupon we prepared to give him a broadside, as we were some distance from camp, and were already owners in fancy of a horse and saddle, when to our intense disgust he spoke in English and proved

<sup>1</sup> This letter was written by Gen. Beale at Gen. Fremont's request when the latter was preparing his Memoirs, about 1872.

to be Jake Snyder of Fremont's battalion. Then I had found my Holy Grail and went with him to Sonoma or some such place. We went like the Knight Hospitalers, two on one horse, I holding on to the taffrail when at a gallop.

"The town was all ablaze, old Ide was there and Cosgrove, and Snyder and Hensley and Bidwell and Gibson and a lot of others. Very soon, mayhap it was the next day, we all went to the boats and soon set sail for the bay again. Major Fremont being naturally in the fastest boat with me, we outsailed the fleet and at nightfall hauled up on an island. . . . Howsomever we got away and reached the old frigate *Congress* . . . and all this happened in the fall of '46 and a few unimportant matters have happened since but hardly worth recording."

## CHAPTER III

### WITH CARSON ON THE GILA

Beale the Hero of San Pasqual—Commodore Stockton's Despatches and the Praise of his Brother Officers—Beale and Carson Set Out across the Plains to Carry the News to Washington—Gen. Sherman's Picture of Carson—Adventures on the Gila—Dogged by Indians for Eight Hundred Miles on the Central Plains—"Them 's Arrers"—Lions in St. Louis and Washington—A Short Holiday—Back across the Plains Again—Incredible Hardships in the Gila Country—Beale Discovers or Divines the Santa Fe Trail—The Rev. Colton as Alcalde of Monterey—The Milch Cow "Eschews" to the Court—Sutter's Mill-race and the Golden Sands—Conditions of Life in El Dorado—The Rev. Colton's Complaint and Prayerful Hope—Beale as a Caricaturist—The Alleged Resentment of Catesby Jones—Story of Gold in California—Competition between the Army and Navy to Get the News East—Beale's Views on the Gold Question.

U. S. FRIGATE "CONGRESS,"  
HARBOR OF SAN DIEGO,  
Feb. 9, 1847.

SIR:

I have selected you to be the bearer of the accompanying despatches to the Navy Department in consequence of your heroic conduct in volunteering to leave Gen. Kearny's

camp (then surrounded by the enemy) to go to the Garrison of San Diego for assistance and because of the perils and hardships you underwent during that dangerous journey, to procure aid for your suffering fellow soldiers.

You will proceed without delay with Mr. Carson's party by the most expeditious route overland.

On your arrival at Washington you will immediately deliver the despatches to the Hon. Secretary of the Navy and receive his instructions for your future government.

Faithfully,

Your obt. servt.

R. F. STOCKTON.

To Actg. Lt. E. F. BEALE.

That Beale's services were as highly esteemed by his brother officers and shipmates as they were by the commodore, a happy state of affairs which does not always exist in the service, was shown by the following letter and the incident so creditable to all concerned which it describes.

SAN DIEGO, Dec. 21, 1846.

DEAR BEALE:

We your friends and brother officers have ordered from England a pair of epaulettes and sword to be presented to you by the hands of Lieut. Tilghman, in testimony of our admiration of your gallant conduct in the bold and hazardous enterprise of leaving Gen. Kearny's encampment, after the battles of San Pasqual and San Bernardino of the 6th of December, 1846, for the purpose of bringing information to the garrison of San Diego and obtaining relief for the suffering troops. Your bravery in the field of action and cool determination in the service above spoken of merits our warmest applause and we congratulate you upon the opportunity of distinction which you so handsomely improved. Hoping that the President of the United States



will not overlook your merit and that you may speedily wear the epaulettes and sword as the mark of your legitimate rank, we remain, yours faithfully,

W. W. Revere, Lt.,	Sam Mosbey, Surgeon,
W. B. Renshaw, Lt.,	R. Lloyd Tilghman, Lt.,
Ben. F. B. Hunter, Lt.,	Jno. Guest, Lt.,
W. B. Harrison, Master,	J. Zeilan, Capt.,
C. Eversfield, Surgeon,	H. B. Watson,
Jas. H. Watmough, P. M.,	George Minor, Lt.,
Wm. Speeden, P. M.,	J. H. Thompson, Lt.,
C. D. Maxwell, Surgeon,	A. A. Henderson, Inc. 9,
F. J. Stenson, Master,	G. W. Harrison, Lt.,
G. Missrova, Lt.,	Edwd. Higgins, Lt.

Carson, who acted as Beale's guide in this journey across the plains in the winter of 1846-7 with Stockton's despatches, is said to have been a grandson of Daniel Boone and came to his pioneering prowess and woodcraft by right of heredity. He was a son of the plains but at the same time had none of the physical characteristics of the frontiersman. General W. T. Sherman who saw Carson in 1848 in the company of Beale describes the celebrated scout as follows:

He was a small, stoop-shouldered man with reddish hair, freckled face, soft blue eyes and nothing to indicate extraordinary courage or daring. He spoke but little and answered questions in monosyllables. He spent some days in Monterey during which time we extracted some items of his personal history.

In all his journeys Carson was so cautious that not a few, strangers to the quality of his courage,

deemed him timid. Not a tree, a rock, a bush, or any other place where an Indian might hide escaped his notice. His eye was ever scanning the horizon for the hazy smoke that might indicate an Indian fire, or the flight of crows which generally hovered over a spot where Indians had recently encamped, and the ground he was always scrutinizing in search of the pressure of the horse's unshod foot or of the Indian's moccasin. For this expedition with Lieutenant Beale to Washington, Commodore Stockton gave the young scout a free hand, and ten picked marksmen were enrolled. The expedition took an extremely southern route and after journeying four hundred miles they reached the Gila, a tributary of the Lower Colorado. Here Carson's lynx eyes brought to light evidence of the fact that a band of hostile Indians, though always keeping out of sight, were dogging his path and eagerly watching for an opportunity to take him by surprise. The route led over a vast prairie where there were no natural defences. When he considered that the psychological moment had come, from indications that were anything but enlightening to his companions, Carson met Indian strategy with the trapper's ruse. Carson and Beale and the other riflemen cooked their supper rather early in the evening, and wrapped in their blankets threw themselves on the grass, apparently to sleep, but as soon as it was dark the men were ordered to rise and to march forward for something more than a mile, again to picket their animals and

to arrange their pack saddles so that they might serve as a protection from the arrows of the Indians. At midnight the yell of the savage was heard and a shower of arrows fell around but wide of the mark. The attacking party had not ascertained with accuracy the changed position of the travellers. They dared not approach near enough to see, for in that case they knew the fate that awaited them from the unerring aim of Kit and his companions. After many random shots and many unearthly yells the discomfited savages fled before the approach of dawn. And this was the last serious attempt made by the "horse Indians" to prevent the bearers of despatches from crossing their territory.

East of the Colorado River and in the Central desert there was no respite from other escorting Indians. Beale and Carson were only accompanied by ten men and they were doggedly followed for eight hundred miles by a large band who day or night were hardly ever out of sight; however, after one or two costly attempts to charge the wide-awake plainsmen, the Indians contented themselves with repeated but always unsuccessful attempts to stampede their horses and mules.

Carson had seen Beale stand to his guns with a handful of bluejackets while the Mexican lancers, in what should have been overpowering numbers, charged his battery again and again. He had been his comrade in the desperate journey through a hostile country from San Pasqual to San Diego, but it was a little incident of this trip that the

scout loved to relate as more fully giving the measure of Beale's bravery:

Things whirring like birds on the flight wuz flying over us as I wuz trying to sleep by the campfire [said Carson], and Ned was sleepin or leastwise he wuz snorin. Then suddenly he sits up and says, "What's that Don Kit?" and I says, "Them 's arrers" and they wuz and could you believe it before I could hold him down Ned was wrapping his buffalo robe about him and standing in the fire kicking out the embers. "Now," sez he, as them arrers came whizzin along like a raft of geese going South before er North wind. "Now," sez he, "Don Kit, they won't be able to get our directions any more and you know they don't dare rush us"; then he tumbled down on the ground and went on with his sleepin.

Carson and Beale were of course great cards to the curious when they arrived in St. Louis and later at the Capital. They were reluctant lions, and Carson was most uncomfortable in the presence of the crowds of citizens who waited upon him to see him "plain" and to shake his sinewy hand for one ecstatic moment. But Carson would never allow himself to be rushed, as he called it, in the house. "I allays see folks out in the road," he would explain as he sidled out into the street to meet the citizens who were always awaiting his appearance in front of the Benton house in St. Louis and later outside of Mrs. Beale's in Washington. Carson could never sleep indoors and when Mrs. Beale, the mother of his young companion, arranged a simple couch for him on her veranda the family



**The City of Lima**  
From a Lithograph



chronicle states that "Kit shed tears of gratitude and joy."

Beale and Carson were made much of wherever they went. They were lodged at Senator Benton's and met the most distinguished men of the day. Beale was allowed a few days in which to visit Chester, where the young girl who became his wife resided, and President Polk, much to his dismay, appointed Carson, the dashing scout, a lieutenant in the United States Rifles. However, these idle days were soon over, and both men were soon on their way back to the new world, the Pacific world, they were doing so much to open to the crowded East.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> WASHINGTON CITY, Aug., 1847.

To the HON. MR. MASON, Sec. of Navy.

SIR:

Passed Midshipman Edward Beale, now ill at Philadelphia, has written to me to desire the Department to charge him with despatches for the North Pacific. I do so with pleasure, being well informed by all who have returned from California of his most meritorious conduct there, especially in the signal act of volunteering with Mr. Carson and his Indian servant to make his way through the Californian forces and amidst incredible dangers and sufferings to go to Commodore Stockton for relief to Gen. Kearny, and also in volunteering to parley with Hon. Andres Pico for an exchange of prisoners and the handsome manner in which he executed it, and for his manly daring in crossing the continent last spring amid great suffering and with heroic courage and constancy.

Having a high opinion of the young man for honor, courage, truth, modesty, enterprise and perseverance I should be happy to see him noticed and countenanced by the Department.

Yours respectfully,

THOMAS H. BENTON.

To HON. THOMAS H. BENTON,

Aug. 27, 1847.

The Department appreciates Mr. Beale's meritorious services and will give him orders to return when his health is sufficiently re-established to

The *Mobile Register* gives the following authentic account of Beale's adventures on the return journey to California.

Lieut. Beale was sent early in November last, as a bearer of despatches from our Government to the United States officers in California and upon the Pacific. He was entrusted with communications to Col. Washington at Santa Fe, Col. Mason in California and Gen. Lane in Oregon and was required to pass through the extensive regions beyond the Mississippi to reach his destination. He left Fort Leavenworth on the Missouri the 20th of November with a command of seventeen mounted men, all raw recruits and a few adventurers. After a tedious and fatiguing journey they reached Bent's fort and learned that Col. Fremont and his party had passed about ten days before. In crossing the Taos or Raton mountains they encountered all the severities of winter in these difficult and gigantic passes covered with the snows of an unusually cold and inclement season. Many of their mules perished from the rigors of the weather and march, and a number of the men were frostbitten and disabled for further service. Upon arriving at Santa Fe, which he reached on the 25th of December, Lieut. Beale gave permission to such of his men as were unwilling to proceed to return, and seven did so. He was unwilling to be accompanied in the dangers and trials before him by any upon whom he could not rely with implicit confidence. To supply the deficiency Col. Mason allowed him to enlist eight additional men who were desirous of engaging in the expedition.

With this force Lieut. Beale started from Santa Fe on the

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undertake the journey. A bearer of despatches is not required now but officers of Mr. Beale's character are much wanted. An opportunity will occur for him about the first of October.

Respectfully,

J. G. MASON.



11th of January and was soon destined to encounter the most trying difficulties. The Sierra de los Miembres, a vast range of lofty mountains, was enveloped in snowstorms and the route was most hazardous and oppressive. So intense was the cold that several mules were frozen to death at night even under tents and covered with blankets. Here the fortitude of a number of men failed them and a sergeant and six men, privates, deserted. Of these as well as of the seven who had previously left no subsequent information has been received. They no doubt perished under the violence of the weather or were assassinated by the Indians who infest these regions.

Lieut. Beale now pressed on with indomitable resolution through indescribable difficulties to the head-waters of the river Gila. Passing to the southern side he followed the trail which winds in a zig-zag manner along the precipitous sides of the lofty mountains which prevail in this region. This section of the country has been falsely said to furnish opportunities for a good road or roads to California. From Lieut. Beale's description it is a continuance of the most rugged and inaccessible mountains, with vast gorges and peaks and declivities covered perpetually with snow, and presenting barriers to be passed only with incredible exertions. No track for a wagon or any wheel vehicle can ever be made along this route. The men could only press on along the ascents by the aid of their hands as well as their feet and even the tenacious mountain mules were often precipitated from the declivities and rolling down the slopes were crushed to pieces with every bone broken and even their saddles so damaged they could not be used again.

This route crosses the head-waters of the Gila frequently, so as to avoid the barriers which constantly jut upon and overhang the streams. That river in this portion of its extent is not susceptible of even canoe navigation. Its currents are of arrowy swiftness, shooting over rocky and irregular falls with short serpentine windings through

narrow and dangerous canyons that produce whirlpools and cascades which would engulf any water craft entrusted to their control.

After this rough experience Lieutenant Beale cast about him for a more favorable route to the Pacific from the Missouri settlements. In his next journey westward he hit upon the Santa Fe trail which soon became the principal avenue of communication between the two sections of the country. Years later, in 1880, the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad was built along Beale's route and the company very gracefully requested General Beale to become the engineer-in-chief, if only in a consulting or honorary capacity, of the great trans-continental line which he had first explored and later opened to the passage of prairie "schooners," an honor which on account of other engagements General Beale was compelled to decline.

There are many amusing stories told of the early days of American control in California and in many of these the Reverend Walter Colton who came out as chaplain on the *Congress* figures. There was one in particular that in after years General Beale delighted to relate. His old ship-mate, who wrote a volume entitled *Three Years in California*, did not think the incident of sufficient importance to set down in his somewhat ponderous chronicles of these interesting times.

When Commodore Stockton instituted civil government over the territory so recently wrested

from the Mexicans, the Reverend Colton was appointed alcalde of Monterey, where his duties were both administrative and judicial. Gambling was then the besetting sin of the Mexican Californian, as it soon became that of the American invader. There was also a dearth of milch cows in the community, which was all the more severely felt because in those days condensed milk and the other substitutes were unknown.

One day two gamblers were brought before the clerical alcalde as was also a magnificent fresh cow. They were charged with having gambled over it and the ownership of the animal was disputed. The Reverend Colton considered the story as set forth by the interested parties with great interest and then submitted the following decree.

“You, sir, lost the cow, consequently it does not belong to you.” Then turning to the other man, he said, “You, sir, have won it—you have won it by gambling, but this is a form of transfer that the Court does not recognize. In my opinion, therefore, the animal *eschews* to the Court.”

The coveted cow was henceforth attached to the Court and the decision of the alcalde greatly admired by all save the bereaved former owner. The milk punches which the Court was now enabled to serve from time to time, and indeed always when the ex-chaplain's former messmates called upon him, became famous throughout the land, and were very generally regarded as an

important auxiliary to the speedy Americanization of the conquered territory.

In the last days of the year 1847 the Swiss pioneer Sutter began to build a sawmill and to deepen his mill-race. To do this the earth was loosened during the day and the waters of the river turned in at night to wash out the dirt. Marshall saw the glittering sand one day in the following January. A determined attempt to keep the discovery secret was made, but without much success. In March the discovery was mentioned in the California papers and a few days later the precious dust in small quantities was being sold in some of the port towns. Then scenes were enacted which will doubtless never be seen again. Ships were abandoned in the harbors and churches closed. San Francisco was deserted and the flight up the Sacramento River toward the gold fields began. Even the army posts were reduced by desertion to corporal's guards and our naval vessels in Monterey harbor were kept off the land and without communication with the shore. Commodore Jones reported:

“Even men having balances due them of over one thousand dollars have deserted. Nothing, sir, can exceed the deplorable state of things in all upper California at this time and of the maddening effect of the gold mania. I am sorry to say that in this squadron some of the officers are a little tainted and have manifested restlessness under moderate restrictions. For the present, and I fear for years to come, [the Commodore continues] it will be

impossible for the United States to maintain any naval or military establishments in California, as at present no hope of reward or fear of punishment is sufficient to make binding any contract between man and man upon the soil of California. To send troops out here would be needless as they would immediately desert."

Paymaster Rich, U. S. N., writing to the Department from Monterey at the same time says:

"The pay of Governors and Judges, etc., as allowed in the United States will hardly compare with that paid to salesmen and clerks here."

During the six months of Beale's absence from California the United States had instituted civil government, and changed—almost incredible—conditions presented themselves on every side. The Reverend Walter Colton, chaplain of the frigate *Congress*, a shipmate of Beale, the first alcalde of Monterey after the American conquest, describes in his volume already referred to one phase of the remarkable situation in the following sentences:

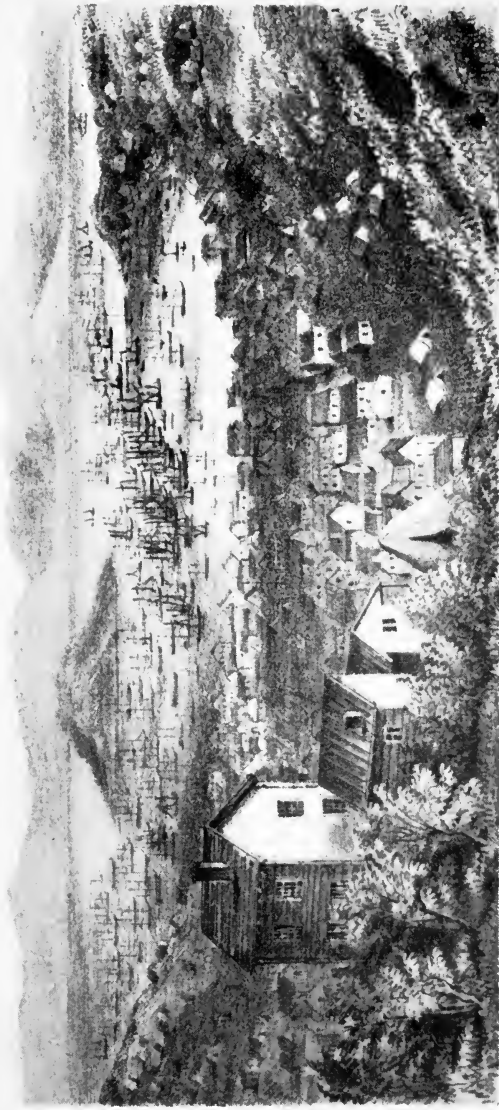
Her emigrants are rushing from every continent and isle, they crest every mountain, they cover every sea; they sweep in like a cloud from the Pacific, they roll down like a torrent from the slopes of the Sierra Nevada. They crowd to her bosom to gather gold, their hammers and drills, their mattocks and spades divert the deep stream and are echoed from a thousand caverned hills, the level plain, the soaring cliff and wombed mountain give up their glowing treasures.

But the gifts of nature here are not confined to her sparkling sands and veined rocks, they extend to the produc-

tive forces of her soil, they lie along her water courses, through her verdant valleys and wave in her golden grain, they reel in her vintage, they blush in her fruits, while her soft zephyrs as they float the landscape scatter perfume from their odorous wings.

But with all these gifts disease is here with its pale victims and sorrow with its willow woven shrine. There is no land less relieved by the smiles and soothing cares of women. If Eden with its ambrosial fruits and guiltless joys was still sad the voice of woman mingled with its melodies, California with all her treasured hills and streams must be cheerful till she feels the presence of the same enchantress. It is woman alone that can make a home for the human heart . . . where her footsteps light the freshest flowers spring! where her voice swells the softest echoes wake! Her smiles garland the domestic hearth, her sympathy melts through the deepest folds of grief. Her love clothes the earth with light. . . . Of all these sources of solace and hope multitudes in California are now bereft; but the ties of kindred, the quick-winged ship and the steed of flame on his iron-paved track will soon secure them these priceless gifts.

Beale, a few weeks before the discovery of gold, had been detached from the flagship *Ohio* and given disagreeable duty on shore. This was the first setback the rising young officer had received upon his upward course and while there is no trace of it upon Beale's official record he is supposed, according to the service tradition, to have incurred the commodore's displeasure in this wise. Jones, though in command of a large fleet, loved nothing better than to sail a small boat unless it was to tell of the important part he had taken in the Battle



The Harbor of San Francisco in November, 1849

From a Lithograph of 1850





of New Orleans, where he commanded a flotilla of small boats which helped to delay the British advance until Jackson was ready to receive it with sharpshooters behind cotton bales. Some of the younger officers knew the story by heart and very much disliked sailing with the commodore on these little excursions where it would seem that from the force of suggestion he could not help telling his 1813 war story. The youngsters were nimble and would get out of the commodore's way when it was evident he was about to embark upon one of these, for him at least, pleasure trips and in consequence the fleet surgeon, an elderly man, generally became his companion and, it is said, acquitted himself in the task with considerable diplomacy.

Beale had a happy or unhappy knack of caricature and he drew a cartoon which represented the commodore sailing his boat and holding forth to the fleet surgeon upon certain incidents of the New Orleans campaign which had not been dwelt upon in most histories. As the commodore talked the obsequious surgeon could be seen sluicing him up and down with a grease pot such as sailors use on the rigging. The commodore never saw the cartoon which convulsed the fleet but he heard of it and Beale was detached. Some of the officers saw in Beale's subsequent selection to carry despatches and the news of gold across Mexico a further evidence of the commodore's hostility. If it was, and all this rests upon the flimsiest tradition, Jones's hostility was more useful to Beale

than even Benton's friendship. It gave the midshipman a chance to distinguish himself which he was not slow to seize.

There is no official record or reference in the family archives of how Beale secured the golden nuggets and the glittering sands which he carried East to initiate a movement which changed the course of history. He did not secure it first hand from the diggings, as his first visit there was some months later. In the Navy the tradition was that Beale secured the treasure from one of the earliest visitors to the mill-race in exchange for one hundred grains of quinine which Beale was too old a traveller ever to be without. Certain it is only that at this time in Monterey and San Francisco quinine was quoted higher than gold, grain for grain.

Of recent years the discovery of gold in California can boast its own literature and not a few controversies. There evidently was keen rivalry between the officers of the Army and the officers of the Navy as to which branch of the service should have the honor of carrying the epoch-making news to Washington. Beale left La Paz a month before Lieutenant Loeser of the engineers and reached the Capital two months before his army rival, thanks to his daring short cut across Mexico.

As was to be expected of an army man afloat, Lieutenant Loeser had many misadventures. Owing apparently to adverse winds the skipper of

the schooner upon which he embarked could not or would not land him at Panama but carried him on to the port of Payta at the mouth of the Guayaquil River in Peru and from there the young engineer made haste to retrace his steps and cross the Isthmus, but in the meantime the gold-bearing midshipman had reached the Capital. Commodore Jones had found no authority in the regulations to purchase a specimen of the gold, and the nugget and the sands which Beale carried were his own private property and venture. Col. Mason, however, commanding the army in California at the time, apparently at the suggestion of his aid, Lieut. W. T. Sherman, purchased three thousand dollars worth of the gold and turned it over to Loeser for conveyance to the Secretary of War. This gold was officially examined at the mint and the report upon it published by the Government set at rest all doubt as to the value of the discovery which was at first hotly disputed.

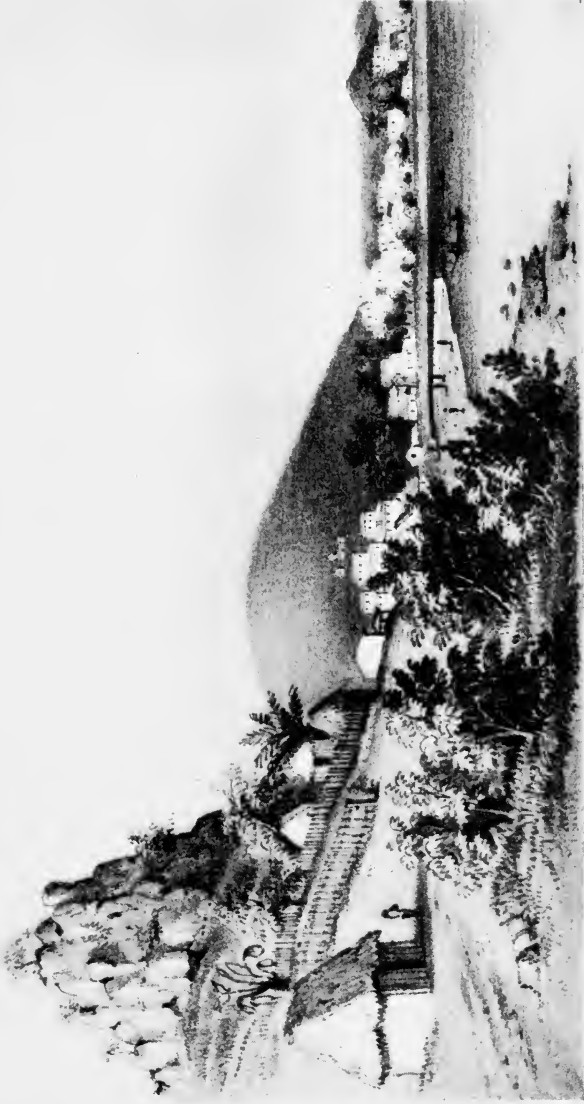
Beale at this time as well as in later life always maintained that while the discovery in Sutter's mill-race was the most important and perhaps the first gold discovered in paying quantities, the presence of gold in California had been well known to the Mexicans for twenty years before. He was also inclined to think that the attempt of the Russians to settle and colonize on our Pacific Coast, coming down from Alaska for this purpose, was inspired by rumors of the presence of gold.

## CHAPTER IV

### BEALE BRINGS FIRST GOLD EAST

Beale's Daring Journey across Mexico with the First Gold—*Gente de Camino*—Mexico City and Minister Clifford—Fate of Beale's Guide—Senators Foote and Benton Hear the Wonderful Story—William Carey Jones's Account of Journey in *National Intelligencer*—Beale Introduced to the United States Senate—Wise "Stay-at-Homes" Show Incredulity—Beale Walks down Wall Street with Mr. Aspinwall—P. T. Barnum Wants to Exhibit the Gold—But Half the Treasure is Fashioned into an Engagement Ring—Courting at Chester—Ammen's Letter to the Young Argonaut—On the Trail Again—Letter from Big Timber—Beale's Description of His Route across the Continent—Along the Thirty-fifth Parallel—Old Trail Develops into Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fé Railroad—Chronological Table of Beale's Early Travels—Marriage with Miss Edwards—Arctic Expedition Proposed—Letters from Captain Lynch and Commodore Maury—Bayard Taylor Dedicates His Book on California to Beale—Beale Resigns from the Service—He Retrieves the Business Ventures of Commodore Stockton and Mr. Aspinwall.

**B**EALE left the port of La Paz near the foot of the peninsula of California on the first of August, and on the fifth arrived at Mazatlan on the west coast of Mexico. There he took



**Mazatlan**

From a Lithograph of 1850



passage in a small Mexican *goleta*, which after a stormy voyage of five days made the harbor of San Blas. From San Blas he proposed to travel overland, southeast a thousand miles by way of Guadalajara and Mexico City to Vera Cruz; and from here, on August 13th, he started accompanied only by a guide in spite of the earnest dissuasions of the Governor of San Blas and of every one else who heard of his project.

Beale dressed himself for his journey in a sombrero, a red flannel shirt, leather breeches and boots. He carried four six-barrelled revolvers, and a knife. Being very much sunburned and speaking Spanish well his chances of being taken for a Mexican by casual observers were fairly good.

The rainy season was just setting in and the bad roads becoming daily worse, but the real dangers of the trip lay in the bands of *ladrones* who infested all the highways of Mexico, and whose numbers had been hugely strengthened by the recent disbanding of Paredes's army. By the time Beale arrived at Tepic he had been held up once by three *gente de camino*, who however had made off when confronted with great resolution and the four American revolvers, and he had become so thoroughly convinced of the uncertainties and perils of his undertaking that he assumed the responsibility of opening his despatches and making copies of them, which copies he enclosed with a note to the American Minister at Mexico City, and put in the mail. Then he immediately pushed on, travelling night

and day and taking no rest but by throwing himself on the ground at each post while the saddles were being changed to fresh horses.

Once, before arriving at Guadalajara a *banda*, coming out of the woods just at nightfall, chased him for several hours, but he finally outrode them, though not before the foremost of them had shot at him a number of times with their carbines. At the next post after this adventure he heard of a party of eleven travellers just ahead of him, but before he could come up with them they were attacked by a large party of ladrones and murdered to a man. Beale found their blood still staining the muddy ground.

After leaving Guadalajara the rainy season set in in full force. Furious storm succeeded furious storm, the water courses swelled into raging torrents which could only be crossed by swimming. The roads were blocked by uprooted trees and avalanches of stones and mud, and at night Beale found his way chiefly by the almost incessant flashes of the lightning. When on the eighth day he arrived at Mexico City he was literally cased in mud, and dried himself for the first time since leaving San Blas. Mr. Clifford, our Minister in Mexico,<sup>1</sup> wishing also to send despatches, Beale

<sup>1</sup> Among the Beale papers is a weather-stained parchment bearing these credentials.

To All Whom it May Concern. I the undersigned Minister of the United States residing in the City of Mexico do hereby certify that Edward F. Beale is a bearer of despatches from this Legation entitled to all the privileges and immunities to which agents are entitled.



was detained three days while they were preparing, but he made up for the delay by covering the ninety leagues between Mexico City and Vera Cruz in the extraordinary time of sixty hours, in spite of being held up once more by ladrones from whom he only escaped by the speed of his horse and the reckless daring with which he rode him down an almost precipitous mountainside.

At Vera Cruz he slept under a roof for the first time since leaving Mazatlan, with the exception of his two nights of enforced stay at the Capital. The mind of his unfortunate guide had been unhinged by the dangers and fatigues of the journey, and the city authorities were obliged to send him back under guard in the diligence.

Four days after his arrival Beale left Vera Cruz in the sloop-of-war *Germantown*, which after a tedious passage put him ashore at Mobile.<sup>1</sup>

With his wonderful news of the El Dorado on the shores of the Pacific and his nugget and golden sands to prove that his was not a mere sailor's yarn, Beale received ovations wherever he went. Towns

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Given under my hand and the seal of the Legation at the City of Mexico this 21st day of August 1848.

NATHAN CLIFFORD.

Attest:

WM. WALSH, *Secretary of Legation.*

<sup>1</sup> Such wonderful and Munchausen-like exploits were attributed to Beale by the press of the cities and towns through which he passed on the way to the Capital that shortly after his arrival in Washington the young argonaut authorized his friend, a well-known journalist of the day, William Carey Jones, to publish a sober and restrained account of his feat in the *National Intelligencer*. It is from this article that the account given above is condensed.

and even hamlets gave the passing traveller banquets while the infamous thirst for the yellow metal began to make itself felt in the most austere bosoms. From Mobile the returning argonaut travelled North partly by stage and for some days at least in the company of Senator Foote of Mississippi, who drank in greedily all the tales from the Pacific which were unfolded and who upon their arrival in Washington insisted upon sharing with Benton the honor of introducing the bearer of such momentous news to the Senate of the United States.

Of course there were unbelievers, and special messengers were sent to California by sea and by land to secure specimens of the alleged gold through official channels, to be subjected to the usual tests at the mint. In Washington there were also evidences of incredulity, though Beale's good faith in the matter was never attacked. "It glitters, it looks like gold but is n't," was the verdict of the wise stay-at-homes.

However, when Beale came to New York and walked down Wall Street leaning on Mr. Aspinwall's arm, the gold-hungry thousands followed them, broke into the exchange, and were not to be denied until the golden nugget was produced and the golden sands allowed to sift through their hands, an operation by which it is said the sands did not seem to increase or multiply. P. T. Barnum, then fast rising to the zenith of fame in the showman's world, sent Beale the following letter which was

followed up by messages and even with threats that he would come himself to secure the great prize.

BARNUM'S MUSEUM,  
PHILADELPHIA.

LIEUT. BEALE,

DEAR SIR:

Mr. Harding of the *Enquirer* has just informed me that you have in your possession an 8 lb. lump of California gold. As I am always anxious to procure novelties for public gratification I write this to say that I should be glad to purchase the lump at its valuation if you will dispose of it and if not that I should like to procure it for exhibition for a few weeks.

A line in reply will much oblige,

Your obedient servant,

P. T. BARNUM.

Feeling that he was no longer in his element, the young naval officer showed he possessed that part of valor which is discretion and which he had never before been suspected of possessing. Suddenly Beale disappeared from the popular excitement and turmoil and the gold also disappeared from circulation among the curious. Half of his trophy, like the loyal servant of the people that he was, Beale placed on view in the Patent Office in Washington, and the rest, by far the heavier and better half it is said, he was having fashioned into an engagement ring for the young lady who had consented to be his wife, with whom he was walking in the shades and nooks of "Green Bank," the Porters' estate at Chester, while all the world was wondering what had become of the youngster who had tired so quickly of being the man of the hour.

It was down in Chester also that Beale received the following letter from his friend and classmate Daniel Ammen, afterwards a distinguished admiral for whom his affection only increased with the passing years. The letter told Beale what a fine fellow they thought him, indeed knew him to be, in the service, and what without the slightest doubt interested him the most in his frame of mind, that "our class are all marrying."

STEAMER "BIBB,"  
NANTUCKET ISLAND.

DEAR NED:

I saw with a great deal of pleasure that you had arrived again at the eastern part of "the land of the free and the home of the brave" and hope you will be content for a short time at least.

Now, old fellow, come down to Nantucket and pass a short time catching fish and walking about on the shore of the great sea. I am tired of this damn monotonous life and want to hear of your last trip in order to believe it. This fall I shall assuredly go to sea and when I start it shall be for three cruises on end.

I see you published in all the papers and as you are justly a lion I want you to come on and shake your tail at these people. After I saw of Fremont's hard time I was afraid that you would be unfortunate and was the more delighted to see your arrival in the East with some of the gold we read of.

I got a letter from Catesby Jones dated the 10th April but I have not written him yet, indeed I think I shall write him, when I do, to the East Indies.

Our class are all marrying. "Brick-Top" is engaged to a very pretty little girl from Providence I think. I have not heard of Billy Muse making anybody happy yet.

We have the great naturalist, Agassiz, on board and as I spoke of your shooting a Capiniche, or sea hog or sea bear or some other animal whose name I don't know, the old fellow became highly excited and hoped you would lend him if not give him a skull if you have one. He wishes also to know whether they live in salt water, or brackish or fresh. If you will be good enough to send a skull to Professor Agassiz, Boston, by Adams Express, the old fellow will bear you in grateful remembrance during the remainder of his natural life.

Are you going soon to California or in what direction do you think of branching out? Will you come down to Nantucket before you travel? Davis, Rodgers and myself will be delighted to see you.

Be good enough to give my kindest regards to your mother's family as well as remember me affectionately to any old friends who may be drifting about where you are and believe me,

Truly your friend,

AMMEN.

ED. F. BEALE, Esq., U. S. Navy.

Write to me at Nantucket. Don't forget the sea bear or hog or Capiniche. Raymond Rodgers sends his kindest regards.

Beale's vacations were always matters of days rather than of weeks. Soon he was proceeding overland to the Pacific and from the Raton mountains writes the following joyous letter to the brother of his future wife.

CAMP AT BIG TIMBER,

Dec. 3d, '48.

MY DEAR HARRY:

I have stopped awhile to get a few buffalo robes to send your mother and which I hope will reach Chester with this letter. I find here three Americans trading with the

Indians. They have built a couple of miserable huts, but appear in spite of the cheerless and wretched appearance of everything around them to be making a very excellent business. There are thousands of Indians here but most of them friendly tribes, and those who are not disposed to be so are kept in awe by those who have met here to trade. I have had a most unpleasant journey so far, and the men I have with me are so utterly worthless that I anticipate many difficulties; not a day passes that I do not punish two or three. I have had two affairs with the Indians, one of which began so seriously that for a while I held my breath, but turned out in the end a trifle, in the other I came so very near losing my hair that I am not positive to this moment that my scalp sticks to the top of my head. In the last I behaved so entirely to my own satisfaction that I have half a mind to tell you about it and what I did, but you might accuse me of boasting too much and I am not very anxious to blow my own trumpet.

The weather here is most cruelly, bitterly cold, it is snowing and freezing. You may form some idea of the severity of it when I tell you that a trader who passed some sixty miles to the southward of me lost in one snowstorm *ninety* mules frozen to death in a single night. I counted in one day myself, seventy-two animals dead and dying, belonging to a large company returning to the United States. In this weather we have sometimes at night after travelling all day to cross the river filled with floating masses of drift-ice to get wood, and bring it over again to camp, and this where the river is from three to five or six hundred yards in width. I mean no disparagement to your manhood, Harry, but I do not really think you could stand what I am doing, nor could I endure it but that I am constantly buoyed up by the hope of returning to you all once more.

I get from the traders here most discouraging accounts of the Raton Mountains, which I am just now about to cross. It is said they are impassable but I have passed *impassable*

places before. They tell me also to tie my hair on before starting, as every party ahead of me has been attacked and defeated by the Apaches. The troops even have been whipped and driven off by them—regular soldiers that were sent against them. A party of eighteen men were attacked a short time since and several whom I knew very well, killed.

If you can let my mother know that you have heard from me do so. I have not time to write to her. Say that I am *doing* well and happy and above all things don't drop a word about Indians. My best of warmest love to your sister, to whom I shall write from Santa Fé. Tell her I am very happy, happy because I am always thinking of her and my return.

I write in great haste and a snowstorm is no place for letter writing. Love to those who love me.

God bless you. Ever yours,

NED.

The following is Beale's description of his trans-continental route, which soon after his first crossing began to play a great rôle in the development of the Southwest and the Pacific Coast, as indeed it does to-day, though now stone ballasted and iron railed.

Our route was along the 35th parallel of latitude and our furthest variation did not exceed fifty-five miles. From our point of departure in New Mexico to the Colorado River, the easternmost boundary of Mexico, the distance travelled did not exceed 470 miles and there was everywhere an abundance of wood, water, and grass.

The chain of the Rocky Mountains was passed but the elevation was so unimportant that the exploring caravan of men, camels, horses and mules was not conscious of the fact. The route was explored in mid-summer and retravelled in the very dead of winter yet neither impediments of drought nor snows were met with either way.

In February, 1880, the first train over the Atchison Railroad arrived at Santa Fé and the old trail, so long known as Beale's "track," was closed, to interstate commerce at least, forever.

Among the Beale papers is a chronological table of these early years of active restless travel which in later life General Beale wrote out at the request of his son. It is condensed and skeletonized to a degree, and, characteristically, all references to battles fought and honors won are omitted.

Few men's lives reveal such a period of prolonged activity as is here disclosed, and one can only regret that the diaries and the route journals, which even at this early date young Beale was accustomed to keep, were in part lost through the vicissitudes of the journeys which they describe, or only survive entombed in government archives.

The paper runs:

Lieutenant Edward F. Beale left the United States on board the *Congress* in October, 1845, and twenty days after was transferred to a vessel bound to England as bearer of despatches for the United States, and he reached the United States between the 17th and the 20th of March, 1846. Left for Callao, Peru, with despatches about April 1st, 1846, and reached Callao in about six weeks by the Panama route. Sailed from Callao to California via Sandwich Islands in the *Congress*, and arrived at San Francisco about July 20th, 1846. Served on shore with the army until the conquest of the country was completed, which was in February, 1847, when he was sent home with despatches by Commodore Stockton by overland route.

Arrived in Washington about last of May, 1847, and was



sent back immediately across the plains with despatches, was taken sick and thus found upon the plains, and was carried back insensible to St. Louis. In the fall of 1847, he returned to the Pacific via Panama with despatches for Commodore Jones at Callao, and sailed from Callao to Mazatlan on board the *Ohio* and served on shore at Mazatlan in command of a company until we heard of peace about August, 1848, when he was sent through Mexico, disguised as a Spaniard via Vera Cruz to Washington with despatches and arrived at Washington during September, 1848.

About the 14th of October, 1848, received despatches from Secretary Marcey for Santa Fé and California, and arrived at Santa Fé December 25th, 1848, on foot and nearly naked. Continued journey and arrived at San Francisco about April 10th, 1849. Left San Francisco with despatches for Washington April 13th, 1849, and arrived at Washington about June 17th, 1849.

Left Washington with despatches for California overland for Commodore Jones, June 27th, 1849, and arrived at San Francisco about August 17th. Returned almost immediately with despatches and arrived at Washington during December, 1849.

Well might Carson, who was a traveller and despatch bearer himself, have been aghast, as he frankly confessed that he was, at the activity of his young navy friend, born and grown to manhood in the effete East.

Here concludes the adventurous period of the pioneer and the day of the resolute Forty-niner begins.

Miss Mary Edwards, who now became the help-mate as well as wife of Beale, accompanied him to California where in San Francisco their son Trux-

tun was born. Miss Edwards came of an old Delaware County family and of Quaker stock, her ancestors having accompanied Penn from England on his venture in the New World in the year 1682. Her father, Samuel Edwards, was only thirty-three years of age when elected to Congress and he represented Delaware County in the lower house for many years. In later life Mr. Edwards's health was far from robust but he practised successfully at the bar and served as Chief Burgess and Collector of Customs at Chester, Pa. In his obituary the *Philadelphia Press* wrote with truth: "During the administrations of Jackson and Van Buren, George G. and Samuel L. Leiper, Samuel Edwards and James Buchanan were the powers behind the throne."

The Arctic expedition to which the following letters refer was planned in 1850. Captain Lynch, U. S. Navy, was to have been in command and he was, as this correspondence shows, most anxious to obtain the services of Beale as his first lieutenant. Mr. Henry Grinnell, the wealthy New York merchant who afterwards financed the Dr. Kane expedition, appeared in the matter as principal financial backer. While Beale was preparing himself for adventurous activity in this new sphere there came from the Arctic contradictory news in regard to the fate of Franklin, and there were further delays on account of Captain Lynch's health which had become impaired by his travels in Asia Minor and the Holy Land. When a few

months later, through Maury, Mr. Grinnell offered the chief command to Beale, he had already made an arrangement with Commodore Stockton to return to California in charge of the latter's business interests there which he did not feel that he was at liberty to break.

There are at this time references in the Beale papers to an expedition to explore the Gulf of Darien with the idea of ascertaining the exact location of the water-way across the Isthmus, which, curiously enough, despite the innumerable scientific surveys which have been made, the San Blas Indians to this day maintain exists, at least in the rainy season. Beale was asked to head this expedition and accepted. The necessary funds, however, were not forthcoming and the matter hung fire for many years. Ultimately the desired survey was carried out by a naval expedition under the auspices of the Government with but meagre results. Mention of these two widely divergent expeditions is made, two from among many others, to show how Beale's daring and adventurous spirit had captivated public opinion and how generally recognized both in and out of the service was his ability to command and to undertake desperate hazards. It was at this moment, when the popularity of the "Hero of San Pasqual" was at its height, when he was the idol of the Southwest and the new world that was coming into being on the Pacific Coast, that Beale, in recognition of his family responsibilities, had the courage to resign,

there being no enemies of his country in sight, and go into a business which must have seemed humdrum to his adventurous spirit. But Beale always recognized the call of duty and the adventures had not all been of his seeking, they came by the way. The offer of service in the Arctic was made in the following terms:

DEAR SIR:

Although personally a stranger to you, the subject of this letter will, I trust, be its ample apology.

When I first volunteered to go in quest of Sir Jno. Franklin and his companions, it was my purpose, if my application was successful, to have asked you to accompany me, for although you are recently married, I have not done your partner the injustice to class her among weak and frivolous wives, but rather, regarded her as one who would cheer you in an undertaking which would enhance your reputation and embellish (?) your name.

The long interval that was supinely suffered to elapse had nearly taken all hope, when a recent letter from the Rev'd Mr. Scoresby, written at the instance of Lady Franklin, has reinvigorated me. In that letter, I am told that Lady F. and her friends place little reliance on the expedition now being equipped by the Admiralty, and which is to pursue the route by Behring's Straits. Their greatest hope is in us and the eastern route. If that lady carries her intention into effect and comes to this country, I have little doubt that an expedition will be authorized. I use the term authorized, because Congress may not feel justified in appropriating money, especially for such an object, while its sanction or that of the Executive would be necessary to a military organization, without which, I presume, no officer of respectability would undertake it.

Should it be undertaken and I be appointed to lead it,

will you embark with me? Do not answer with precipitation, for I know that you will never withdraw a pledge, and I only wish to receive one after full deliberation.

If you decide to cast your lot with me, in the above event, I would, of course, stipulate that you should be second in command.

My reasons for applying to you are twofold—first physical, for my own constitution is a weak, while yours, from all I can learn, is a vigorous and hardy one, and secondly, you have the moral qualities, unshrinking courage and indomitable perseverance which are indispensable for such an undertaking.

It would be my aim to pass through Wellington Channel and make our winter quarters on the north shore of Melville Island. If in our route thither we were unsuccessful in our search, I would during the winter despatch parties to the north to reach the pole if possible, the other to the west towards Behring's Straits—the members of each party to be surmounted on skates, with light boats fixed on metallic sleigh runners. If neither of those parties should discover the English ships or their crews, there would be no longer doubt of their having perished. When the summer opened, therefore, I would feel justified in making a bold push with the ship for Behring's Straits, through which if I could only succeed in carrying the Am. flags I could die content. Even at the worst it is a noble cause to die in: but you have endearing attachments to the world, and I would not have you thoughtlessly link your fate with one so desolate as myself.

Please answer this at your leisure and let no editor of a paper see or hear anything of it.

Uncertain of your direction, I will send this to the department to be forwarded to you.

With great respect,

Your obt. serv't,

W. F. LYNCH, U. S. N.

Baltimore, Jan'y 11, 1850.

Lieut. E. F. BEALE, U. S. Navy.

WASHINGTON OBSERVATORY,  
Feb. 28th.

DEAR SIR:

I am requested to sound you as to a private expedition after Sir John Franklin. If you will come up I will tell you all I know and all that I am authorized to say to you on this subject. In the meantime I am enjoined to regard the matter as a great secret which you are to help me to keep.

Yours truly,  
M. F. MAURY.

I also reproduce one of the many letters which Beale received from Bayard Taylor at this time:

"TRIBUNE" OFFICE, NEW YORK,  
March 26th, 1850.

MY DEAR BEALE:

What has become of you? That you are somewhere in the country I know and I send this note to Chester hoping it may reach you. I was in Washington two weeks ago but you were not there. I should have stopped a few hours at Chester had I not happened to be in the midnight train. Let me hear from you and don't attempt to go to California without passing through here. Stoddard tells me he has not seen you so I judge you have not been here yet. Are you going to California and when if so? or are you to be sent into the unknown Central Region? Let me know I pray you for I am anxious to hear from you and more anxious to see you.

I had an odd, exciting, adventurous ride of it through Mexico and should like to compare notes with you.

I am working day and night on my book<sup>1</sup> and expect to get it through the press in two weeks, will you allow me to dedicate it to you? As the best friend and comrade I had

<sup>1</sup> *Eldorado or Adventures in the Path of Empire*, by Bayard Taylor. George P. Putnam, New York; Richard Bentley, London, 1850.

on the trip it is properly owing to you. I shall try and make the volumes such as you will be satisfied with.

Pray give my best regards to Mrs. Beale and believe me ever,

Most faithfully yours,

BAYARD TAYLOR.

It is interesting to note that from the moment of his first visit to California, Beale saw in his mind's eye the great city that was to grow up at the Golden Gate, and command the commerce of the Pacific. He had that instinct of prophecy, which is called "luck," in an eminent degree. On his return East, he often spoke to his mother and to his friends of the many opportunities that presented themselves for acquiring fortune in California; but for the most part his words fell upon deaf ears. Indeed, Mrs. Beale was very anxious at what she considered her son's inclination toward wildcat speculation. Though the daughter and the widow of naval officers, Mrs. Beale was in affluent circumstances for those days, and she absolutely refused to follow her son's advice to purchase either for herself or for her children any of the large Mexican land grants, which were going begging at any price. In answer to her son's suggestions, Mrs. Beale said, quite emphatically, "What, buy land out in that wilderness? Never!"

The consequence of Mrs. Beale's conservative views regarding Western investments was that her foresighted son had to wait some years before laying the foundation of his fortune, but, as he always





which his enthusiasm had led him and Aspinwall had come to a point where he evidently doubted the wisdom of throwing good money after bad, and shortly after Beale reached California on his mission of salvage all money supplies were cut off and willy-nilly the Stockton-Aspinwall enterprise had to become a going concern or go into bankruptcy.

In this crisis Beale gave a foretaste of the remarkable business ability which distinguished him in after-life. He made a hurried trip to the mines and the haciendas in which his backers had invested with such haste. In the mines there was promise of wealth in the future and in the haciendas there was also the assurance of comfortable returns in later years, but for the present there was no money in sight and he knew nothing more could be expected from the East, at least not for many months to come. In his journey Beale had personal experience of the difficulty of obtaining transportation and of its costliness when once obtained, and like a flash the business inspiration came: the mines could wait and even the haciendas vegetate, gold-seekers thronged every trail and people were willing to pay any price to get to the river of Golden Sands. In a few days Beale had converted the great mining and real estate enterprise into a transportation concern, the mining experts were turned into the leaders of mule trains, book-keepers were learning how to drive, and Beale was king of all the transportation on the roads that led from Sacramento and Marysville to the American

Fork and the lands adjoining Sutter's ranch and mill, then the centre of the first mining region.

Beale knew of course that this stream of passengers who were willing to pay any price for accommodations would not flow on forever. He worked the makeshift, however, for what it was worth and at the end of nine months, when they were expecting anything but favorable news, he reported to his principals in the East that profits slightly exceeding one hundred thousand dollars were awaiting their orders. Rear-Admiral Harmony, U. S. N., retired, one of Beale's few surviving shipmates to whom the writer of this narrative is indebted for many personal notes and intimate touches which could not otherwise have been obtained, relates that he rode on the Marysville stage with a pass from Ned Beale when a ticket would have cost him three months' pay, and that he witnessed a test which he did not expect even Beale's popularity to survive. The company was charging one dollar a pound to transport freight from Sacramento to the diggings and yet Ned Beale remained the most universally beloved man in the country.

Before he went East the following year, to re-enter the Government service, though nothing was farther from his thoughts than so doing until he reached Washington, Beale had accumulated thirteen thousand dollars as his agreed percentage of the profits. With this money he made the intelligent investments which in ten years brought him to affluence and even to great wealth. He had

also earned and received a blessing from his old commander, Stockton, a fine sailor, but who was somewhat out of his element in business or politics.

## CHAPTER V

### FIRST STEPS IN OUR INDIAN POLICY

Lieut. Beale Appointed by President Fillmore General Superintendent of Indian Affairs for California and Nevada—Congress Appropriates Two Hundred and Fifty Thousand Dollars to Carry into Effect Beale's Plans—Indian Tribes to be Colonized and Protected on Reservations—Beale's Journey from the Valley of the Mississippi to California along the Central Route as Described by Himself and Mr. Heap—Westport, Kansas, and the "Stirrup Cup"—Fort Atkinson and Pike's Peak and the Huerfano River—Plains of the Arkansas and Fort Massachusetts.

ON Nov. 11th, 1852, Lieutenant Beale, who was in Washington<sup>1</sup> at the time, was appointed by President Fillmore General Superintendent of Indian Affairs for California and

<sup>1</sup> There was some slight opposition to the appointment of Beale as Superintendent of Indian Affairs. Beale was opposed more as a Fremont man than for anything he had done himself. While the nomination was before the Senate and still waiting confirmation, Fremont wrote a letter giving the most explicit denial to the charge that he, Fremont, had profited out of army contracts upon which he had passed in his official capacity. He further stated that Beale had never been connected with him "in any business transactions whatsoever," and the nomination was immediately confirmed.

Nevada.<sup>1</sup> Lieutenant Beale's views on all questions relating to the welfare of the Indians were well known; they had in fact indicated the appointment which was duly confirmed by the Senate.

At the time fears, which subsequent events showed were anything but idle, were freely expressed that the growing friction between emigrants and settlers in California and the Indians would soon develop into a savage warfare all along the new and almost wholly unprotected frontier. Fillmore and Benton, the first of our statesmen to have an eye on the Pacific world, were convinced that Beale well understood the critical situation and was the one man available who could cope with it successfully. In consequence Beale received the appointment under which he was clothed with powers which were afterwards described in the Senate, and most correctly described, as being "vice-regal in breadth and scope and finality."

On the third day of March, 1853, Congress, not to be behindhand, passed a law appropriating \$250,000 for the purpose of carrying into effect the

<sup>1</sup> The thought is suggested by the following almost illegible note among the Beale papers that while our Presidents are as hard worked as were their predecessors they most certainly do not begin business at such an early hour as President Fillmore would seem to have done. The note reads:

"The president will meet you and myself at the White House on Tuesday morning at half-past seven o'clock.

"R. W. —.

"LIEUT. BEALE. March 27th, 1853."

Unfortunately the last letter or rather initial of the friend who summoned Beale to this early morning conference with the President is hopelessly illegible.

plan which Lieutenant Beale had proposed for the better protection, subsistence, and colonization of the Indian tribes within his superintendency.

The President having given his approval to this plan, Lieutenant Beale was instructed to proceed forthwith by the shortest route to his superintendency, and to select lands most suitable for Indian reservations. He was also directed, in connection with this plan, to examine the Territories of New Mexico and Utah, where their frontiers and those of California lie contiguous, and to ascertain whether lands existed there to which the California Indians might, with advantage, be removed.

The route selected by Lieutenant Beale was, in conformity with his instructions, the shortest and most direct to California, and it also enabled him to examine, with the least delay, the localities to which it was believed that the Indians of California might be removed with advantage to themselves, should suitable lands for the purpose be found.

While Lieutenant Beale was collecting his party and arranging the transportation problems which the adventurous journey imposed, he was joined in the undertaking by his kinsman, Mr. Gwinn Harris Heap, who was also desirous of proceeding to California. Together they determined to combine with the hazards of an overland journey, a preliminary survey of a route for the railway which even at this early day was in contemplation, from the Valley of the Mississippi to California, which

quaintly enough Mr. Heap always refers to in his journal as "our Pacific possessions."<sup>1</sup>

We left Washington on the 20th of April, and arrived at St. Louis the 2d, Kansas the 5th, and Westport the 6th of May.

Westport is a thriving place, situated four miles from Kansas; and emigrants from Missouri to California and Oregon make either this place or Independence their starting-point. At both towns all necessary supplies can be obtained at reasonable rates, and their merchants and mechanics, being constantly required to supply the wants of travelers on the plains, keep on hand such articles as are best adapted for an overland journey. Kansas, a newer place, is also thriving, and a fine river landing.

Our party was composed of twelve persons, viz:

E. F. BEALE, Superintendent of Indian Affairs in California.

G. HARRIS HEAP.

ELISHA RIGGS, of Washington.

WILLIAM RIGGS " "

WILLIAM ROGERS " "

HENRY YOUNG.

J. WAGNER.

J. COSGROVE.

<sup>1</sup>In 1854, the account of this journey, taken from the journals of Lieutenant Beale and of Mr. Heap, was published in Philadelphia by Lippincott and in London by Trübner. These journals are of course largely drawn upon in the following chapters for a description of what the pioneers called the Central Route to the Pacific and for many of the interesting adventures which befell them on the way.

RICHARD BROWN (a Delaware Indian).

GREGORIO MADRID (a Mexican).

JESUS GARCIA (a Mexican).

GEORGE SIMMS (colored man).

May 15. All our arrangements being completed, we started from Westport at 3 P.M. A party of ladies and gentlemen accompanied us a few miles into the prairie, and drank a "stirrup cup" of champagne to the success of our journey. The weather was bright and clear, and, after a pleasant ride of twelve miles over prairies enamelled with flowers, we encamped at thirty minutes after six P.M. on Indian Creek, a tributary of the Kansas, fringed with a thick growth of cottonwoods and willows. Day's march, 12 miles.

May 18. We had a severe thunder and rain storm, which lasted all night; the wind blew strong from the southward, and the lightning was incessant and vivid. One of those balls of fire which sometimes descend to the earth during violent thunderstorms, fell and exploded in our midst. The mules, already terrified by the constant peals of thunder, became frantic with fear; and when this vivid light was seen, accompanied with a report like the crack of a rifle, neither picket-pins nor hobbles could hold them; they rushed through the camp, overturning everything in their course—their ropes and halters lashing right and left, and increasing their panic. They were stopped by an elbow of the creek, where they were found a few



minutes after, huddled together, and quivering with fear. It was fortunate for us that they did not take to the open prairie, as we would have had much difficulty in recovering them. This was our first experience in a stampede, and to prevent a recurrence of such accidents we after this placed the animals in the centre, and, dividing our party into twos and threes, slept in a circle around them. By using such precautions we were never subjected to this annoyance again, except once, after entering the country of the Utahs.

A ride of twenty-five miles brought us to a hollow, where, finding good water, we encamped. Resting but a short time we continued our journey and in ten miles, over a rich rolling country, arrived at Council Grove, where our train was waiting for us.

Council Grove is situated in a rich grassy bottom, well watered and heavily timbered. It is a settlement of about twenty frame and log houses, and scattered up and down the stream are several Indian villages. At a short distance from the road is a large and substantially built Methodist mission-house constructed of limestone, which is found here in inexhaustible quantities. This stone is excellent as a building material and lies in strata of from six inches to three feet in thickness; lintels and arches are made of it as it is extracted from the quarries, which extend for fifteen miles up the stream. Day's march, 32 miles; total distance, 122 miles.

Since our departure from Westport we had seen

many graves on each side of the road, and some of the camping-places had the appearance of village graveyards. The cholera raged on the plains a few years ago, occasioning a fearful mortality, and these mounds remain to attest its ravages. Through carelessness or haste, they were often too shallow to protect their contents from the wolves, and it frequently happened that he who in the morning was hastening forward in health and spirits towards the golden bourne, was ere night a mangled corpse, his bones scattered by the savage hunger of the wolf, over the plain.

May 20. Resumed our march at noon, and travelled over a flat uninteresting country with little water. This day saw antelope for the first time. Met Major Rucker, and Lieutenants Heath and Robinson on their way from New Mexico to Fort Leavenworth. They informed us that at a short distance in advance of us were large bands of buffalo. Encamped, as the sun was setting, on a brook called Turkey Creek, where we found an abundant supply of water, but no wood. We here overtook Mr. Antoine Leroux, on his way to Taos, and considered ourselves fortunate in securing the services of so experienced a guide. He did not join us at once, as he was desirous of seeing his train safely over one or two bad places in advance of us, but promised to overtake us in a day or two. Day's march, 35 miles; distance from Westport, 189 miles.

May 21. We were all on the lookout for buffa-

loes. It was five days since we had left Westport, and as yet our eyes had not been gladdened by the sight of even one. Hoping to fall in with them more readily by diverging from the beaten track, I left the party soon after sunrise, and turning to the left, went a few miles in the direction of the Arkansas. After a ride of two hours, I observed afar off many dark objects which resembled trees skirting the horizon, but, after a closer scrutiny, their change of position convinced me that they were buffaloes. I slowly approached them, and, in order to obtain a nearer view without giving them the alarm, dismounted, and, urging my horse forward, concealed myself behind him. I thus got within a hundred yards of the herd. Bands of antelope and prairie wolves were intermingled with the buffaloes, who had come down to a rivulet to drink. Of the latter some were fighting, others wallowing, drinking, or browsing. I was just congratulating myself upon my ruse in getting so near to them, this being my first sight of these noble animals, when my horse, suddenly raising his head, uttered such a sonorous neigh as put the whole troop to flight. Away they galloped, one band after another taking the alarm, until the whole herd, numbering several thousand, was in motion, and finally disappearing in clouds of dust. Despairing of getting such another opportunity for a shot, I reluctantly turned my horse's head in the direction where I supposed the rest of the party to be. A few hours'

ride brought me back to them. They too had fallen in with buffaloes, and, in their eagerness to secure the first prize, each man had taken two or three shots at a straggling old bull, an exile from the herd; he fell, pierced with twenty-three balls. He was, however, too old and tough to be eaten, and was left for his friends, the coyotes.

Buffaloes now became such an ordinary occurrence that the novelty soon wore off, and we had more humps, tongues, and marrow-bones than the greatest gourmand could have desired.

May 22. We had already overtaken and passed several large wagon and cattle trains from Texas and Arkansas, mostly bound to California. With them were many women and children; and it was pleasant to stroll into their camps in the evening and witness the perfect air of comfort and being-at-home that they presented. Their wagons drawn up in a circle, gave them at least an appearance of security; and within the inclosure the men either reclined around the campfires, or were busy in repairing their harness or cleaning their arms. The females milked the cows and prepared the supper; and we often enjoyed the hot cakes and fresh milk of which they invited us to partake. Tender infants in their cradles were seen under the shelter of the wagons, thus early inured to hard travel. Carpets and rocking chairs were drawn out, and what would perhaps shock some of our fine ladies, fresh-looking girls, whose rosy lips were certainly never intended to be defiled by the

vile weed, sat around the fire, smoking the old-fashioned corn-cob pipe.

May 23. We were again on the road at sunrise, and travelled thirty-one miles to the Pawnee Fork of the Arkansas. The sun was excessively hot, but towards noon its heat was tempered by a pleasant breeze from the northwest; crossed many gullies, which carry water only after heavy rains. We passed, on the right of the road, a remarkable butte, or spur of the hills, projecting into the plain, and presenting a broad surface of smooth rock, thickly inscribed with names. This landmark is known as "The Pawnee Rock."

May 25. We were glad to saddle up at sunrise, and in five miles reached Fort Atkinson, where Major Johnson, the officer in command, gave us a cordial reception. Several large bands of Indians, of the Cheyenne and Arapahoe tribes, were congregated around the fort, awaiting the arrival of Major Fitzpatrick, Indian Agent, whom they daily expected. As it continued to rain without intermission all day, we concluded to pass the night in the fort, where Major Johnson had provided comfortable accommodations for us. Orders had just been received to remove this post to Pawnee Fork of the Arkansas, one hundred miles nearer the settlements. It will there be of very little service, for it is already too near to the frontiers.

The timber at Pawnee Fork being mostly cottonwoods, it is not suitable for building purposes; though at Fort Atkinson there is none whatever

nearer than fifteen miles; and it was with some difficulty that we obtained a few small logs for our men, who were encamped at a short distance, under tents borrowed from the fort. All the houses are in a dilapidated condition; a few are built of adobe (sun-dried bricks) but the greater part are constructed of sods. Emigrants frequently stop here to settle their difficulties with Indians, and with each other, Major Johnson administering justice in a prompt and impartial manner. A few days before our arrival, a quarrel having occurred between a party of emigrants and some Cheyenne Indians, which ended in blows, Major Johnson, upon investigation, finding that an American was the aggressor, immediately ordered him back to the States. Mr. Leroux being still too ill to continue the journey, remained here under the care of the surgeon of the post; and Mr. W. Riggs, desiring to return to the States, took leave of us at this point. Day's travel, 5 miles; whole distance, 361 miles.

May 26. Although it still continued to rain, we left Fort Atkinson at noon, and travelled up the left bank of the Arkansas. The trail from Independence to Santa Fé crosses the Arkansas ten miles above Fort Atkinson; and there is another crossing five miles higher up.

May 29. At sunrise, recrossed the river to its left bank, grass still coarse and rank. The water of the Arkansas is very similar in color and taste to that of the Missouri. As we coasted up the left

bank the grass became coarser and scantier. Passed a singular slaty mound on the right of the road, resembling a pyramid in ruins. Encamped at noon near a slough of the river. There was no wood near enough for use; but the general resource in such cases on the plains was scattered in abundance around us. The sun was very hot, but at times tempered by a light breeze from the north-westward. A wagon and cattle train of emigrants encamped near us. In the afternoon, we ascended the river eight miles, and encamped near the stream in coarse, wiry grass, as in fact it has been for several days past. The country a few miles from the river has scanty grass and dry arid soil. In the evening, we had a large company of emigrants on each side of us. Day's travel, 36 miles; whole distance, 483 miles.

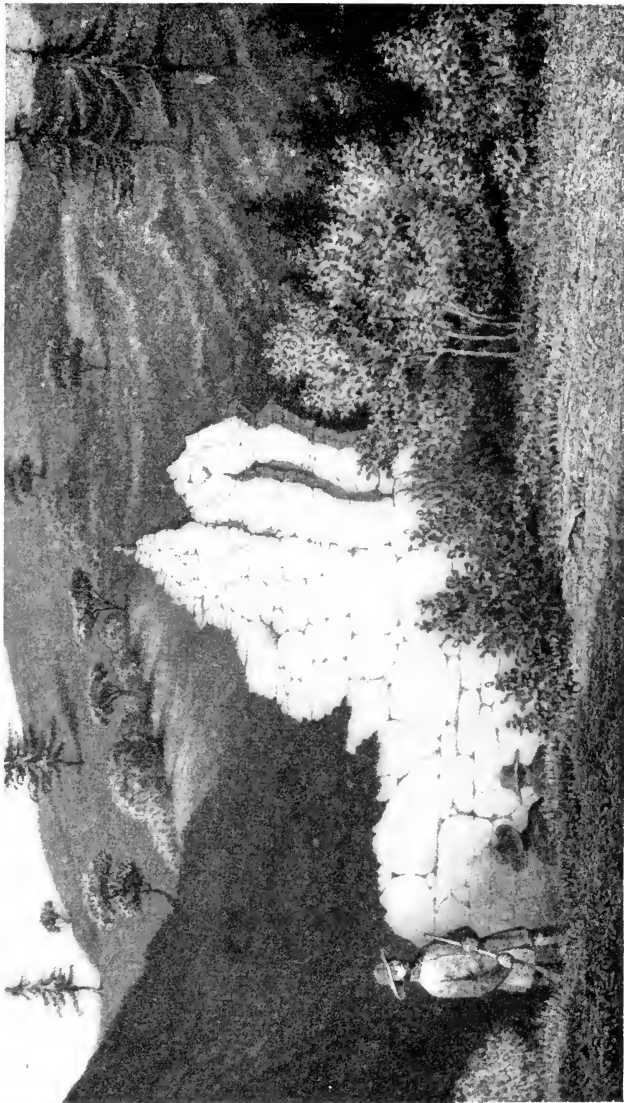
June 2. Left the Timpas at early dawn, and discerned at a distance of fifteen miles several high buttes, bearing due west, in a line with the southern end of the Sierra Mojada; towards these we now directed our course. The country was gradually rolling towards the buttes, and covered with abundant bunch grass; the prickly pear, or cactus, which grows in clusters close to the ground, was at times very distressing to our mules; their constant efforts to avoid treading on this annoying plant gave them an uneasy, jerking gait, very harassing to their riders during a long day's march.

Upon reaching the summit of the buttes, a magnificent and extensive panorama was opened to

our view. The horizon was bounded on the north by Pike's Peak, northwest and west by the Sierra Mojada, Sangre de Cristo Mountains, and Spanish Peaks; to the south and east extended the prairie, lost in the hazy distance. On the gently undulating plains, reaching to the foot of the mountains, could be traced the courses of the Arkansas and Sage Creek by their lines of timber. The Apispah, an affluent of the Arkansas, issuing from the Sierra Mojada, was concealed from sight by a range of intervening buttes, while the object of our search, the Huerfano, flowed at our feet, distant about three miles, its course easy to be distinguished from the point where it issued from the mountains to its junction with the Arkansas, except at short intervals, where it passed through canyons in the plain. Pike's Peak, whose head was capped with eternal snows, was a prominent object in the landscape, soaring high above all neighboring summits.

Descending the buttes to the Huerfano, we encamped on it about five miles above its mouth. A bold and rapid stream, its waters were turbid, but sweet and cool; the river-bottom was broad, and thickly wooded with willows and cottonwoods interlaced with the wild rose and grape-vine, and carpeted with soft grass—a sylvan paradise. This stream was about twenty-five yards in breadth, and five feet deep close to the bank. Bands of antelope and deer dotted the plain, one of which served us for supper, brought down by the unerring rifle of Dick, the Delaware.





The Site of General Beale's First Camp in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains

From a Lithograph



June 4. I rode ahead of camp, to Huerfano Butte, a remarkable mound, bearing north from the southernmost Spanish Peak, and about fifty yards from the right bank of the river; its appearance was that of a huge artificial mound of stones, covered half-way up from its base with a dense growth of bushes. It is probably of volcanic origin and there are many indications in this region of the action of internal fires.

Our ride to-day was full of interest, for we were now approaching the Sangre de Cristo Pass, in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains. We had been travelling for eighteen days, over an uninterrupted plain, until its monotony had become extremely wearisome. The mountain scenery, which we entered soon after raising camp this morning, was of the most picturesque description. We crossed the Huerfano seven miles above the butte; at this point it issues from a canyon one hundred and fifty yards in length; above it the valley, watered by the Huerfano, forms a beautiful plain of small extent, surrounded by lofty and well-wooded mountains; numerous rills trickle down their sides, irrigate the plain, and join their waters to those of the Huerfano, which are here clear and cold. We did not enter this valley, but left the Huerfano after crossing it, and followed up the bed of one of its tributaries, the Cuchada, a small brook rising near the summit of the Sangre de Cristo Pass.

This small valley of the Huerfano contains about six hundred acres, and forms a most ravishing pic-

ture; it would be a good place for recruiting cattle after their weary march across the plains, as they would be perfectly secure and sheltered, and the pasturage is excellent. This, however, is the case all through these mountains, for waving grass, gemmed with flowers of every hue, covers them to their summits, except in the region of snow. The Cuchada led us up a succession of valleys of an easy grade. We were now travelling on an Indian trail; for the wagon trail, which I believe was made by Roubindeau's wagons, deviated to the right, and went through the pass named after him. This pass is so low that we perceived through it a range of sand hills of moderate height, in San Luis Valley; to have gone through it, however, would have occasioned us the loss of a day in reaching Fort Massachusetts, though it is the shortest and most direct route to the Coochatope; and Mr. Beale's views constrained him to take the most direct route to Fort Massachusetts, where he expected to obtain a guide through the unexplored country between New Mexico and Utah, and also to procure some mules. We were therefore very reluctantly compelled to forego the examination of Roubindeau's Pass.

Encamped at noon at the foot of a remarkable rock, watered at its base by the Cuchada; it resembled the ruined front of a Gothic church. Encamped for the night six miles farther up the valley, and near the summit of the Sangre de Cristo Pass. An excellent wagon road might be made over these

mountains, by the Sangre de Cristo Pass, and a still better one through Roubindeau's.

The grass around our encampment was really magnificent; it was in a large mountain meadow, watered by numerous springs and girt in by dark pines. Through an opening in the mountains, to the eastward, we could see the sunny plains of the Arkansas and Huerfano, with its remarkable butte, whilst around us heavy clouds were collecting, giving warning of a storm and wet night. We made ourselves shelters and beds of pine boughs. The Delaware had killed a fat antelope, which furnished us a hearty supper; and we sat around our fire until a late hour, well pleased with having accomplished in such good time and without accident the first stage of our journey, for we expected to reach Fort Massachusetts at an early hour next day. Day's march, 26 miles; total distance, 668 miles.

June 5. After crossing Indian Creek, we halted a few minutes to make our toilets previous to our arrival at Fort Massachusetts, and, although our hunter had just ridden into camp with a haunch of fat venison behind his saddle, and our appetites, which were at all times excellent, had been sharpened by a long mountain ride without breakfast, we were too impatient to reach the fort to lose time in camping. We arrived there late in the afternoon, and received a warm and hospitable welcome from Major Blake, the officer in command, and from Lieutenants Jackson and Johnson, and

Dr. Magruder. An incipient rainstorm made us feel sensible that we were still in the vicinity of the Sierra Mojada (or Wet Mountains), which well merit the name, for rain fell every day that we were in or near them; on the highest peaks in the form of snow, and lower down in hazy moisture, alternating with drenching showers.

This humidity gives great fertility to this region, and the country bordering on the sides of these mountains, as well as the valleys within their recesses, are unequalled in loveliness and richness of vegetation. To the settler, they offer every inducement; and I have no doubt that in a few years this tract of country will vie with California or Australia in the number of immigrants it will invite to it. It is by far the most beautiful as well as the most fertile portion of New Mexico, and a remarkably level country unites it with the western frontier of the Atlantic States. As soon as this is thrown open to settlement, a continuous line of farms will be established, by which the agricultural and mineral wealth of this region will be developed. Communication will then be more rapid, and instead of the mail being, as it is now, thirty days in reaching Fort Massachusetts, it will be carried through in eight or ten.

Messrs. Beale, Riggs, Rogers, and myself quartered at the fort; the men encamped two miles below on Utah Creek, in a beautiful grove of cottonwoods. A tent was sent to them, and with fresh bread and meat they were soon rendered perfectly comfort-



**Grand River, below the Junction of the Uncompagne**

From a Lithograph





able. There was excellent pasturage around their encampment, on which the mules soon forgot the hard marches they had made since leaving Westport. Day's travel, 25 miles; total distance from Westport to Fort Massachusetts, 693 miles.

June 14. As it was found impossible to obtain here the men and animals that we required, and that it would be necessary to go to Taos, and perhaps to Santa Fé, for this purpose, Mr. Beale and Major Blake left for the former place on the morning after our arrival at the fort. Taos is about eighty, and Santa Fé about one hundred and forty miles to the southward.

The cavalry at Fort Massachusetts numbered seventy-five men, of whom forty-five were mounted. Though their horses were excellently groomed, and stabled, and kept in high condition on corn, at six dollars a bushel, they would break down on a march in pursuit of Indians mounted on horses fed on grass, and accustomed to gallop at half speed up or down the steepest hills. Corn-fed animals lose their strength when they are put on grass, and do not soon get accustomed to the change of diet. Of this fact the officers at the fort were perfectly sensible, and regretted that they were not better prepared for any sudden emergency.

Lieutenant Beale returned from the southern country late in the afternoon of this day, and brought with him a guide, and a Mexican *arriero* (muleteer); they were cousins, and both named

Felipe Archilete. Jesus Garcia was discharged here, and Patrick Dolan, a soldier who had served out his time, hired in his place. Our party now numbered fourteen.

The guide, Felipe Archilete, or "Peg-leg," for it was by this sobriquet that he was commonly known to Americans, deserves particular mention. He had spent the greater part of his life trading and trapping in the Indian country, and his accurate knowledge of the region between the Arkansas and Sevier River in Utah Territory, as well as his acquaintance with the Utah tongue, promised to render him of great service to us in the absence of Mr. Leroux. A few years ago, in a skirmish with the Utahs, he was wounded in the left ankle with a rifle ball, which completely crippled his foot, and compelled him to use at times a wooden leg, which he carried suspended to his waist. Notwithstanding his lameness, he was one of the most active men of the party, and was always the foremost in times of difficulty and danger.

During Lieutenant Beale's absence, I replenished our provisions from the sutler's store, and had a small supply of biscuit baked; a bullock, which I had purchased from the quartermaster, was cut up and jerked by the Delaware, and the mules were reshod, and a supply of spare shoes and nails obtained. They were completely rested, and in even better condition than when we started from Westport; after a general overhauling of the camp equipage by the men, everything was put in

order for resuming our journey, as soon as Lieutenant Beale should return.

June 15. Bidding adieu to our kind friends at the fort, we resumed our journey at noon, and travelled down Utah Creek south-southwest, until it debouched in the valley of San Luis, when we altered our course to west by north. In six miles from Fort Massachusetts, we crossed the trail of Roubindeau's wagons from the upper Arkansas settlements; they entered through Roubindeau's Pass in the Sierra Mojada. After crossing it, our route led us over a level plain covered with artemisia, cacti, and patches of the nutritious grama. A ride of twenty-five miles brought us at dark to a slough of the Rio del Norte, where we encamped. Day's march, 25 miles; total distance from Westport, 718 miles.

June 18. On resuming our march in the afternoon, we ascended the small valley, as it shortened the distance a couple of miles, and re-entered that of the Sahwatch. After a ride of eight miles we crossed Sahwatch Creek, its waters reaching to our saddles, and encamped as the sun was setting, at the entrance of the celebrated Coochatope Pass.

## CHAPTER VI

### ACROSS THE PLAINS IN '53

From Coochatope Pass to Grand River—A Taste of Mountain Sheep—The Great Divide—Murderous Work of Utah Indians—Arrival at the Uncompagne River—The Swollen Fork of the Colorado—Raft Built and Abandoned—The Slough of Despond—Building a Canoe—Forlorn Plight of Pack Mules—Shipwreck and Inventory of Losses—Expedition Separated by River but United by Common Misfortunes—Gallant Swimmers—Beale Decides to Send to Taos in New Mexico to Replenish his Supplies—Mr. Heap's Journey to the Settlements—A Miserable Night—"Peg-leg" and the Venerable Utah—The Lonely Squaw—Arrival at Taos—Mr. Leroux and Supplies.

**C**OOCHATOPE PASS is a wonderful gap, or, more properly speaking, a natural gate, as its name denotes, in the Utah language. On each side, mountains rise in abrupt and rocky precipices, the one on the eastern side being the highest. We climbed up the one on the left, which is but a confused mass of rocks, but in their crevices were many beautiful and sweet-scented flowers. The bottom of the pass was level and at right angles with Sahwatch Valley; and we had thus far

reached twenty-five miles into the mountains, from San Luis Valley, without any apparent change of level. Singular as it may appear, it is nevertheless a fact that, notwithstanding the distance that we had penetrated into these mountains, had it not been for the course of the waters it would have been difficult to have determined whether we were ascending or descending.

A stream issues from Coochatope Pass and joins the Sahwatch; it is called Coochumpah by the Utahs, and Rio de los Cibolos by the Mexicans; both names have the same signification—River of Buffaloes. Coochatope signifies, in the Utah language, Buffalo Gate, and the Mexicans have the same name for it, El Puerto de los Cibolos. The pass and creek are so called from the large herds of these animals which entered Sahwatch and San Luis Valleys through this pass, from the Three Parks and Upper Arkansas, before they were destroyed, or the direction of their migration changed, by the constant warfare carried on against them by Indians and New Mexicans. A few still remain in the mountains and are described as very wild and savage. We saw a great number of elk-horns scattered through these valleys; and, from the comparatively fresh traces of buffaloes, it was evident that many had visited the pass quite recently.

Our Delaware, in commemoration of our arrival at this point, killed a mountain sheep, and soon a dozen sticks were around the fire, on which were

roasting pieces of this far-famed meat; but this was a bad specimen, being both old and tough. Day's travel, 22 miles; total distance, 808 miles.

We resumed our journey at 5:30 A.M. and, having travelled two miles, reached the forks of the Coochumpah, taking the west fork up the valley, which here commenced to ascend at an easy grade. The mountainsides were clothed with fine timber, among which were pines, firs, and aspens, and the valley with the most luxuriant grass and clover, this being the first clover we had seen. Around us were scattered numerous elk-horns and buffalo skulls. Eight miles brought us to a remarkable cliff, about one hundred feet in height, which beetled over the trail on our left; nine miles from the "Gate," we saw the last water flowing east to the Atlantic; in five minutes we were on the culminating point of the pass, and in ten more crossed the first stream flowing west to the Pacific. It was almost as if we were standing with one foot in waters which found their way to the Gulf of Mexico and the other in those losing themselves in the Gulf of California.

In our eagerness to explore this pass to its western outlet, Lieutenant Beale and I rode far ahead of the remainder of the party. The scenery was grand and beautiful beyond description. Lofty mountains, their summits covered with eternal snows, lifted their heads to the clouds, whilst in our immediate vicinity were softly rounded hills clothed with grass, flowers, and rich



The Lower Bar, Mokolunne River

From a Lithograph of 1850





meadows, through which numerous rills trickled to join their waters to Coochatope Creek.

At noon we encamped on this stream, where it had already swollen to a considerable size. It is a tributary of Grand River, east fork of the Great Colorado. Near camp was a lofty and steep hill, which I ascended to obtain a better view of the country; one of its principal features was the Coochatope Mountain to the southeast, high, round, and dark with pines.

June 20. The usual cry of "catch up" set the camp in motion at 5:45 A.M. We travelled twenty-two miles over a rolling country, more hilly than our route of the previous day, and encamped on a rivulet at noon. Our course was south by west. The hillsides and mountains were still covered with a thick growth of pines and aspens; wild flowers adorned the murmuring streams, and beautified the waving grass. Every few hundred yards we came to one of these purling brooks, the haunt of the timid deer, who bounded away at our approach. To the westward, the Eagle Range (La Sierra del Aguila) towered high above the surrounding mountains, its summits capped with snow, some patches of which we passed near our trail. Lieutenant Beale shot a species of grouse, larger than a prairie hen, and caught one of her young. At 5:30 P.M., five miles from our noon camp, we crossed the two forks of the Jaroso (Willow) Creek, a strong stream running into Grand River, not laid down on any map. At

7 P.M. we rested for the night in a valley watered by a small shallow brook, very marshy, and swarming with mosquitoes. Our general course this day was southwest. Numbers of deer and antelopes were seen; indeed, these sheltered valleys seem expressly intended as coverts for these gentle animals.

About a mile before reaching the Jaroso, we crossed a valley where a party of Americans were cruelly murdered by the Utahs, in the spring of this year. Five Americans and a few Mexicans were driving sheep to California by this route, and, from some cause which I did not ascertain, a disagreement arose between them and a band of Utahs, who were still here in their winter-quarters. The latter forbade their passing through their country, and placing a row of elk-horns across the valley, threatened them with instant death if they crossed that line. The whites, deeming this a vain threat, attempted to force their way through, were attacked, and all killed. The elk-horns were still in the position in which the Indians had placed them. Our guide, Felipe, had an account of this affair from Utahs who had been actors in the affray. At this point the trail from the Del Norte through the Carnero Pass joins that through the Coochatope. Traders from Abiquiu come by it into these mountains to barter for peltries with the Utahs. Day's travel, 34 miles; total, 876 miles.

June 21. Raised camp at 4:45 A.M. and travelled five miles west by south, crossing a steep

and rocky hill covered with pines, and in five miles entered a small valley watered by the Rio de la Laguna (Lake Creek).

It became a question with us, how our packs were to be transported over the Laguna without getting them wet or lost, and we at first attempted to make a bridge by felling a tall pine across the stream, but it fell partly into the water, and the current carried it away, tearing it into pieces. This plan having failed another was adopted, suggested by what Mr. Beale had seen in his travels in Panama, and the mode of crossing the plunging torrents of the Andes, which was entirely successful.

Mr. Rogers selected a point where the stream was for some distance free from rocks, and succeeded, after a severe struggle, in swimming across; and one of the men mounting a stray Indian pony, which we found quietly grazing in the valley, dashed in after him, and also effected a landing on the opposite side. To them a light line was thrown, and having thus established a communication with the other side, a larger rope was drawn over by them, and tied firmly to a rock near the water's edge. The end of the rope on our side was made fast to the top of a pine tree, a backstay preventing it from bending to the weight of the loads sent over. An iron hook was now passed over the rope, and by means of a sling our packs were suspended to it. The hook slid freely from the top of the tree down to the rock; and when the load was taken off, we drew the hook and sling back to our side by

a string made fast to it. The last load sent over was our wearing apparel, and just after parting with it, a violent hailstorm broke over us, making us glad to seek shelter from its fury under rocks and trees. Most of the day was thus consumed and it was not until 5 P.M. that we mounted our mules and swam them across. The water was icy cold, and some of the animals had a narrow escape from drowning. We, however, saddled up immediately, and proceeding four miles from the creek, encamped for the night in a small hollow. On leaving the Rio de la Laguna, the road ascended a high steep hill. The country travelled over this day was abundantly grassed, the hills timbered with firs, pines, and aspens, and the streams shaded with willows. Day's travel, 9 miles; total, 885 miles.

June 23. At an early hour in the morning, Lieut. Beale, Felipe Archilete, the Delaware, and I, taking the lead, arrived at the River Uncompage at 11:10 A.M. We travelled about twelve miles parallel with this river, and found it everywhere a broad rapid stream, entirely too rapid and swift to ford with safety; we therefore continued down its right bank until we reached Grand River.

We had been prepared to find Grand River swollen, for its tributaries which we had crossed were all at their highest stage of water; but we had not anticipated so mighty a stream. It flowed with a loud and angry current, its amber-



The Method of Crossing Laguna Creek

From a Lithograph



colored waters roaring sullenly past, laden with the wrecks of trees uprooted by their fury. Sounds like the booming of distant artillery, occasioned by the caving in of its clay and sand banks, constantly smote our ears. This fork of the Colorado rises in the Middle Park, and gathers all its headwaters in that enclosure, and is described by Fremont, who crossed it there, as being a large river, one hundred and thirty yards wide where it breaks through its mountain rim and flows southwest. Between that point and where we approached it numerous streams contribute their waters to increase its volume, and where we now stood, anxiously gazing at its flood, it had spread to a breadth of over two hundred and fifty yards.

As it was evident that this river was nowhere fordable it was determined to commence at once the construction of a raft. A place where dead wood was found in abundance was selected for encampment, and to reach it it was necessary to cross a broad slough, where the mules sank to their bellies in the mud; the packs were carried over on our heads. This brought us to an island of loose, rotten soil, covered with greasewood and some coarse grass. We had no shelter from the sun, which was intensely hot, and the mosquitoes and gadflies were perfectly terrific.

From this point, the Pareamoot Mountains were in full view; they ranged from the north, and terminated in an abrupt declivity on the western side of Grand River, opposite the mouth of

the Uncompagre. They were described to me as abounding in game, and well timbered; on their plateaus, are fine lakes filled with excellent fish, rich meadows, abundant streams, every natural attraction, in fact, to induce settlement.

Our guide, Felipe, had spent three years in them, trapping and hunting, and said that there is no richer country on the continent. Those mountains are not laid down on any map. Day's travel, 28 miles; total distance, 951 miles.

June 24. Whilst most of the party were busily occupied in collecting and cutting logs, constructing the raft, and transporting the packs, saddles, etc., to the point of embarkation, which had to be done in deep mud, and under a scorching sun, others explored the banks of the river, to ascertain whether a place could be found where the cavalcade could be crossed over. The river was examined several miles above our encampment, but its banks on our side were everywhere so marshy as to prevent the approach of the mules to the water's edge. At the encampment the ground was firmer but we feared to drive them into the river at this point, as it was here not only very rapid and broad, but its opposite banks, as far down as we could see, were marshy and covered with a thick jungle, from which our mules, after the exhaustion of swimming across so swift a current, would have been unable to extricate themselves.

Towards noon the raft was completed, but we were far from feeling confident about crossing at



this point. Archilete, who was well acquainted with all the fords and crossing-places, stated that perhaps a better point might be found a few miles below the mouth of the Uncompagre, which flowed into Grand River a short distance below us. As it was evident that it would be risking the entire loss of our animals and packs to attempt to cross them here, it was determined to abandon the raft and to move camp farther down without delay. Everything was again transported to the main shore across the slough. The animals had much difficulty in crossing this place, even without loads; with them, they sank hopelessly into the mud, from which it was very difficult to drag them out.

A more dirty, begrimed, and forlorn-looking party was never seen; we were covered with mud to our waists; wherever the mosquitoes and gad-flies could reach our skin they improved the opportunity most industriously, and most of the men were covered with blisters and welts. All cheerfully took a share in this labor, but a volley of execrations was poured on this quagmire, which was appropriately christened the "Slough of Despond."

Having transported everything to dry land and got the animals through the mud, we once more packed them and resumed our journey down the left bank of Grand River until we came to the Uncompagre, a short distance above its mouth.

The largest animals were here selected to carry the packs across, their feet barely touching the

bottom, whilst the strength of the current drove the water over their backs. Some of the men, mounted on horses, led the pack mules, and prevented their being carried down the stream where the water was deeper. One mule, with a valuable pack, having gone in of her own accord, was carried away, lost her foothold and sank, the weight of the pack being too great to allow her to swim; she was swept down the stream with great rapidity, rolling over helplessly until entirely lost to our sight by a bend of the river. Some of the party swam across, and one, benumbed by the coldness of the water, and exhausted by struggling against the stream, would have been drowned had he not been providentially seized just as his strength had entirely failed him.

We encamped a few miles below the Uncompagre on the left bank of Grand River, upon a bluff from which we had a fine view of its course, and of the Preamoot Mountains opposite. Our tormentors, the mosquitoes, did not fail to welcome us with a loud buzz, whilst the drone of the gadfly, which might with truth be termed the *furia-infernalis* of the plains, gave notice that he was about, thirsting for our blood. Wherever he inserted his proboscis, the sensation was like that of a redhot darning needle thrust into the flesh, and was followed by a stream of blood. The mules and horses suffered terribly by these flies.

Our provisions, by losses in the river and damage by water, were fast diminishing, and it was deemed

prudent at this time to put ourselves on a limited allowance, for it was uncertain how long we might be detained in crossing this river, the Avonkaria, and Upper Colorado.

The pack lost with the mule drowned in the Uncompagre contained many articles of importance to us, besides all our *pinole* (parched cornmeal), and some of the men lost all their clothing.

It was late when we got to camp, and after a day of toil, exposure, and annoyance, nothing more could be done than to select a tree out of which to make a canoe, and the place to launch it, for all idea of crossing on a raft was abandoned. A few miles below the encampment the river was shut in by a canyon, towards which it drove with great swiftness; a raft carried into it would have been torn to pieces in a moment, without a chance for the men on it to save their lives. Day's travel, 5 miles; total, 956 miles.

June 25. At early dawn most of the party commenced working on the canoe; their only tools were two dull axes and two hatchets. A large cottonwood tree was felled for this purpose, and it was hoped to have the canoe finished the next day. The wood, being green and full of sap, was hard to cut, and so heavy that chips of it sank when thrown into the water.

The river still maintained the same level, and the bottom land was overflowed and marshy. The high lands on which we were encamped were composed of a loose, rotten soil, producing no

vegetation except stunted sage-bushes. The only game we had seen for two days was an occasional sage-rabbit, so called from its flesh having a strong flavor of the wild sage (*artemisia*), on which it feeds. The sun was very hot and mosquitoes tormenting; we removed our camp to the bluffs in the hope of avoiding them, but with little success.

At this point, the general course of the river was parallel with the Pareamoot Mountains, from northeast to southwest. The latter appeared to rise in terraces, upon which much timber could be seen.

The work on the canoe was continued steadily all day, though some of the party entertained grave doubts about crossing in it; besides, the two rivers beyond Grand River were said to be larger and their current swifter than this. Archilete stated that he had never seen the river so high, and that it was owing to the unusual quantity of snow which had fallen in the mountains during last winter. The wind rose at ten o'clock and blew with violence until sunset, which relieved us in a measure from the torment of mosquitoes, but they returned in fresh swarms as soon as it lulled.

June 26. The canoe was completed at noon, and a fire was kindled in and around to dry it. At 4 P.M. the first load went over with the Delaware and Archilete. Everything had to be carried to the water's edge through a thick jungle, knee-deep in mud, and under a broiling sun.

They reached the opposite side safely, although

the current carried them some distance down the stream. The canoe was found to be very heavy and easy to upset. Archilete, Juan Lente, and myself went with the second load, reached the other side, and, after unloading, dragged the canoe some distance up stream to enable Archilete, who was to take it back, to make a landing at the point where the packs were deposited. Two more of the men crossed with the next load, and Archilete returned in the canoe to the left bank for the night.

We were now four persons on the right bank of the stream with the prospect of getting the rest of the party and packs across at an early hour the next day. We retired to some dry land about half a mile from the river, and carried to it the few things that had been brought over. Just before dark, Dick, the Delaware, made his appearance in camp, dripping wet, and reported that he had just swam across with some of the mules; that after getting all into the water most of them had turned back, while three mules and one horse, having reached the right bank, had sunk into the mud, from which he had been unable to relieve them. We immediately went down to the water's edge with ropes, and with great difficulty got the horse out of his bed of mud, but found it impossible to extricate the mules. We were compelled to leave the poor animals in their forlorn situation until the morning, when we hoped to get them on dry land.

June 27. Rose at dawn, and our first business

was to get the mules out of their dangerous predicament, by cutting bushes and spreading them around the mired animals, thus rendering the ground sufficiently firm to support their weight.

At an early hour, a signal was made to us from the other side that the canoe was about starting to cross. We therefore went down to the river-side to receive its load. In a few minutes she made her appearance, driving rapidly down the stream. She was heavily loaded, barely four inches of her gunwale being above the water's edge. Felipe Archilete, a strong and active fellow, was paddling, whilst George Simms was crouched in the bow of the boat. They were unable to reach the point where previous landings had been effected, and were soon shut from our sight by trees and tangled bushes, growing close to the water. In a few seconds we heard the most alarming cries for help, and upon rushing to the spot from which these cries proceeded, found Archilete and George just emerging from the water, nearly exhausted with their struggles.

It appears that upon approaching the bank and grasping some small limbs of trees overhanging the water, the latter broke, whereupon one of the men, becoming alarmed, attempted to jump from the boat to the shore, causing it immediately to upset. They were both thrown into the stream, which here ran with a strong current, and it was with difficulty that they reached the shore. I immediately called to one of the men, who was

standing near the horse, to gallop down the river's edge, and by swimming him into the middle of the stream to endeavor to reach the canoe should it make its appearance. But it was never seen again, nor did we recover any of the articles with which it was loaded. We lost by this accident seven rifles, nearly all our ammunition, pistols, saddles, cornmeal, coffee, sugar, blankets, etc.

With broken axes and dull hatchets it would have been difficult if not impossible to have constructed another canoe; and, besides, the men were too much discouraged by this loss to undertake the labor with the spirit necessary to carry it through.

Our party was equally divided; we were seven on each side. Some of the gentlemen on the left bank were now anxious to return to New Mexico to proceed to California by some other route; but Lieut. Beale would not listen for a moment to such a proposition. He hailed me at eight o'clock, and told me that as soon as he could construct a raft, and get the few remaining things and the animals over, we would push on for the Mormon settlements near the Vegas de Santa Clara. Expedition was necessary, for we had provisions for only four or five days.

The Delaware swam back to Mr. Beale's side to assist him to construct a raft or canoe. He was a splendid swimmer, and went through the water like an otter. They immediately commenced the construction of another canoe, but both axes being

broken, they soon had to relinquish the task as hopeless.

An inventory was made of the provisions, and it was found that we had twenty-five pounds of biscuit, mostly in dust, twenty-five pounds of dried venison, and ten pounds of bacon. Although this was but slender provision for fourteen hungry men, we had no fear of starvation, or even of suffering, as long as we had the mules. I also discovered in an old bag a small supply of powder and lead, and some chocolate and tobacco. A canister of meat-biscuit, upon which we had depended in case of an emergency of this sort, had unfortunately gone down with the canoe.

At an early hour in the morning, we saw flying from a tree on the left bank the preconcerted signal to "come down for a talk." To reach the river, we had to wade for half a mile through a deep marsh, into which we sank to our knees, and the air was thick with mosquitoes.

Lieut. Beale informed me that it had been decided to return to Taos for supplies, and inquired whether we could get back to the left bank. As two of the men on my side stated that they could not swim, it was decided to make a raft, and, if possible, to save the articles we had with us. Before this was determined upon, however, Lieut. Beale ordered Archilete to swim over to his side, which the latter did at once, taking his timber leg under his arm; and in the afternoon they made another ineffectual attempt to get the animals



across. There was but one point where it was possible to drive them into the river, and here they crowded in on each other until those underneath were near drowning. Lieut. Beale and one of the men, who were riding, went into the river to lead the band across. The mules fell on them from the bank, which was at this place about three feet high, and for a moment they were in imminent danger of being crushed. An old horse alone struck boldly over, but none of the other animals followed his example. They all got out on the same side, and could not be again driven into the water.

Lieut. Beale now desired me to make arrangements for returning to his side of the river, and while preparing the animals to move down to our camping-ground, I thought I heard a faint shout, and at the same time perceiving two dark objects moving in the water, some distance up the stream, I suspected that they were men from the opposite shore endeavoring to reach land on our side. The current was carrying them swiftly on towards a high bank overhanging the stream, where, without help, to have effected a landing would have been impossible.

Hastily seizing a rope, and calling to the men to follow, I ran to the top of the cliff. In fact, they were our two best swimmers, Dick and Felipe, who were scarcely able to keep their hold until ropes could be let down to them. We drew them up half perished, and it required a good fire and

something stimulating to restore circulation to their limbs, benumbed by the icy coldness of the water. Although we had no sugar, some coffee, that the Delaware had brought, tied in a handkerchief on his head, cheered the men, and we passed a good night, happy in any rest after such a day of toil.

June 29. At an early hour in the morning, I commenced throwing into the river everything that we could possibly dispense with, such as clothing, etc. I allowed each man to select sufficient clothes from the general stock to make up one suit, and it was singular how soon their wants increased. Some of the Mexicans, who heretofore had been satisfied with one shirt and a pair of pants, now arrayed themselves in as many breeches, drawers, shirts, and stockings as they could force themselves into. I cached, under a thick bush, a few Indian goods that we had brought with us as presents.

The three mules and two horses were passed over to the left shore without much difficulty by pushing them into the water from a bank, whence the eddy immediately carried them into the middle of the stream. They got out safely on the other side, and we at once commenced constructing the raft.

It was completed at 1 P.M. and, although it was twelve feet in length by eight in breadth, the weight of seven men, with the saddles, arms, and

provisions we had saved, caused it to sink eighteen inches under water. It drifted rapidly down the stream, the men whooping and yelling until one struck up the old song of "O Susannah!" when the rest sang the chorus. In this style, we fell upwards of two miles down the river, propelling ourselves with rough paddles. Mr. Beale and others of the party stood on a hill on the opposite side cheering and waving their hats. Having approached within ten yards of the left bank, our tritons, Dick and Archilete, sprang into the water, with ropes in their teeth, and reaching the shore soon dragged the raft to the bank, upon which the remainder of the crew landed.

At four P.M. on this eventful afternoon some of the party, Mr. Heap in command, started on the back trail; those whose saddles went down in the canoe were mounted on blankets instead. Mr. Heap was instructed to go to the settlements and return as speedily as possible but so provided as to prevent a second failure in attempting to cross the river.

Wagner, Young, Dick Brown, the Delaware, and Felipe Archilete, Jr., remained with Lieut. Beale who encamped on the Namaquasitch a few miles back from the greater stream. Archilete, Sr., the nimble cripple, went with Mr. Heap as guide. He was also accompanied by those volunteer members of the expedition who after their narrow escape from drowning preferred taking the longer route

to California via Fort Loraine and the Great Salt Lake. Mr. Heap's Journal continues:

July 2. I passed a miserable night; it was cold and frosty, with a piercing north wind. My saddle-blanket was the only covering I had, and it was worn so thin and threadbare that it imparted scarcely any warmth. We saddled up and started at sunrise, directing our course nearly due east. The trail led over a mountain covered with thick pine forests, interspersed with rich meadows, and watered by numerous clear rills, until we reached a portion of the range where a hurricane or whirlwind had, some years ago, uprooted and strewed in every direction a forest of tall pine trees. Through this tangled mass we forced our way with difficulty, but finally got through and commenced a gradual descent on the eastern side of the range.

Peg-leg and myself were riding at a distance in advance of the rest of the party, when, upon crossing the summit of a hill, we suddenly found ourselves in the midst of a large flock of tame goats, behind which was a band of fifty mounted Utahs to whom they belonged. The Indians immediately gathered around us and overwhelmed us with questions; but were civil, and seemed light-hearted and merry. Most of the men had good rifles, and their horses were all in fine condition. My first thought upon meeting these Indians was the possibility of replenishing our exhausted larder with dried meat, and Peg-leg no sooner informed them

that we had been on short commons for several days than they dismounted, unpacked their animals, and from their store presented me with a plentiful supply of dried buffalo, deer, and antelope flesh.

Men, women, and children crowded around my mule, each handing me a parcel of meat; and, although it was apparent that they expected nothing in return, I gave them as good a supply of tobacco, powder, lead, and percussion caps as I could spare; but nothing delighted them so much as a box of lucifer matches; for, having shown them that by a simple friction they might produce a blaze, their joy was great, and each member of the band was eager to perform the feat of kindling a fire.

A garrulous old Indian, who wore, by way of distinction, a "Genin" hat, sorely battered and bruised, and which had become the property of this venerable Utah by one of those reverses of fortune to which hats are so liable, addressed us a harangue accompanied by many gestures. Peg-leg translated his meaning to me, which was to the effect that they had been unsuccessful in the buffalo hunt, on which they depended in a great measure for their subsistence; that they had been many months in the buffalo country, but the treacherous Cheyennes and Arapahoes had driven them off, and had killed some of their young men. He added, that of dried antelope and deer meat they had a plenty, and that we were welcome to as

much as we needed. This unexpected generosity made me regret that it was out of my power to make them a suitable return, and I explained to them that our losses in Grand River had deprived us of the means of making them presents. He replied that what I had already given was quite sufficient.

Our party had by this time overtaken us, but fearing that the "amicable relations so happily existing" might be disturbed, I desired them not to stop, retaining only a pack animal to load with the meat which I had obtained.

With these Indians were many squaws and children. The former rode astride of the packs, and the boys, some of whom were not more than five years of age, were mounted on spirited horses, which they managed with much dexterity and grace, and were armed with small bows and arrows, two of which they held with the bow in their left hand ready for service. The chiefs invited us to encamp with them, that they might treat us with goat's milk and have a "talk"; but I considered it most prudent to separate from them before any cause of disagreement should arise to mar the good understanding that existed between us; besides, it was too early in the day for us to stop. I told them that, in the direction in which they were going, they would meet some of our friends whom we had left for a short time, and that on our return we would bring them tobacco and other presents. They promised to treat our friends well, and, after

a general shaking of hands, we parted mutually pleased with each other.

We encamped at noon on a fork of Sahwatch Creek, running to the eastward through a broad grassy valley, and after a rest of two hours resumed our journey. We had not proceeded far when we noticed at a short distance to our right a singular-looking object, which appeared to be rolling rather than walking over the ground. On approaching it, it proved to be a decrepit Utah squaw, bending under the weight of two packs of buffalo robes, one of which she bore on her shoulders, whilst the other was suspended in front. She was much terrified when we galloped towards her, and although she made a feeble attempt to fly, her shaking limbs bent under her, and she sank to the ground paralyzed with fear. We, however, reassured her, and got her to explain to us the cause of her being in this lonely region by herself. Archilete being interpreter, she told us that, three moons previous, a party of her people going to hunt buffaloes had left her and another old woman in the mountains, as neither had horses, and they were unable to keep up with the band on foot. She said that they had subsisted on meat left them by their tribe, and ended by telling us that she had just buried her companion, who had died the previous night, and that she was now on her way to the summer rendezvous of her people, carrying her own and her companion's pack. We informed her that she would probably overtake a band of Utahs that night or

the next day, and placed her on their trail. She seemed glad to receive this news, and still more so when we turned our mules' heads to leave her, though we had shown her all possible kindness—so hard is it in them to believe in the sincerity of white people.

The trail led over low hills and down a succession of beautiful slopes, running mostly in a southerly direction, until we entered a narrow winding valley two and a half miles in length by one hundred to two hundred yards in breadth. It was shut in on each side by perpendicular walls of rock rising from fifty to seventy-five feet above the level of the valley, whose surface was flat and carpeted with tender grass. A stream of clear water meandered through its centre, and the grade was so slight that the stream, overflowing its banks in many places, moistened the whole surface.

As we descended this beautiful and singular valley, we occasionally passed others of a similar character opening into it. It ends in Sahwatch Valley, which we entered about an hour before sunset.

We had here the choice of two routes: the first was down Sahwatch Valley to its outlet near the head of the valley of San Luis, which would have taken us over the same ground that we had traversed in coming in from Fort Massachusetts; the second crossed Sahwatch Valley here, passed over a shorter and as good a route, and entered San Luis



Valley near where the Garita leaves the mountains. We selected the last route.

Coochatope Pass enters Sahwatch Valley a mile below Carnero Pass. Crossing Sahwatch Valley, here half a mile broad, we travelled up a narrow valley for a short distance into the hills and encamped at dark. Day's travel, 47 miles; distance from Grand River, 138 miles.

. . . . .

July 3. During the early part of the night the mosquitoes swarmed around us, but it soon became cold, which drove them away. We were delayed some time after sunrise in consequence of most of the mules having gone astray; they were not recovered until near seven o'clock, when we resumed our journey. Our course was generally east, down a succession of valleys, whose surface was level and moist, with hills rising abruptly on either side. We saw a great abundance of game, but killed nothing but a grouse. These mountains teem with antelope, deer, and mountain sheep.

July 6. To secure an early start, and to prevent our animals from trespassing upon the cultivated fields, none of which are inclosed, a man was engaged to watch them whilst at pasture during the night; but my horse having been allowed to escape, it was not until after sunrise that I could procure another. A ride of twenty-two miles brought us to the Colorado (Red River), our road taking us across three small streams (Las Ladillas)

on the borders of which were extensive sheep ranchos. The Colorado is formed by the junction of two abundant streams, which issue from deep canyons in lofty and abruptly rising mountains. The valley of the Colorado is about three miles in length by one in breadth, and the Colorado River, having passed it, flows through a deep channel in the plain, and unites its waters to those of the Del Norte. The valley presents a beautiful view, and being abundantly irrigated by means of *acéquias* (canals) every acre of it is under cultivation. The village of the Colorado consists of one hundred adobe houses built to form a quadrangle, with their doors and windows presenting upon the square inside.

Mr. Charles Otterby, a Missourian, long domiciled in New Mexico, invited me to his house and procured me a fresh horse, as the one I had ridden from the Costilla (a distance of twenty-two miles) in two hours and a half had broken down. I left Colorado at noon and, travelling twelve miles across a mountain, over a rough and stony road, I reached the Rio Hondo (Deep Creek) which is so called from its channel being sunk in many places far below the level of the plain; for the stream itself is neither deep nor broad. I here engaged a young American, Thomas Otterby, to go with us to California, he having a reputation almost equal to Kit Carson's for bravery, dexterity with his rifle, and skill in mountain life. I also purchased a mule to replace my unshod and sore-footed horse, and rode

to Taos, nine miles beyond, across a level plain, arriving there at 3 P.M.

Mr. St. Vrain, for whom I had a letter, being absent from Taos, I was hospitably received by his lady. I immediately called on Mr. Leroux, who had a few days previously returned from Fort Atkinson in improved health. Making known to him the accident which had befallen us at Grand River, and stating our wants, I obtained, with his assistance, the supplies we needed. Raw hides were procured and sewed together, to be used as boats for crossing rivers. Corn was parched to make *pinole* (parched and pounded cornmeal, sweetened), coffee roasted, etc.

San Fernando de Taos is situated in the centre of a broad plain, watered by two or three small brooks whose waters are entirely absorbed in the irrigation of the lands around the town. It presents, both within and without, a poor appearance; its low, earth-colored houses, scattered irregularly about, look dingy and squalid, though within many of them are comfortable; and they are all well adapted to the climate. The town is surrounded with uninclosed fields, very fertile when irrigated, and the Taos wheat, originally obtained from the wild wheat growing spontaneously on the Santa Clara and the Rio de la Virgen, has obtained a wide reputation.

## CHAPTER VII

### BEALE'S SEPARATE JOURNAL

Hunting Prowess of the Delaware—Indians Appear in Camp  
—Banquet of Venison and Boiled Corn—The Beautiful  
Valley of the Savoya—The Indians Race their Horses  
—A Taste of Rough Riding—The Return of Mr. Heap.

July 1. Remained in camp to await the return of Heap, with provisions, etc. Remained with me the Delaware, Dick Brown, Felipe Archilete, Jr., Harry Young, and Wagner. Nothing to eat in camp; sent the Delaware out to hunt, and we commenced a house. About nine, Dick returned with a buck, finished the house; sick with dysentery. We find the venison good, it being the first meat or food of any kind, except cornmeal and water, we have had for a week.

July 2. Weather pleasant; mosquitoes abundant, but not troublesome; washed the two dirty shirts which composed my wardrobe. No signs of Indians, and begin to hope we shall not be troubled with them. Nevertheless keep the fright medicine at hand, and the guns ready. Grass abundant and good, animals thriving; the Delaware killed an elk, dried some meat; still sick.

July 3. Employed the day in drying the meat killed yesterday. Weather very hot; but for the sunshine one would suppose it to be snowing, the air being filled with light fleeces like snow-flakes from the cottonwood. The creek is falling, but slowly. Time drags very heavily; three days gone, however, and nine remain; twelve days being the time allotted to go and return from Taos.

July 4. Celebrated the day by eating our last two cups of *pinole*; felt highly excited by it. Henceforth we go it on tobacco and dried meat. The Delaware killed a doe, tolerably fat; dried the meat; still sick; bathed in creek; found the water excessively cold, but felt much refreshed and better after the bath, besides having killed an hour by it—a very important item.

July 5. To-day we killed only a rabbit. The day has been somewhat cool, though the evening is dry and sultry, and the mosquitoes much more troublesome than usual. Took a bath, which seems to give relief from my malady, which, thank God, is no worse. We hope that our men have reached Taos this evening.

July 6. To-day has been cloudy, with rain in the mountains all around us, though but a few scattering drops have reached the valley. We all complain this evening of great weakness and entire lack of energy, with dizziness in the head, and do not know from what cause it proceeds. The bath in the creek has not had its usual invigorating effect; mosquitoes very

troublesome; made a little soup in a tin box and found it tolerable.

July 7. For the last two days we have killed nothing. This evening we had quite a shower of rain; started to take a long walk, but broke down very soon, being too weak to go far. I find my sickness worse to-day, but it is the least of my anxieties. Would to God I had none other! Took the usual evening bath in the creek, which has slightly fallen during the day, and the water not quite so cold, which encourages me to hope that the supply of snow in the mountains is nearly exhausted.

July 8. This morning our anxieties from Indians have commenced. At ten o'clock three of them rode into camp, and shortly afterwards some dozen more.

July 9. Yesterday, after the Indians arrived, I gave them what little tobacco we could spare and some of our small stock of dried elk meat. After eating and smoking for a while they insisted on my accompanying them to their camp, which was some ten miles off. I explained to them as well as I could who I was.

Knowing that it is best always to act boldly with Indians, as if you felt no fear whatever, I armed myself and started with them. Our road for a mile or two led over a barren plain, thickly covered with greasewood, but we soon struck the base of the mountain, where the firm rich mountain grass swept our saddle-girths as we cantered over

it. We crossed a considerable mountain covered with timber and grass, and near the summit of which was quite a cluster of small, but very clear and apparently deep lakes. They were not more than an acre or two in size, and some not even that, but surrounded by luxuriant grass, and perched away up on the mountain, with fine timber quite near them. It was the most beautiful scenery in the world; it formed quite a hunter's paradise, for deer and elk bounded off from us as we approached and then stood within rifle-shot, looking back in astonishment.

A few hours' ride brought us to the Indian camp; and I wish I could here describe the beauty of the charming valley in which they lived. It was small, probably not more than five miles wide by fifteen long, but surrounded on all sides by the boldest mountains, covered to their summits with alternate patches of timber and grass, giving it the appearance of having been regularly laid off in small farms. Through the centre a fine bold stream, probably three feet deep by forty wide, watered the meadow land, and gave the last touch which the valley required to make it the most beautiful I had ever seen. Hundreds of horses and goats were feeding on the meadows and hillsides, and the Indian lodges, with the women and children standing in front of them to look at the approaching stranger, strongly reminded me of the old patriarchal times, when flocks and herds made the wealth and happiness of the people, and a tent was

as good as a palace. I was conducted to the lodge of the chief, an old and infirm man, who welcomed me kindly, and told me his young men had told him I had given of my small store to them, and to "sit in peace."

I brought out my pipe, filled it, and we smoked together. In about fifteen minutes a squaw brought in two large wooden platters, containing some very fat deer meat and some boiled corn, to which I did ample justice. After this followed a dish which one must have been two weeks without bread to have appreciated as I did. Never at the tables of the wealthiest in Washington did I find a dish which appeared to me so perfectly without a parallel. It was some cornmeal boiled in goat's milk, with a little elk fat. I think I certainly ate near half a peck of this delicious *atole*, and then stopped, not because I had enough, but because I had scraped the dish dry with my fingers, and licked them as long as the smallest particle remained, which is "manners" among Indians, and also among Arabs. Eat all they give you, or get somebody to do it for you, is to honor the hospitality you receive. To leave any is a slight. I needed not the rule to make me eat all.

After this we smoked again, and when about to start I found a large bag of dried meat and a peck of corn put up for me to take to my people.

Bidding a friendly good-bye to my hosts, and dividing among them about a pound of tobacco and two handkerchiefs, and giving the old chief



the battered remains of a small leaden picayune looking-glass, I mounted my mule to return. The sun was just setting when I started, and before reaching the summit of the mountain it was quite dark. As there was no road, and the creek very dark in the bottoms, I had a most toilsome time of it. At one creek, which I reached after very great difficulty in getting through the thick and almost impenetrable undergrowth, it was so dark that I could see nothing; but, trusting to luck, I jumped my mule off the bank and brought up in water nearly covering my saddle. Getting in was bad enough, but coming out was worse; for, finding the banks high on the other side, I was obliged to follow down the stream for half a mile or more, not knowing when I should be swimming, until I succeeded with great difficulty in getting out through the tangled brushwood on the opposite side. I arrived at camp late at night, and found my men very anxiously awaiting my return, having almost concluded to give me up, and to think I had lost my "hair." A little rain.

July 11. To-day I raised camp and went over to the valley of the Savoya, near my Indian neighbors. The more I see of this valley the more I am delighted with it. I cannot say how it may be in winter, but at this time it is certainly the most beautiful valley, and the richest in grass, wood, soil, and water, I have ever seen. The Delaware brought into camp last evening a small deer, alive, which he had caught in the mountains.

It was a beautiful creature, but it escaped in the night.

July 12. Went out this morning with the Indians to hunt. They lent me a fine horse; but God forbid that I should ever hunt with such Indians again! I thought I had seen something of rough riding before; but all my experience faded before that of the feats of to-day. Some places which we ascended and descended it seemed to me that even a wildcat could hardly have passed over; and yet their active and thoroughly well-trained horses took them as part of the sport, and never made a misstep or blunder during the entire day. We killed three antelopes and a young deer.

Yesterday an Indian, while sitting at our camp, broke the mainspring of his rifle lock. His distress was beyond anything within the power of description. To him it was everything. The "corn, wine, and oil" of his family depended on it, and he sat for an hour looking upon the wreck of his fortune in perfect despair. He appeared so much cast down by it that at last I went into our lodge and brought my rifle, which I gave him to replace the broken one. At first he could not realize it, but as the truth gradually broke upon him, his joy became so great that he could scarce control himself; and when he returned that night he was the happiest man I have seen for many a day.

These Indians are all well armed and mounted, and the very best shots and hunters. Our revolvers seem, however, to be a never failing source of

astonishment to them, and they are never tired of examining them. Yesterday, I allowed them to fire two of ours at a mark, at thirty paces. They shot admirably well, putting all the shots within a space of the small mark (size of a half dollar) and hitting it several times. A rainy day.

July 13. To-day has been showery, and the evening still cloudy, and promising more rain during the night. Our eyes are now turned constantly to the opposite side of the valley, down which the road winds by which we expect our companions from Taos.

These days have been the most weary and anxious of my whole life. Sometimes I am almost crazy with thinking constantly on one subject and the probably disastrous result which this delay may have on my business in California.

God knows I have done all for the best, and with the best intentions. A great many Indians came into the valley this evening. Ten lodges in all, which, with the fifteen already here, and more on the road, make up a pretty large band. Dick killed an antelope. Last two nights have slept in wet blankets, and expect the same to-night. Last night it rained all night. The Spanish boy has been quite ill for two days past.

July 14. This morning I explored the mountain lying to the north of our camp, forming a picturesque portion of our front view. After ascending the mountain and reaching the summit, I found it a vast plateau of rolling prairie land, covered with

the most beautiful grass, and heavily timbered. At some places the growth of timber would be so dense as to render riding through it impossible without great difficulty; while at others it would break into beautiful open glades, leaving spaces of a hundred acres or more of open prairie, with groups of trees, looking precisely as if some wealthy planter had amused himself by planting them expressly to beautify his grounds.

Springs were abundant, and small streams intersected the whole plateau. In fact, it was an immense natural park, already stocked with deer and elk, and only requiring a fence to make it an estate for a king. Directly opposite, to the south, is another mountain, in every respect similar, and our valley, more beautiful to me than either, lies between them. In the evening took a long ride on the trail to meet our long-expected companions. I did not meet them, and returned disappointed, worried, and more anxious than ever.

July 15. This has been a great day for our Indian neighbors. Two different bands of the same tribe have met, and a great contest is going on to prove which has the best horses. They have been at it since the morning, and many a buckskin has changed hands. The horses are all handsome, and run remarkably well. We have had more than fifty races; a surfeit of them, if such a thing as a surfeit of horse-racing is possible.

July 16. Here at last. This morning I saddled my mule to go and hunt up our expected com-

panions. I had not gone far before I met about fifty Indians, from whom I could learn nothing of them, and was beginning to despair, when I met a loose mule, and as I knew it was not one of the Indians' I concluded it must belong to some of our companions. Going on a mile or two farther, I met Felipe, who told me that Heap and the others were just behind. I immediately returned to camp to get dinner ready for them, so that we might go on this evening to the Uncompagre. Here terminates the most unpleasant sixteen days of my life; but for this beautiful country, to look at and explore, I think I should have gone crazy. The time seemed endless to me, but my zealous comrades had not unnecessarily lengthened it, for they had averaged 45 miles a day during the double journey (going and coming) and that through the whole mass of mountains which lie between the Upper Del Norte and the Grand River Fork of the great Colorado (Red River) of the Gulf of California.

## CHAPTER VIII

### ON THE VERGE OF HOSTILITIES

Shaking Hands with Utahs—Picturesque Encampment on the Big Uncompagne—Lieutenant Beale and the “Capitanos”—A Stiff Demand for Presents—A Pair of Game-cocks—Crossing the Fallen River—Indians in Paint and Feathers—Beale’s Ultimatum—The Delaware’s Long Memory—Grand River Canyon—The Crossing—The Indians Attempt a Stampede—The Mormons near the Vegas of Santa Clara—Paragoona—Brigham Young—Why the Mormons Settled at Parawan—Little Salt Lake—Strict Vigilance over Strangers—Colonel Smith—The Practice of Polygamy—Views on the System of “Spiritual Wives.”

**S**HORTLY after Mr. Heap returned to camp with the much needed supplies Lieut. Beale despatched Wagner and Gallengo to Grand River with the bull-hides, directing them to make a boat should they fail to find a ford. Mr. Heap’s Journal continues:

July 17. We were now again united, and freed from the anxiety for each other’s safety which had been weighing on us since the day of our separation. We resumed our journey at sunrise, with the hope of soon overcoming all difficulties. Although the

sun rose in a cloudless sky, yet before noon the rain commenced falling in heavy showers. Lieut. Beale and myself, having much to relate to each other, rode several miles ahead of the men. We descended to the plain at the foot of the Sawatch Mountains by the same trail over which we had already twice travelled, and which was now familiar to us.

On approaching the Uncompagre we travelled parallel with its course towards Grand River, keeping on the trail of the two men sent ahead the day before with the hides to construct the boat. At noon, we noticed two recumbent figures on a distant butte, with horses standing near them; when we had approached within a mile they sprang to their saddles and galloped towards us at full speed. They were Utah Indians, on a scout, and evinced no fear of us, but approaching, frankly offered us their hands. We conversed with them partly by signs and partly by means of the few Utah words which we had picked up, and their scanty knowledge of Spanish, which extended only to the names of a few objects and animals. They told us that large numbers of their tribe were encamped a few miles below, on the Uncompagre, and, bidding them farewell, we went on to meet our train.

Soon after parting with them, we saw on the hillsides and river bottom a vast number of gayly-colored lodges, and numerous bands of Indians arriving from the northward. Upon approaching,

we were received by a number of the oldest men, who invited us to ascend a low but steep hill where most of the chiefs were seated. From this point we had a view of an animated and interesting scene. On every side fresh bands of Indians were pouring in, and the women were kept busy in erecting their lodges in the bottom near the Uncompagre, as well as on the higher land nearer to us. Horses harnessed to lodge poles, on which were packed the various property of the Indians and in many cases their children, were arriving, and large bands of loose horses and mules were being driven to the riverside to drink or to pasture. Squaws were going to the stream for water, whilst others were returning with their osier jars filled, and poised on their heads. Some of the young men were galloping around on their high-mettled horses, and others, stretched lazily on the grass, were patiently waiting until their better halves had completed the construction of their lodges, and announced that the evening meal was prepared. All the males, from the old man to the stripling of four years, were armed with bows and arrows, and most of the men had serviceable rifles. We almost fancied that we had before us a predatory tribe of Scythians or Numidians, so similar are these Indians in their dress, accoutrements, and habits, to what we have learned of those people.

An old chief, who, we were told, was one of their great men, addressed us a discourse, which very soon went beyond the limits of our knowledge of



the Utah tongue, but we listened to it with the appearance of not only understanding the subject, but also of being highly interested. Our men, with Felipe Archilete, the guide and interpreter, were many miles in the rear, and we waited until their arrival, for Lieut. Beale wished to take advantage of this opportunity to have a conversation with these chiefs, two of whom were the highest in the nation.

When Felipe came up, Lieut. Beale and the "capitanos," as they styled themselves, engaged in a long "talk." Lieut. Beale told them that many Americans would be soon passing through their country on their way to the Mormon settlements and California, with wagons and herds, and that, if they treated the whites well, either by aiding them when in difficulty, guiding them through the mountains, and across the rivers, or by furnishing them with food when they needed it, they would always be amply rewarded. They appeared much gratified to hear this and by way, no doubt, of testing whether his practice coincided with his preaching, intimated that they would be well pleased to receive, then, some of the presents of which he spoke; remarking, that as we had passed through their country, used their pasturage, lived among their people, and had even been fed by them, it was but proper that some small return should be made for so many favors. This was an argument which Lieut. Beale had not foreseen, but having no presents to give them, he explained how it was;

that, having lost everything we possessed in Grand River, it was out of his power to gratify them. This explanation did not appear at all satisfactory, nor did they seem altogether to credit him. They were very covetous of our rifles, but we could not, of course, part with them. The old chief became taciturn and sulky, and glanced towards us occasionally with a malignant expression.

We took no notice of his ill-temper, but lit our pipes and passed them around. In the meanwhile, our men had, in accordance with Mr. Beale's directions, proceeded to Grand River, where they were to seek for Wagner and Gallengo, and encamp with them. Felipe, whose quick and restless eye was always on the watch, dropped us a hint, in a few words, that it was becoming unsafe to remain longer in the midst of these savages, for he had noticed symptoms of very unfriendly feelings.

We were seated in a semicircle on the brow of a steep hill, and a large crowd had collected around us. Rising without exhibiting any haste, we adjusted our saddles, relit our pipes, and shaking hands with the chiefs who were nearest to us, mounted and rode slowly down the hill, followed by a large number of Utahs, who, upon our rising to leave them, had sprung to their saddles. The older men remained seated and our escort consisted almost entirely of young warriors. They galloped around us in every direction; occasionally, a squad of four or five would charge upon us at full speed, reining up suddenly, barely avoiding riding over us

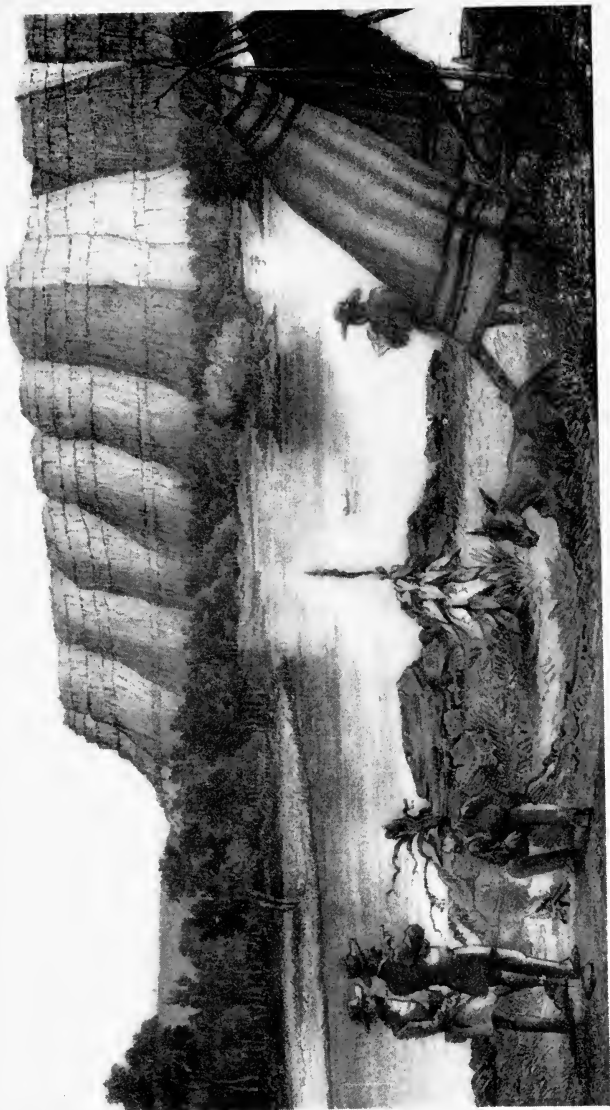
and our mules. They did this to try our mettle, but as we took little notice of them, and affected perfect unconcern, they finally desisted from their dangerous sport. At one time the conduct of a young chief, the son of El Capitan Grande, was near occasioning serious consequences. He charged upon Felipe with a savage yell, every feature apparently distorted with rage; his horse struck Felipe's mule, and very nearly threw them both to the ground. The Indian, then seizing Felipe's rifle, endeavored to wrench it from his hands, but the latter held firmly to his gun, telling us at the same time not to interfere. We and the Indians formed a circle around them, as they sat in their saddles, each holding on to the gun, whose muzzle was pointed full at the Indian's breast. He uttered many imprecations and urged his followers to lend him their assistance. They looked at us inquiringly, and we cocked our rifles; the hint was sufficient—they declined to interfere. For some minutes the Utah and Felipe remained motionless, glaring at each other like two gamecocks, each watching with flashing eyes for an opportunity to assail his rival. Seeing that to trifle longer would be folly, Felipe, who held the butt-end of the rifle, deliberately placed his thumb on the hammer and raising it slowly, gave warning to the young chief, by two ominous clicks, that his life was in danger. For a moment longer the Utah eyed Felipe, and then, with an indescribable grunt, pushed the rifle from him, and lashing

his horse furiously, rode away from us at full speed. Felipe gave us a sly wink, and uttered the highly original ejaculation—" *Carajo.*"

July 18. We saddled up at early dawn, swam our mules across the Uncompagre, and rejoined our men. They informed us that Juan Cordova had deserted the day before, and returned to Lieut. Beale's encampment on the Savoya in company with the two Indians we had met in the morning, and who were going that way.

We found camp filled with Indians who, however, behaved in a friendly manner, and had even supplied the men with a bucketful of goat's milk. No time was lost in preparing to ford Grand River and some Indians went ahead to show us the way. On reaching the stream we found that it had fallen about six feet, and under the guidance of the Indians had no difficulty in getting over. The water reached nearly to the mules' backs, but the packs had been secured so high as to prevent their getting wet.

The Indians followed us across in large numbers, and at times tried our patience to the utmost. They numbered about two hundred and fifty warriors, and were all mounted on fine horses, and well armed with bows and arrows, having laid aside their rifles, which Felipe considered a sign that their designs were unfriendly, as they never carry them when they intend to fight on horseback. Their appearance, as they whirled around us at full speed, clothed in bright colors, and occasionally



A View on Grand River in 1852  
From a Lithograph



charging upon us with a loud yell, made a striking contrast with that of our party, mounted as we were upon mules, in the half-naked condition in which we had crossed the river (for it was dangerous to stop for a moment to dress). They enjoyed many laughs at our expense, taunting us, and comparing us, from our bearded appearance, to goats, and calling us beggarly cowards and women. Most of these compliments were lost to us at the time, but Felipe afterwards explained them.

The old chief, the same who had given us such a surly reception on the preceding day, and his son, who had made a trial of strength with Felipe for his rifle, soon joined us, and behaved with much insolence, demanding presents in an imperious manner, and even endeavored to wrench our guns from our hands, threatening to "wipe us out" if we refused to comply with their wishes. They frequently harangued the young men, and abused us violently for traversing their country, using their grass and timber without making them any acknowledgment for the obligation. The latter listened in silence, but most of them remained calm and unmoved, and evinced no disposition to molest us. The chiefs then changed their tactics and endeavored to provoke us to commence hostilities. Lieut. Beale calmly explained to them that, having lost everything in the river, he was unable to make them such presents as he would have desired, and added (addressing himself to the chiefs) that he

clearly saw that they were vile-hearted men; for, after treating us as brothers and friends, they were now endeavoring to make bad blood between us and their people. He ended by telling them that we had a few articles which he would have distributed among them, had they not behaved in so unfriendly a manner; but that now, the only terms upon which they could obtain them was by giving a horse in exchange. Mr. Beale's motive for not giving them presents was our inability to satisfy the whole party, for all we possessed was a piece of cloth, a calico shirt, and some brass wire, and these articles, valueless as they were, if given to a few, would have excited the jealousy and ill-will of the less fortunate, and thus made them our enemies. The Indians, however, declined giving a horse in exchange for what we offered, saying that it would not be a fair bargain. Mr. Beale then said: "If you want to trade, we will trade; if you want to fight, we will fight"; requesting those who were not inclined to hostilities to stand aside, as we had no wish to injure our friends.

The chiefs, finding themselves in the minority as regarded fighting, finally consented to give us a mare for our goods; and after the trade was made we parted, much relieved at getting rid of such ugly customers.

The Utahs had been in company with us for several hours and had often separated our party. During all this time our rifles were held ready for use, not knowing at what moment the conflict



might commence. Had we come to blows, there is no doubt that we should have been instantly overwhelmed. The Delaware had kept constantly aloof from the party, never allowing an Indian to get behind him; and although he silently, but sullenly, resisted the attempts that were made to snatch his rifle from his grasp, he never for a moment removed his eyes from the old chief, but glared at him with a ferocity so peculiar that it was evident that feelings even stronger than any that could arise from his present proceedings prompted the Delaware's ire against the rascally Utah. Dick subsequently told us that, when he was a boy, he had fallen into the hands of this same old chief, who had been urgent to put him to death. Dick had nursed his revenge with an Indian's constancy, and, upon the first blow, intended to send a rifle-ball through his skull.

Several times Felipe warned us to be on our guard, as the attack was about to commence, and Lieut. Beale directed all to dismount upon the first unequivocal act of hostility, to stand each man behind his mule, and to take deliberate aim before firing.

Travelling down Grand River, at some distance from its right bank, we came to where it flowed through a canyon. The ground on either side of the river was much broken by ravines. The country, about a mile from the river, was barren and level, producing nothing but wild sage and prickly pear. After a harassing day we encamped on a

rapid, clear, and cool brook, with good pasturage on its banks, called in the Utah language, the Cerenoquinti; it issues from the Pareamoot Mountains and flows into Grand River. Day's travel, 25 miles; whole distance from Westport, computed from June 23, 976 miles.

July 20. Commenced crossing at an early hour. The boat answered admirably; it was buoyant, easily managed, and safe. Before sunset most of the train had crossed, and the Delaware had succeeded in swimming the mules over, by following in their wake, and heading off those that tried to turn back. It took us longer than we had anticipated to get our effects across, as it was necessary at each trip to tow the boat some distance up the right bank, in order to make our encampment on the left, without drifting below it. The current was very rapid, and the work of towing the boat up through the bushes which overhung the stream very laborious. Some of the Mexicans and a few of their packs were carried in safety to the left bank. It rained heavily during the afternoon and we passed a wet night under blankets. The camp was crowded with Indians, who were anxious to trade, but were not troublesome. As some of them passed the night with us, we allowed our animals to run with theirs.

Henry Young was at one time in a very precarious position, from which he was relieved with difficulty. One of the mules had stubbornly resisted every effort to get her over, and had finally

made a landing under a high precipice on the left shore, from which it was impossible to dislodge her without going into the water and swimming to the spot. This was attempted by Young, and as the current here swept down with tremendous velocity, he was on the point of drowning, when fortunately he seized a rock, upon which he landed. It was now dark, the rain falling fast, and to have passed the night in this situation was certain destruction, for he was under a precipice, and in front of him roared the Avonkarea. No one knew that he had gone into the water, and we were not aware of his distress until he had attracted our attention by his shouts and a flash of lightning revealed him to us. The boat was got down to him after more than an hour's work, and he was finally brought into camp nearly frozen.

July 21. The remainder of the packs and men crossed in the morning, and the day was consumed in sending the rest of the Mexicans and their luggage to the opposite side. They were also assisted in crossing over their animals. These men reported that they had been badly treated by the Mormons at the Vegas de Santa Clara, and that two of their number had been put in jail. They warned us to be on our guard, when we arrived in Utah Territory, as they (the Mormons) had threatened to shoot or imprison all Americans passing through their country. Notwithstanding their plausible story, the Mexicans only impressed us with the belief that, having misbehaved, they

had received the chastisement they deserved, for it was well known to us that the Mormons strictly prohibited the practice of the natives of New Mexico of bartering firearms and ammunition with the Indians for their children.

The hides were removed from the frame of the boat and reserved for future use, and having got our animals together we resumed our march at 7 P.M.

July 24. The men passed a refreshing night, perfectly free from the mosquitoes, which had been a source of such serious annoyance since leaving the settlements in New Mexico. Started at 5 A.M. and, travelling thirty-five miles, encamped on Green River Fork of the Great Colorado at 1 P.M.

The country we traversed was stony and broken by dry watercourses. On every side, and principally to the north and northeast, extended ranges of rugged hills, bare of vegetation, and seamed with ravines. On their summits were rocks of fantastic shapes, resembling pyramids, obelisks, churches, and towers, and having all the appearance of a vast city in the distance. The only vegetation was a scanty growth of stunted wild sage and cacti, except at a point known as the Hole in the Rock, where there were willows and other plants denoting the vicinity of water, but we found none on our route. The sun was exceedingly hot, and we, as well as our mules, were glad to reach the river, where we could relieve our thirst. Saw four antelopes near Green River, to which the Delaware

immediately gave chase, but was unable to get within gunshot.

Green River was broader and deeper than either Grand River or the Avonkarea, but its current was neither so rapid nor so turbulent. The scenery on its banks was grand and solemn, and we had an excellent view of it from our camping-place on a high bluff.

The frame of the boat was commenced at once. Some Indians made their appearance on the opposite shore, and one of them swam over to our side, assisted by a log, on which he occasionally rested. Day's travel, 35 miles; total distance, 1105 miles.

July 25. At an early hour the men resumed their work on the boat; the hides were found to be rotten and full of holes, as we had neglected to dry them after crossing the Avonkarea; but by dint of patching with pieces of India-rubber blankets and sheepskins, and smearing the seams with a mixture of tallow, flour, soap, and pulverized charcoal, the boat was made sufficiently tight, that, with constant bailing, all the men and packs were carried over in four trips. I went with the first load to guard our packs, as Indians were on the left bank watching our proceedings.

Lieut. Beale made great exertions to hurry the train over this river. He went across at every trip, jumping into the river where it was shallow, and taking the boat in tow until he was beyond his depth. He was thus for many hours in the water,

encouraging the men by his example. We had now an excellent party; the men were daring and adroit; they exhibited no fear when we were so hard-pressed by the Utahs, and when exposure or toil was required of them, not one flinched from his duty. Some appeared almost to rejoice whenever there was a difficulty to overcome, and we never heard the Delaware's wild shout and laugh without suspecting that either he or his mule had got into some predicament, either by sliding down a bank, or getting into the morass, or becoming entangled in a jungle. He never asked for help, and rejected all assistance, relying on himself in every emergency.

At sunset, the crossing of the Green River was effected, and we gladly gave the boat to the Indians, who ripped it to pieces to make moccasin soles of the hides. We proceeded a mile up the stream, and encamped in the midst of luxuriant grass. A band of twenty-five mounted Utahs accompanied us and passed the night in our camp; we gave them food, and they seemed quite friendly. Their accounts of the Mormons corroborated what the Indians and Mexicans on the Avonkarea had told us. Day's travel, 1 mile; whole distance, 1106 miles.

July 28. Travelled twenty miles south by west, and halted at noon on the Rio del Moro (Castle Creek, so called on account of buttes near it resembling fortifications). In ten miles from the San Rafael, crossed a broad brook of clear and cool

water, running into Green River. Between the streams vegetation was scanty and stunted, and the soil clayey, dry, and barren; to the westward were steep hills, beyond which could be seen the green and wooded slopes of the Sahwatch range.

Noticed fresh tracks of animals going north, evidently those of cattle stolen by Indians from the Mormons.

Our noon camp was near the point where Moro Creek issued from the mountains. The clayey soil of which they are composed had been washed by rains into the strangest shapes. At times, long lines of battlements presented themselves; at others, immense Gothic cathedrals, with all their quaint pinnacles and turrets, which reminded us of the ruined castles and churches that we had seen in our travels in the old world. The different colors of the clay added to the singularity of the scenery, and strengthened the resemblance.

July 29. We encamped for the night, on the Salado, in a broad and level valley. Throughout the mountains the pasturage reminded us of that in the Sahwatch range, although in the valley it was less luxuriant.

Soon after guard was set for the night, an attempt was made by Indians to stampede our animals. The watchfulness of the man on guard, however, defeated their purpose; he fired, but missed them. One of the mules was slightly wounded by an arrow. Day's travel, 30 miles; whole distance, 1222 miles.

August 2. We were now approaching another stage in our journey which we were impatient to reach. The Mormon settlements near Las Vegas de Santa Clara were at a short distance, and we made an early start in the hope of reaching them before dark. We descended the mountains in a westerly direction through an abundantly watered valley, everywhere covered with grass. I found wild rye growing in great abundance, the seed quite large and full.

At dusk, on the previous day, we had discovered a party of mounted Indians examining us from a neighboring ridge, and were on the lookout for them all the morning. Soon after sunrise a few Pah-Utahs, the first of that tribe which we had seen, came running down a hillside to meet us, and accosting us in a friendly manner, asked whether we were Mormons or "Swaps" (Americans). They informed us that a Mormon village was not far off, and Mr. Beale and I, riding in advance of our party, in a few hours arrived at the town of Paragoona, in Little Salt Lake Valley, near Las Vegas de Santa Clara.

Paragoona is situated in the valley of the Little Salt Lake and lies near the foot of the mountains which form its eastern boundary, at four miles from the lake. It contains about thirty houses, which, although built of adobes, present a neat and comfortable appearance. The adobes are small and well pressed, and are made of a pink-colored clay. The houses are built to form a quadrangle,



the spaces between them being protected by a strong stockade of pine pickets. Outside of the village is an area of fifty acres inclosed within a single fence, and cultivated in common by the inhabitants. It is called The Field and a stream from the Sahwach Mountains irrigates it, after supplying the town with water.

The Mormons have found iron ore in the mountains, where they have established several smelting furnaces; they stated that it was of an excellent quality, and that the mines were inexhaustible.

Shortly before our arrival in the Territory, hostilities had broken out between Walkah, a Utah chief, and the Mormons, and we found them in a state of great alarm and excitement in consequence of some of his recent acts.

We did not remain long at Paragoona; for soon after our arrival the inhabitants, in obedience to a mandate from Governor Brigham Young, commenced removing to the town of Parawan, four miles to the southward, as he considered it unsafe, with the smallness of their number, for them to remain at Paragoona. It was to us a strange sight to witness the alacrity with which these people obeyed an order which compelled them to destroy in an instant the fruits of two years' labor; and no time was lost in commencing the work of destruction. Their houses were demolished, the doors, windows, and all portable woodwork being reserved for future dwellings; and wagons were

soon on the road to Parawan, loaded with their furniture and other property.

We left Paragoona in the afternoon, and rode to Parawan over an excellent wagon-road, made and kept in repair, and bridged in many places, by the Mormons. We passed, at a mile on our left, a large grist and sawmill worked by water power.

This ride to Parawan formed a strange contrast to our late journeying through the wilderness. At all the cross-roads were finger-posts, and mile-stones measured the distances.

Parawan is situated at the base of the mountains, and contains about one hundred houses, built in a square and facing inwards. In their rear, and outside of the town, are vegetable gardens, each dwelling having a lot running back about one hundred yards. By an excellent system of irrigation, water is brought to the front and rear of each house, and through the centre and outside boundary of each garden lot. The houses are ornamented in front with small flower-gardens, which are fenced off from the square, and shaded with trees. The Field covers about four hundred acres, and was in a high state of cultivation, the wheat and corn being as fine as any that we had seen in the States; the people took a laudable pride in showing us what they had accomplished in so short a time, and against so many obstacles. Day's travel, 32 miles; whole distance, 1345 miles.

August 3. Most of the day was spent in having the animals shod, and in getting extra shoes made

to replace those which might be lost in crossing the desert region between the Vegas de Santa Clara and Mohaveh River. An American blacksmith assisted by a couple of Pah-Utah youths did this work, and we were surprised to see what skilful workmen these Indians made. Most of the Mormon families have one or more Pah-Utah children, whom they had bought from their parents; they were treated with kindness, and even tenderness; were taught to call their protectors "father" and "mother" and instructed in the rudiments of education. The Mormon rulers encourage a system which ameliorates the condition of these children by removing them from the influence of their savage parents, but their laws forbid their being taken out of the Territory. The children are not interdicted from intercourse with their people, who are allowed freely to enter the town; but the latter evince very little interest in their offspring, for having sold them to the whites, they no longer consider them their kith or kin.

The water of Little Salt Lake is as briny, we were told, as that of Great Salt Lake, and we noticed that its shores were covered with saline incrustations for a mile or more from the water's edge; but the Mormons stated that the salt was of little value, being impregnated with saleratus and other alkaline matter, which rendered it unfit for use. They obtain their supplies of this article from mines of rock-salt in the mountains.

The excitement occasioned by the threats of

Walkah, the Utah chief, continued to increase during the day we spent at Parawan. Families flocked in from Paragoona, and other small settlements and farms, bringing with them their movables, and their flocks and herds. Parties of mounted men, well armed, patrolled the country; expresses came in from different quarters, bringing accounts of attacks by the Indians, on small parties and unprotected farms and houses. During our stay, Walkah sent in a polite message to Colonel G. A. Smith, who had military command of the district, and governed it by martial law, telling him that, "The Mormons were d—d fools for abandoning their houses and towns, for he did not intend to molest them there, as it was his intention to confine his depredations to their cattle, and that he advised them to return and mind their crops, for, if they neglected them, they would starve, and be obliged to leave the country, which was not what he desired, for then there would be no cattle for him to take." He ended by declaring war for four years. This message did not tend to allay the fears of the Mormons, who, in this district, were mostly foreigners, and stood in great awe of Indians.

The Utah chieftain who occasioned all this panic and excitement is a man of great subtlety and indomitable energy. He is not a Utah by birth, but has acquired such an extraordinary ascendancy over that tribe by his daring exploits, that all the restless spirits and ambitious young warriors in it

have joined his standard. Having an unlimited supply of fine horses, and being inured to every fatigue and privation, he keeps the territories of New Mexico and Utah, the provinces of Chihuahua and Sonora, and the southern portion of California in constant alarm. His movements are so rapid, and his plans so skilfully and so secretly laid, that he has never once failed in any enterprise and has scarcely disappeared from one district before he is heard of in another. He frequently divides his men into two or more bands, which making their appearance at different points at the same time, each headed, it is given out, by the dreaded Walkah in person, has given him, with the ignorant Mexicans, the attribute of ubiquity. The principal object of his forays is to drive off horses and cattle, but more particularly the first; and among the Utahs we noticed horses with brands familiar to us in New Mexico and California.

He has adopted the name of Walker (corrupted to Walkah) on account of the close intimacy and friendship which in former days united him to Joe Walker, an old mountaineer, and the same who discovered Walker's Pass in the Sierra Nevada.

This chief had a brother as valiant and crafty as himself to whom he was greatly attached. Both speaking Spanish and broken English they were enabled to maintain intercourse with the whites without the aid of an interpreter. This brother the Mormons thought they had killed, for, having repelled a night attack on a mill, which was led by

him, on the next morning they found a rifle and a hatchet which they recognized as his, and also traces of blood and tracks of men apparently carrying a heavy body. Although rejoicing at the death of one of their most implacable enemies, the Mormons dreaded the wrath of the great chieftain, which they felt would not be appeased until he had avenged his brother's blood in their own. The Mormons were surprised at our having passed in safety through Walkah's territory, and they did not know to what they were to attribute our escape from destruction. They told us that the cattle tracks which we had seen a few days previous were those of a portion of a large drove lifted by Walkah, and that the mounted men we had noticed in the mountains in the evening of August 1st were scouts sent out by him to watch our movements. They endeavored to dissuade us from prosecuting our journey, for they stated that it was unsafe to travel even between their towns without an escort of from twenty-five to thirty men.

The Mormons had published a reward of fifteen thousand dollars for Walkah's head, but it was a serious question among them who should "bell the cat."

We procured at Parawan a small supply of flour and some beef, which we *buccanee'd*.

The kind reception that we received from the inhabitants of these settlements, during our short sojourn among them, strongly contrasted with what we had been led to anticipate from the reports

of the Mexicans and Indians whom we had met on the road. On our arrival, Colonel G. A. Smith sent an officer to inquire who we were, our business, destination, etc., at the same time apologizing for the inquiries, by stating that the disturbed condition of the country rendered it necessary to exercise a strict vigilance over all strangers, particularly over those who came from the direction of their enemy's territory.

Mr. Beale's replies being, of course, satisfactory, we were treated as friends, and received every mark of cordiality. We spent the evening of our arrival in Parawan at the house of Col. Smith, who was in command of this portion of the territory, and was organizing a military force for its protection. He related to us the origin of these southern settlements, the many difficulties and hardships that they had to contend with, and gave us much interesting information concerning the geography of the surrounding country. He also stated that furnaces for smelting iron ore were already in operation in the vicinity of Paragoona and Parawan, and that the metal, which was obtained in sufficient quantity to supply any demand, was also of an excellent quality; and that veins of coal had been found near Cedar City, on Coal Creek, eighteen miles south of Parawan, one of which was fifteen feet in thickness, and apparently inexhaustible. A large force of English miners were employed in working these mines, and pronounced the coal to be equal to the best English coal. I saw it used in

the forges; it is bituminous and burns with a bright flame.

As regards the odious practice of polygamy which these people have engrafted on their religion, it is not to be supposed that we could learn much about it during our short stay, and its existence would even have been unobserved by us, had not a "saint" voluntarily informed us that he was "one of those Mormons who believed in a plurality of wives," and added, "for my part I have six, and this is one of them," pointing to a female who was present. Taking this subject for his text, he delivered a discourse highly eulogistic of the institution of marriage, as seen from the Mormon point of view. He spoke of the antiquity of polygamy, its advantages, the evils it prevents, quoting the example of the patriarchs, and of eastern nations, and backing his argument with statistics of the relative number of males and females born, obtained no doubt from the same source as the Book of Mormon. This discourse did not increase our respect for the tenets he advocated, but we deemed it useless to engage in a controversy with one who made use of such sophistry. From what he said, I inferred that a large number of Mormons do not entirely approve of the "spiritual wife" system, and judging from some of the households, it was evident that the weaker vessel has in many instances here, as elsewhere, the control of the *ménage*.



## CHAPTER IX

### THE DESERT JOURNEY

The Mormon Wagon Trail—Joy of the Pah-Utahs—Famous Horse Thieves—The Traffic in Children—Rio de la Virgen—The first *Jornada*—Muddy Creek and the Spring of Gaetan—Pah-Utah Billingsgate—The End of a Mormon Explorer—The Second *Jornada*—Twenty Hours without Water—The Oasis of Tio Meso—The Mohaveh River—The Valley of the Santa Ana—San Bernardino Mountain—The Settlements and Los Angeles—Benton's Letters and Congratulations.

WE left Parawan at dusk, having sent most of the party in advance with directions to await our arrival at the nearest of those rich meadows known as Las Vegas de Santa Clara, about eighteen miles distant.

August 4. We now travelled on the Mormon wagon-trail leading to San Bernardino, in the south of California. We had heard of another route leading west to Owen's River, thence through a pass in the Sierra Nevada, which leads into the Tulare Valley near the head of the Four Creeks; but unfortunately we were unable to take this route, for we could neither obtain a guide nor even

information on the subject; moreover, it would have been departing from his plan, of examining the country on the Mohaveh, for the purpose of locating Indians there, for Lieut. Beale to have altered his course. The route by Owen's River shortens the distance nearly two hundred miles, cutting off the large elbow to the southwest, and according to the accounts we had received it conducts over a tolerably level, well-watered, and grassy country.

August 6. The Santa Clara at our encampment was a slender rill; but a few miles lower down its volume was considerably increased by the accession of several streams.

We were now approaching the desert, and we this day travelled only ten miles, to allow our animals to recruit by rest and food. The road followed down the stream, and although level, was much overgrown with bushes.

After travelling a few miles, we met a small party of Pah-Utah Indians, who evinced great joy at seeing us, accosting us without fear. On approaching their village, a collection of miserable bush huts, we were met by an aged Indian, apparently their chief, holding in his hand a pipe the stem of which was a reed and the bowl a piece of tin. With much gravity, he bade us welcome to his village, and after blowing three wreaths of smoke toward the sun, he offered us their symbol of friendship, with which we imitated his example. As soon as we had dismounted, a venerable squaw, laboring under

great excitement, rushed towards Lieut. Beale, and seizing his hands, forced into them a couple of green *tunias* (prickly pears) which she invited him to eat, a ceremony, I have no doubt, having a meaning as mystical as the first. And having thus entered into bonds to keep the peace and complied with all the exigencies of etiquette, we were considered the guests of the nation.

Among these Indians we witnessed one of the benefits which they have derived from their intercourse with the Mormons, who take every opportunity to ameliorate the condition of this wretched tribe. Near their village was a large and well-irrigated field, cultivated with care, and planted with corn, pumpkins, squashes, and melons.

The Pah-Utah Indians are the greatest horse thieves on the continent. Rarely attempting the bold *coups-de-main* of the Utahs, they dog travelers during their march and follow on their trail like jackals, cutting off any stragglers whom they can surprise and overpower, and pick up such animals as stray from the band or lag behind from fatigue. At night, lurking around the camp, and concealing themselves behind rocks and bushes, they communicate with each other by imitating the sounds of birds and animals. They never ride, but use as food the horses and mules that they steal, and, if within arrow-shot of one of these animals, a poisoned shaft secures him as their prize. Their arms are bows and arrows tipped with obsidian, and lances sometimes pointed with

iron, which they obtain from the wrecks of wagons found along the road; they also used a pronged stick to drag lizards from their holes.

The Indians being apprehensive that our animals might trespass on their field, which was without inclosure, we permitted them to drive the band several miles up the stream, where we had noticed an abundance of white clover; and, whilst thus confiding in them, we had security for their honesty by several Indians passing the night in our camp, where they lay near the fire, coiled up like dogs; besides which their women and children, and entire crops, on which they depended for their subsistence during the approaching winter, were also in our power.

In the afternoon we visited their huts, which presented a squalid scene of dirt and wretchedness. When the women saw us approaching they concealed their children, fearing that we might wish to carry them off. Noticing that something moved under a large wicker basket, one of us examined its contents, which were found to be a little naked fellow, his teeth chattering with fear.

Yearly expeditions are fitted out in New Mexico to trade with the Pah-Utahs for their children, and recourse is often had to foul means to force their parents to part with them. So common is it to make a raid for this purpose, that it is considered as no more objectionable than to go on a buffalo or a mustang hunt. One of our men, Jose Gallengo, who was an old hand at this species of man-hunting,

related to us, with evident gusto, numerous anecdotes on this subject; and as we approached the village, he rode up to Lieut. Beale, and eagerly proposed to him that we should "charge on it like h-l, kill the *mans* and maybe catch some of the little boys and *gals*."

Camp was all day crowded with men and squaws; the former had reduced their costume to first principles, and even the latter were attired in a style of the most primitive simplicity. They spoke with great volubility and vehemence, using many gesticulations, regardless of the common usage of other Indians, of speaking but one at a time. It appeared as though they thought aloud, and were not addressing any one in particular. Our ragged and forlorn appearance, unshaven chins, and sun-scarred visages excited great merriment, and they used no ceremony in pointing and laughing at us. Day's travel, 10 miles; whole distance, 1439 miles.

August 7. The Indians drove our animals into camp before dawn, and we were on the road at sunrise, travelling down the Santa Clara. In ten miles the road diverged to the right from the creek, and for eight miles passed through a region of rugged and arid hills and canyons, when it issued upon an inclined plane leading to the Rio de la Virgen. Although generally level, it was a rough road for wagons, and with the exception of one good spring, four miles from the Santa Clara, we saw no water until we encamped on the Virgen. A scanty growth of cactus, *Agave americana*, greasewood,

and small cedars, was the only vegetation after leaving the creek. A Pah-Utah handed me some ears of wheat, the grains of which I preserved, and he stated that it grows spontaneously near the Santa Clara. It is from this stock that the New Mexicans have obtained the seed which they call Payute wheat, and the Mormons, Taos wheat. It has been much improved by cultivation, and is considered the best in New Mexico and Utah. A party of Indians accompanied us for twelve miles, begging for *tabac*, and we noticed several *smokes* during the day, and fires after dark, made by the natives on the Virgen, to warn the country of our approach. We set double guard at night, and the mules evinced by their restlessness and uneasiness the vicinity of Pah-Utahs. Day's travel, 35 miles; whole distance, 1474 miles.

August 8. The Rio de la Virgen is a turbid and shallow stream, about twelve yards in breadth. It flows with a rapid current over a sandy bed, and as we descended it, the growth of cottonwood gave place to mesquit trees and willows. The mesquit tree bears in some localities an abundance of sweet pods, on which mules feed greedily, and they are a good substitute for corn, being almost as nutritious. We crossed scanty patches of wiry salt grass, which affords but little nourishment.

The river bottom was hemmed in by bluffs, beyond which, on the right, was an extensive plain much cut up by gullies, and on the left a range of dark mountains, which in many places came down

to the river's edge. The road which followed down the bottom was at times through deep sand, as was mostly the case since leaving the Vegas de Santa Clara. The scenery was gloomy and forbidding, and gave indication that we were approaching a wild and desolate region. We noticed during the day many fresh Indian tracks, and at times caught glimpses of dark forms gliding through the bushes on either side. Day's march, 29 miles; whole distance, 1503 miles.

August 9. By keeping a watchful guard, our animals were saved from the Pah-Utahs, who hovered around us all night.

We rode down the Virgen ten miles farther, when we left it to cross the hot and sterile plain, eight miles broad, extending between the Virgen and the Rio Atascoso (Muddy Creek). It was thickly covered with sharp flints, and bore a scanty growth of stunted mesquit bushes, which on the dry plains bear few pods; for a couple of miles from each stream the country was much broken by ravines.

Rio Atascoso is a narrow stream, but in many places quite deep; its water is clear, and it derives its name from the slimy and miry nature of its banks and bed. Day's march, 18 miles; whole distance, 1521 miles.

August 10. We again had Indians around us all night, making their usual signals, but by keeping a strict double guard they were prevented from stealing or wounding our animals. Soon after

sunrise, a party of Pah-Utahs showed their heads from behind some rocks near camp, and shouted to us; finding that we did not attempt to molest them, they cautiously exposed more of their persons, and finally dropped among us by twos and threes, until they numbered fifteen. They professed entire innocence of being concerned in the proceedings of the previous night, laying them all to the charge of other Pah-Utahs and expressed for us the warmest attachment.

At this time a strange figure, entirely divested of clothing, suddenly made his appearance on the summit of a rock thirty yards from us; his face was covered with a thick coating of crimson paint; a slender bone, eight inches in length, was thrust through the septum of his nose, and in his left hand he carried a bow and a bunch of arrows. This worthy addressed us a long speech, introducing himself as *the* great chief of all the Pah-Utahs (which was false, as they recognize no chief), intimating that the monotonous existence which he had hitherto been leading had become irksome to him, that he wished to travel and see the white man's world, and that, if we consented to admit him into our company, he would endeavor to "make himself generally useful." He ended by offering to give himself away to any one who would accept of him. Although any accession to our number was not at all desirable, to have refused his request would have nipped in the bud the aspirations of this ambitious youth. Lieut. Beale there-



fore allowed him to join our party, handed him a pair of old buckskin pants and a woollen shirt, which he at once donned, feeling very proud but very uncomfortable.

The first *jornada* (long distance between water) across the desert commences at the Muddy; and to avoid the heat, which at this season is very oppressive during the day, we did not resume our journey until afternoon. The road led us for six miles up a broad and sandy ravine, issuing from which we entered upon an extensive and undulating plain, whose sandy and stony soil produced no vegetation except artemisia. We travelled all night, during which a hot wind blew from the southward.

August 11. Dawn found us still on the *jornada*, between Muddy Creek and the Ojo del Gaetan (Spring of Gaetan), or Vega Quintana as this meadow is sometimes called, which we reached at 8 A.M. without loss of an animal. Thus far we had lost three mules; one was drowned in the Uncompagne, another was left on the Virgen, and the third at the Muddy. Both of the latter were animals that we had obtained on the journey, and being unshod, became "tender-footed" and were unable to keep up with the train.

The Vega Quintana is a meadow of several thousand acres in extent, watered through its centre by two deep but narrow streams of clear and icy cold water. It is shaded in many places with mesquit trees, willows, and vines covered with

clusters of small but sweet grapes. Two Pah-Utahs, who were gathering mesquit beans, fled in alarm at our approach, and we saw numerous coveys of the California partridge. This oasis deserves the name of The Diamond of the Desert, so beautiful and bright does it appear in the centre of the dreary waste that surrounds it. Dusty and weary as we were, after our long and toilsome ride, a bath in the brook was a luxury in which we indulged more than once during the day that we spent here. Day's march, 45 miles; whole distance, 1566 miles.

August 13. Wearied with watching all night, we resumed our journey at dawn. Indians were around us as usual, and any signs of their vicinity, which would have escaped our notice, were pointed out to us by "Pite" as we had christened our new follower. We had scarcely started, before a torrent of yells and abuse were poured upon us from every side. No one could be perceived, but every rock and bush apparently concealed an Indian. "Pite" was not slow in replying to them, and for a moment they were silent with astonishment at receiving in such pure vernacular a reply to their insults. Soon, however, the war of words was renewed with fresh fury, and had we understood them, we should doubtless have enjoyed a very choice specimen of Pah-Utah billingsgate. "Pite" prudently kept close among us; brave as he was with his tongue, he entertained fear of falling into the hands of his fellow countrymen, for

they would soon have brought his travels to a close.

Our road led us through a canyon or chasm which we had entered the previous day; it followed the bed of the stream, and was much obstructed by heavy sand and scattered rocks. We passed two singular caves, one of which presented a close resemblance to the Cyclopean order of architecture, with the principle of the arch and keystone admirably preserved. The other forcibly reminded us of the façade of an old Catholic church, such as is often seen in Italy.

After travelling ten miles through rocky ravines, with bald and furrowed mountains on either side, we ascended a ridge which brought in view an extensive and barren plain, bounded on all sides by lofty mountains. To the westward we perceived a range which extended from north to south, and which appeared to have frequent breaks in it.

In the afternoon, we arrived at the Aqua Escarbada, where we expected to have to dig for water; but the ground had been so deeply excavated that a running spring had been reached.

Shortly before reaching this place, we found on the roadside the remains of an American, with the mark of a rifle-ball in his skull. From papers which were scattered around, we ascertained that he was a Mormon on an exploring expedition, and his buckskin garments not having been wet by rain, proved that he had been killed this season. Day's travel, 25 miles; total, 1608 miles.

August 14. A rapid descent down a sinuous ravine, from two to three miles in length, brought us to the sink in the plain, where is found the Ojo de Archilete (Archilete's Spring) at some distance from which are many small willows, but in its immediate vicinity there is a total absence of shade; the water is clear and cool, but slightly brackish. A cruel tragedy, heroically avenged by Kit Carson and Alexander Godey, and recorded by Fremont, occurred here in 1844, and has rendered this spot memorable; we found near the spring the skull of an Indian, killed perhaps in that affray. Day's travel, 22 miles; whole distance, 1630 miles.

August 15. A ride of five miles brought us to the Amargosa (Bitter Creek), a ravine containing a scanty supply of warm, fetid, and nauseating water, in a succession of holes. We encamped at the foot of a rock on its eastern side, where a slender brackish spring barely supplied our wants. The valley, or broad ravine, through which the Amargosa, during the rainy season, is for a few miles a running stream, winds with a general course from southeast to northwest, and is hemmed in by steep, black and rocky hills.

The second *jornada* across the desert commences at the Amargosa, and ends at the Agua del Tio Meso (The Spring of Uncle Meso). It is fifty miles in length, and we anticipated much toil and suffering in crossing it. We endeavored to guard against the loss of our mules from hunger, by laying in a small supply of green reeds and mesquit

beans, the only forage, except salt grass, that could be obtained here; and, not expecting to find water the whole distance, all our canteens were filled.

We commenced this dreary journey at 2 P.M. The heat was intense and, instead of diminishing as the sun descended, it became more oppressive. For twelve miles the road was over deep sand, into which the mules sank above their fetlocks.

In fifteen miles, we diverged to the left across a spur of rocky hills, the road leading through a ravine, where, much to our surprise, we discovered the remains of houses, *rastres* (Mexican quartz crushers) and all the appliances of gold mining. These we subsequently ascertained were the Salt Spring Gold Mines, where a fortune had been sunk by men who were sufficiently deluded or sanguine to abandon the rich mines of California, travel across one hundred and fifty miles of desert, and live upwards of twelve months in a spot so desolate and forlorn that there is actually not sufficient vegetation to keep a goat from starvation. We here found two springs, one sulphurous and nauseating, the other brackish. The canteens were replenished, but it was impossible to water the mules.

August 16. The heat increased as we advanced into the desert, and most of the party had divested themselves of the greater part of their clothing. The guns, which we carried across the pummels of our saddles, were hot to the touch; and to add to our annoyance and suffering the wind, laden with

an impalpable sand, blew fiercely from the southward, feeling as if it issued from the mouth of a furnace, and obliterating in many places all traces of the road. The mules, already jaded by traveling across the sandy plain, went slowly along, their heads dropping to the ground. The pale moon, occasionally overshadowed by clouds, threw a ghastly light over the desert, and skeletons of animals glistening in her beams, strewed the way, adding horror to the scene.

Shortly before dawn we entered some hills to the westward where the heat was less intense. Three of the mules were unable to go farther, and their saddles and packs were placed on other animals, and men left with them, together with some reeds and beans and a small supply of water. We were now all on foot, our animals having barely sufficient strength to carry their saddles. At daylight we began to scatter and those who could go in advance did so, for our thirst was beginning to be intolerable. It was not until 10 A.M., after twenty hours of continuous march, completely prostrated with heat, toil, hunger and thirst, that we reached the Agua del Tio Meso.

This camping-ground (which is called on the maps Agua del Tomaso) has two small pools fed by tiny springs. The water in the pools we found barely drinkable; the grass was scanty and salt; but when mules are starving, they are not particular in their choice of food.

The men who had been left with the mules joined

us late in the afternoon; they had suffered much, but brought in all the animals. Poor "Pite" was the last one in; his thirst was dreadful, and when he reached the spring he threw himself on the ground and drank to repletion.

This spring is named after an old Mexican called Meso, who was styled Tio, or uncle, on account of his age. He discovered it when he and his party were nearly perishing with thirst. Their happy deliverance was celebrated by a great feast. He washed and dressed himself and rambled about the place singing until he fell dead, killed by a stroke of apoplexy. Two peons, abandoned on the desert by their master, reached this spring after their party had left for the Mohaveh. Unable to proceed farther, they both died of starvation, and the next travellers who encamped here found their skeletons locked in each other's embrace, as if they had expired in the act of devouring one another.

These painful associations, together with the utterly desolate appearance of all around, cast a gloom over our spirits; and we could not raise them, as old Tio Meso did, by a feast; for all we had that day was a couple of spoonfuls of boiled *pinole*. The road across the *jornada* is good, with the exception of the first twelve miles, where it is sandy. The only vegetation that I noticed was artemisia, on the plains, and mesquit and dry greasewood among the hills. Day's march, 55 miles; whole distance, 1685 miles.

August 17. The Agua del Tio Meso is an oasis;

for, although a wretched spot, it is the only resting-place in the desert between the Amargosa and the River Mohaveh. We were glad to leave it at 4 A.M. Two of the mules soon showed signs of failing, and remained on the road in charge of one of the Mexicans. We rested for a few minutes at 10 A.M. to breakfast, having filled our canteens at Tio Meso's spring. The Delaware had killed a rabbit, the first of any game that we had seen for a long time; but we left it on the road, with some water, for the Mexican, as we feared that he might be delayed until late.

The desert retained its level and monotonous character until we reached Mohaveh River, at 7 P.M., our animals almost perishing from hunger and thirst.

The sandy soil through which the Mohaveh flows absorbs nearly all its water, and where we struck it it was no longer a running stream. Grass, however, was everywhere abundant, together with a thick growth of willows, reeds, and mesquit bushes, interlaced with grape-vines; and in some places there were beautiful groves of cottonwoods.

All our troubles as regarded a scarcity of water and grass were now at an end, and from this point our journey was over a level country, offering no impediment whatever to a good road as far as the settlements in California. Except on the edge of the river, however, the land was barren and unproductive, offering no point fit for settlement.

Lieut. Beale and myself had intended on reach-



ing the Mohaveh to have gone in advance of our people; but we could not leave them in their starving condition. It was also our intention to have selected two or three of the men to accompany us across the desert between the Mohaveh and Walker's Pass, in the Sierra Nevada; but we found that of all our animals there were not five that could travel over twenty miles a day, and, as the intervening country was entirely destitute of water and grass, we were compelled reluctantly to relinquish this prospect.

The Mexican left with the mules arrived at 11 P.M., having remained faithfully by them until he brought them in. We thus crossed this desert without abandoning a single animal, which is, I believe, almost unprecedented. Day's travel, 30 miles; whole distance, 1715 miles.

August 19. The road was through heavy sand, and often left the river at a distance of two miles. We encamped at noon near a large and deep pond of very cool and clear water, alive with fish, principally mullets, some of which were large. We had just finished our allowance of *pinole*, when the Delaware rode into camp with a splendid antelope lashed behind his saddle, and reported that he had shot another, which was immediately sent for. As the question of starvation was now set at rest, it was determined that Mr. Beale and myself and two of the men should proceed as rapidly as our mules could travel, whilst the remainder of the party were to follow us by easy stages to the settle-

ments. Day's travel, 19 miles; whole distance, 1742 miles.

August 20. Where we crossed the Mohaveh it was a rapid stream, twenty-five yards in breadth and one foot in depth, but its water was too warm to be drinkable. Passed several fine meadows near the river, and saw bands of antelopes, also hares and partridges. After a rest of seven hours we resumed our journey, the road leading up to an extensive plain, thickly covered with cedars and pines, intermingled with palmyra cactus and aloes. It forks about ten miles from the river. The left-hand fork, which we took, follows the old Spanish trail, whilst the other, which had been recently opened by the Mormons, makes a bend to avoid a rough portion of country. They both join again in the Cajon Pass. We travelled until 11 P.M., when we rested under the cedars on the plain, where we found dry bunch-grass, but no water. Day's travel, 40 miles; whole distance, 1783 miles.

August 21. For the last time the cry of "catch up" was heard, and we saddled our mules before dawn, impatient to reach our journey's end. On approaching the mountains which extended between us and the valley of Los Angeles, the country presented a more broken appearance. After travelling six miles, we commenced descending the Pacific slope, and soon after reached the head waters of the Santa Ana, a creek rising to the eastward of the mountains, and which finds its

way through the Cajon Pass to the Pacific Ocean, south of San Pedro.

We entered this pass, and the most magnificent scenery presented itself to our eyes. Around us were lofty mountains, their summits clothed with pines, while around their bases grew chimisal, manzanita, dwarf oaks, and aloes. In the valley were numerous clusters of sycamore, which attains here a large size, and is one of the most beautiful trees in the country. The ground was covered with innumerable tracks of grizzly bears, and the Delaware kept a keen lookout for the rough-coated gentry. During our journey, he had killed at least one specimen of each species of game to be found in the region which we had traversed, and he was anxious to have an encounter with the largest and fiercest of them all, the mighty grizzly of California; but he was disappointed; although our men, in coming through this pass a few days later, had a desperate fight with a bear, which they finally overcame.

We issued from the mountains at noon, when the beautiful valley of San Bernardino, with its stupendous mountain, broke upon our view. Never did so beautiful a sight gladden the eyes of weary travellers, and having been in the saddle since dawn, we turned our jaded mules into a rich meadow, where the grass reached to their knees, and we rested under the shade of a grove of sycamores.

Leaving the valley of San Bernardino behind us, we directed our course northwest in the direc-

tion of Los Angeles. We travelled steadily until nightfall without perceiving any signs of habitations, though our hopes were constantly kept alive by fresh tracks of men and cattle. Finally at nine o'clock when we were on the point of dismounting, our weary beasts being scarcely able to lift their feet, we were saluted by the cheering bark of a dog and in a few minutes found ourselves in the centre of a large cluster of buildings, and welcomed in the most friendly manner to Cocomongo Rancho, by the Mexican proprietor. Day's travel, 35 miles; whole distance, 1817 miles.

August 22. Our arrival at the Rancho de Cocomongo will long be a green spot in our memories; and it was a pleasant sight to us to witness the satisfaction of our travel-worn mules in passing from unremitting toil and scanty food to complete rest and abundant nourishment.

We obtained fresh horses, and a gallop of thirty-five miles through a rich and settled country brought us to the city of Los Angeles, where every kindness and attention was shown to us by Mr. Wilson, Indian Agent, and his accomplished lady.

We had been given up for lost, and several parties had gone in search of us. Some of our friends had spent six weeks in Walker's Pass, where they expected us to arrive, and had kept up fires by night and *smokes* by day on a point visible at a long distance in the desert, to guide us in case we should have lost our way. Day's march, 35 miles; total

distance from Westport, Missouri, to Los Angeles, California, 1852 miles.

The remainder of our party arrived two days later, and thus, without serious accident to any of the men, and with the loss of only three of the mules, we accomplished the distance from Westport to Los Angeles in exactly one hundred days. Some of the party, however, had travelled seven hundred and fifteen miles more, in going to Taos from Grand River and in returning.

As the following letter indicates, the arrival of the expedition was warmly welcomed by Colonel, afterwards Gen. E. A. Hitchcock, U. S. A., who was in command of the Pacific Division. Gen. Hitchcock was a warm and loyal supporter of Beale throughout his Indian wars in the field as well as in the forum.

HEADQUARTERS PACIFIC DIVISION,  
SAN FRANCISCO, Sept. 5th, 1853.

DEAR SIR:

The *Morning Herald* has just announced the anxiously looked for news of your safe arrival in California once more. I sincerely congratulate you on the success of your adventurous trip and shall be most happy to hear from yourself some account of your extraordinary journey. The news, among other immediate results, lighted up the countenance of Mr. Edwards<sup>1</sup> who appeared to relish his office this morning—which I am sure he has not done for many weeks past. He told me a few moments since, that he intended

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Beale's brother and a companion of Gen. Beale in many of his journeys.

going out to meet you, and I have thought it a good opportunity to say a word of our public duties. Let me say, at once, that the sanction required from me, as Com'g. this Division, as a prerequisite to your locating an Indian farm or reservation, has in view, as I regard it, only this, that the place selected by you may be within reach of such military appliances as the plan contemplates, and it is only to this extent that I shall give any opinion.

I shall not undertake to control your judgment in the slightest manner in what properly belongs to you as Superintendent of Indian Affairs. But as some measures of a military character were contemplated, looking to accessibility and defence, it was doubtless thought proper that the Military Commander of the Division should have a voice on this point. Otherwise the Superintendent would virtually have the troops under his control, by selecting the site and compelling the troops to occupy it. I mention this view in order to express the opinion that the Executive could have had no intention of superseding you in your proper duties. In view of this I desire to say that I consider it entirely within your own province to see that the law is complied with in respect to settlers and indeed in all other matters, and when you shall have satisfied yourself as to the best location I will indicate my opinions as to the practicability of defence. In order to come to an understanding in regard to my part of it I will thank you to take an opportunity of seeing Capt. Jordan, at Fort Miller, who has recently traversed much of the Tulañe country, and by explaining your wishes to him I shall obtain a report from him upon which to act myself; such a course being pointed out by my instructions from the Sec'y of War.

It gives me the greatest pleasure to feel that you and myself will not seriously differ in opinion either as to the general object to be accomplished or the best means of attaining it. I will venture to suggest that you would do well so to make your calculations as not only *not* to exceed

your means but to have something left for contingencies. For this purpose I would make as close an estimate of the probable expenses of a farm as possible, and if necessary, to keep within the provided means, I would commence with only one farm. I would on no account begin with the Indians on a scale beyond my ability to carry it through the year and would hold the power of going beyond my promises rather than falling short of them.

We shall look for you soon and no one will be more happy to meet you than

Yours very sincerely,

E. A. HITCHCOCK,  
*Col. U. S. Army.*

ED. F. BEALE, Esq.,  
*Supt. of Ind. Affairs,*  
California.  
Fort Miller.

During this adventurous period and indeed throughout his life Senator Benton was a constant correspondent of Beale's. In the following letters written at this time a very charming side of the Missouri Tribune's character is revealed and the interest with which Beale's exploration of the Central Plain was followed in the East and at the seat of government in Washington is made very plain.

Benton's praise of the young explorer is all the more generous when it is recalled that it was a sore disappointment to him at the moment, and a rank injustice for all time, that the command of one of the trans-continental expeditions sent out by the Administration had not been given to his son-in-law, Col. Fremont.

WASHINGTON CITY, Oct. 3, '53.

TO EDWARD BEALE, Esq.

DEAR SIR:

Col. Fremont had to turn back for some illness after leaving the frontier to get medical assistance at St. Louis; but his party went on (ten good Delawares among them) to proceed until they entered the Buffalo range, and then to remain in a hunting encampment until he overtook them. He writes from St. Louis in good spirits and perfect confidence of making a complete survey. He desired me to send this message to you, which I do in his own words:

“Please request of Mr. Beale to put his best animals at my rancho, or at any other convenient place, where they may recruit, and exchange them for mine when I reach California. It is my intention to turn back immediately and make the return voyage with great rapidity. I had on my place, when I left California, upwards of twenty horses and mules. These animals, and the proposed exchange with Beale, would enable me to accomplish my purpose; but the animals ought to be all looked to and well cared for in the meanwhile.”

This is what he requests of you, and which you will no doubt take pleasure in doing as far as you can. I had wished to apply to the Secretary for leave for you to return with Fremont, but we have not yet heard of your arrival in the country, and therefore, cannot ask that favor at present. Our last advices from you are the letters from Mr. Heap at Taos, and which gave us the gratifying news of your having found good passes, good country, water, etc., altho' balked at the Grand River Fork of the Great Colorado.

We have Santa Fe mails to the first of September, which was six weeks after Heap returned from Taos, and hearing nothing more of you on this side of the mountains, conclude that you have gone through. I enclose a slip which gives an account of Riggs and Rodgers. The former has stopped



in New York, and I think must be pretty well cured of gout.

Let Mr. Heap know that I have a letter from his father as late as the 18th of August, when they were all well—as we are here.

Yours sincerely,

THOMAS H. BENTON.

WASHINGTON CITY, Nov. 2, '53.

DEAR EDWARD:

Your letter of the 29th Sep. giving a brief account of the Cañada de las Uvas, and referring to a previous one, came safe to hand, but not so the one to which it refers, and which has not yet reached me. I am glad you explored that Pass. It adds to our choice of routes, but we wish to find one north of Walker's, and as near as possible in the straight line of travel, so as to cut off the elbow to the S. W. after leaving the Vegas de Santa Clara. I am looking for the Journal kept of your expedition, and will have it published in the *National Intelligencer*, whence it will go all over the U. S.

Your expedition has been filling the U. S. during all the summer, and has fixed the character of the central route. The Government expeditions seem to be forgotten. Fremont resumed his expedition on the 15th ult. from St. Louis, taking a physician with him.

I am sincerely glad that Hammond has been able to dispel the cloud of suspicion that had gathered against him. Somebody acted foully and villainously toward you, and time may show who it was. . . .

Your friend,

THOMAS H. BENTON.

Dec. 3, '53.

DEAR EDWARD:

You have gained a great deal of credit by your expedition, and established yourself with the country—the more so

from the massacre of Gunnison's<sup>1</sup> party by the same tribe that was so hospitable to you.

The *Nat. Int.* spreads it and it will be printed in pamphlet, with a map, which will bring you a heap *de l'argent*, *beaucoup de l'argent*. Will also try and get Congress to reimburse your expenses.

I think you should make a special report on the Indian department debts in California—reporting every one to the Government, that you can find out, with the justice, or injustice of each.

This is due to *bona fide* claimants as well as to the government, that the good may be paid and a check had upon the bad. In your report give this as a special reason, in addition to general duty, for making it.

In that report you can well place the cattle which Fremont actually delivered to N. Y. agents.

Affectionately,

THOMAS H. BENTON,

*Senator from Missouri.*

Benton was never weary of praising Beale and pointing out the immense importance and value of his explorations to the country in general and in particular to his beloved St. Louis. Upon the return East, Benton met them and at a banquet which the city gave made the following remarks, which, necessarily very much condensed, I take from a St. Louis paper of the following day. "There before you, Gentlemen," said the Senator, "sit the heads of this remarkable party (pointing

<sup>1</sup> Referring to the fate of the exploring and surveying expedition under the command of Col. John M. Gunnison, U. S. A., Gunnison with seven of his men was murdered by a band of Mormons and Indians near Sevier Lake, Utah, on October 26, 1853.

to Beale and Heap), they are young in years but old in experience and well tried in all the hardships and dangers of distant travel. The Superintendent, Mr. Beale, has made at least a dozen voyages by land or water to California, has been the comrade of Fremont, Carson and other mountain men . . . and yet he is only twenty-eight, an age when the period of heroic life is still ahead." Benton then enumerated the supplies which the explorers took with them; it is not a long list and yet too long to be reproduced here. However, Benton adding up the total, says the whole outfit cost only eighty-six dollars and thirty cents and then preaches a sermon upon the economy shown.

"This is the list of supplies all told and a blanket apiece and no tents. Some rifles to keep off the Indians and to bring down game . . . And this is the outfit for a fifty days' wilderness jaunt of young men who at home wear fine linen and fare sumptuously every day. Gentlemen, this is certainly suggestive of many conclusions such as that they are not a government party, do not equip at public expense, did not graduate at West Point and do not intend to break down under the transportation of what is called, in the vernacular of the West, 'belly-timber.' "

## CHAPTER X

### INDIAN AFFAIRS

State of the Indians in the Pacific Coast Territories—Indians Held to Peonage by the Whites—Fifteen Thousand Die of Starvation—Spaniards and Mexicans as Slave Drivers—Beale's Plan of Protected Reservations for the Nation's Wards—Mr. Sebastian Supports the Plan in the Senate, and Secures the Desired Appropriation—Beale's Indian Policy Endorsed by the Military and Civil Officials in California—General Hitchcock's Letter—Opposition of Indian Agents—Massacres in Shasta and Scott Valley—General Rising of the Indians Feared—Beale Commissioned Brigadier-General—As Peace Plenipotentiary Brings the Warlike Tribes to Terms—Beale's Defence of the Modocs.

ONCE arrived upon the Pacific Coast, Gen. Beale addressed himself with characteristic energy to the tremendous problem which anything like fair treatment for the Indians imposed. He held a census of his wards and found that the Indians numbered about seventy thousand "though they are," as he wrote to Washington, "melting away every day before the pressure of the white population and owing to the harassing

operation of circumstances over which we have no control."

General Beale further wrote that he was convinced that more than fifteen thousand Indians had perished from starvation during the previous season. He further describes at considerable length in his official correspondence many cases of peonage in which whole families and even villages of Indians had been involved and as a result were living in a state of servitude. Fortunately for the reputation of American citizenship he adds, "these slave drivers and those who were holding the pueblos in bondage are almost without exception Spaniards or Mexicans."

It was apparent to General Beale that the system or rather want of system which he found in force would lead soon to an Indian war, or, if not would in a very few years end in the disappearance of his wards. A section and a very noisy section of the frontier population was in favor of exterminating the unfortunate savages who had large possessions but not the wit to defend them, and it required a man of General Beale's sturdy courage to oppose the plans for getting rid of the unfortunate race which were now showered upon him. What took place is perhaps best described in one of the speeches with which Senator Sebastian,<sup>1</sup> who had seen the General at work in the field, supported his policy.

<sup>1</sup> William King Sebastian, born in Tennessee. U. S. Senator from Arkansas, 1853-61. During this time he was Chairman of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs.

I will not go on into further details [said the Senator]; that conditions are bad enough in all conscience will not be disputed I suppose. The moment Gen. Beale became satisfied that if the present order of things were permitted to long continue the results would be disastrous, he tried on a limited scale the plan which I now propose should be generally adopted. He congregated around about him upon a small reservation a number of Indians without interfering in the rights of property or occupancy of any citizen of California. Over one thousand of this simple tribe of Indians who are mild in their character, not wild like the Comanches or other tribes east of the Sierra Nevada, have flocked around him as their only protector from the misery by which they are surrounded and from the cruel persecution by which they are pursued. Gen. Beale finds these simple people anxious for work and easily adapting themselves to the changed condition of their affairs. Indeed such has been the extended success of the experiment which he undertook on his own responsibility that hundreds of other Indians are absolutely importuning him to place them under his immediate protection and allow them to work and to live.

There can be no doubt about the success of the experiment upon the scale it has been tried, all observers agree in this favorable verdict, and so encouraged, all the Superintendent of the Indians asks is to be allowed a sufficient amount of money to extend the same system all over California. In this way it is believed that the entire Indian population can be congregated into small districts of country which will not interfere with any existing white settlements and which can be protected from incursions. It is supposed that two hundred and fifty thousand dollars will suffice to carry out the plan. If the system is worth anything, and I think it will be successful once it is put into operation, it will be self-sustaining.

Not only have we reason to expect this but I am assured

by General Beale and we all know he is a practical man that not only will the system prove self-sustaining but it will prove a useful auxiliary in reducing the expenses of the regular army Quartermaster's Department in that country. I have not entered into details because we have I am sure implicit confidence in the Superintendent and propose to let him carry out the details of his own plan in his own way.

The following letter from Beale was also read to the Senate by Mr. Sebastian and helped greatly to carry the day for a more civilized treatment of the Indians. The letter was addressed to the Secretary of the Interior and reads:

I have the honor to inform you that in obedience to your instructions dated Dec. 8th, 1852, I went over to the San Pablo Rancho in Contra Costa county to investigate the matter of alleged cruel treatment of Indians there. I found seventy-eight on the rancho and twelve back of Martinez and most of them were sick and without clothes or any food but the fruit of the buck-eye. Up to the time of my coming eighteen had died of starvation at one camp, how many at the others I could not find out. These Indians were brought into this country from some place near Clear Lake by Californians named Ramond Briones, Ramon Mes, etc., who have for some time made a business of catching Indians and of disposing of them in various ways. And I have been informed that many Indians have been murdered in these expeditions.

These present Indians are the survivors of a band who were worked all last summer and fall and as the winter set in, when broken down by hunger and labor and without food or clothes they were turned adrift to shift for themselves as best they could. Your timely interference in behalf of these unfortunate people has saved the lives of

most of them, for the Indians could not have lived through such weather as we have had without any food, clothing or shelter.

I distributed all the well among families around who are to feed, clothe and protect them until your further orders. I have made provision for the sick to be fed and cared for. I am happy to inform you, to show the good character of these Indians that even when starving and surrounded with horses and cattle I heard no complaint of their stealing. These people could easily be made to support themselves and their condition changed for the better. The grand jury of the county has found bills against the Californians above mentioned and I presume their trial will come on next term.

On several other occasions in February, 1853, Mr. Sebastian, Chairman of the Committee on Indian Affairs, addressed the Senate on the question of a fairer treatment of the Indians which General Beale had so courageously raised, much too courageously indeed to please many of his friends who had been longer in political circles and had lost the moral courage which characterized the sailor who had left his ship to become a pilot of the plains. In his speeches Mr. Sebastian read many extracts from General Beale's reports and warmly supported the plans which the General submitted for adoption by the Government. The most notable of these speeches was delivered before a full and as yet unconvinced Senate on March 2nd, with the most happy result. Indeed it may be said without the slightest exaggeration that General Beale's humane work and Senator Sebastian's eloquent words laid



the foundation of a protective policy toward the Indians more in consonance with the demands of civilization than any that had been previously followed, and it was certainly not the fault of these pioneers who carried their principles with them across the Colorado that the policy which they instituted did not immediately bear fruit. Some of Senator Sebastian's statements in the course of the prolonged debate are not without interest or timeliness to-day. He said:

The Amendment (which was but a paraphrase of Gen. Beale's recommendations given elsewhere) is approved I believe by the unanimous consent and earnest conviction of the Committee on Indian Affairs that some legislation of this kind is absolutely necessary to correct the state of affairs now prevailing in California which no one can wish to see continued. I beg that Senators will be startled neither at the amount asked for or at the almost unlimited power which it is found necessary to confer on the Superintendent for the Indians. We have often been called upon to legislate for California on account of the state of things prevailing there and it was but natural for us to be called upon to make large appropriations.

We attempted to extend the whole system of the Indian administration of that country by means of a superintendent and Indian agents. Now the first result of the agents going into the country was a return to the *régime* of the Nineteen Treaties which on account of their condemnation by an unquestionable public sentiment which reached even this body was laid upon the table without a dissenting voice. These treaties provided for large reservations and pledged this government to the payment of a large sum of money, a policy which did not meet the approbation of the delegates

from California. The next step which Congress took was to confide the entire subject of the Indian policy of that country to a resident Superintendent of Indian Affairs who is clothed with almost viceregal authority and who was made Indian Commissioner for California. I remember with what satisfaction the nomination of Gen. Beale to fill that office, a gallant officer and a gentleman eminently qualified for it, was received in this body.

Now Gen. Beale has, after a complete investigation of the subject, made a report which for comprehensiveness of plan, for clearness of conception and above all for its practical adaptation to the institutions of the country I think stands unequalled by other documents of this kind.

What, Sir, may I ask is the necessity of the case? We find California in the possession of a large number of Indian tribes occupying the whole surface of the country. They have been in fact independent although in form dependent upon the mild paternal sway of Spanish rule. Our emigrants went there and went with a kind of feeling which contented itself with nothing less than the possession of the whole country; the consequences have been an unvaried monotonous history of wars, murders, predatory incursions, starvation and great distress among the Indians ever since. The plan resorted to by the treaty making power has been unequal to the object in view and now it is recommended by Gen. Beale to collect the tribes together upon small military reservations which because they are military can be removed according to the exigencies of the case. They can be placed here or removed there. It will entitle the Indians to protection against the whites which is more needed than protection against the Indians and I am satisfied that nothing less than this will be acceptable to the people of California. There is a necessity to which we must accommodate ourselves in legislating for that country. There is a condition of things there which we must endeavor to remedy and the best method seems clearly to be found

in Gen. Beale's plan. He would as you have been informed, congregate the Indians upon small military and agricultural reservations, sufficiently large to enable them to maintain life upon and then insist that all comers respect their rights.

Mr. Sebastian then proposed the following amendment to the bill regulating Indian affairs, then before the Senate. It was read a third time and carried unanimously. It embodied General Beale's plan and gave him all the power and the facilities he then thought he would require to put an end to the shocking conditions in which he found the Indians living when he was called upon to take charge of their destinies. The amendment unanimously adopted read:

That the President of the United States be and is hereby authorized to make five military reservations from the public domain in the state of California or in the territories of Utah and New Mexico bordering on said state for Indian purposes. Provided that such reservations shall not contain more than twenty-five thousand acres each and provided further that such reservations shall not be made on any lands inhabited by citizens of California and the sum of two hundred and fifty thousand dollars is hereby appropriated out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated to defray the expense of subsisting the Indians in California and removing them to said reservation for protection.

General Beale's Indian policy, as it developed, was warmly indorsed in letters from the Governor and the Lieutenant-Governor of California which they addressed to the President of the United States

from Vallejo, California, in February, 1853. An even more valuable ally than Hon. John Bigler the Governor, developed in the person of General Hitchcock, who was continually addressing the Secretary of War in support of Beale's policy. Writing in November, 1852, General Hitchcock says:

I deem it necessary for such use as the Hon. Secretary of War may think proper to express an opinion carefully formed in favor of the plan proposed recently by Gen. Beale, the Superintendent of Indians in this division for adjusting and placing on a permanent basis our relations with the Indians of this country. . . . It appears to me that the choice of the Government lies necessarily between accepting Gen. Beale's plan or in giving the Indians over to rapid extermination or expulsion from the state. The objection to the plan is the apparently new policy of assuming direct control over the Indian lands and providing for the Indians, giving them the alternative of accepting such arrangements as the Government may make or of being treated or maltreated at the pleasure of the white settlers.

In answer to this it should be considered that these Indians have never been recognized by the Spanish or Mexican governments as having independent rights in the county and therefore as far as they are concerned the proposed policy would introduce no decided change. In regard to the settlers it is not to be denied that there is serious difficulty but the real question is whether they shall in an unregulated manner determine our intercourse with the Indians, inducing expensive wars with other evils or whether the Government shall establish some limits and rules for this intercourse.

By the plan proposed a small portion of land is to be set apart within which there is to be a military post and some

provision made for the subsistence of the Indians to be supplied as far as possible from their labor. Within this reserve the Indians are to be protected but not beyond it. This reserve would naturally be selected near the mountains, leaving the latter for the range of the Indians extending into the interior without limit.

The system might be commenced with one or two posts at first where most needed as on the head-waters of the San Joaquin Valley at the base of the Sierra Nevada and at some point on the upper waters of the Sacramento, and the system could be extended as the requirements of the country and experience might indicate the necessity for it.

The present course tends to exasperate a large body of Indians, a remnant of which in a very few years will be driven beyond the Sierra Nevada carrying with them a leaven of bitterness among extensive tribes with which we have as yet no intercourse. They would also carry with them some knowledge of firearms and an instructed spirit of war hitherto unknown on this coast and the result would not fail to be the most savage and desperate warfare for an indefinite period, making a pacific transit over the continent next to impossible for a great many years.

It is a mistake, in my judgment, to suppose that the Indians on this coast except perhaps a few digger bands differ materially from those found by the pilgrims at Plymouth from whose descendants there sprang up in time a Philip and a Tecumseh. It is by no means certain that the seeds of dreadful massacres and barbarities are not already sown. . . . It is of manifest importance that there should be harmony of action between the Superintendent of Indian Affairs and the military commander on this coast and, if I am to be retained on duty here I beg to express the wish that Mr. Beale may be continued in the superintendence of Indian affairs. He has a more extensive acquaintance with the Indians than any other man in the country and brings to the performance of his duties an earnest zeal, a humane

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spirit, an untiring perseverance and an honest independence.

Agent McKee, in writing to the Secretary of the Interior a report which Mr. Beale endorsed, was particularly severe in his criticism of some members, indeed even of a small class of the border population. He says:

In the meantime I design appealing to the Governor of the State to order a rigid scrutiny into the facts of these outrages and to take such measures as may be proper to bring the offenders to justice. In all the frontier settlements there are many men from Missouri, Oregon, Texas, etc., who value the life of an Indian just as they do that of a coyote or a wolf and embrace every opportunity to shoot them down. I despair of seeing the peace of these settlements fully established until the laws of the state are enforced and some terrible examples made, or until the government of the United States sends the military commandant of this division the men and the means to establish several small military posts to protect the Indian from these attacks.

The most flagrant case of ruthless killing reported by General Beale is the massacre of Trinity River. He writes:

This river falling into the Pacific from the high rugged country some distance north of San Francisco is noted as the best in the country for salmon fish which constitutes almost the whole subsistence of the Indians. The whites took the whole river and crowded the Indians into the sterile mountains and when they came back for fish they were usually shot. If the Indians took cattle or were suspected

of taking cattle they were pursued and punished and their villages sometimes attacked. In the spring of last year some Indians were charged with taking cattle, a party went against their village, surrounded it at night, attacked at daybreak, killed the whole, chiefly consisting of women and children, the men being absent, except one woman and child who were taken prisoners. They carried home a bag full of scalps, believed to be about 130 and all without loss to themselves, which proves the character of the operation.

There are of course, adds General Beale, many right thinking, considerate men in this country who deplore this savage spirit on the part of some of the settlers; but living so far from the county seats and with their own lives and property at risk they are afraid to speak out as they otherwise would.

In concluding his official report General Beale made the following recommendations. Unhappily not all of these measures were approved.

1st. For the immediate subsistence and support of the Indians the sum of half a million dollars.

2d. For their permanent support and protection military reserves where a few soldiers can be stationed and where they will support themselves by labor.

3d. That all the officers employed in California in the Indian service shall reside on these reserves or among the Indians. I myself have an abode between the Mariposas and the San Joaquin about three hundred miles from San Francisco.

4th. That the Indian agencies shall be abolished and six sub-agents be appointed at about fifteen hundred

dollars each to reside with the Indians and assist them in cultivation as well as discharging other duties.

Washington, Feb. 25, 1853.

While doing the best he could for the Indians and for the dignity and well-being of the State of California, General Beale had been absolutely ruthless in his campaign against corruption and inefficiency among the Indian agents and the contractors in their service. With an eye single to the public service and the interests of his wards, General Beale had dismissed the venal officials without thought of personal or political considerations, and many agents were also removed from their lucrative posts pending investigation of their conduct.

At first, and again at the end of Beale's service, he was heartily supported by the administration at home and by the officials of the Interior Department; however, there was a time, an interregnum, when the men whom Beale had discharged for the good of the service, and the malcontents still in the service who were fearful that their shortcomings might any day attract the attention of their eagle-eyed chief, had the audacity to conspire against their superintendent. The administration was not particularly friendly at this juncture with the friends<sup>1</sup> of General Beale.

<sup>1</sup> WASHINGTON, April 2d, 1854.

DEAR EDWARD:

I received your letter from Panama and think it well that Mrs. Beale join you—you have not much favor to expect here, and only fear gets you justice. But be of good heart, they cannot remove you, on account



California, the scene of his administration, and the Californians, who could testify as to its value, were far away, while the chorus of dismissed and discredited Indian officials were assembled in Washington and were unhappily sustained by political backing of practical value.

The moment, however, Beale's enemies were forced into making definite charges, their overthrow and confusion were near. I have noticed this trivial and as it would seem unavoidable incident in the life of any man who sets his face sternly against the temptation of corrupting influences, because of its delicious dénouement. While General Beale was under fire his friends waited, but formed themselves into a court of honor, when the charges fell to the ground and Beale's vilifiers were routed and disgraced. Later the members of the court of honor published in the Washington papers, according to the custom then prevailing, the following statement of what had occurred. It was well received and the incident closed.

THE END OF A SLANDER.—The newspapers of Saturday last published a telegraphic despatch, giving an account of a personal encounter the day previous between Lieut. Beale, and one ——, a Commissioner of Indian affairs, at one

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of the hold you have on the public mind. Your expedition and success in colonizing the Indians does the business for you. Write full accounts of your operations with the Indians, have them published—and they secure you. —— is a low fellow and naturally hates a man like you. But I have him on the anvil and will hammer him.

Your old friend,

THOMAS H. BENTON.

of the hotels at Washington. The causes which led to the affair, as we have gathered them from those cognizant of all the circumstances, were these.

It is well known that Lieutenant Beale, owing to his intimate acquaintance with the habits of the Indians and their mode of life was appointed by Mr. Fillmore, Superintendent of Indian Affairs in California. He held the office until after the election of the present President, and by the faithful discharge of his duties gave entire satisfaction to the Government. He was subsequently reappointed to the situation he then held by President Pierce at the earnest solicitation of those who knew his ability to manage the Indians in that part of our country.

About a year since the administration deemed it necessary for political purposes to appoint a mere *politician* to the place held by Lieut. Beale, and as some pretext for his removal seemed to be called for, it was given out in Washington, and then sent all over the country, that he was a defaulter to the Government in a large amount. This false charge reached him in California, and he at once left his post, returned to his home with his vouchers and submitted them to the proper officers for examination and settlement.

After a delay of some eight months—during all of which time he was present to answer any objections which might be made to his disbursements—the accounting officers of the Treasury Department finally passed his accounts, which were afterwards taken up by the Secretary of the Treasury in person, and he was allowed every claim he had made in expending some three hundred and sixty thousand dollars of the public money—not a cent of which had adhered to his hands.

Further than this, the officers who had charge of his accounts informed the Superintendent that his vouchers were examined with more than the usual scrutiny, owing to the reports which had been given out by — as to the delinquency, and they congratulated him on the entire

satisfaction which their correctness had given them. This was a triumphant vindication from the charges which had been made by a bad man against the probity and honor of a faithful and efficient officer.

The article charging Mr. Beale with being a defaulter to the Government appeared originally in *The Evening Star* at Washington. After his accounts, which had passed the searching examination before alluded to, were admitted to be correct, a number of his personal friends called upon the editor of the *Star*, and were frankly informed that the information had been furnished by —, and that he, —, *had himself written the article charging Lieut. Beale with the defalcation!* Mortified that he should thus be stabbed in the back by a functionary of the Government, at whose hands he had a right to expect justice, Mr. Beale embraced an opportunity which offered at the hotel where he sojourned, and properly punished the vilifier and slanderer, by slapping his face with his open hand in public—and this is the extent of the “outrage” perpetrated by the Lieutenant. If an assault can be justified in any case then was this public castigation right and proper. — attempted to ruin the reputation of an honest man in his absence. His accusation went abroad, and was believed by those who did not know the facts; and now the vindication of the charges, extorted from his accuser, and his public punishment will go together—the antidote to the poison.

Do what he could, and Beale was certainly tireless in his activity, and despite the fact that his humane policy was warmly supported by all the best people in the country, official and unofficial, General Beale soon recognized that with the slender means at his command he could not secure for his wards the protection to which they were entitled and which had indeed been promised in solemn

treaty. Beale sums up the situation in a letter to Washington written at this time.

The condition of many of the Indian tribes is truly deplorable, they are driven from their hunting and fishing grounds and are in danger of starving. Many of them are made to work without compensation and massacres are taking place all the time. Only fifteen miles from San Francisco the Indians are often enslaved and made to work without pay and when the work season is over they are turned out to starve.

Naturally the Indians, persecuted and starving as they were, endeavored to help themselves and naturally enough at last in true Indian fashion; white emigrants and colonists were massacred in Shasta and in Scott Valley and what was more alarming, the news came of a general rising of the Indians at Visalia and of their apparent preparations to wage a war of extermination against the whites throughout the country.

At this juncture, and it was certainly a case of better late than never, the California authorities bethought them of General Beale and of the extraordinary powerful personal influence he exercised over the Indians who had so long been his wards and who ever found in him a generous protector. He was placed in charge of the situation and was soon able to conjure the dangers and smooth out the difficulties with which it fairly bristled. The measures which General Beale adopted and which proved so efficient in the circumstances are de-

scribed with characteristic modesty in the following report to the Governor. To-day, with the Indians gone and populous cities rising on their happy hunting grounds, the most remarkable feature of the campaign that followed is the fact that United States officials and even United States troops acted throughout in perfect subordination to General Beale who in this instance held his commission from the State of California. This happy and most unusual co-operation was due in part at least to the great good-will of Gen. John E. Wool, U. S. A., who at this time most fortunately was in command of the Department of the Pacific. General Wool was a warm personal friend of Beale and a sturdy supporter of his Indian policy and as several personal letters written by him to Beale<sup>1</sup> in later years attest, he recognized that at this critical moment in the history of the settlements on the Pacific, General Beale's high reputation for fair dealing and his deep insight into Indian character were of more value than several regiments of dragoons and these, it might be added, were not immediately available, while General Beale was.

The report of General Beale is dated San Francisco, July 12th, 1855, and reads as follows:

Governor: I have the honor to report that in obedience to instructions received from you I proceeded with all despatch to the scene of the Indian difficulties. I left San Francisco on the morning of the 28th of May last, accom-

<sup>1</sup> See Beale papers in MS.

panied by my Aide-de-camp Colonel Edward Byre. At midnight on the 5th day of June, I encamped on the banks of the King's River. In conversation with Mr. Campbell, sub-Indian agent stationed at this point, I learned that in consequence of the continued excitement of the whites, more particularly those living in and about the villages of Woodville and Visalia, rumors had reached the Indians that active hostilities would be at once commenced against them and they in consequence had fled to the mountains.

I despatched early next morning Mr. Campbell, who speaks their language, with five bullocks and a message to them asking them to appoint some spot where I might hold a council. In the meantime I continued on to Elbow Creek. Here I found Lieutenant Livingston, Third Artillery encamped with some thirty of his men. I also fortunately met here Lieut. Allston of the dragoons who were encamped some ten miles to the south. These gentlemen corroborated the reports I had received relative to the violent measures contemplated by the whites. I then visited Visalia and Woodville and after consulting with several prominent citizens I deemed it best to call a general meeting of the people in the afternoon. It was very fully attended and those present seemed to think that nothing but a very severe punishment of the Indians would prevent future molestation of the whites. I fully explained to them the power that had been confided to me by your Excellency and urged upon them a more conciliatory spirit. I also invited several well-known citizens to accompany me to the proposed council ground. This plan met with their approbation and Mr. Campbell, after several days' absence, returned with the information that the Indians had despatched runners in every direction to call in their scattered bands and that they would meet me in a valley about thirty-five miles from Elbow Creek.

I ordered Lieut. Allston's command of some forty dragoons together with Lieut. Livingston's command of thirty

men to accompany me as escort. Early next morning we took up our line of march; the weather was excessively hot and Lieut. Livingston's men being on foot suffered exceedingly from the heat and thirst and it was nearly midnight before they reached camp. The next morning I held council, some sixty or seventy Indians being present. The following tribes were represented by chiefs or captains: Monoes, Chokimauves, En Tennysich, Coilla, Yacolle, Talumne, Palu Paloushiss, Wirkachoumnies, Openochies, Tache Noo-tune-too and Chooeminees. Mr. O. K. Smith from Woodville and Dr. George from Visalia represented the citizens; Messrs. Campbell and Jennings, sub-Indian agents were also present.

Through Gregorio, my Indian interpreter, a very intelligent man who accompanied Gen. Fremont to the Atlantic States and back and speaks English very well, I told them the object of my visit was if possible to make peace; that it was idle for them to attempt to cope with the whites in warfare, that unless they would unconditionally promise to go where I deemed it best for them to live I had come prepared to inflict summary and severe chastisement upon them. They seemed very anxious for peace and after talking to them for about two hours I dismissed them to reflect well upon what I had said. Later in the afternoon I sent for them again and told them that all their people living upon the waters of the King River must go at once to the Reservation on King River, and that all their people living to the south of this stream must go to the Tocolé Valley and to this they joyfully assented.

I then distributed among them as presents the articles listed in the paper marked A accompanying my report. Finding now that a very large tribe living on and about Tule Lake were not represented, I despatched Indian runners that night to them with a message that unless they met me in five days from that time in the Tocolé valley for the purpose of making a treaty I should deem them to be at war and treat them accordingly.

The next morning, the 10th instant I broke up the camp and returned to Elbow Creek. On the morning of the 14th I went to the Couilla valley, some ten miles beyond Woodville with an escort of dragoons. Here over three hundred Indians were gathered and some forty citizens were also present. The Olanches, Piquirinals, Coyotes, Wacksaches, and Couillas were present. They said they were delighted to meet me and were perfectly willing to do anything I desired of them. They further agreed, as the others had that they would preserve peace and remain in their present camp until the arrival of Col. Henley the Indian agent. [Here is inserted a list of property destroyed by the Indians which I omit.]

The peace to be preserved requires first the presence of the Indian Commissioner and next the presence of about twenty-five dragoons in the field constantly. I went to Fort Tejon, and remained there constantly until the arrival of Col. B. L. Beall commanding the fort, of whom I made a request in writing that he should send a detachment into the field at once. He answered that he could not do so unless he received instructions from Gen. Wool. This post should be reinforced at once with another company so that one company could be constantly in the field. There would never be any trouble with the Indians if this were done.

I arrived here via San José on the night of July 10th. Hoping that my efforts will meet with your approbation,

I have the honor to be

Your Excellency's most obedient servant,

EDWARD F. BEALE,

*Brigadier-General,*

5th District.

To the end of his life Beale was a generous and self-sacrificing friend of the Indians and to the end, as will be seen, the Indians were loyal to their



protector. It required courage to tell the truth concerning the treatment of the Modocs which provoked their uprising, especially at a moment when the whole country was in mourning for the gallant Canby. It required courage and it meant unpopularity, but without hesitation General Beale stepped into the breach with the following letter, which was first published in *The Republican* of Chester, Pennsylvania, on April 25, 1873. It was widely copied throughout the country and helped to steady public opinion with the result that a more civilized view of the situation was taken by the Government. It was the last signal service that Beale was able to render his former wards. He did it cheerfully, though it cost him many friends in and out of the army.

General Beale's letter reads:

In the heat of a great popular excitement caused by the loss of a most useful and exemplary officer, it is very doubtful if a fair judgment can be had in relation to the causes which have produced the event we all deplore. General Canby had served his country with such efficient zeal in two great wars, and was possessed of so many of the virtues which attached him to the community, that the intelligence of his death was received as a shock by the whole people of the United States. Perhaps there was not in the entire army a man whose public and private character stood so high, or who was more generally and justly beloved, and the manner of his death has added to the public grief a sentiment of bitterness toward the Indians which it seems nothing but their extermination will satisfy. With but few exceptions the press of the country is eagerly demanding blood for blood.

Let us pause for a moment before committing ourselves to a policy more savage and remorseless than that of the Modocs whom we propose to smite hip and thigh. Let us ask ourselves if we are not reaping what we have sown, and if the treachery to which the gallant and lamented Canby fell a victim is not the repetition of a lesson which we ourselves have taught these apt scholars, the Indians? Are we to think ourselves blameless when we recall the Chivington massacre? In that affair the Indians were invited to council under flags of truce, and the rites of hospitality, sacred even among the Bedouins of the desert, were violated as well as all military honor, for these poor wretches, while eating the sacred bread and salt, were ruthlessly fallen upon and slaughtered to the last man. The Piegan massacre was another affair in which we industriously taught the uncultivated savages the value of our pledges; and if we are correctly informed the very beginning of the Modoc war was an attempt while in the act of council to which they had been invited to make Captain Jack and two others prisoners. As to the bloody character of Indian warfare, as far as we can see, it is carried on by us with about the same zeal. We read of a sergeant in the service of the United States who in the late attack on the Modocs "took the scalp of Scar-face Charley who was found wounded in the lava beds." And if we desire to feel very good and free from barbarism we have only to read what comes to us side by side with news from the Modocs of the humane and civilized treatment we are meting out to our brothers in Louisiana, who differ from us on political questions; or recall the massacre and robbery and mutilation of unoffending Chinese, which was committed in broad daylight by American citizens in California a year or so ago.

The Modoc Indians are fighting for a right to live where God created them. The whole testimony of their neighbors when the war against them was first talked about, is to the effect that they were intelligent and inoffensive; and we

have exasperated them by insisting on our right, which they do not see, to remove them to a distant and unknown country. Having been taught by us a violation of flags of truce, they have followed our example, and unhappily a noble victim to our teaching of falsehood and crime is the result; whereupon there goes out a cry of extermination throughout the land.

We enter our protest against this course, and we ask for justice and a calmer consideration by the public, of the Indian affairs of our country. We cannot restore the good men who have been killed, by an indiscriminate slaughter of all the tribe of the Modocs; and it does not become a Christian people to hunt to death the poor remnant of those from whom we have already taken the broad acres of thirty-seven states of this Union.

## CHAPTER XI

### THE FORGOTTEN CAMEL CORPS

Transportation Problems of the Fifties—To Provision Army Posts in Southwest, Beale Suggests Camel Train to the War Department—Enthusiastic Reception of the Novel Idea by Secretary Jefferson Davis—David Dixon Porter Sent to Tunis and Syria to Secure the Camels—Camel Corps in the Scinde Campaign—Beale's Report to the War Department of his Camel Journey from San Antonio to El Paso—San Francisco Papers Enthusiastic over the New Beast of Burden—Davis Resigns from the War Department and the Camels are Neglected—Beale Herds the Survivors on his Ranch—A Camel Tandem—Value of Beale's Journals to Future Historians of the Southwestern and Pacific States.

**I**N 1854 the War Department had its hands quite full in endeavoring to solve the difficult problem of army transportation to the remote stations of the newly acquired territory in the Southwest. This vast region, added to our possessions by the Mexican War and the subsequent purchase, was chiefly peopled by Indians and Mexicans who were held in check with much difficulty and no little danger by a few scattered army posts.

To furnish the desired transportation facilities all manner of plans and agencies were proposed. When Beale presented himself at the Department with his suggestion of a camel corps it was regarded as quixotic it is true, but at all events as having as much substance as a relayed line of balloons which was at this time warmly advocated for the same purpose.

Beale naturally did not pretend that he had enjoyed any personal experience with camels as beasts of burden but he simply overwhelmed the Department with excerpts and citations from books of travel in Asia and Africa all going to show the great usefulness of the "Ship of the Desert," in desert places. In after years General Beale told his son that the idea came to him once when he was, probably the first white man who ever did so, exploring Death Valley<sup>1</sup> with Kit Carson. He never travelled so light but what there was at least one good book in his pack. On this occasion it chanced to be Abbé Huc's *Travels in China and Tartary*. Reading this book, Beale was convinced that by the introduction of camels the great desert of Arizona could be robbed of half its terrors. Kit Carson

<sup>1</sup> It is characteristic of Beale that not a line concerning this adventurous trip is to be found in his papers and diaries. The Death Valley journey was but one of a series of systematic explorations which he made, whenever opportunity presented and generally in the company of Carson, for the purpose of examining all the passes from the then barren plains of Arizona into the Eden of California. The moment Beale had satisfied himself that Death Valley was not the path of empire which he sought, he drew a line through that route and went on to the exploration of others which seemed more promising.

seems to have remained sceptical but on his return to Washington Beale was so fortunate as to find a fellow-enthusiast in the person of Jefferson Davis who had recently entered the cabinet as Secretary of War.

Finding such an important person as the Secretary of War in a receptive mood, Beale lost no time in setting about the preliminary step of "catching the camels." Mr. Davis and Beale were successful in infusing the Navy Department with some of their enthusiasm, the store ship *Supply* was soon fitted out for Camel-Land and Beale induced his friend and kinsman, David Dixon Porter, who was later to win imperishable laurels in the Civil War, to apply for the command.

In May, 1855, Porter sailed for Tunis. Neither he nor any man of his command had ever seen a camel, outside of a circus, and he wisely decided to go slowly and experiment at first on a small scale. In Tunis he purchased two camels and shipped them for the purpose of studying their habits before the entire herd was taken in tow or rather on board. In October the *Supply* arrived at Constantinople and from here Porter visited the Crimea and saw something of the campaign in progress. While he went at it with his characteristic thoroughness, hitherto the camel-mission had appealed to Porter's well-known sense of humor rather than to any belief in its utility. In the Crimea, however, he met several English officers who had served with General Napier in the Scinde campaign. They



San Francisco in 1846

From a Lithograph





told him of the valuable services which the camel corps, one thousand men mounted on five hundred dromedaries had rendered, and Porter immediately set sail for Alexandria and Smyrna where thirty-three camels were carefully and prayerfully purchased. With this strange deck cargo Porter arrived off Indianola, Texas, in April, 1856, and only one of his ungainly passengers had died. Porter was immediately sent back to Asia Minor and in the summer of 1856 arrived off the mouth of the Mississippi with forty-four more very sea-sick camels.

General Beale, now commanding the first and last camel corps ever organized on the American Continent, was from the very first enthusiastic in his praise of the desert ships. He assured all who addressed him on the subject, and it should be remembered that popular interest was almost as generally excited by this new method of transportation as it is interested in aviation to-day, that the camel was to be the pack animal of the immediate future, on the American as well as the African and Asian deserts. To a friend, General Beale wrote upon his arrival in El Paso in July, 1857: "When exactly the right breed is at our disposal and when one or two Turks or Arabs to the manner born have been induced to remain long enough to familiarize our people with the habits of the camels, complete success will undoubtedly be attained."

Writing from El Paso on July 24, 1857, General Beale gives the following official account of his ex-

traordinary journey, which promised to be epoch-making, to the Hon. J. B. Floyd, Secretary of War.

Sir: I have the honor to report my arrival at this place with the expedition under my command. Thus far we have progressed rapidly and without a single day's delay since leaving San Antonio.

It gives me great pleasure to report the entire success of the expedition with the camels so far as I have tried it. Laboring under all the disadvantages arising out of the fact that we have not one single man who knows anything whatever of camels or how to pack them, we have nevertheless arrived here without an accident and although we have used the camels every day with heavy packs, have fewer sore backs and disabled ones by far than would have been the case travelling with pack mules. On starting I packed nearly seven hundred pounds on each camel, which I fear was too heavy a burden for the commencement of so long a journey, they, however packed it daily until that weight was reduced by our diurnal use of it as forage for our mules.

I trust they may stand the remainder of the journey as well as they have thus far and I see no reason whatever to doubt it. If they should, the experiment of their usefulness is demonstrated fully, and it is to be hoped a larger number will be imported. For Indian scouts with infantry companies in countries as badly supplied with water as Texas and New Mexico, they would prove an invaluable aid though those we have with us are not the most valuable kind for burden being all females with three exceptions.

The regular burden camel would make the same journey we have made and in the same time with twelve hundred pounds as easily as these with half the weight. I desire to call your attention particularly to the fact that they live and keep on food which the mules reject and which grows in the greatest luxuriance in the most barren of our American

deserts, namely, the greasewood, a small bitter bush, useless for any purpose I have been able to discover except as being a valuable food for the camels. Although they eat grass when staked out to it, if left to themselves they will instantly leave the best gramma and browse greedily on bushes of any kind whatever in preference.

I was told by the highest authority on leaving San Antonio that not one of them would ever see El Paso; that they would give out on the way. This prediction has not been verified by fact. The road from here to San Antonio is certainly the most terribly trying on unshod feet I have ever seen. This is so true that I have not an unshod work mule or horse that is not lame. With the camels I have not to this time a single tender-footed animal. I attribute this not so much to the spongy natured, gutta percha-like substance which forms their feet, as to the singular regularity and perpendicular motion with which the foot is raised and put down. In horses and mules there is always more or less of a slip and shuffle, but the camel lifts his foot clearly and perpendicularly from the ground, extends the leg and replaces it squarely and without the least shuffle or motion to create friction.

They are the most docile, patient and easily managed creatures in the world and infinitely more easily worked than mules. From personal observation of the camels I would rather undertake the management of twenty of them than of five mules. In fact the camel gives no trouble whatever. Kneeling down to receive his load it may be put on without hurry at the convenience of the master and the process of packing is infinitely easier than mule packing. These animals remain quietly on their knees until loaded. Contrast the lassoing, the blinding, the saddling, the pulling and hauling of ropes, the adjustment of the pack on an animal like the mule, flying around in all directions, to say nothing of a broken limb received

from one of its numerous kicks, with the patient quiet of the camel kneeling for its load.

We had them on this journey sometimes for twenty-six hours without water exposed to a great degree of heat, the mercury standing at one hundred and four degrees and when they came to water they seemed to be almost indifferent to it. Not all drank and those that did, not with the famished eagerness of other animals when deprived of water for the same length of time.

If the Department intends carrying their importation of the camels further, after this present experiment has been more fully tested, and I have reported my success or the want of it, I would strongly recommend a new saddle to be prepared for them, to replace the present clumsy contrivance, and also that a corps of Mexicans be employed in herding and using them. The Americans of the class who seek such employment are totally unfit for it, being for the most part harsh, cruel and impatient with animals entrusted to their care. "The Greeks and Turks who are with us know no more of camels than any American living in New York knows of buffalo.

The animal is used in their own country but they know nothing about it. My only object in employing them at the high rate they are paid was that they, knowing the harmless character of the camel, would give confidence to the others employed in the management of an animal which, with all its gentleness, has a most ferocious-looking set of teeth which it displays with a roar rivalling that of the royal Bengal tiger. The two Turks, Hassan and Suliman, who really did know all about camels, and who were the only ones that did that I could discover, refused to accompany the expedition, being desirous of returning home to their own country.

We are getting on rapidly and very pleasantly and I hope to be in Washington again on Christmas Day, etc.

There are available few contemporaneous accounts of how the first and the last American camel corps looked to the man in the street or the scout on the trail. The camels had warm friends and partisans, the chief of whom was easily General Beale, and they had bitter and tireless enemies, many of whom, it was openly charged, were not wholly disconnected with the incipient mule trust then growing up in Missouri. On this account we are all the more grateful for the following unpartisan though unsigned statement of things seen which, dated Los Angeles, January 21, 1858, appeared in several of the San Francisco papers and was widely copied throughout the country.

Gen. Beale and about fourteen camels stalked into town last Friday week and gave our streets quite an Oriental aspect. It looks oddly enough to see, outside of a menagerie, a herd of huge ungainly awkward but docile animals move about in our midst with people riding them like horses and bringing up weird and far-off associations to the Eastern traveller, whether by book or otherwise, of the lands of the mosque, crescent or turban, of the pilgrim mufti and dervish with visions of the great shrines of the world, Mecca and Jerusalem, and the toiling throngs that have for centuries wended thither, of the burning sands of Arabia and Sahara where the desert is boundless as the ocean and the camel is the ship thereof.

These camels under charge of Gen. Beale are all grown and serviceable and most of them are well broken to the saddle and are very gentle. All belong to the one hump species except one which is a cross between the one and the two hump species. This fellow is much larger and more powerful than either sire or dam. He is a grizzly-looking hybrid,

a camel-mule of colossal proportions. These animals are admirably adapted to the travel across our continent and their introduction was a brilliant idea the result of which is beginning most happily. At first Gen. Beale thought the animals were going to fail, they appeared likely to give out, their backs got sore, but he resolved to know whether they would do or not. He loaded them heavily with provisions, which they were soon able to carry with ease, and thence came through to Fort Tejon, living upon bushes, prickly pears and whatever they could pick up on the route. They went without water from six to ten days and even packed it a long distance for the mules, when crossing the deserts. They were found capable of packing one thousand pounds weight apiece and of travelling with their load from thirty to forty miles per day all the while finding their own feed over an almost barren country. Their drivers say they will get fat where a jackass would starve to death. The "mule" as they call the cross between the camel and the dromedary will pack twenty-two hundred pounds.

The animals are now on their return to the Colorado River for the purpose of carrying provisions to Gen. Beale and his military escort who, it is conjectured, will penetrate from thence as far as possible into the Mormon country. Afterwards Gen. Beale will return by the new wagon route that he has lately surveyed to verify it and so on to Washington. He is expected to reach the Capital before the first of March in order to lay his report before Congress.

When Mr. Davis left the War Department the camels lost a most influential friend, although General Beale remained their most enthusiastic admirer to the end. As is shown in the foregoing reports, the camels gave an excellent account of themselves on even the most trying journeys but the ordinary teamsters and mule-drivers were afraid of them and

in the end this silent opposition prevailed. Many camels were allowed to escape from the army posts where they were herded and not a few died from neglect. Some of the camels that were allowed to regain their liberty seem to have increased and multiplied, and for years they wandered over the plains of Arizona and New Mexico where they were a terrifying object to man and beast, to all Indians and whites who had not enjoyed Oriental experiences.

The remnant of the camels were finally condemned by an army board as unsuitable for transportation and sold under the hammer. General Beale, loyal to the end, bought them and marched them off to Tejon where they had free quarters as long as they lived. One of Truxtun Beale's earliest experiences, which any boy might envy, was in driving with his father from Tejon to Los Angeles, a distance of one hundred miles, in a sulky behind a tandem team of camels with whom General Beale, when necessary, would carry on conversation in Syrian which he had with characteristic energy taught himself for this purpose.

During the years 1854-5 and 1856 General Beale was fully occupied with the supervision and control of Indian affairs, in California, Nevada, and at the Capital and it is apparent from his journals that the battles he was compelled to fight in Washington were less to his liking than the open hostility which he had so often met with on the banks of the Colorado. Beale's road-breaking and

Beale's  
 journals  
 2, 1854

building operations, never entirely suspended, were resumed vigorously, thanks to a substantial appropriation by Congress, early in 1857 and were continued almost without interruption until the outbreak of the Civil War, or rather until the inauguration of President Lincoln by whom Beale was immediately appointed Surveyor-General of California.

The journey from Fort Defiance to the Colorado River to survey the proposed routes of the wagon road was made during the summer of 1857 and the winter of 1857-8. General Beale's report and log of land travel was, at the suggestion of the Secretary of War, ordered printed during the first session of the 35th Congress and it is entombed in the national archives of that year as Executive Document No. 124.

The report upon the wagon road projected from Fort Smith, Arkansas, to the Colorado and the narrative of the journey which was undertaken during the winter of 1858-9 was ordered printed by the 36th Congress during its first session and bears the caption Executive Document No. 42.

These interesting Journals did not receive the close attention or the just appreciation which they deserved. Beale's services were, it is true, highly considered and no step relating to the Pacific Coast was taken or even considered in Washington without consulting him, but the details of his adventurous travels were little known and Beale was the last man in the world to push his exploits into



prominence. The roads were built, however, in great part, and the new commonwealths on the Pacific were bound to the older States by a physical tie which the shock of the impending conflict when it came could not snap. The roads were built and the Pacific Coast was saved to the Union, but the details and the thrilling incidents of the great task so quietly accomplished were little noticed and soon forgotten.

In a volume of limited scope such as the present, it is impossible to reproduce many more pages of General Beale's graphic Journals and I shall not venture to condense them. I shall, however, print in full General Beale's covering despatches to the War Department in which, in a few words, he tells of the objects and of the results of his journeys, and I shall also reproduce a few detached entries from the Journals themselves, sufficient, I hope, to demonstrate that in the rarely turned and never reprinted pages of these official reports is to be found a wealth of picturesque material indispensable to the understanding of the Western movement and the early days in California. When a definitive history of the Southwest territory and the Central Plains, out of which so many States have been carved, is written, the pages of General Beale's Journals will be found, I believe, to supply the indispensable data as well as the glowing pictures of the primitive life which Captain John Smith's Narrative offers to the historian of the Old Dominion, which the Diary of Bradford makes

accessible to the modern writer on the Massachusetts Bay settlements, and which the Journals of Bonneville, of Lewis, and of Clark reveal to the historian of those States "where rolls the Oregon."

## CHAPTER XII

### THE WAGON ROAD SURVEY FROM FORT DEFIANCE TO CALIFORNIA

General Beale's Report to the Secretary of War—From Zuni to the Banks of the Little Colorado—Praise of the Camels, Especially their Swimming—Extracts from Beale's Journal—Howard's Spring, Famous for Indian Massacres—Water Shortage—Mount Buchanan and Mount Benton—Indian Adventure of a Geologist—Captured Indians Retained as Guides to the Colorado—First Sight of the Sierra Nevada—Winter at Fort Tejon—The Return Journey—First Steamer on the Colorado—Last Entry in the Journal—"We have Tested the Value of the Camel, Marked a new Road to the Pacific, and Travelled Four Thousand Miles."

**G**ENERAL BEALE'S report to the Secretary of War on his explorations for a wagon road from Fort Defiance, in New Mexico, to the western borders of California, communicated to Congress, in answer to a resolution of the Senate, reads as follows:

COLORADO RIVER, CALIFORNIA, October 18, 1857.

SIR:

I have the honor to report my arrival in California, after a journey of forty-eight days. It gives me pleasure to

inform you that we have met with the most complete success in our exploration for a wagon road from Fort Defiance, New Mexico, to this State.

In a hurried letter of this kind, it is not possible that I should give you much of the detail of our exploration. Leaving that for my daily journal to disclose, I shall endeavor briefly to give you an idea of the character of the country, as well as the advantages of the road I have explored.

Leaving Zuni, the point from which the road should properly start, we found the country easy and rolling and bearing good grass, with water at convenient intervals, until our arrival at the banks of the Little Colorado. This I found a fine stream, the bottom of which is wide and fertile, filled with excellent grass, and the banks of the stream itself fringed with a heavy growth of cottonwood. The whole region through which it runs is of a character to make it most valuable to the agriculturist and grazier. After following this stream for several days, and fording it with our wagons without difficulty, we left it and pursued our course westward to San Francisco Mountain. The country at the foot of that mountain (a gradually ascending plain) although somewhat rocky, in places was covered with the finest gramma-grass, with timber sufficient for fuel, and water in abundance.

From this point, twenty miles from the base of the mountain, until we commenced the descent of its western slope, the country is undulating, with frequent extensive level plateaus, well watered with springs, and is by far the most beautiful region I ever remember to have seen in any portion of the world. A vast forest of gigantic pine, intersected frequently by extensive open glades, sprinkled all over with mountain meadows and wide savannahs, filled with the richest grasses, was traversed by our party for many successive days.

From the western slope to the country dividing the head

of Bill Williams' fork from the Colorado River, the only change is in the growth of the timber, cedar of the largest size, for the most part, taking the place of pine; but the character of the soil remains unchanged, and is of the same fertile nature, bearing in all parts the richest gramma-grass.

From the divide of Bill Williams to the Colorado the country assumes a more barren aspect, and becomes a desert on the banks of the river, excepting in the bottom lands, for a few miles in width on either side. Arrived at the river, I crossed the wagons and people without difficulty. At the point of our crossing I found it to be about 200 yards wide, a smooth surface as far as the eye could reach up and down, unobstructed by bars or rocks, flowing at the rate of three miles an hour, 19 feet in depth in mid-channel, apparently perfectly navigable for steamers of largest size. Questioning the Indians closely, I derived from them satisfactory information that it bore the same character the entire distance from that place to Fort Yuma, some 200 miles below.

You have thus, sir, in a few words, a short account of our journey on the road we were sent to explore. Of its advantages, in detail, I have not time in this letter to speak, except in general terms. I enumerate them.

It is the shortest from our western frontier by 300 miles, being nearly directly west. It is the most level: our wagons only double-teaming once in the entire distance, and that at a short hill, and over a surface heretofore unbroken by wheels or trail of any kind. It is well watered: our greatest distance without water at any time being twenty miles. It is well timbered, and in many places the growth is far beyond that of any part of the world I have ever seen. It is temperate in climate, passing for the most part over an elevated region. It is salubrious: not one of our party requiring the slightest medical attendance from the time of our leaving to our arrival. It is well grassed: my command never having made a bad grass camp during

the entire distance until near the Colorado. It crosses the great desert (which must be crossed by any road to California) at its narrowest point. It passes through a country abounding in game, and but little infested with Indians.

On the entire road, until our arrival at the Mohave villages, we did not see, in all, over a dozen Indians, and those of a timid and inoffensive character. At the point of the crossing of the Colorado, grain, vegetables, and breadstuffs may be obtained in any quantity from the Indians, who cultivate extensively, though rudely, the fertile bottom lands of the Colorado. It is passable alike in winter and summer. These are the advantages which I claim for the road which we have discovered, marked, and explored, from New Mexico to this State.

I shall mention, then, only one important fact, that it leaves to the option of the emigrant the choice of entering California either at the city of Los Angeles, by the regularly travelled road, in the most fertile part of the southern portion of the State, or of turning off from that river, by an easy road, frequently travelled, and coming into the head of the great Tulare Valley, and by a good road through settlements all the way, extending to Stockton, Sacramento, and the more northern parts of the State.

Our work, although arduous, has been rendered pleasant by the beautiful character of the country through which we have passed, and the salubrious nature of the climate; and, although the double duty of exploring and marking the road has fallen upon us, we have passed through it without an accident of any kind whatever.

An important part in all of our operations has been acted by the camels. Without the aid of this noble and useful brute, many hardships which we have been spared would have fallen to our lot; and our admiration for them has increased day by day, as some new hardship, endured patiently, more fully developed their entire adaptation and usefulness in the exploration of the wilderness. At times



Sacramento City, from the South, in 1849

From a Lithograph





I have thought it impossible they could stand the test to which they have been put, but they seem to have risen equal to every trail and to have come off of every exploration with as much strength as before starting. Unsupported by the testimony of every man of my party, I should be unwilling to state all that I have seen them do. Starting with a full determination that the experiment should be no half-way one, I have subjected them to trials which no other animal could possibly have endured; and yet I have arrived here not only without the loss of a camel, but they are admitted by those who saw them in Texas to be in as good condition to-day as when we left San Antonio.

In all our lateral explorations, they have carried water sometimes for more than a week for the mules used by the men, themselves never receiving even a bucketful to one of them. They have traversed patiently, with heavy packs, on these explorations, countries covered with sharpest volcanic rock, and yet their feet, to this hour, have evinced no symptom of tenderness or injury. With heavy packs, they have crossed mountains, ascended and descended precipitous places where an unladen mule found it difficult to pass, even with the assistance of the rider dismounted, and carefully picking its way. I think it would be within bounds to say, that, in these various lateral explorations, they have traversed nearly double the distance passed over by our mules and wagons.

Leaving home with all the prejudice invariably attaching to untried experiments, and with many in our camp opposed to their use, and looking forward confidently to their failure, I believe at this time I may speak for every man in our party, when I say there is not one of them who would not prefer the most indifferent of our camels to four of our best mules; and I look forward, hopefully, to the time when they will be in general use in all parts of our country.

Reading the accounts of travellers who had used them a great deal in the East, and who, I presumed, were entirely

acquainted with their habits and powers, I was rendered extremely anxious on the subject of their swimming; foreseeing that, however useful they might be as beasts of burden in inhabited parts of the country, their usefulness would be impaired, if not entirely lost, to those who desired to use them where ferry boats and other such conveniences did not exist.

The enterprising priest, Father Huc, whose travels have lately been published, in speaking of his detention at the Yellow River, in China, because of the impossibility of crossing the camels, concludes by saying "for this animal cannot swim"; hence my great anxiety for the entire success of this experiment with camels was very much increased on my arrival at the Colorado River. All my pleasure in looking upon this noble stream, and all the satisfaction I derived in the reflection of a successful journey accomplished, was clouded by this doubt. However, the effort was to be made, and after having resolved in my own mind what to do in the event of failure, I determined to test the truth of the statements which I had seen in relation to that fact. The first camel brought down to the river's edge refused to take the water. Anxious, but not discouraged, I ordered another one to be brought, one of our largest and finest; and only those who have felt so much anxiety for the success of an experiment can imagine my relief on seeing it take to the water, and swim boldly across the rapidly flowing river. We then tied them, each one to the saddle of another, and without the slightest difficulty, in a short time swam them all to the opposite side in gangs, five in a gang; to my delight, they not only swam with ease, but with apparently more strength than horses or mules. One of them, heading up stream, swam a considerable distance against the current, and all landed in safety on the other side.

On reaching the settlements of California, I have concluded to despatch Lieutenant Thorburn, U. S. Navy, immediately to Washington with the notes and astronomi-

cal observations, in order that he may prepare a map of our route.

In closing this report, I desire to say a word, in conclusion, of the officer who bears it. His reputation in his own service would render unnecessary any commendations of mine, but the department of which you are the head, being unacquainted with his merits, I desire to make them known to you. He has evinced on this journey an activity, zeal, intelligence, and courage, rarely to be found combined in any one man, and has been to me, not only a most able assistant, but an agreeable companion throughout the entire exploration; and I ask as an especial favor from the department, if the work is to be continued, that he be not detached from his present duty.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

E. F. BEALE,

*Superintendent.*

Hon. JOHN B. FLOYD,

*Secretary of War,*

Washington, D. C.

The following are a few extracts from Beale's Journal while engaged on the wagon road survey which is outlined in the above report. The Journal was also ordered printed by resolution of the Senate.

July 7, 1857. We started at 4:30 A.M., and travelled twelve miles, when we encamped for breakfast. Our crossing-place was called Cedar Bluffs. The grass is very fine and water abundant in holes filled by the late rain. We were passed on the road this morning by the monthly El Paso mail, on its way up, by which I received, forwarded by

some of my friends at San Antonio, a box about two feet square, for which the moderate charge of twenty dollars was made! The dangers of this road, however, justified any price for such matters. Scarcely a mile of it but has its story of Indian murder and plunder; in fact, from El Paso to San Antonio is but one long battle-ground—a surprise here, robbery of animals there. Every spring and watering-place has its history or anecdote connected with Indian violence and bloodshed. The country through which we have travelled to-day is entirely destitute of timber, except the mesquite bush, which grows almost everywhere in Texas. The road though rolling is excellent.

July 8. Up at half-past two and off at daybreak without breakfast. We travelled eleven miles to Howard's Spring, where we stopped to breakfast and water the animals. This place seems to have been famous for Indian surprises. Near it we passed the graves of seven who had been killed by the savages, and still nearer, within a hundred yards or so, the bones of a sergeant, and some two or three dragoons who were here killed by them. The bodies had apparently been disinterred by animals, and the ghastly remains of the poor fellows who had perished there were scattered on the ground. Captain Lee (U. S. Army) gave us the history of the fight, which occurred some months ago.

Howard's Spring is a small hole containing apparently about a quarter of a barrel of water, but

is in reality inexhaustible. It is directly under a bluff of rock in the bed of a dry creek, and to get at the water it is necessary to descend about eight feet by rude steps cut in the rock; the water has to be passed up in buckets, and the animals watered from them. There is but little grass here, and no timber but greasewood and mesquite, and not much of that; a few stunted cedars that grow around the bluff of the spring are neither large enough for shade or fuel.

The rain has brought the grass forward wonderfully, and with it an abundance of beautiful flowers, so that the prairie for the last few days has been filled with perfume and richly colored flowers, which would have been no disgrace to the most costly hothouse. The whole of the country is vastly improved by these grateful showers, which have clothed it everywhere with verdure, and filled the air with fragrance.

Of large game we have seen but little, but turkeys and partridges abound in great numbers; in fact, the whistle of "Bob White" is with us all the time.

The camels came into camp with us. We find one great trouble, and the only one, in managing them is that we know nothing about the method of packing them, and have it all to learn. In consequence of our want of knowledge in this particular, we have several with sore backs, which, however, I am glad to observe, heal much more rapidly than similar abrasures on the backs of horses or

mules. As soon as we discover one to be getting sore, it is immediately freed of its burden, and in a day or two is ready for service again. They seem almost entirely indifferent to the best grass, and to prefer any kind of bush to it. To-day we found another food they seem particularly to relish, the name of which we do not know. The wild grape-vine is a great favorite with them, and as it grows plentifully, they will fare well on it. It seems that they like most the herbs and boughs of bitter bushes, which all other animals reject. The more I see of them the more interested in them I become, and the more I am convinced of their usefulness. Their perfect docility and patience under difficulties render them invaluable, and my only regret at present is that I have not double the number.

After remaining a few hours at Howard's Spring we resumed our march, and soon regained the plain. At the crest of the hill, as we came upon the level land again, we found a new-made grave, probably another added to the long list of Indian victims with which the entire trail is filled.

We encamped without water on the open prairie; grass good, but no timber whatever.

This evening many of our party have seen Indians, but for me, "Ah, sinner that I am, I was not permitted to witness so glorious a sight." encourage the young men, however, in the belief that deer, bushes, etc., which they have mistaken

for Indians, are all veritable Comanches, as it makes them watchful on guard at night.

Sept. 18.—Camp 17. . . . We leave here to-day at noon to explore this great plain and shall endeavor to go as nearly west as possible to the Colorado Grande. I should suppose this plain to be, at its widest part, from eighty to one hundred miles in width. To our left, that is to the south and southwest, a range of mountains seems to terminate in long cape-like mesas which extend into the plain we are traversing. Ahead the view is unbounded, only the blue points of a mountain appearing far in the distance. The weather is clear and warm, making the uncertainty of water ahead rather unpleasant.

The slopes of the mesas on our left seem to be covered with a heavy growth of pine timber. The nearest is about ten miles south of us. Leaving our supper camp at dark we travelled by night, and the night dark, for ten miles across the country to the northwest, and so level was the surface that not a wagon stopped for a moment. Going ahead with two or three of my party I made fires every three or four miles, as guides to the wagons, and such was the level character of the country that those behind me told me they could frequently see the flash of my match as I would light it to kindle the fire. In gathering greasewood bushes for one of these fires Thorburn picked up in his hand a rattlesnake, but fortunately the night was so cool that, I presume, the reptile was torpid with cold,

so that when the fire blazed up I shot him with my pistol where Thorburn had dropped him.

Resuming our march at sunrise we travelled twelve miles, the country assuming a slightly more rolling character as we advanced. We crossed many broad and well-beaten Indian trails all going to the southwest and northeast but none toward the direction we were travelling. Our guide, however, still retained his confident air and assured me there was no doubt of our finding water a short distance beyond.

A half mile further and he came back to tell that the distant mountain, towards which our course was directed, was not the one he thought and that he was completely lost. I ought to have killed him there but did not.

We were now thirty-two miles from water and in a country entirely unknown. Encamping at once, I despatched the two dromedaries to the east, while, with a few men on our strongest horses, I started to the west. On our line we travelled through some low hills and following an Indian trail came suddenly upon a most wonderful sight. This was a chasm in the earth or apparently a split in the very centre of a range of hills from the top to the bottom.

Seeing that the Indians had descended I determined to try it, so picking out the least precipitous part and scrambling down and leading our horses and zigzagging, we at last reached the bottom. Indian signs were abundant in the caves on either



side and a trail led up the middle of the ravine. From appearances I should judge the Indians wintered here after gathering the piñon on the surrounding mountainsides. Finding no water or the appearance of any we turned our faces toward home. Arriving at camp I found the dromedary men had found a river (the little Colorado, I presume) about sixteen or twenty miles off but very rough to approach.

Our animals were now beginning to suffer very much, having been almost constantly at work for thirty-six hours without water; and one of the most painful sights I have ever witnessed was a group of them standing over a small barrel of water and trying to drink from the bung-hole, frantic with distress and eagerness to get at it. The camels seemed to view this proceeding with great contempt and kept quietly browsing on the grass and the bushes. . . . Hitching up the teams we commenced our retreat at dark and about three o'clock in the morning it was found necessary to turn the animals out and drive them to water.

The moment they were released they started off in a gallop, for well they remembered the last water we had left and they did not cease galloping until they reached the creek. I arrived with Thorburn at seven in the morning, the camels were sent on in advance and shortly after our arrival here, although like the rest of us they had been on the road all night, they were started back with eight or ten barrels of water for the camp at the

wagons. Six of the camels are worth half the mules we have though we have some good ones. My admiration for the camels increases daily with my experience of them. The harder the test they are put to the more fully they seem to justify all that can be said of them.

October 9.—Camp 25. . . . Passing the point, our doubts were all set at rest most satisfactorily. The stream turned abruptly to the westward and in that direction a glorious view broke upon us. For sixty miles an immense plain extended to the west only bounded by a distant range of mountains in that direction, through which we thought we saw such great depressions as to make a passage easy. This we trust is the Colorado range. Directly west is a huge mountain which I called Mount Buchanan and connected with it another which I called Mount Benton. Altogether the prospect is the finest we have had on the road.

Many Indian signs are presented about our camp. A few hundred yards below is a *rancheria* deserted, likely, by its people on our approach. It probably contained some thirty or forty savages. . . . We came nearly ten miles to-day; six on a southwesterly course. The fresh Indian signs induce me to believe water may be found quite near us in the morning but we encamped too late this evening to look for it.

October 10.—Camp 26. While waiting in camp for the mules which this morning had been sent up the creek to water, our geologist came into

camp much excited to inform us that while engaged in cracking stones on the mountainside, three Indians had crept up to his gun, a short distance from him, and after taking it had drawn their bows upon him and he was obliged to beat a rapid retreat to camp, which was fortunately not over half a mile from him. I immediately sent my three boys, May, Ham, and Joe, to look after the thieves and to bring them to camp. They did not succeed in finding them though they trailed them to the spot. Here they found shoe tracks an extraordinary distance apart, and of large size, coming directly toward camp; but as our geologist says he walked on his return these could not have been his, especially as the toe had made deep impressions in the sand. On returning to camp the boys saw two Indians quite near who immediately fired their arrows at them. This was returned by double-barrelled guns and hearing this at camp, Mr. Thorburn and I started at once. A few hundred yards from camp in the bottom of the valley we saw the Indians running and the boys hot foot after them, both parties firing as they ran. We immediately joined the chase which proved very good practice for a while but soon began to tell on the lungs. In a few minutes the mounted party joined us. I ordered the men by no means to kill the Indians but to take them alive. Directly opposite the camp is a dark red butte very rocky, high, and steep. Here we fairly ran them to earth near the top. The first caught was a boy apparently

fifteen years of age; but where was the other? We had completely surrounded the conical peak of the hill and though a minute search had been made we had not found him. Still I knew he was not over fifty steps from me so we formed a complete cordon around the spot where he was last seen. At last one of the men looking at a greasewood bush not larger than an ordinary rosewood bush discovered him close to the root, lying apparently coiled around it and so completely concealed that even within six feet of him he could not be seen. He was dragged out, roped, and carried to camp. Here he was well fed and both of them clothed from head to foot. I shall use them as guides to the Colorado and then either take them on and bring them back next winter or allow them to return from the river. . . .

In the morning as soon as it was light enough to see we were off again. Turning the point which makes out from the high peak, which I called Frank Murray's peak, we entered a wide gorge which seemed to cut the mountain far upward towards its centre. It was rough with stones, and overgrown in places with willow and rank weeds through which Indian trails with fresh tracks and other signs showed their immediate presence. We found a fine cold spring about three miles from the entrance to the pass, and pursuing our way soon came to a short but steep hill at the end of the gorge which seemed to be the summit of the pass. Ascending this the river lay below us. We had

arrived at the end of our long journey, so far without an accident. Only those who have toiled so far, with life, reputation, everything staked upon the result, can imagine the feelings with which I looked down from the heights of this mountain upon the cottonwoods and the shining surface of the river far below us.

At a great distance to the northwest a snow-capped chain of mountains marked the Sierra Nevada, the mountains of my own State, and my heart warmed as I thought of the many friends beyond that distant chain who were looking anxiously for my arrival and who would share with me the feelings of gratified pride with which the result of a successful expedition would be crowned.

The expedition went on to Fort Tejon to rest the animals and to recruit the courage and the strength of the men. On January 1st, General Beale began the eastward and homeward journey and on January 23d, he reached the Colorado where, this time at least, a most surprising experience awaited him. We will describe it in his own words.

“Shortly after leaving camp my clerk, F. E. Kerlin, who, with two of my party had been despatched the day previous in order to have my boat ready for crossing, was seen returning. Various surmises were immediately started as to the cause and as soon as he was within speaking distance he was questioned eagerly for the news. He gave us a

joyful surprise by the information that the steamer *General Jesup*, Captain Johnson, was at the crossing waiting to convey us to the opposite side. It is difficult to conceive the varied emotions with which this news was received. Here in a wild almost unknown country, inhabited by savages, the great river of the West hitherto declared unnavigable had for the first time borne upon its bosom that emblem of civilization, a steamer. The enterprise of a private citizen had been rewarded by success for the future, was to lend its aid in the settlement of our vast western territory. But alas! for the poor Indians living on its banks and rich meadow lands. The rapid current which washes its shores will hardly pass more rapidly away. The steam whistle of the *General Jesup* sounded the death knell of the river race.

“In a few minutes after our arrival the steamer came alongside the bank and our party was transported at once with all our baggage to the other side. We then swam the mules over and bidding Captain Johnson good-bye he was soon steaming down the river towards Fort Yuma three hundred and fifty miles below. I confess I felt jealous of his achievement and it is to be hoped the government will substantially reward the enterprising spirit which prompted a citizen at his own risk and at great hazard to undertake so perilous and uncertain an expedition.

“I had brought the camels with me and as they stood on the bank surrounded by hundreds of

unclad savages and mixed with these the dragoons of my escort, and the steamer slowly revolving her wheels preparatory to a start, it was a curious and interesting picture.

“The camels I had placed in camp within a few hundred yards of the summit of the Sierra Nevada immediately on my arrival, for the sake of testing their capability of withstanding the cold and to this date they have lived in two or three feet of snow, fattening and thriving wonderfully all the while. Lately in a terrible snowstorm the wagon carrying provisions to the camp could proceed no further. The camels were immediately sent to the rescue and brought the load through snow and ice to camp, though the six strong mules of the team were unable to extricate the empty wagons.”

A month later General Beale was able to write in his Journal: “Here my labors end. The main road to Fort Defiance being intersected at this point by the road which I have explored and surveyed to Fort Tejon, California. A year in the wilderness ended! During this time I have conducted my party from the Gulf of Mexico to the shores of the Pacific Ocean, and back again to the eastern terminus of the road, through a country for a great part entirely unknown, and inhabited by hostile Indians, without the loss of a man. I have tested the value of the camel, marked a new road to the Pacific, and travelled four thousand miles without an accident.” ✓

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE JOURNEY ALONG THE 35TH PARALLEL

Beale's Official Report—Railway Surveys from Fort Smith, Arkansas, to the Colorado—Choteau's and the Valley of the Canadian—The Rio del Norte at Albuquerque—Advantages of this Route for Wagon or Railroads—Extracts from Beale's Journal—Inscription Rock—Breakfast of Wild Cat—A Visit to Zuni—Advice to the Chief—"A Merrie Jest of ye White Man and ye Indian"—Indian Rumors and a Treaty of Peace—Civil War and the Close of the Wagon Road Period—"Wanderer" Writes about It from Gum Springs to the Philadelphia *Press*—The Pacific Railroad as a Government Project—Santa Fé Traders—Praise of Beale as Pioneer and Road Builder.

GENERAL BEALE'S official report to the Secretary of War on the results of his next journey, the survey from Fort Smith, Arkansas, to the Colorado, reads as follows:

CHESTER, PA., December 15, 1859.

SIR:

I have the honor to transmit herewith the report of my last expedition from Fort Smith, Arkansas, to the Colorado River, from which I have lately returned. This expedition, commencing as it did in the fall of 1858, and being prosecuted on the open plains of the 35th parallel of latitude



during the entire winter of 1858 and 1859, affords a striking and gratifying proof of what I have stated heretofore of the route on which I have been employed, that winter offers no obstacle on that parallel to the passage of men and wagons, or travel of any description. During the entire winter my men were exposed night and day to the open atmosphere, some of the messes not using for the whole journey their tents, and others but very rarely. The winter was said to have been one of uncommon severity, yet, although my men were exposed on their guards at night, and in their duties with pick-axe and shovel in cutting down the embankments of creeks, and with the axe and saw in making bridges, during the day, and to the continual discomfort of a daily march, not one of them had occasion to complain of the slightest sickness during the journey.

The country over which we passed was one of the most attractive description. As I have stated to you in a previous letter, a wide and level river bottom is offered as a general line of travel all the way from the last settlements of Arkansas to the first settlements of New Mexico, and, although I did not follow this line exclusively, but frequently deviated from it to take the divide, I do not remember a heavy pull between Little River in Arkansas and the settlements of New Mexico.

Nature has supplied the country over which we passed most bountifully with the three great requisites for an overland road—wood, grass, and water. Although I remained in New Mexico for nearly two months, it was not time lost, as I employed myself and a portion of my men in an exploration to the eastward along the line of the Conchas River, which afforded the most gratifying results. On the termination of this exploration, I broke up my temporary camp in February, and pursued my journey to the westward.

The broken nature of the country lying immediately west of Fort Smith, Arkansas, occasioned by the approach

of the spurs of the mountain ranges, which run for a distance of nearly one hundred and fifty miles beyond the boundary line of the Indian Territory to the Arkansas and Canada Rivers, renders the construction of a railroad elsewhere than along the valleys of the streams a work of no little difficulty and cost. From Fort Smith two routes have now been reconnoitred; one passing along the head waters of Poteau Creek, San Bois, and the south fork of the Canadian, and then crossing to the waters of Boggy River, whence the line descends to the Canadian valley near the site of old Fort Arbuckle; the other traversing the country immediately south of the rivers, but not touching the valleys, and crossing the numerous spurs and several elevated ridges east of the passage of the Canadian at North Fork Town, beyond which the surface east of Little River is even more broken than the more eastern portion of the route.

Along either of these lines the maximum grade could not, except at an immense cost, be reduced below fifty to the mile, and the tortuous character which would of necessity attach to a line located upon either route would so increase its length that, without considering the increase of distance due to a proper allowance for ascents and descents, it is questionable, if upon the score of distance alone it would not be advisable to make the location along the valleys. The general course of the Canadian is remarkably direct between its mouth and the 104th meridian, it never runs further north than the 35th parallel, and but once passes below it, and in that instance flows for a distance of about sixty miles parallel to it, and only a few miles below it. A line located along the valley of this stream, from its mouth to the point at which it would leave it near the 104th meridian, would not exceed six hundred and thirty-five miles in length. There are but few points along the river where any considerable work would be required. East of North Fork Town some few bluffs would offer unimportant obstacles, but west of that point a magnificent valley offers every

facility for the construction of a first-class road, with very low grades and easy curvature.

The advantages which attach to a route which offers a continuous river valley for so long a distance for its location cannot be too strongly urged; there is every reason to believe that from Fort Smith to the main divide, between the waters of the Canadian and those of the Rio de las Gallinas, an unbroken ascending grade can be had that will at no point exceed twenty-five feet per mile; the entire ascent from Fort Smith to this point would be fifty-two hundred and sixty-five feet, and as there would be no descents whatever the equated distance would only amount to seven hundred and eighty-five miles of level road.

From the divide just mentioned to the Rio Grande at San Felipe the distance would be about ninety-five miles, over a country which would compel the adoption of grades of 52.8 feet per mile, though careful examination might reduce them. Upon this division all the heavy work would occur, comprising the bridging of the Gallinas, the Pecos, and Rio Grande, and tunnelling the summits between these streams; the equated distance from the Canadian summit to the Rio Grande would be one hundred and forty-five miles, making the entire distance (equated) from Fort Smith to San Felipe, nine hundred and thirty miles. The road from Fort Smith to San Felipe may be properly divided into three sections: the first extending from Fort Smith to the eastern boundary of Texas, the second to the mouth of the Rio de las Conchas near the 104th meridian; the third thence to the Rio Grande.

The valley of the Arkansas is similar to that of western streams generally, the highlands alternately receding from and approaching the river—the bottom lands sometimes stretching out for miles, sometimes disappearing and giving place to bluffs; except where it is necessary to cut through these bluffs the work will be very light, the smooth level character of the bottom land offering every facility for easy

construction. East of the old trading post known as Choteau's, the valley of the Canadian is very like that of the Arkansas, the bluffs, however, occur less frequently and the liability to overflow seems to be lessened. Going west the tributaries to the main streams diminish in number and size, and if a line be located upon the south bank of the river there would be but two bridges of any size needed. West of Choteau's, the valley of the Canadian is very wide, rising very gently and with an almost inappreciable slope from the stream toward the high land.

The river itself is small and never apparently leaves its banks; long, straight stretches are of frequent occurrence; tangents of from ten to thirty miles in length can be easily laid along the valley; the soil is a light sandy loam that can be easily handled and will form a firm compact roadbed; the dryness of the climate will expose embankments to but little loss from washing; the fertility of the soil that characterizes the entire valley of the Canadian; wild grape-vines grow in the greatest profusion, not only in the bottoms, but on the first plateau; there is but little doubt of the perfect adaptability of this country to the production of wine; the high lands that bound the river are covered at all seasons with a dense growth of nutritious grasses that will serve for the pasturage of countless herds; the country throughout this section is well wooded for the most part; as far as Choteau's, oak, hickory, cedar, etc., of large size abound; beyond, black oak, hackberry and cottonwood are found, in sufficient quantities to serve for railroad purposes and the wants of settlers, besides, the Washita Valley, and those of its tributaries will furnish a large amount of similar wood, with a mean transportation not exceeding twenty miles.

The Canadian supplies a large quantity of water fit for all purposes, while nearly every little arroyo that approaches it from the hills on either side is well furnished with ever-flowing springs. The second division of the road follows the valley of the Canadian exclusively to the mouth of the

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Conchas—the character of the country is similar to that near the Antelope Hills; about the 104th meridian the valley narrows, but soon opens again, and for fifty miles east of the Conchas offers to the eye a magnificent expanse of bottom land that cannot fail to please both agriculturist and engineer. A good supply of timber is found along this division, water is abundant, and the character of the works precisely similar to that of the western portion of the first section. At the Angosturas, a short distance east of the Conchas, there is an admirable site for a bridge across the Canadian, should the north side of the river be chosen for this road. About this point the Canadian is a clear, free-flowing stream, passing over a beautiful gravel bed, and running between banks of from ten to twenty feet in height; large groves of cottonwood and hackberry occur at frequent intervals.

Up the valley of the Conchas, a tributary of the Canadian, there will be no trouble in finding a favorable line. The valley is large, free from ridges, rising very regularly, and smooth in its surface; the approach to the divide between it and the Gallinas is very gentle, not requiring a grade of more than twenty-five feet. At the summit a short tunnel will be needed. The site, however, is most favorable, and the material a soft sandstone, easily pierced. The descent to the Gallinas will be regular and easy, at the rate of thirty feet per mile; a bridge can be easily thrown across this stream with a span of one hundred feet; the approaches on either side will need but little embankment.

Beyond the Gallinas, the country is rolling, and it will be necessary to form a summit near the Chupainas; the grades approaching it will not exceed forty feet per mile; the work around will be comparatively light; it is doubtful whether there would be any rock excavation. An admirable site for a bridge across the Pecos can be found near the mouth of the canyon about five miles above Anton Chico. At this point machine shops, etc., could be advantageously estab-

lished, as there is an abundance of coal and timber in the immediate vicinity, and a large water-power might be commanded; good building stone abounds, nor is it deficient at the Gallinas. By crossing the Pecos at this point rather than at or below Anton Chico, the ascent to the high land in approaching the canyon Blanco is materially lessened. To the canyon the route would traverse a somewhat broken country, rendering grades of about forty feet per mile necessary. At the summit, between the canyon and Gallisteo creek, a short tunnel through an easily excavated material would be needed, and a small amount of moderately heavy work would occur in passing to the Rio Grande. As far as the Lagunas timber is found in abundance, and in descending the valley of Gallisteo creek, mottes of cedar and piñon are frequent, while the mountains in the immediate vicinity possess large forests which will furnish an endless amount of fuel.

Throughout this division of the road there will be no difficulty in procuring the necessary timber for the purpose of construction. Pine, hemlock, and other forest trees of large size abound in the Santa Fe mountain, and along the head-waters of the Pecos, and other streams. The construction of a bridge at San Felipe, while a work of no small magnitude, will offer no serious obstacle; three spans of two hundred feet each will be necessary. The bed of the stream is of solid rock, affording the best of foundations for the abutments and piers. Good building stone can be obtained in the immediate vicinity.

While a mere reconnoissance does not afford sufficient data for an elaborate and exact estimate of cost, an approximation may be made from notes taken along the route that will not vary much from the amount to be expended in the actual construction of the road—an estimate which it is thought will fully cover all expenditure is appended. It is based upon such knowledge of the country as can be had without the actual use of transit and level instruments. It

is true that the sinuosities of the Canadian River might, by those disposed to find fault, be urged against the route but when we consider the width of its valley, its gentle rise, the abundant supply of wood and water, the very small cost of construction, and the capabilities of the country for supporting a large population, these constitute, it must be acknowledged, advantages that are not found to belong, in an equal degree, to any other projected route across the continent.

Beyond the Antelope Hills even this objection cannot obtain, for the course of the Canadian is remarkably straight from the 104th meridian to that point, and if this portion of the line could be connected with the frontier of either Missouri or Arkansas without too great an increase of cost, the 35th parallel route would be unrivalled in its claim to consideration.

The north fork of the Canadian would probably afford a more direct location than the main stream, and the summit between it and the latter could be crossed without the adoption of objectionable grades. Whether the valley, however, would prove as favorable in other respects is questionable. Such a line would be worthy of a careful examination and comparison with the other. Another route from the southwestern portion of Missouri to the Antelope Hills is worthy of consideration. The country west of the Missouri frontier comprises a series of gently rolling prairies, well wooded and watered, of excellent soil, and not so broken as to offer any serious impediment to the building of a good road with easy grade. No difficult streams would require bridging, and the summits between the water courses could be easily crossed. A railroad connecting the town of Neosha with St. Louis is projected, and will, no doubt, be in a short time constructed. This is a fact of no little consequence in this connection, and unless the enterprise of citizens of Arkansas arouses them to a sense of their position, and efforts are made to connect the flourishing

little city of Fort Smith by rail with the east, she may forfeit by the neglect of her people the advantages nature has bestowed upon her.

The respective merits, however, of these proposed lines can only be decided by a critical and careful examination by the civil engineer; the level and transit instruments solve difficulties and establish facts in a few days that would defy simple barometric and compass reconnoissances for years. A twelvemonth of careful survey would furnish reliable and accurate estimate for the entire route from the frontiers of the States to California, and in that time an examination could be made of all the branch lines, that the expediency of reducing the distances and grades to the lowest limits might suggest. I have already described to you the country lying between the Del Norte and the Colorado River, nevertheless a recapitulation may not be thought unnecessary.

Leaving Albuquerque, the first fifty miles over a country of sandy soil, not very well supplied with timber, but possessing in parts a fair amount of grass; thence to Zuni, grass, wood, and water are found in sufficient quantities. The timber is pine, of the largest proportions existing in noble forests. Intermediate in this distance, by an exploration to the northward, I made important discoveries of mineral (copper ore) and a country of uncommon beauty. This region I have described in my journal, which accompanies this letter, as far as the village of Zuni, and at it, a distance of one hundred and fifty miles to the westward of Albuquerque. Corn forage may be obtained at short intervals on the road.

From Zuni to the Little Colorado River the country is rolling, and well supplied with wood, water, and grass, and is of a good surface for the whole distance, excepting the wide sandy beds of several creeks, which are at times several feet deep, and at others dry. Once arrived on the banks of the Little Colorado, there is before the traveller a



wide river bottom, and abundant grass and timber, to the base of the San Francisco Mountain. At this point the road ascends to its greatest elevation, through pine forests and magnificent valleys, and by an ascent so gradual that there is but little appearance of it to the eye. From the San Francisco Mountain to Floyd's Peak the country is very much of the same character as that between Zuni and the Little Colorado River, being high and rolling, but not hilly. It is nearly equally divided between open plains, covered with nutritious grasses, and dense forests of pine, piñon, and cedar. Between Floyd's Peak and the Colorado River, timber becomes scarcer, although there is still a great abundance until within forty miles of the river, when the country assumes a barren and sterile appearance.

Among the important discoveries made during this exploration was the existence of the finest quality and abundant quantity of timber in a mountain, which I called on my first expedition "Harry Edwards' Mountain," and which is not over forty-five or fifty miles from "Beale's Crossing" of the Colorado River. I cannot conclude this letter without urgently calling your attention to the imperative necessity of building a bridge across the Rio del Norte, at or near Albuquerque. This is a military, civil, and emigrant necessity. In support of this assertion, I have the honor to enclose you the replies of distinguished officers of the army serving in New Mexico, and thoroughly acquainted with the subject, to the committee appointed at a public meeting held in Albuquerque for the purpose of considering this matter. I also desire to call your attention to the itinerary which accompanies this letter. It is in itself an abbreviated history or description of the country from Arkansas to California, by which an emigrant may pursue the route of the 35th parallel with a perfect knowledge from hour to hour of the character of the country in advance of him, its resources, climate, production, Indians, and game.

Without intending to draw invidious comparisons between the various routes from our western border to the Pacific ocean in favor of that by the 35th parallel, I think I can, with safety, say that none other offers the same facilities for either wagon or railroad.

It is the shortest, the best timbered, the best grassed, the best watered, and certainly, in point of grade, better than any other line between the two oceans. with which I am acquainted.

For the first of these assertions an inspection of the map is quite sufficient proof; for the second, I rely upon the report of Lieutenant Whipple and my own observation, and especially my last exploration, which, by the discovery of fine pine timber in Harry Edwards' Mountain, enable me to state that the 35th parallel road carries abundance of cedar and pine to within forty miles of the State line of California, within which, on the same parallel, there is abundance in the whole Sierra Nevada range of mountains. For the third proposition, I rely upon the concurrent testimony of all who have travelled the road and compared it with other trans-continental routes, who agree with me that it is habitable throughout. For the fourth assertion, I think there can be no better proof than the fact that water is at but one point thirty miles distant; and for the last assertion, I rely upon the profile of the country, which has been prepared from the instrumental observations of my two explorations.

It is my firm belief that whatever influences may tend to divert travel from the road at present, the future will fully sustain the judgment of those who now advocate its claims.

I have given my views in this letter of the facilities offered by the 35th parallel for a railroad as far as New Mexico. Accompanying this is an estimate also of the cost of that work. These may be considered by you of some value, and I am willing to give them to the public, in the



**Portsmouth Square, San Francisco**

From a Lithograph of 1850



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hope that they may in some manner aid this great necessity of the age.

I have the honor to be your obedient servant,

E. F. BEALE,

*Superintendent.*

Hon. J. B. FLOYD,  
*Secretary of War,*  
Washington, D. C.

Estimate of cost of railroad, with double track, from Fort Smith, Arkansas, to San Felipe, New Mexico.

## FIRST DIVISION.

From Fort Smith to Antelope Hills, 377 miles; graduation, masonry, track, engineering expenses, and equipment.....\$ 9,311,900

## SECOND DIVISION.

From Antelope Hills to summit between Canadian and Gallinas, 308 miles; graduation, masonry, track, engineering expenses, and equipment..... 8,192,800

## THIRD DIVISION.

From summit to Rio Grande at San Felipe, 95 miles; graduation, masonry, track, engineering expenses and equipment ..... 3,886,400

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\$21,391,100

The following extracts are taken from General Beale's Journal of the expedition from Fort Smith to California.

March 22, 1859. Taking Drs. Floyd and Spiller, the Delaware, and Little Axe, I started to explore the valley of Inscription Rock. Turn-

ing back on our road of yesterday nearly to the head of the valley, I crossed to the opposite or northern side; following down the north side of the valley came first to a dry ravine which, however, has evidently at times much water in it, as the remains of a large Indian encampment proves.

Going on to the westward close under the mountain, and crossing a sandy piece of ground, for a mile or more I found another of similar character, and having old Indian signs about it; beyond this, perhaps two miles, discovered a large spring in a grove of small oak; this spring is about forty feet in diameter, a perfect circumference; good solid ground around even to the edge of the water, and issuing from it a rill of clear sweet water; the spring is seven feet in depth, a thicket of cottonwood grows just below it, and a long line of red willow, of small growth, marks the course of the rivulet which flows from it: Inscription Rock bears by compass SW. by W.; distant about eight miles; between this point and the rock the grass is everywhere abundant and the soil good, but stony in parts; at the spring where we are at present encamped, are several [oaks] of great size, one of them over four feet in diameter, and an abundance of small oaks.

Leaving our noon camp and crossing a low sandy ridge, we came into a sheltered valley; here, fringed with cottonwood, we found a sparkling fresh flowing brook; it was of a size which in the Eastern States would be called a fine trout stream, and was

as lovely a spot as one would desire to see, flowing, as it did, over the rocks, and making beautiful little cascades of clear bright water; some enormous pines grow in the bottom and much cedar, with bark resembling white oak in every respect; the distance from the spring to this stream is about two miles NW. and its bearing from the Inscription NE.; remaining awhile at the stream, we pursued our way along the base of the mountain and crossing a dry bed of what is evidently at times a large stream, we came at nightfall to another dry bed, where we encamped, deferring until to-morrow a search up it for water; in the bed of this stream is found limestone in abundance, of a gray color and of finest quality; in this stone we found innumerable fossils, some of which we took to camp with us; killed a catamount this evening.

March 23. This morning we followed up the dry bed, and in a mile or two found abundant running water. In many places the solid limestone made canyons of twelve to twenty feet in height. Returning at ten, we raised camp and pursued our journey, still keeping the northern side of the valley and the base of the mountain, which is densely covered with pine of the largest size, and the valley rapidly becoming green in grass. Leaving camp and pursuing the same course at the foot of the mountains about northwest, we came in a mile upon another fine stream larger than the first. This was fringed like the other with cottonwood and oak, and in a grove of giant pines, on a little

mound, we encamped for noon, Inscription Rock bearing about S. by E. The bottom lands as well as the hillsides are of the richest quality of soil.

Following down the stream after nooning we saw on the opposite bank the ruins of an ancient building, which we crossed to examine. We found it larger and more perfect than those on the summit of Inscription Rock. The wall remaining was about ten feet in height, built of stone, all of the same size and regularly laid. Opposite, in strange contrast with its massive appearance, were some deserted huts, built of mud and twigs, the houses of the present inhabitants of the country. It was ancient and modern Greece. Leaving the stream and pursuing our course, and passing over a soil of incomparable richness, we came at sundown after travelling about four miles to another brisk running stream, on which we encamped in large pines at the foot of the mountain. . . . I killed another catamount this evening.

March 24. This morning, breakfast on wild-cat being over, we started to explore the creek to its head. We found much rich copper ore on its banks. About a mile above our camp several rich and pretty pieces of malachite were found. Following up the mountain we came to a grove of quaking aspen. Above this the stream flowed almost to its head, over a broad flat rock which seemed as though it might be the very backbone of the world.

We found the stream had three forks. Two we



explored to their heads. Both issued out from under the rocks near the summit of the mountain. The right hand fork is the largest and bursts out of the mountainside a full-grown brook and goes on its way making cascades over the rocks, rushing and sparkling through the crevices in fine style. In ascending these forks we found several spots where cattail was growing luxuriantly, and which gave unmistakable evidence of living water. The view from the summit was of the grandest description. We found the mountain covered to the summit with lofty pines, and but little snow, scarcely any upon it.

Leaving this camp and travelling about five miles, still along the foot of the mountain and over the richest description of soil, we arrived at the largest stream we had yet seen. It would be impossible to do justice to the view from our present camp. Guided by the roar of the water we followed up the stream a hundred or two yards above our camp and there found it issuing from the mountain, roaring and boiling and struggling among the rocks of the canyon. Looking up toward the mountain, up the bed of the stream, nothing could be wilder or more savage. The powerful stream pent up in the narrow solid rocks seemed in torture to get free, and was twisted and turned from its arrow-like career at every inch by the rocks which stubbornly opposed it. At times it broke with tremendous bounds in cascades, and at others formed deep whirls and pools of foam, al-

ways violent, restless and noisy. The steep sides of the mountain even to the verge of the canyon, and where there was room within it were covered with pine, and on all sides huge rocks and broken trees, with occasional patches of snow.

Turning from this scene of savage grandeur, just below and stretching for miles was a quiet, smiling, abundantly fertile valley, through the centre of which the fierce stream above flowed as peacefully as though its waters had never been vexed and tortured by the rocky walls of a canyon. On the opposite side, about five miles off, a high mesa of red and white sandstone rose perpendicularly, its summit and its base covered with cedar. . . . This stream cuts directly across the valley we have been traversing, and enters a canyon on the opposite side . . . its course is nearly north and south. Here also we found, in a hill on the sides of which we encamped and quite near to where the river comes out of the canyon, rich copper ore. From this point Inscription Rock bears about SE. by S. and distant some eighteen miles.

The climate of this region is most unexceptionable; the days warm, the air pure, the nights cool without being too cold. . . .

March 25. To-day I return to camp, my duties requiring my presence there. I shall cross to the opposite side of the valley, and return by it to Inscription Rock; my exploration has been in every way most satisfactory, disclosing as it has a country rich in everything that makes the habitation of

man prosperous and happy; to New Mexico it is of incalculable importance, and I trust to live to see my labors of the past few days rendered useful by the enterprise of our people, and some day to find flourishing settlements and prosperous communities where our footsteps have trodden, in what is now a wilderness known only to the wretched Indians who now inhabit it. . . .

March 26. We left El Moro, Inscription Rock, early, and travelling over our old road, which we found excellent, and well timbered and grassed, the surface being nearly level and without a hard pull, we nooned at the beautiful spring of the Ojo Pescado; we crossed the Zuni River before coming to and after leaving this spring, a mile on either side of it; the river was full and running rapidly; it was about twenty-five feet in width and three in depth; it is sometimes quite dry where we crossed it though water is always to be found in it below.

After nooning we travelled on to within ten miles of Zuni, where we encamped near the river, in good grass and wood plenty. Going toward Zuni it is always well to encamp at a distance of ten miles or so from the town, as nearer, one does not find good grass or wood, the Indian sheep and ponies requiring it nearly all, besides which, most of the valley is cultivated in corn and wheat.

March 27. We entered Zuni to-day. We had a wagon under charge of Mr. George Beall three days in advance, trading with the Indians for corn, and having obtained a sufficiency we moved on

about six or seven miles from town to a good camp in the cedars and about half a mile from the river. The day was very disagreeable with a high wind blowing the dust in every direction, reminding us of Washington City in a winter gale. Before reaching the town about two miles we crossed the Zuni River for the last time, and already beginning to lose a large portion of its waters in the loose soil of the valley. The old Governor met me in the town with many compliments and congratulations, and bearing in his arms a box containing my "artificial horizon" which I had left with him in passing last winter.

He told me the charge had been a great burden on his mind and he was glad to be rid of the responsibility; rewarding him with several blankets and pieces of calico, I sat down in his house to hear the news. He had a long list of grievances. The United States had persuaded him into an alliance with the troops as auxiliaries in the late war with the Navajoes; his people had fought with our troops side by side like brothers; the United States had found it convenient to make peace with their enemies and had left their auxiliaries the prey of their powerful and numerous foes.

I told him I thought it served him right for meddling in things which did not concern him, and warned him for the future to avoid "all entangling alliances." I left town after giving some things to the Indians and trading for some corn-meal, and

through the dust which was nearly blinding, we rode to camp.

April 29. We arrived early this evening at the springs at the Colorado Mountain, where we found the water very plentiful. We played off a very good joke on the Indians last evening, which brought up our accounts quite square with them; about sundown after they had killed the mule and stolen the one mentioned yesterday, I caused the mules to be hitched up, and camp made ready in as much apparent confusion as possible, knowing the devils were watching every movement we made; it was so managed that we got off at night, so that they could not see the men we left behind concealed in the rocks.

After going a few miles as if we had been frightened off and were moving to seek more open ground, we encamped and built our fire. All this must have amused Mr. Indian vastly, and doubtless he chuckled hugely how they had frightened us. The men left behind lay in the rocks until daylight when, just as we expected, our red brothers came down to see the mule they had killed, and what damage besides they had done us, when our party fell upon them and killed four, returning to camp before we were ready to start in the morning, bringing bows, arrows, and scalps as vouchers; it was a good practical joke—"a merrie jest of ye white man and ye Indian."

April 30. Went to the summit of the mountain and to the base on the other side to look at the road.

We saw the river very plainly but could see nothing of the troops, and so shall make our preparations to go down and give the Mohaves a turn in the morning, for which the men are busy preparing their arms. . . . I shall take with me thirty-five men and three days' provisions on three camels. The men will go on foot, so that we shall not be encumbered with mules to guard while we are fighting; as for the camels, they will pack our provisions and require no guarding, as they will feed well tied up to a bush.

May 1. Left camp early with thirty-five men all on foot, and in fighting trim with nothing to carry but their rifles, knives, and revolvers, the camels packed with provisions following close behind us. We marched the twenty-five miles in six hours. On our arrival at the river we saw Indians, and the men as soon as they had drunk started out to get a shot. Whilst they were hunting them through the thick undergrowth which fills the bottom, and about three hours after we arrived, we were surprised at seeing three or four white men coming up the trail. These informed us that the troops were encamped on a bend of the river a few miles below, and that Colonel Hoffman had made a treaty with the Indians; so that we immediately called in our men much to their disappointment and intense disgust. Here I heard that our caches of provisions had been raised by the soldiers so that I would be obliged to go into

the settlements for more. Major Armistead is at present in command of the troops.

The construction and maintenance of national wagon roads across the plains was laid aside upon the outbreak of the Civil War and not resumed when peace came, as, in the meantime, the railway era had begun. The situation of affairs when General Beale was called to the post of surveyor-general, not to survey nor to examine land titles but to help keep the Pacific Coast territory in the Union, is well described by a correspondent of the *Philadelphia Press*, who under the signature of "Wanderer" writes to his paper in the following terms under date of October 15, 1859, from Gum Spring, Choctaw Nation.

. . . Having yesterday made more than the usual day's travel, and the ponies evincing distress, we have, early this afternoon, made camp and a huge fire under a spreading oak of lordly dimensions. We are east of the Winchester Mountains, and not more than two days' journey from Arkansas. I have the *cacoethes scribendi* upon me, and as we have had our coffee and several pipes, and the usual chat about our good old city of Philadelphia, I sprawl myself upon the machilla of my saddle to wear out the sun, now nearly two hours high, with writing something of the routes to the Pacific.

Ever since the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo gave us our California possessions, the same motive that actuates England to draw her Indian colonies to her by lessening the distance and shortening the length of travel between them and the mother country, and that also impels France to desire a ship canal across the Isthmus of Suez has induced

speculations and explorations for a railway route across this continent. There has been a myriad of theories deduced from books and nicely sketched; daring men have explored in every quarter; the Government press has poured out ponderous tome after tome filled with itineraries; appropriations have been made by Congress for the construction of wagon roads in order to facilitate the emigration of the hardy pioneers, who with their families plunge into the wildernesses of the Far West to raise up new settlements—these things have gone on steadily until the public mind has become fully awakened to the importance in a military as well as commercial point of view, of a railway between the Atlantic and the Pacific. The large majority of the people of the United States are undoubtedly in favor of some route, but the particular route to be selected is the question at issue.

A Pacific railroad as a Government project can only be sustained upon the ground of its necessity as a national work. Not to lose the force of an argument so vital, the route ought to be neither an extreme northern nor an extreme southern one, unless there are insuperable obstacles to a central route by which of course all sections of the country would be equally benefited. I don't mean that a pair of dividers should fix the centre and a route be marked and followed accordingly; but that the best practical route near the centre of the Confederacy should be selected; the one that gives the easiest crossing of the Rocky Mountains, and furnishes wood, water, and grass, at all seasons of the year. This route, beyond all cavil, is that laid down and travelled by Lieut. Beale. Of the wagon roads started some have been abandoned and others drag their slow length along. Beale rapidly marked his upon the route of the thirty-fifth parallel, crossed it and recrossed it with large parties and small parties, with camels and without them, with heavy teams and the last time, I am told, with a light buggy.

A paper which I found up the country, I think it was *The*



*St. Louis Republican*, contained the information that Mr. Beale had arrived home, that he had taken his party home by a more northern route in order to compare it as he had all the other routes with his own; that his examinations had been rigid and impartial and that the conclusion was irresistibly in favor of the route from Fort Smith over the thirty-fifth parallel through Albuquerque in New Mexico to California. It is the most direct route, not dipping as the route now followed by the overland mail does hundreds of miles south into Texas.

I am confident from what I have seen of it that it is as good a natural road as can be found. . . . Besides, from Albuquerque to California the road has been improved; it has been deeply marked by the heavy teams, trees have been cut down out of the way where it could be shortened, and bridges have been constructed over the streams. Then come the plains and you strike Little River. The Canadian is fordable, or a ferry is to be had at all times. The other streams between Fort Smith and Little River are crossed with substantial iron bridges sent out from Philadelphia. Mr. Edwards has his men now engaged upon the double span bridge over the Poteau, which will be completed ere long.

The Choctaws have commenced to improve the road over the Winchester Mountain, and a project is afoot to turnpike the road from the bridge through the fearful boggy bottom of the Poteau and Arkansas to the village of Skullyville. Thus will there be a good wagon road or road for any kind of travel from the East to California. Already railroads are creeping towards Fort Smith by the way of Little Rock from Memphis and from St. Louis. The forerunner of railway travel, the telegraph, will station itself soon, as soon, I learn, as the poles can be put up, at Fort Smith, which of itself will lessen the time of news communication from California three or four days. All these things are signs.

I have seen Santa Fe traders taking Beale's route as far as it would take them to their destinations. You never saw a Santa Fe party? Riding in advance is a young man armed with his six shooter and knife, and a fowling piece. His dress is for use rather than show, yet show is not forgotten as the red sash round his waist will testify, as well as the rich blue ribbon that binds his hat, and flutters its ends in the wind. His saddle has the high cantle and pommel, the broad wooden stirrups, the leg-flaps and the wide leathern *manchilla* that covers the frame in the day and serves at night as part of his bed to prevent the sharp stones and sticks and damp getting at him. All these like the old fashioned Spanish or Moorish saddles, the awful spurs and check bit weighing something less than a ton, must not be forgotten.

Anon and we see two hard-faced grave-looking men mounted upon serious-looking mules, that have their tails shaved off, except a slight bunch of hair at the end, giving them a ludicrous appearance. They are in deep chat but salute us with much dignity as we pass them. In the woods and prairie are others of the party hunting fresh meat for the evening meal. Then there are the heavily-laden wagons drawn by their half-dozen ox-teams each, the loose cattle, the teamsters, and the long ox-whip cracking on every side its eternal noise. We saw an Indian just behind the party tricked in his best. He was on his way to pay a visit. . . .

If Edward F. Beale had been a Massachusetts man, his services to his country would have teemed the papers with his exploits, his daring and his usefulness. The more credit to Massachusetts! A young lieutenant in the navy during the war with Mexico, not his least daring act was to carry despatches through Mexico itself. In California, he gathered the wild Indians that threatened the lives and property of the settlers and miners upon reserves and there taught them agriculture and to earn their own subsistence.

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His merit gained for him from California high praise, together with a commission as Brigadier-General. Hon. Jefferson Davis, when a Senator from Mississippi, before entering Gen. Pierce's cabinet was impressed with the belief that camels if introduced into this country would be of vast use in Texas, Arizona, and New Mexico, and he made efforts to have the matter tested. When the camels were brought over, under his administration of the War Department, he selected Mr. Beale to take the camels and decide the point he had so much at heart. We all know how well Mr. Beale discharged this duty and in what an unprecedentedly short space of time the first mail over Mr. Beale's route across the continent was brought by the camels.

In concluding his letter "Wanderer" laments, a sentiment that was surely not shared by General Beale, that after the wagon road over the 35th parallel had been completed he should be allowed to retire quietly into the circle of his friends in Chester, Delaware County, Pa., without receiving ovations.

The same people [he adds reproachfully] that hung with raptures over the foolish and profitless daring of Blondin in walking a rope stretched over the Niagara Falls are neglectful of the courage and the hardihood and suffering of the man who traverses this Continent amid every conceivable danger from disease, the elements, and the yet more ruthless hand of hostile savages to prepare the way for new cities and States and greater power and influence for our Republic.

## CHAPTER XIV

### GENERAL BEALE AS SURVEYOR-GENERAL

Lincoln Appoints Beale Surveyor-General of California and Nevada—Plans of the Secessionists—Beale Persuades Lincoln not to Enforce the Draft in California—Weathering the Crisis—Beale's Letter to the President Volunteering for Service in the Field—His Views on the Cause and Probable Consequences of Civil War Published by the *Philadelphia Press*—"The Fate of the Commons of the World Depends upon the Issue of the Struggle"—Beale's Letter to Secretary Chase Favoring Acquisition of Lower California by United States—Chase's Reply—Letters from the Mexican General Vega—Beale's Sympathies with the Liberal though Fugitive Government across the Border—Grant and Beale Contrive to Send Muskets to Juarez—President Diaz's Recognition in After Years of Beale's Assistance in This the Hour of Need.

ONE of the first appointments made by Lincoln after his inauguration was that of Beale to the post of surveyor-general of California and Nevada. In ordinary times the post of surveyor-general with the control of the public lands and the duty of locating the old Spanish grants and translating them into English

measures was important enough, but Beale soon found that the duties to which he was urged to address himself with particular zeal were almost exclusively extra-official.

The overshadowing issue of the moment, west as well as east of the Sierra Nevada, was that of union or secession, and the political outlook in California was anything but reassuring to Northern sympathizers. It must be admitted that the southern settlers in California, though doubtless outnumbered by the Unionists, were exceedingly active and well organized, and when Sumter was fired on it was generally believed that the secession organization aided by the lukewarmness of a large alien population would succeed in taking California out of the Union in a few weeks.

Such was the situation when Lincoln bestowed upon Beale his confidence and gave him full charge. The papers dealing with the political affairs of this important and interesting period were nearly all destroyed in the recent great fire in San Francisco when the archives of the Pioneers' Library went up in flames. Fortunately, however, the memory of General Beale's successful activity still survives in the recollections of those who knew distracted California in war time.

It was only a few days after General Beale had been appointed, and when assisted by the other U. S. officials he was engaged in developing and organizing the Unionist sentiment of the State, that the draft proclamation from Washington

arrived. Suddenly aroused like a leviathan from its slumbers, the Government was going to work on a large scale but somewhat automatically, the same in Maine as in Nevada, in California as in Connecticut, without the slightest regard for local conditions and local prejudices.

Beale recognized that the publication of the draft and its attempted enforcement would not bring many men into the Union armies, and on the other hand might tip the balance, until then with such difficulty preserved, and send California into the secession ranks. Upon his own responsibility General Beale suppressed the proclamation, and in a forcible despatch to Washington laid before Lincoln the reasons which had induced him to take this extraordinary step. Lincoln approved and applauded Beale's course. He wrote upon the surveyor-general's letter, "Draft suspended in California until General Beale shall indicate that the times are more auspicious."

In a few weeks the Unionists, now thoroughly aroused and effectively organized, made their presence felt in the State. Californians though not drafted were volunteering for the Union army in larger proportion to the population than was the case in some of the Eastern States. Beale feeling now that the immediate crisis was over, thought that he might with propriety address the President, acquainting him with his desire for active service in the field. He did it in the following terms:

SAN FRANCISCO, CAL.,

July 24, 1861.

HIS EXCELLENCY PRESIDENT LINCOLN:

A short time ago you did me the honor to appoint me to a most important and responsible position for which I beg you to accept my grateful acknowledgment. Under any other condition of public affairs, you have left me nothing to desire; but to the flag under which I have received honorable wounds, under which my father and my grandfather fought for the honor and the glory of the country, I think I owe something more, in this hour of trial, than a mere performance of duty in a position of ease and quiet. To the government I owe early education and support, for I entered its service almost a child and feel toward it a filial affection and gratitude. All that I have, even my life I owe to it, and it is a debt I am willing gratefully and cheerfully to discharge.

From fourteen to twenty-five my life was passed at sea, and for the past fifteen years principally on the great plains and in the Rocky Mountains. I served during the Mexican War, and at its close I resigned and have been engaged in many expeditions of some importance since. I know that I am resolute, patient, and active and if I had not courage, my love of country would supply the want of it in such a time as this. Devoted to my country, and owing it everything I have in the world, I write to offer my services to you in any capacity you may wish to use them until the present rebellion is crushed out of the land. You cannot add to the distinction you have already conferred upon me by any appointment, for there is none within your gift more distinguished or more honorable; nor do I desire any change except that I may more efficiently serve the United States. In a word I wish simply to offer my life for the flag.

With great respect, your obedient servant,

E. F. BEALE.

The *Press* of Philadelphia—Oct. 9, 1861—reproduces in part a letter which General Beale wrote some weeks later to a personal friend in Washington and which apparently arrived by the same mail that brought his proffer of service to President Lincoln. In this communication General Beale says:

Nothing could be more delightful or agreeable to me than the office I hold, at least in California! Nevertheless I feel that if my services are required this is no time to withhold them from my country. I have been looking forward with the keenest delight to two or three years of rest after so many long ones of hardship, but I will cheerfully put off my time of rest still longer, or find eternal rest in an honorable grave under the old flag. I conscientiously believe that the fate of the commons of the world depends upon the issue of the struggle and I am willing if need be to devote my life to the great cause of the people.

Commenting editorially the *Press* said the letter would be read with pleasure alike for its noble spirit and cheering example.

Lincoln, however, and as the event proved wisely, for the secession movement in the State was not dead or even sleeping, decided to keep Beale in a position where it was recognized he had rendered such invaluable services. The President's decision was a great blow to the General, but he took it like a man and a patriot. From California at least there was no "fire from the rear" directed upon the war administration.

Early in 1863, General Beale began to take an



interest in the Mexican revolution which provoked or rather invited the French intervention and its consequences in which the United States became so closely involved. Beale had always regretted that the war of 1847 between Mexico and the United States had not ended in the acquisition of the Peninsula of Lower California. He had always regarded its possession as necessary to the safety and to the prosperity of Upper California, and indeed of the whole Southwest. The General frequently stated, without, however, revealing his authority, that it had been the purpose of President Polk to demand for strategic reasons Lower California, then more even than now a vacant wilderness. The matter, however, seemed of so little importance to the American peace commissioners that the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was signed and sealed before their important oversight was discovered.

Thinking the moment opportune General Beale brought up the question again, and the following interesting correspondence took place between him and the Secretary of the Treasury, Salmon P. Chase.

SAN FRANCISCO,  
Aug. 5th, 1863.

SIR:

I have written several letters to Thomas Brown, Esq., U. S. Agent for the Pacific Coast, on the importance of the acquisition of the Peninsula of Lower California by the United States.

I am quite sure I have not exaggerated the great value to our country of that long mountain ridge which abounds

in good harbors on both the Gulf coast and the Pacific and is filled with mineral wealth of every description. I beg you will give this subject a few hours' consideration. Valuable and abundantly occupied as your time is I assure you this matter is worthy of your attention. I desire most particularly to call your attention to the fact that we have it in our power at this time by purchase of Lower California and a very small portion of the opposite coast, to *possess the mouth of the Colorado* destined to be as important to us on the Pacific as is the Mississippi to the Eastern States. If the line of the Gadsden purchase was straightened, instead of being deflected at 111 degrees of longitude, and touched the Gulf at the Coast, and we should possess ourselves of Lower California, we should then control entirely the navigation of the Colorado, which the future will prove of the utmost importance to the welfare of the Pacific Coast States.

The mountains which border the Colorado abound in vast resources and in mineral wealth which has but just commenced to excite and lead our people to their exploration and development while its rich bottom land invites our farmers with most flattering prospects to their cultivation. Cotton, sugar and tobacco will there find their largest crops and furnish their greatest returns to commerce. Lower California as I have before written possesses mines of incalculable extent and inestimable value while its harbors are numerous and secure. This cannot have escaped the French sagacity, and if it is not purchased now *or taken possession of by us* it may very soon be too late to do so at all. It seems to me this might be easily accomplished by a purchase from the Government party lately expelled from the City of Mexico by the French. If this was done without noise and the ports of La Paz and Guaymas promptly occupied, we might easily with five thousand men drawn from the Army of New Mexico, where they are actually entirely useless, and

placed under a proper commander, defy foreign interposition to prevent our holding the new territory forever.

You may be sure that those who live after us on this coast will not hold the memory of that administration in high respect which will have allowed a foreign power to collect toll at the mouth of the Mississippi, of the Pacific, after having lost the opportunity of its acquisition for our own people.

Offering my services to you in any manner in which I can serve the country,

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your Obt. Servt.,

E. F. BEALE.

Honorable S. P. CHASE,  
*Secretary of the Treasury,*  
Washington, D. C.

Mr. Chase's reply reads:

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
Sept. 5th, 1863.

MY DEAR SIR:

Yours of the 5th of August has just reached me. I appreciate as you do the importance of the acquisition you suggest. I fear that the Juarez Government is now too entirely broken to warrant negotiations with it but I will confer with the President and Secretary of State on that subject.

What a pity it is that we neglected our opportunities when the states of Central America were so ready to identify their fortunes with those of the American Union! What a pity it is also, that when General Scott took Mexico he did not remain there and establish a protectorate! The timid counsels of the Whig leaders and the fears of the slave-holding oligarchy suppressed a policy which would

have prevented all our present troubles so far as French domination in Mexico is concerned.

Yours Very Truly,

S. P. CHASE.

To

E. F. BEALE, Esq.

Later General Beale again wrote the Secretary of the Treasury on the subject he had so near at heart, and in the following terms:

SAN FRANCISCO, Nov. 5, 1863.

SIR:

While I thank you very much for your reply to my letter in relation to possessing ourselves of the mouth of the Colorado and the Peninsula of Lower California I must beg again to intrude upon your time on the same subject.

Every day more and more convinces me of the importance of our owning the country of which I have spoken. Every day new and rich discoveries in the precious metals are drawing attention to that region and rendering its purchase more difficult. If Mexico could always keep it, it would be greatly to our disadvantage, but in the hands or under the influence and control of any other Power, it would be ruinous to our commercial prospects on that part of the Coast.

We must have the whole Peninsula with its magnificent harbors and bays even if we have to fight France for it. I beg you to remember that this river reaches with its tributaries spread out like a fan for a thousand miles into the very bowels of our continent and terminates in that long and narrow placid sea which washes the shores of Sonora on one side, and the Peninsula of Lower California on the other, for more than seven hundred and fifty miles.

The Gulf of California is the mouth of the Colorado.

It is possible to buy up for insignificant sums immense grants of land in both Sonora and Lower California. These grants are what are called floating grants, that is, they are unlocated. It occurred to me to buy up these grants and locate them so as to cover the mouth of the Colorado and that this title might be somehow transferred to the U. S. Government. It is true an individual would not, in making the purchase, buy with it the sovereignty, but the fact that the land was all owned by citizens of the United States might predispose Mexico to part with its sovereignty for a small consideration of some commercial character which we could make. It may be that this is not possible, but in conference with Mr. Brown and Col. James, we thought it probable that your experience might find in this scheme something by which this most desirable result could be accomplished.

I trust you will not think I underrate the hazards of a war with France. I believe I fully appreciate all its cost added to our present struggle but I know that in a few months more it will be almost impossible to possess ourselves of this country, and I believe it worth all a war will cost us. Moreover since your letter I find Juarez is again at the head of a respectable army and as we still recognize his Government why could not a secret treaty of purchase be made with him and kept secret for the present until we have more time to devote to outside matters?

I beg you to excuse my writing to you again on this subject. I do it with infinite regret, for I can imagine how every moment of your time is fully occupied. Still, I am somewhat encouraged to intrude upon you again, as I interpret that portion of your late speech at Cincinnati (Oct. 12) into a determination not to allow France to have things entirely her own way in Mexico and your very kind letter to me satisfies me that the interests of the Pacific Coast are not forgotten or neglected by you in the midst of

all the herculean labors you are daily performing in the service of your country.

I have the honor to be your Obt. Servt., etc.,

E. F. BEALE.

Hon. S. P. CHASE,

*Secretary of the Treasury.*

If the press of California is to-day well informed the Congressional delegation of that State would seem to be under instructions from their constituents to bring to the attention of Congress in the winter of 1912 the policy of reshaping the Mexican frontier line which General Beale urged so strongly upon the Secretary of the Treasury in 1863.

The plans, the hopes and the fears of the Mexican revolutionists of the day are very clearly revealed in the following letters addressed to Beale by Gen. Placido Vega who was operating in Sinaloa. Spanish originals of these letters are preserved among the Beale papers.

#### GENERALS-IN-CHIEF OF THE BRIGADE OF SINALOA

##### EXCELLENCY:

In the many conferences which we have had with reference to the French Invasion and the firm resolve of the Constitutional Government to fight to the last extremity to defend the nationality and independence of our country, it has given me very great pleasure to see the interest and the sympathy with which you have followed the heroic efforts of my Fatherland in the defence of the most sacred of causes.

Of course nothing less was to be expected from a worthy general of the Republic, nourished and fortified in the doctrines of Liberty and in the rights of man, or from one

who also understands how dangerous it would be for the political principles in the worship of which we are coreligionists, to permit the development on the American Continent of the monarchical principle that the party of European Reaction pretends and seeks to promulgate.

Holding as I do these views the generous offers which you have been kind enough to make, of your services for the purpose of expediting the export of arms and munitions which have been gathered in this city compel the deepest gratitude of my countrymen, and of the Constitutional Government and I for my part am pleased to be called upon to voice this sentiment in which I participate in the highest degree.

I accept then the good disposition you have shown in favor of my country's cause and leave entirely to your loyalty and good faith all the arrangements for the departure of the munitions and arms from this state that may seem to you most convenient, in the understanding however that I will personally embark on the ship with them.

The munitions referred to are now deposited in the warehouses of the government, and also in those of private individuals. In the same way they should be sent out to the Colorado consigned to the person you may see fit to designate.

At the first opportunity I shall place in your hands the receipts and all the papers relative to the consignment so that you may arrange the freight and indeed all other questions which their export may entail. I also beg to inform you for your guidance that I will bring on board with me very excellent pilots of the coasts in question whom I have recruited in advance for the greater security of our landing.

The well deserved influence and consideration which you enjoy in the official and all respectable circles in this city and in the other states of the Union procure for you facilities to render important services to my country such as no one

else could; for this reason and because I am convinced that your party has sympathy for our cause and the good will to aid us to sustain it, I do not impress upon you the fact that the actual circumstances of the Constitutional Government of Mexico demands the greatest economy in the purchase of arms although they are so urgently needed. And it is on the score of this very urgency that I suggest to you to select a steamer so that the cargo may the sooner arrive. Even the very moments are indeed precious.

The preceding suggestions should not be construed as instructions for the performance of the mission you have been so kind as to accept. On the contrary I merely submit them to your good judgment so that you may modify them as you think best and in order that you may with your perfect knowledge of men and of affairs adopt the means most suitable for carrying out the work we have in hand. In sending this note I have the honor to offer to you the consideration of my particular respect and esteem.

Independence—Liberty—Reform.

San Francisco, May 17th, 1864,

PLACIDO VEGA.

To Gen. E. F. BEALE.

And again on the following day General Vega writes:

MEXICAN REPUBLIC,  
DEPARTMENT OF SINALOA.

The Supreme Government of the Mexican Republic, vested by the honorable Congress with extraordinary powers has authorized me to dispose of the Salinas or salt works or deposits on the Island of Carmen, which belong to the territory of Lower California, so that funds may be secured with which it would be possible to purchase the machinery necessary to the manufacture of munitions of war. The salt deposits have been profitably worked and



there is no reason to fear they would not be profitable to any one advancing money on the lease.

With the object of raising the desired funds I delegated my authority in the matter to the Licenciado José Aguirre de la Barrera who acting under the instructions which I communicated to him previously went to New York and to other states and cities of the Union. He was by means of very brilliant work successful. I shall not molest Your Excellency with the details of his mission, in forming a company to lease the salt works on the lines and in the manner set forth in the contract which I submit herewith as an enclosure.

All possible funds having been obtained in this manner we have been able to purchase the machinery and the munitions of war so ardently desired by my Government. These articles should arrive in this port within a short time. I would also inform you, as the enclosed papers show, that we have purchased five thousand Austrian rifles through the agency of Licenciado Pedro Barrera and these rifles are also expected to arrive in this city in a few days.

I have wished to keep you informed of these events because I have felt it my duty to reciprocate the many marks of sympathy and confidence you have been good enough to show to my country and to my cause, also because I trust you will continue to assist Senores Barrera and Aguirre in carrying out the duties with which they have been charged.

These gentlemen, who already have the honor of being in communication with you will inform you of any details you may wish to know in regard to our current affairs and will call upon you should circumstances arise requiring your influence and co-operation. Again I have the honor to renew the assurances of my respectful thanks and sincere esteem.

Independence—Liberty—Reform.

Beale was at this time in close touch with General Grant. They had after Vicksburg resumed their long interrupted correspondence. Grant was more strongly in favor of a forward policy in Mexico than Seward and would seem to have been, from 1864 on, in communication with the Liberals of Mexico, Beale probably acting as his intermediary. Grant's attitude at this time is made plain in General Badeau's volume, *Grant in Peace*. Badeau says that on the first day of the Grand Review in Washington, at the conclusion of the war, Grant hurried Sheridan off to Texas (see page 181):

"There must be a large amount of captured ordnance in your command," said Grant, and Sheridan was directed to send none of these articles to the North. "Rather place them," said Grant, "convenient to be permitted to go into Mexico, if they can be gotten into the hands of the defenders of the only Government we recognize in that country."

On the 30th of July, 1866, Grant again wrote Sheridan, "Since the repeal of our neutrality laws I am in hopes of being able to get authority to dispose of all our surplus ammunition within your command to the Liberals of Mexico. Seward is a powerful ally of Louis Napoleon, in my opinion, but I am strongly in hope that his aid will do the Empire no good."

Evidently the Administration in Washington was of two minds how to approach the problem which the presence of Maximilian in Mexico presented. While sending notes, more or less diplomatic, to the Tuileries, with the tacit approval of the Administration, something much more sub-



**Kit Carson Statue**  
Frederick MacMonnies, Sculptor  
Courtesy of Theodore B. Starr, Esq.



stantial was sent across the frontier to the Liberals of Mexico, and it is certain that all the surplus ammunition and the condemned muskets so plentiful at the close of the war in Texas now mysteriously disappeared. For his part, General Beale turned over to General Vega eight thousand muskets. He never was inclined to speak of the providence of these muskets but seemed confident they fell into the hands of Juarez and were used in the battles around Queretaro in which the fate of the Mexican Empire was tragically decided. This view was confirmed twenty years later when President Diaz, at a Union League Club dinner in New York at which Beale was present and made the address of welcome, hailed him as a friend of Mexico in her hour of trial and as one who had contributed mightily to the restoration of her liberties.

## CHAPTER XV

### LIFE ON THE TEJON RANCHO

Beale Resigns as Surveyor-General and Retires to Tejon—Purchases More Land from Absentee Landlords—Description of the Bakersfield Country when Kern County was a Wilderness—The Spring, the Fig Trees and the Live Oaks—A *Rodeo*—Robber Bands—Nearest Justice One Hundred and Fifty Miles Away!—Sale of Sheep in San Francisco—Mexicans who Panned for Gold before the Forty-niners—Lincoln and Beale Anecdotes—"Monarch of All He Surveys"—Charles Nordhoff's Visit to Tejon—Description of Life There—His Praise of What General Beale had Accomplished—Kit Carson's Ride by Joaquin Miller—Beale Falls Foul of the Poet—Sad Scenes on the Rancho.

WHEN the Civil War was over General Beale sent in his resignation as surveyor-general and retired to the Tejon Rancho. Here he spent much, indeed most of his time until well on to the end of his life when, deeply interested as he always was in the political questions of the day, his annual visits to Chester, Pennsylvania, and to the National Capital were greatly prolonged.

The Tejon lands were purchased by General Beale from Mexicans and Spaniards, who lived in

Los Angeles, and who took very good care never to go near the enormous land grants which they had heired. General Beale was accustomed to relate with considerable humor that he often had to convince these absentee landlords that they were legally possessed of the land before inducing them to sell. While in comparison with the recognized value of Kern County lands to-day the prices paid for these grants seem merely nominal, the vendors were delighted, regarding naturally the purchase money for something they did not well know they owned as so much gold picked up by the roadside.

There was a deserted fort on the place, the lands were unoccupied, and no one passed that way except an occasional detachment of troops, changing post, and now and again a roving band of Indians on some predatory excursion. However, the place appealed to General Beale as had no other spot he had come upon in his many travels, and here actually and not figuratively he pitched his tent and began to prepare with what philosophy he could summon for those long years which overtake even the most nimble traveller.

The Tejon Rancho rose five hundred feet above the present town of Bakersfield, and enjoyed, as General Beale once wrote to an envious friend summering on the Potomac flats, "a refreshing atmosphere of perpetual spring which never becomes close summer."

Here the wanderer camped by his own spring

and planted his own fig trees. Not indeed that shade was wanting. It was perhaps the wide-spreading umbrageous live oaks that had first chained his wandering fancy. One of these primeval forest trees, as the General satisfied himself, not by rule of thumb but by the careful surveying in which he delighted, covered with its pendent branches a circumference of two hundred feet.

Some three hundred Indian herders, or rather Indians who became herders, the same soft-spoken but uneasy fellows who had apparently driven the previous owners to seek refuge in the towns, lived in an adobe village at the Monte near the entrance to the Tejon Canyon.

Some idea of the life on the ranch in these early days is given in the following letter of General Beale to his children who were then in the East on a visit.

RANCHO DE LA LIEBRE, May 3, 1865.

MY DEAR CHILDREN:

The past few days have been of such excessive labor that I could not fulfil my intention, as promised in my letter to your dear Mother, of writing the day after to you. On the first of May I rode from noon until six o'clock, forty-five miles. Then from that time until night worked anxiously and hard on the *rodeo* ground with from five to seven thousand head of cattle parting out five hundred for market. Unfortunately in putting them in the corral for the night they became alarmed and many escaped, which gave me all the next day to collect again, so that it was noon to-day before I could start Mr. Hudson on the road with them, and after seeing him ten miles on the way, rode



back and threw myself perfectly exhausted on the bed, and went to sleep, and have just now awakened. A good bath has greatly refreshed me.

The country I am sorry to say is in a very disturbed condition,—robbers swarm over it in bands of ten to thirty, and only to-day some fifty soldiers stopped here who were looking for a large party of secessionists and thieves who had stolen from my Rancho, at the Tejon, a large herd of one of my neighbor's horses, who had just collected them to gather his cattle with. But the soldiers will not catch them or distinguish themselves in any way under their thick-headed General McDowell. The whole countryside here has never before been in such a horrible condition, even this lawless region where our nearest Justice of the Peace is a hundred and fifty miles off! So far they have not robbed me, but my turn may come, and when it does I shall defend my property as long as I have life. Our house is well provided with arms and my people faithful and attached so that I feel prepared and secure.

In my last letter to your dear Mother I told of my sale of sheep at San Francisco. I must now tell you of what befell my shepherd on his return. He was encamped on the shores of the great Tulare Lake, and for protection against the wind had made his camp some considerable distance within the tall and exuberant growth of flags and reeds twice as high as one's head, which we call tule. This tule is frequently fired by the Indians to scare out the game, which seek its shelter from pursuit or natural inclination for such localities, and at such times ill betide the unfortunate who cannot escape the flames. In that long journey of mine alone and on foot through them, I found the calcined bones of some unhappy wretch who had been overtaken in them and perished miserably in this manner. Well, to go on with my story.

About midnight the shepherd lying wrapped in his blankets and fast asleep, was roused by his dog jumping

vehemently on his breast, and barking violently and tearing at the blanket which covered him. At first he thought it was sunrise, it was so bright around him, and that the dog was mad, but the instant the faithful brute (it hurts my feelings and jars upon me to call such a noble animal brute, while assassins and murderers escape that reproachful term and are called men) found his master was thoroughly awakened, he fled with a howl directly for the open land beyond the tule, and at the same instant the shepherd became aware that the devouring flame was upon him. He had barely time, a little scorched, to escape with life and lost only his camp.

The General kept open house at all times at Tejon according to the Californian custom, whether he was in residence or not. He would talk to all comers concerning his companions, the Argonauts, of Stockton, of Carson and of Fremont, Sloat and Kearny. As to his own exploits he was modest and non-committal. Late in the seventies however one of the San Francisco papers awoke to the fact that the pioneers were dying and that it was high time that something, at least, of what they knew should be committed to paper. So a most expert questioner was sent to Antelope Valley and we are indebted to him for information which has escaped other chroniclers.

“When in 1857 I came from Little Salt Lake in Utah via Amargosa,” said the General, “and struck this valley at Big Rock, I travelled West to Tejon Pass along the foothills and was as you can imagine highly impressed with the country. There was considerable grass and wild game but not a single human being did we see. At Elizabeth Lake

the ducks and geese were so thick that I killed three ducks with one shot of my rifle. We did not have shot guns then."

"My attention," continued the General, "was first called to this ranch, the first land sold in the Antelope Valley since the conquest, by a curious incident which was not without influence upon the course of my life. I chanced to enter the U. S. Court House in Monterey while a Mexican witness was being examined. He was a man whom the owners of the Liebre Rancho had living there. It was then held though afterwards discarded," interjected the General, "that to make a Spanish grant good there had to be occupancy." "I was panning out gold on the San Felipe mountain," asserted the Mexican witness and the watching lawyer thought he had caught him in a falsehood but as a matter of fact the Mexican succeeded in proving that he had panned gold south of the Liebre years before the official discovery of gold. "I bought this forty thousand acre tract and started to raise cattle. In those days my nearest neighbors were at Visalia on one side and at Los Angeles on the other." From Liebre, the correspondent rode with the General back to his usual residence at Tejon. Together they traversed several other tracts of land which the General had purchased and which taken in the aggregate made an estate half as large as the state of Rhode Island. They met fifteen thousand cattle on the way and five hundred horses and they spent the evening at Tejon. "It was crisp and cool," writes the correspondent, "and we sat by the open fire-place with a rousing fire which made the spacious room in the great adobe house cheerful with its glow."

A witty though absolutely groundless story is told about Lincoln and General Beale, and the latter's great landed possessions. Lincoln is reported as saying that he could not reappoint Beale

as surveyor-general because "he became monarch of all he surveyed."

As a matter of fact General Beale, to the amusement of many of his friends who have since died poor, purchased for cash all the land in California of which he died possessed, and the purchases were made long before he became surveyor-general. While Beale only paid five cents an acre for much of this land, this was five cents an acre more than most people at the time thought it was worth, and it was well known that for years no white man could be paid to live on the place during the General's frequent absences for fear of marauding Indians and white outlaws.

General Beale enjoyed the "surveying story," as he called it, as well as any one else, but once he said, "Some day the archives of our country will tell why Lincoln made me Surveyor-General. It had nothing to do with rod or chain, but much to do with the metes and bounds of the Union."

Charles Nordhoff, the celebrated writer and journalist, visited the Pacific Coast in 1872 and dedicated the resulting book of travel, as had Bayard Taylor twenty-three years before, to General Beale, "in memory of the pleasant days at Tejon." To this brilliant writer we are indebted for many interesting sidelights upon the subject of this narrative and upon the work which General Beale accomplished both as pathfinder and road-builder to the Pacific and as a vigorous and efficient citizen



**A View of Monterey, California**  
From a Lithograph of 1850



of the great commonwealth he lived to see grow up on the Pacific slope.

Our host [writes Nordhoff] was a sparkling combination of scholar, gentleman and Indian fighter, the companion and friend of Kit Carson in other days, the surveyor of trans-continental railways and wagon roads and the owner to-day of what seems to me the most magnificent estate in a single hand in America.

[Again he writes] The Rancho from which I write, the Tejon as it is called, the home of Gen. Beale, contains nearly two hundred thousand acres and lies at the junction of the Sierra Nevada with the Coast Range. These two mountain ranges bend around toward each other here in a vast sweep and form the bottom of the San Joaquin Valley. They do not quite meet. The Tejon Pass, a narrow defile, separates them and gives egress from the Valley into the Los Angeles country.

You may ride for eighty miles on the county road upon this great estate. It supports this year over one hundred thousand sheep; and it has a peasantry of its own about whom I shall tell you something presently. The Tejon is devoted to sheep and here I saw the operation of shearing; eight or nine weeks are required to shear the whole flock, as well as the various details of the management of a California sheep farm.

What we call at home a flock is in California called a band of sheep. These bands consist usually of from 1300 to 2000 sheep and each band is in the charge of a shepherd.

"This country is quiet now," said the General one evening in a reminiscent mood, "but when I first came into it it contained some rough people. The head of the famous robber Joaquin Murieta and the hand of his lieutenant, 'Three-fingered' Jack, were brought into my camp but a few hours after those two scoundrels were shot. Jack Powers and his gang used to herd their bands of stolen

horses on my ranch as they drove them through the country; and Jack once kindly came to tell me that he would kill the first man of his gang that took anything from me. Mason and Henry, the worst of all the road agents in this state, used to go through Kern County waylaying and robbing; and in those days a man had to be careful not only of his money but of his life."

Of course the sheep are scattered over many miles of territory, but each band has a limited range, defined somewhat by the vicinity of water, and it is customary in California to drive them every night into a corral or inclosure usually fenced with brush and with a narrow entrance. This corral is near water and the sheep drink at morning and evening. The shepherd sleeps near by, in a hut, or, in the mountainous part of the Tejon Rancho, in a tepestra. The corral is to keep the sheep together, and in a measure protect them against the attacks of wild beasts, which, curiously enough are too cowardly to venture after dark inside of even a low fence. The tepestra is to protect the shepherd himself against the attacks of grizzly bears which are still abundant in the mountains, especially in the Coast Range.

The tepestra is a platform about 12 feet high, built upon stout poles solidly set into the ground. On this platform the shepherd sleeps, in the mountains, at the entrance to the corral; the grizzly bear cannot climb a pole, though he can get up a tree large enough to give his claws a hold. It is, I believe, not infrequent for a grizzly to stand up at the side of a tepestra at night and try to rouse the shepherd. But all the men are armed with guns which they carry day and night.

The grizzly does not usually attack sheep. The California lion, a very strong but cowardly beast, the wildcat, the fox and the coyote, are the sheep's enemies. The last named is easily poisoned with meal which has strychnine powdered over it. The others are hunted when they become troublesome, and as the lion upon the slightest



alarm will take to a tree, and will run even from a small dog, it is not accounted a very troublesome beast.

Indians, Spaniards, Chinese, and some Scotchmen, serve as shepherds in California. The last are thought the best, and the Chinese make very faithful shepherds, if they are properly and carefully trained. They are apt to herd the sheep too closely together at first. Dogs I have found but little used in the sheep ranches I have seen. They are not often thoroughly trained, and where they are neglected become a nuisance. Of course the shepherds have to be supplied at stated intervals with food. They usually receive a week's rations which they cook for themselves.

At the Tejon there are two supply stations, and every morning donkeys and mules were sent out with food to some distant shepherds. The ration-masters count the sheep as they deliver the rations, and thus all the sheep are counted once a week and if any sheep are missing they must be accounted for. The shepherd is allowed to kill a sheep once in so many days but he must keep the pelt which is valuable. Above the ration-masters are the major-domos. Each of these has charge of a certain number of bands; on a smaller estate there is usually but one major-domo. It is his duty to see that the shepherds are competent; that new pasturage is ready when a band has need for it; to see that the corrals are in good order; to provide extra hands at lambing time; to examine the sheep, to keep out scab which is almost the only disease sheep are subject to in this State; and to give out the rations for distribution.

On such an estate as the Tejon there is finally a general superintendent and a bookkeeper and a storekeeper, for here in the wilderness a supply of goods of various kinds must be kept up for the use of the people. A blacksmith, teamsters, plowmen, gardeners and house servants make up the complement of the Tejon's company. The gardeners and servants are Chinese as they usually are in this State, and very good men they are—civil, obliging, and competent.

Besides these numbers fed from the home place there are on this estate about 300 Indians, who have been allowed to fence in small tracts of land, on which they raise barley and other provisions, and in some cases plant fruit trees and vines. They form the peasantry of whom I spoke above, and are a happy, tolerably thrifty, and very comfortable people. Their surplus produce is purchased by the superintendent; when their labor is used they are paid; and they all have horses which pasture on the general fields. They have learned how to plow, shear sheep, and perform some other useful labor.

Now these Indians came to the Tejon naked, except a breech clout, feeding miserably on grasshoppers, worms and acorns, ignorant, savage nomads. They were first brought here when a part of this rancho was used by the Government as an Indian Reservation. Gen. Beale, the present owner of the Tejon, was then Superintendent of Indian Affairs in this State, and he has seen these people emerge from a condition of absolute barbarism and wretchedness into a degree of comfort and prosperity greater than that enjoyed by the majority of Irish peasants; they have abandoned their nomadic habits, have built neat and comfortable houses and fenced in ground which they cultivate. Their women dress neatly and understand how to cook food. The men earn money as sheep shearers. In some places vineyards and fruit trees have been brought by them to a bearing condition. In short these human beings were savages, and are—well, they are as civilized as a good many who come in emigrant ships from Europe to New York.

And all this has been accomplished under the eye and by the careful and kindly management of the owner of the Tejon Rancho. It seemed a great thing for any man to achieve, and certainly these people compared in every way favorably with a similar class whom I saw on the Tule River Indian Reservation, living at the expense of the Government, idle, gambling, lounging, evil-eyed and good

for nothing. If the Tule River Reservation be abandoned, the Government would save a handsome sum of money, and the farmers would find a useful laboring force, where now there are three or four hundred idle vagabonds, who when they do go out to work, as some of them do, still receive rations and clothing from the Government, and use their own earnings for gambling and debauchery.

Gen. Beale's Indians have been raised to a far better condition by his own private efforts, than the Reservation Indians after years of expensive support from the Government. They shear all the Tejon sheep, and are thus, of course, of value to the estate, and they are useful in many other ways. Unluckily their language is Spanish. It seemed to me a pity that when they had to learn a new language, English had not been taught them.

The Tehachapie Pass by which the Southern Pacific railroad is to pass from Bakersfield into the Mohave Plain is part of the Tejon Rancho, and when I came to drive into that great plain, which is just now the home of thousands of antelopes, I saw another fertile region, only awaiting the railroad to be "prospected" by settlers. The Mohave Plains have the name of being uninhabitable, but they furnish abundant pasturage for antelopes and deer. They lack running streams of water; but a German, who is the first settler, has dug a well, and found water without going far down, and I saw on the plain a fine field of barley almost ready for harvesting, which showed the quality of the soil. Stretching far into the great uninhabited plain is a singular and picturesque mountain range, called the "Lost Mountains" which relieves the dreary desolation of a great level, and promises, in its canyons, springs and streams, pleasant homes for the future settler when the railroad opens this great uninhabited tract.

Sometimes, though not often, as the Patron was not a leisurely rancher and his days were filled

with toil, General Beale would lay down the shears and take up the pen, which he generally used as a cudgel upon one or another of the Sierra poets who were beginning to write with, as he thought, little or no regard for historical accuracy, of the days of the pioneers. The most vigorous, sincere, and heartfelt of these articles the General wrote in defence of his old friend and comrade, Kit Carson, whose life had inspired the then youthful Joaquin Miller to a soaring flight with Pegasus.

The General's rejoinder to the Poet of the Sierras reads:

#### KIT CARSON'S RIDE

Under this title there comes to us in *Harper's Weekly*, a very long poem by one Joaquin Miller, of California. As well as we can make it out, it seems to be an ugly cross of Browning on Swinburne, and ought to be put in a moral glass bottle, labelled "Poison," put on a high shelf in the cupboard out of the reach of children, and forgotten.

It is rarely that the license allowed to poets has been more thoroughly abused than in the ill-written lines which are contained in the article that heads this notice. As a rule in poetry when fact is departed from, it has always been to exaggerate the virtues of a departed hero, but never to slander him by rendering his picture ridiculous, much less indecent, and as we recall the modest, earnest, refined simplicity of Carson, and compare it with the frenzied and licentious buffoon presented in the poem and picture referred to, we cannot but regret that the scalp of Joaquin had not been counted among the "coups" of that redoubted knight of the prairies and mountains. How far the descendants of that upright and noble man might be justified in

suing the author for defamation of character in a city court, we do not know, but are sure in the courts of that generous and active Judge Lynch, away off in the Rockies, where Kit's fame is yet cherished by many a hardy pioneer, we might safely count on "Exemplary damages"—something that would make his hair *stand on end*.

What an abuse of all common sense is such stuff—as though a half-witted maudlin had read "How the news was carried to Ghent," and then slept off the fumes of a debauch dreaming of "Chastelard." And this is a representative poet! That virtuous gentlewoman, Dame Quickly, says of the famous Pistol:

"He a captain! Hang him rogue! He lives upon mouldy stewed prunes and dried cakes. A captain! These villains will make the word 'captain' as odious as the word 'occupy,' which was an excellent good word before it was ill-sorted. Therefore Captains had need look to it."

Carson was a man cleanly of mind, body and speech, and by no manner of means a border ruffian. He had no gift of swearing. The only oath I ever heard him use, was that of William the Conqueror, which I had once read him out of a stray volume of *Tristram Shandy*. On this occasion, he drew a long single-barrelled pistol (old Constable's make), which Fremont had given me, and I to Kit, for we had no "gold mounted Colt's true companions for years" in those simple-minded days, and with slow, deadly speech, which carried the sense of imminent mischief in it, said to one who was in the act of a cowardly wrong upon a sick man, "Sergeant, drop that knife, or 'by the Splendor of God,' I'll blow your heart out."

He had not the advantages of education, but was wise as the beaver, and of great dignity and simplicity of character, and not given to the least vulgarity of thought or expression nor would he tolerate it in those about him.

It was not enough that this poor "metre balladmonger," has talked of scenes of which he knows nothing, and has

misplaced and misnamed all mountain craft, and the chronology and geography, weapons, and ranges of tribes of Indians and the spirit of the times whereof he speaks. It is not enough that he puts into the mouth of a calm, dignified, sweet nature, such words of bosh as would make a love-sick and idiotic ape quite ashamed of himself, but he slanders a character as chivalrous as that of a knight of romance, by making him escape on his lady love's horse from a danger in which she is left to perish. . . .

General Beale, after a further severe scoring of the poet and his lines, pays this tribute to his old friend:

Dear old Kit. Not such as the poet paints you do I recall the man I loved. Looking back through the misty years, I see a man Tasso, if you had lived in an earlier age, would have placed by the side of Godfrey and made the companion of Tancred and Rinaldo. A man pure, very pure, in his nature—not given to lustful ways, but calm, serious and sweet of temper; a man of very moderate stature, but broad fronted and elastic, yet by no means robust of frame though gifted with immense endurance and nerves of steel. A head quite remarkable for its full size and very noble forehead, quiet, thoughtful blue eyes, and yellow hair, a very strong jaw and a face dished like an Arab horse, that made a man who had never seen him before look at him again with the thought that he would “do to tie to.” Arms rather long, and thin strong flanks, with slightly bandy legs.

This was the outward shape, which enclosed a spirit as high and daring and as noble as ever tenanted the body of a man. No man to take a woman's horse because it was faster than his own and leave her to the prairie fire, while he galloped off to twaddle in tumid bosh over her marvellous eyes. What an abuse of common sense is such stuff!

Oh, Kit, my heart beats quicker, even now, when I think of the time, twenty-five years ago, when I lay on the burning sands of the great desert, under a mesquite bush, where you had, tenderly as a woman would have put her first born, laid me, sore from wounds and fever, on your only blanket. I see the dim lake of waterless mirage. I see the waving sands ripple with the faint hot breeze around us and break upon our scattered saddles. I see the poor mules famishing of thirst, with their tucked flanks and dim eyes, and hear their sad, plaintive cry go up out of the wilderness for help. I see the men dogged and resolute or despondent, standing around or seeking such shelter as a saddle blanket thrown over a gun afforded.

Without a thought of ever seeing water again, you poured upon my fevered lips the last drop in camp from your canteen. Oh, Kit, I think again of afterwards, on bloody Gila, where we fought all day and travelled all night, with each man his bit of mule meat and no other food, and when worn from a hurt I could go no further, I begged you to leave me and save yourself. I see you leaning on that long Hawkins gun of yours (mine now) and looking out of those clear blue eyes at me with a surprised reproach as one who takes an insult from a friend. And I remember when we lay side by side on the bloody battle-field all night, when you mourned like a woman and would not be comforted, not for those who had fallen, but for the sad hearts of women at home when the sad tale would be told; and I remember another night when we passed side by side in the midst of an enemy's camp when discovery was death and you would not take a mean advantage of a sleeping foe. Then you were with Fremont and afterward at the solitary desert spring of Archilete, when you all stood around shocked at the horrid spectacle of slaughter which met your eyes. A whole family done to death by Indians. Fremont asked, "Who will follow these wretches and strike them in their camp?" It was you, old Kit, and Alexis Godey who took

the trail; a long and weary hundred and twenty-five miles, you followed that bloody band. You two attacked in broad daylight a hundred. Killed many for which you brought back our grizzly mountain vouchers and recovered every stolen horse for the sole survivor, a little boy. And this you did in pity for the women who had been slain. Oh! wise of counsel, strong of arm, brave of heart, and gentle of nature how bitterly you have been maligned.<sup>1</sup>

But even at the Tejon it was not always sunshine as the following characteristic letters of the General to Mrs. Beale show:

TEJON RANCHOS,  
TEJON, CAL., Sunday, October 17, 1886.

MY DEAREST WIFE:

This has been the saddest day I ever passed on the Rancho.

When I got here, as soon as I had washed off the dust, I went to see my old friend Chico. He knew I was coming

<sup>1</sup>KENNETT SQUARE, PENNA.  
Sunday, Aug. 27th, 1871.

MY DEAR BEALE:

Thank you heartily for writing, as well as for sending to me, your defence of Kit Carson, and scarification of that vulgar fraud, Joaquin Miller! I am very glad to have my own immediate impression confirmed—that the fellow really knows nothing about the life he undertakes to describe. And this is the "great American poet" of the English library journals! Why, I'd undertake to write a volume of better and truer "songs of the Sierras" in three weeks! We authors have really fallen in evil days, when such stuff passes for poetry. However, *patience* is my watchword; we have but to wait and see these fictitious reputations go down as fast as they go up.

How are you, and what are your plans? Can we not meet and have an Olympian evening together, somewhere, soon? I am more dependent on circumstances than you are, but I can still make them bend a little, for the sake of an old friend. Remember me kindly to all your family.

Ever affectionately,

BAYARD TAYLOR.





### **The Gun Used by Kit Carson**

This gun was given by Kit Carson to General Beale, after a brush with the Indians, in which Carson claimed that General Beale had saved his life. It was afterward presented by Truxtun Beale to Theodore Roosevelt, who in turn gave it to the Boone and Crockett Club.



and had been waiting for me all day most anxiously. When I came into the room he struggled to put his arms around my neck but was too weak and I had to raise his hands up to my shoulders. He looked so pleased for a moment, but the excitement of my coming soon left him and he began to sink rapidly. I sat at his bed-side with his hands in mine until they stiffened in Death.

Just before I came he asked, "Has not the Patron come yet—I hear a horse, go to the door and see." It proved to be my horse but poor dear old fellow it seemed as if he was only holding on to life until I came to close those faithful eyes which had watched my interests so carefully for so many years. Jimmy Rosemire told me this morning that in speaking to him a few days ago of his friends he said, "I have no friend and do not want any but my Patron, and his interests are all the business I have in life."

How we shall do without his wise counsel and knowledge I do not know. I feel inexpressibly sad. He has been so true and faithful these many long years. The Tejon without him will never be the same to me.

I have fixed Tuesday for his burial and the place at the head of the flower garden.

A priest will come for the occasion and everybody including all the Indians will attend.

Myself and Alex. Godey, Pogson and Lopez will act as pall-bearers.

Good night, my dear wife,

Your devoted husband,

E. F. BEALE.

TEJON RANCHOS,  
TEJON, CAL., October 20, 1886.

MY DEAREST WIFE:

We buried my old friend Chico yesterday.

It was the most impressive funeral I have ever seen. I had sent to Bakersfield for a handsome coffin in which he

was laid at his house. The house I had built for him is about a mile from here and there the procession formed.

All work was suspended on the place. Half way from his house I met the procession, accompanied by Pogson and Godey. The coffin was borne by the Vaqueros who relieved each other at intervals. In front was carried in the arms of one of our men his eldest child. All the Indians and men followed chanting in Spanish the burial service—the men one verse and the women another.

I never heard anything so solemn and sweet as this chant. When the body arrived at the house it was placed in the parlor, where it was permitted to all, Indians and white people, to come and look at him for the last time.

The flower garden was full of roses and other beautiful flowers which soon filled the coffin. Here at intervals the funeral songs and hymns of the Catholic Church were sung as before—the women and men's voices in alternate verses.

At eleven the priest arrived.

Then I took the right hand side of the coffin, and Godey the left—the middle was taken by Lopez on one side and Don Chico Lopez on the other, and the other end Pogson on the right and Rosemire on the left, and we bore him to his grave at the upper end of the flower garden.

The priest preached a sermon—very appropriate and performed the full service of the Church and all was over.

I am just going off with Pogson for the day and will write at every opportunity.

Your devoted husband,  
E. F. B.

## CHAPTER XVI

### LAST YEARS

General Beale Purchases the Decatur House—Its Distinguished Occupants and Ghost Story—Beale's Political Activity—His Untiring Efforts to Help the Negro—Appointed by Grant Minister to Austria—Newspaper Comment in California—A Bill of Sale from Slavery Days—Awkward Diplomatic Situation—The Emperor and Count Andrassy—Friendship of Grant and Beale—Their Correspondence Published—Arthur Fails to Appoint Beale Secretary of the Navy—Grant's Resentment—Beale Ends the Grant-Blaine Feud—Last Days—Beale's Death—Scenes in Washington and on the Tejon Rancho.

**G**ENERAL BEALE'S Washington residence, which he purchased shortly after the close of the war, was the Decatur mansion on Lafayette Square and within a stone's throw of the White House. This mansion, which has played an important if silent part in the life of the National Capital, was designed by Latrobe, one of the architects of the Capitol, and built by Commodore Decatur, the hero of the Algerine War, in the early years of the last century, and here, in the present library, it is said, Decatur died from the wound

which he received in his duel with Commodore Barron.<sup>1</sup>

Martin Van Buren lived here when elected President, and from here he removed into the Executive Mansion. Henry Clay, Vice-President George M. Dallas, and the British and Russian Embassies were among its distinguished occupants before the house passed into Gen. Beale's possession. Its exterior is of an old-fashioned plan—a plain three-storied structure of painted brick, without ornamentation of any kind, but with a dignity and distinction very difficult to copy or to reproduce, as many distinguished Washington architects have learned to their cost and to the regret of their clients.

The floor of the ball-room, which is on the second floor, is made of California woods, of, it is said, twenty-two thousand pieces, in the centre being a beautifully inlaid reproduction of the arms of Cali-

<sup>1</sup> Another correspondent, this time an old Washingtonian, writes as follows concerning the Decatur-Beale house, another version of an historic incident.

"Mortally wounded by Barron, Commodore Decatur was borne home to his wife and died in the small south-wing room on the ground floor. Of course that room is haunted, and if rumor is to be believed it is not alone the impressionable negro servants who have seen the figure of the Commodore prowling about at ghostly hours, with ghastly face and blood-streaming wound, enveloped in the inevitable blue-luminous, terror-inspiring mist."

Many tributes are also paid in all chronicles of Washington life to the dignity and splendor of this historic mansion during the years immediately before the war, when it was occupied by Judah P. Benjamin, then Senator from Louisiana, and afterwards Attorney-General and Secretary of State of the Southern Confederacy."—*From the Beale papers.*

fornia. The house was so spacious and furnished in such excellent taste that it never seemed crowded even when all Washington was there at one of Mrs. Beale's receptions, nor yet encumbered by the number of historic relics which it contained, surpassing as they did in their number and value the resources of several of Washington's museums. Among the most notable of these historic relics was a massive silver urn presented by the merchants of London to Captain Thomas Truxtun of the United States frigate *Constellation* for the capture of the French frigate *Insurgente*, 44 guns, in the West Indies in 1799.

They were, it must be admitted, very forgiving, these London merchants and during the French War, as the great urn testifies, they delighted to honor a man whom a few years before, while their shipping suffered from his roving activity, they had denounced as a pirate. Then there were in strange corners and nooks, which General Beale would only reveal and explore with his young son's boy friends, medals to Truxtun and to George Beale for his gallantry in the fight with Macdonough on the Lake, and lances—fearful and awe-inspiring weapons were these captured from the Mexican-Californian cavalry at the battle of San Pasqual, and how interesting this or that lance was because it had lodged in the thigh or the breast of those paladins of the plains, Godey or Kit Carson!

From 1870 on, when he began to spend at least six months of the year in the Decatur house, General

Beale exerted great influence politically and socially in the National Capital. He was elected President of the National Republican League, and never spared his time or his money in furthering the cause of good government. In helping upward the emancipated negro he was more useful and more sincere than many a man whose name is enshrined in the Walhalla of the Abolition cause. He rarely spoke at the political meetings of his party and of his friends; for this purpose there were speakers in plenty and to spare, but knowing the reluctance of many white leaders of opinion to speak at the meetings of colored men at this period he never refused a call of this description, although they came frequently and compelled journeys to out-of-the-way places.

From his earliest years Beale had strong opinions on the slavery question and did what he could to bring about a settlement of the vexed question, a legal settlement if possible, but in any event a settlement. He in early life liberated many slaves and among his papers is a bill of sale<sup>1</sup> for a negro

<sup>1</sup> UNITED STATES OF NORTH AMERICA,  
STATE OF TEXAS,  
CALHOUN COUNTY,  
June 4, 1857.

We, Josiah W. Baldrige, Daniel P. Sparks, and Joseph H. Baldrige, former partners and now in liquidation, known and designated under the style and firm name of Baldrige, Sparks & Co., have this day sold, and by these presents, bargain, sell, and convey unto Edward F. Beale, our negro man named Jourdan, of yellow or copper color, supposed to be from twenty-five to thirty years of age, for and in consideration of the sum of one thousand five hundred dollars to us in hand paid by the said Edward F. Beale, the receipt of which is now acknowledged. And the



in Texas whom he learned was about to be sold into the hands of a cruel task-master, a New England man, as so many such people were. Beale purchased the slave and set him free, and went on his way rejoicing that he should have been given the opportunity of bringing happiness to a fellow-being.

At all times and particularly in the early 'seventies, Beale was an ardent and indefatigable student of the profession which he had left years before with so much reluctance. He knew the unsatisfactory condition of our Navy, as far as the ships were concerned, and worked and wrote in the reviews on the subject in the hope of bringing home to Congress and the people an appreciation of our national weakness.

In 1876 came unexpectedly Beale's appointment as Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to Austria-Hungary. Ever since the execution of the Emperor Maximilian, by Juarez, our relations with the reigning house and with the government of the Dual Monarchy had been of a perfunctory rather than of a cordial character, and while this criticism most certainly does not apply to General Beale's immediate predecessor, the Hon.

---

said Baldrige, Sparks & Co. covenant and agree with the said E. F. Beale that said boy is healthy, sensible, and a slave. We also guarantee the title to the said E. F. Beale free from all incumbrance or claims of every kind or description whatever. Claiming through us. Witness our hands and scrolls for seals this day and date above written.

On the back of this document Beale wrote:

"I bought the slave referred to within and gave him his freedom."

E. F. B.—*Beale papers.*

John Jay, so distinguished in letters and in diplomacy, it is quite true that many of the occupants of this important post in the service had been obscure men and many of them unfit for the performance of the duties which were incumbent upon them.

When General Beale was selected by General Grant for the Austrian Mission the appointment was received with much enthusiasm in California. The San Francisco *News-Letter* voiced as follows the sentiment which prevailed in the State:

The news of Ned Beale's appointment to be Minister to Austria, succeeding Mr. John Jay, is as refreshing as a shower of rain—for if ever there was a typical and representative Californian, Ned Beale is he. Setting out in life a Lieutenant in the Navy, he had a chance to fight in the Territorial days and he fought like the devil. Appointed to look after the Arizona Indians at a time when Arizona Indians were at their best and meanest, he polished them off and taught them to stand around in such style that they have never been the same Indians since.

Those were days when Indians were Indians, and their only use for a Commissioner was to scalp him on sight. In his Arizona administration Beale took bigger risks, showed more endurance, underwent more trying hardships than any other man whether in the army or out of it. He out-scouted any scout and out-rode any mail-rider, we had in the service. He showed himself an iron-man put up with steel springs and whalebone, and all this time be it noted he was only a youngster.

Finally, the war came and Beale went Union and got thereby the Surveyor-Generalship of California. Ned Beale was no sentimentalist—not by the longest kind of

odds. He was born with a head on his shoulders, was Edward, and he never laid it away in his trunk.

No questions of great international importance arose between the two countries during General Beale's stay of a year in Austria, but nevertheless his mission gave him an opportunity to show diplomacy of a very high order. When General Beale's name was submitted to the Austrian Emperor by the State Department, according to diplomatic usage, the report upon his availability for the Austrian Mission, doubtless supplied by the Austrian Envoy in Washington whose acquaintance with Beale was of recent date, was most enthusiastic. Later, however, when Beale had been officially accepted and indeed was on his way to his post, Ball-haus Platz, the Austrian Foreign Office, received information which admitted of no denial, and indeed none was ever attempted, that General Beale had been a strong sympathizer with and a valued supporter of the Juarez administration in Mexico, which, after the capture of Queretaro, had put to death the so-called Emperor Maximilian, the younger and best-beloved brother of that Emperor to whom Beale now found himself accredited.

It was certainly an awkward situation and the way in which it was handled was most creditable to all concerned. Had not General Beale's name already been passed on favorably, it is certain that when the first news of his former relations with Juarez and the Mexican Liberal generals reached

the Foreign Office a polite but prompt refusal to accept the new envoy would have followed; however, the Emperor received General Beale apparently with great cordiality. Every honor was paid him that the most desired and most welcome envoy could have asked for, but it was soon evident that the Emperor did not propose cultivating close relations with the man whom he certainly regarded as the friend of his brother's murderers. After all the American Minister could transact his business at the Foreign Office.

It was fortunate for Beale that at this—for him—awkward moment such an able and intelligent man as the famous Count Jules Andrassy presided over the Foreign Office of the Dual Monarchy. A few days after the reception at Court, Beale had his first serious conversation at the Foreign Office and Count Andrassy introduced the subject of Mexico. Perhaps the kindly Hungarian wished to give General Beale a quiet tip as to the reason of the frigid atmosphere into which chance and the careless methods of the American State Department had steered his bark. General Beale talked frankly about the matter as though it had not the slightest bearing upon his personal position. He explained what he knew about Mexico, and with equal frankness what he did not know. Andrassy was impressed and pleased. The next day he reported to the Emperor. "General Beale is the only man who has ever made the Mexican tragedy clear to me. You should speak with him," he

said. A summons to a private breakfast at Schoenbrunn followed, and ever afterwards the Emperor admitted General Beale to his presence upon terms of friendship and even of intimacy.

General Beale was always inclined to credit the dissipation of this diplomatic cloud to Count Andrassy's good will. Andrassy naturally loved conspirators. In early life, as a member of Kossuth's revolutionary government he had been condemned to death, and only saved himself by flight to Turkey. In later life, when mellowed by the lessons of the passing years and with direct reference to Andrassy, the Emperor said: "It was fortunate for me that all my sentences of death were not carried out. I should have lost many valuable servants."

When the year elapsed which was all that General Beale felt he could give to the Government in view of his many and pressing interests at home. Mr. Fish was able to, and did, write the departing envoy, that he was leaving the relations of the two countries on a very different basis from that on which he had found them.

In *Scribner's Magazine* for October, 1911, extracts from General Grant's letters to General Beale, charming in their manly simplicity, were published with the following introductory note:

These letters were written by Grant to his friend General Edward F. Beale at intervals from 1877, when Grant left Washington and went upon his travels, down to 1885; the last, indeed, was penned within a few weeks of the heroic end of the great commander at Mount McGregor.

The letters are the living memorial of a friendship which began in California in the early fifties and which twenty years later had a marked influence upon the course of national affairs. Grant had the gift of friendship, and his circle was not small; but to the Washington of the seventies it was no secret that of all his personal friends the one he most admired, the one to whom he always listened (and then did as his own good sense dictated), was "Ned" Beale (a grandson of the gallant Truxtun), who with Stockton conquered California, who fought Kearny's guns in the desperate battle of San Pasqual, who gave up active service in the Civil War at Lincoln's request because the providential President knew that Beale's presence in the debatable State would preserve it to the Union. Beale related that he first saw Grant in 1848 in the Casino on the Plaza of the City of Mexico where the officers used to gather during the American occupation. Beale was on his famous ride across Mexico, bringing the news of the conquest of California and the first specimens of the gold that had been newly discovered in the City of Mexico. He stopped for a few hours to change horses on his route to Vera Cruz. The friendship of Grant and Beale, however, really dates from 1853, when Grant's army career seemed closed, and Beale, having resigned from the navy that he might provide for his growing family, was becoming interested in the wonderful development of the Golden State, which he foresaw like a prophet and by which he profited like a wise man.

In these days, when Grant was unfortunate, Beale stood by his friend with both word and deed. They walked the Long Wharf together and ate their meals at the "What Cheer" House when San Francisco was as uncertain of its name as of its future.

The value of these letters is enhanced by the fact that Grant was a reserved man and a somewhat reluctant correspondent; to few if to any of his circle of intimates did he open his heart as he did to his old comrade and house-friend Beale.

Beale while at home as well as abroad had continued his naval studies. While in Vienna it was said of him that he would travel a thousand miles to avoid an idle function and twice that distance to visit an interesting navy yard or a stud farm. Outside of the Navy, and of course precedent if not the law makes the choice of a naval officer to head this branch of the Government impossible, there was perhaps at this time no one in the country so capable of beginning the reconstruction of the Navy that was now admittedly an imperative necessity, as General Beale, and shortly after Mr. Arthur became President General Grant urged Beale's appointment as Secretary of the Navy most strenuously. However, the whole Congressional delegation from New England demanded the appointment for a New England man, Mr. Chandler, and in a difficult situation and with evident reluctance, President Arthur yielded to the political pressure which was exerted.<sup>1</sup>

Whatever may have been Grant's feelings, General Beale was certainly not embittered. He remained the friend and adviser of the successive Secretaries of the Navy, from Chandler to Whitney and Herbert, and when the new Navy, as typified

<sup>1</sup> Ben Perley Poor in his reminiscences, *Sixty Years of the National Metropolis*, says, p. 449:

"President Arthur in his desire to administer his inherited duties impartially made himself enemies among those who should have been his friends—General Grant asked that his personal friend General Beale might be appointed Secretary of the Navy and he never forgave President Arthur for not complying with his request."

by the White Squadron, put to sea, in it were embodied as many of the ideas of General Beale as of any other man.

During the years of the famous feud between Blaine and Grant, General Beale made several attempts to bring them together for the good of the party and as he most sincerely thought for the good of the country. In 1883 the party managers urged upon Beale renewed attempts to bring about the long frustrated reconciliation, stating that they regarded it as a *sine qua non* to Republican success in 1884.

General Badeau in *Grant in Peace* sheds some light upon these negotiations. To Badeau, Grant wrote in October, 1883:

“I write because of your allusion to hearing a rumour that Blaine and I had formed a combination politically. You may deny that statement peremptorily. I have not seen Blaine to speak to him since a long time before the Convention of 1880.” Grant knew that I was anxious for him to take ground in favor of Blaine [continues Badeau]. Gen. Beale, who was an intimate friend, Senator Chaffee, the father-in-law of one of Grant’s sons, and Elkins all desired the same result but were unable to bring it about at this time.

However, Beale was undaunted, and at last succeeded where others had failed. General Grant was staying in General Beale’s house and Blaine lived next door to him on Jackson Place. Only a month intervened before the election when, as the Beale papers reveal, Blaine wrote as follows to General



Beale, a hasty note but of far-reaching importance: "My dear General:—It will give me great pleasure to call on General Grant at your house at any time you say."

One cold October afternoon the interview took place in the historic drawing-room. The three party leaders sat around an open grate fire and the feud which had disrupted the Republican party, or probably only typified its disruption, was buried.

The reconciliation, however, took place too late. In the last days of the campaign Grant and his adherents developed remarkable strength, and it was all loyally exerted in favor of Blaine, but in November the Plumed Knight went down in defeat. A new god had arisen in Israel, and his name was Grover Cleveland.

Early in the spring of 1893 General Beale's physical powers began to wane, while mentally he remained as active and alert as ever. On April 22d the long expected event occurred and General Beale passed peacefully away.

The press of the country recognized General Beale's death not only as that of a distinguished and remarkable personality, but as an event marking the close of an era. The day of the pathfinders was over, and the papers of the country without exception, from Sandy Hook to the Golden Gate, from the St. Lawrence to the Rio Grande, paid eloquent tribute to the man who in so many ways had played a distinguished part in

the winning of the West and the development of the Pacific Empire. The Cabinet and the Justices of the Supreme Court, the scientists of the Smithsonian and the political leaders were present at the simple service of the interment. There came to the bereaved family messages from crowned heads, from the Courts of St. Petersburg, of Vienna, and of Athens, which showed that those who ruled by divine right could still recognize the rare quality of this leader of men who had come to the front by right of personal achievement.

Sympathetic words there came too from the humble and the lowly, from the trapper and the scout, from the small farmer and the herder who had found life more spacious because of the rich domain of Southern California which more than any other one man General Beale had opened to the crowded East.

Down on the Tejon Rancho in the San Joaquin Valley there still lived two Indians who had followed General Beale across the plains when, in the heyday of youth in 1847, with his San Pasqual wounds still open, he had carried the news of the conquest of California to Washington. These men had long outlived their usefulness, they were crippled by the weight of years and the burden of hardships undergone, but the Patron, as they called the General, by the most adroit and long sustained diplomacy had always succeeded in convincing them that they could still do a day's work with the best and more than earned their rations.

When Raimundo the scout, whom even Carson relied upon, heard the sad news that the wires brought with such marvellous rapidity from the Capital, he said simply, "I do not care to live any longer," dressed himself in his fête-day clothes, wrapped his serape about him, and, stretched out upon his blanket in the sunshine outside his adobe hut, soon passed from sleep to death.

Juan Mohafee, the incomparable packer who had been charged with the General's mules on many a desert journey, was all bustle and excitement. He told every one that the General would want him on the long journey that lay before him, longer indeed than any they had ever undertaken together. "I will go, too," he said decidedly and then with a touch of pride, "I may be able to help him, he always said I could." Juan continued his active preparations for a long journey and when not busily engaged in furbishing saddles and oiling creaking packs could be found waiting patiently under the spreading fig tree outside of the great house where he had awaited the coming of the Patron so often in the earlier active years, and here now his children found him one morning, but his body was cold and his faithful soul had fled.

THE FOLLOWING IS THE OFFICIAL RECORD OF  
GENERAL BEALE'S PUBLIC SERVICES

Appointed Midshipman in the Navy, from Georgetown College, December 14, 1836.

Ordered to duty on the *Independence*, the Receiving Ship at Philadelphia, which served at the time as Naval School, in February, 1837.

Warranted, March, 1839.

Ordered to the West Indian Squadron, September 19, 1840.

Ordered to the Naval School, Philadelphia, in August, 1841.

Commissioned Passed-Midshipman and ordered to *Porpoise*, August, 1845.

Ordered to Frigate *Congress* as Acting Master, October 2, 1845.

Returned from Pacific and placed on waiting orders, June 2, 1847.

Ordered to Fortress Monroe as witness in Colonel Fremont's trial, September 29, 1847.

Commissioned as Master, February 28, 1850.

Commissioned Lieutenant in Navy, August 3, 1850.

Resignation from Navy accepted, March 5, 1851.

Appointed in 1852 by President Fillmore, Superintendent of Indian Affairs in California and Nevada.

In 1857 was appointed by President Buchanan, Superintendent of the Wagon-Road Expedition from Fort Defiance, New Mexico, to the Colorado River.

In 1858 by President Buchanan to command wagon-route survey along 35th parallel from Fort Smith, Arkansas, to California.

1859-60, in charge of wagon-road construction on central plains.

1861, appointed by Lincoln, Surveyor-General of California and Nevada.

1865, resigned position of Surveyor-General.

1876, appointed by President Grant, Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to Austria-Hungary.

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