A THRILLING AND
TRUTHFUL HISTORY OF

THE PONY EXPRESS

WITH OTHER SKETCHES AND INCIDENTS
OF THOSE STIRRING TIMES


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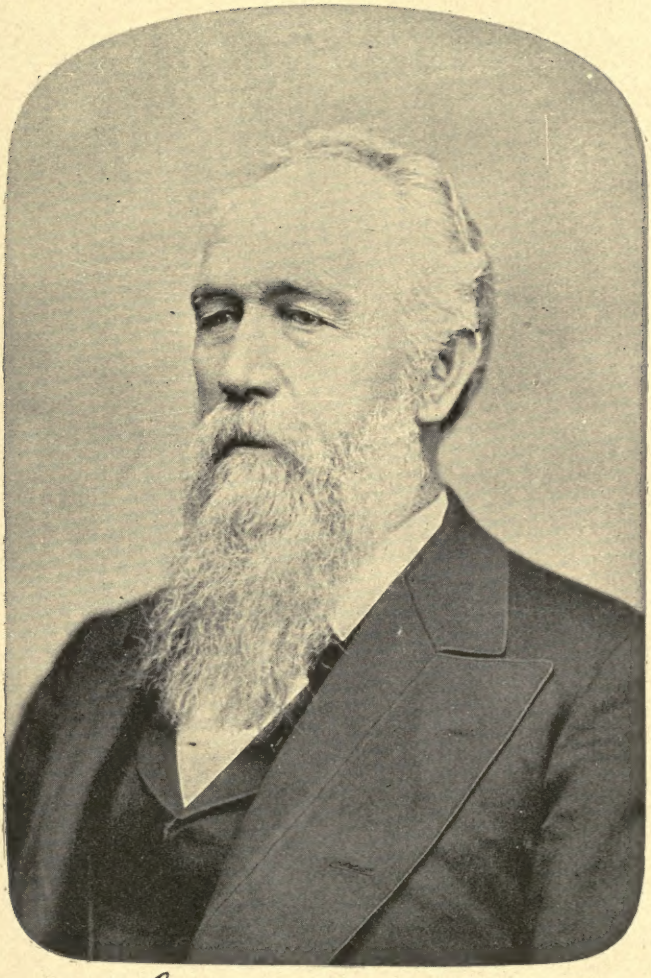

Alexander Majors.

A THRILLING AND TRUTHFUL HISTORY OF

THE PONY EXPRESS

OR

BLAZING THE WESTWARD WAY

AND OTHER SKETCHES AND INCIDENTS OF THOSE STIRRING TIMES

WILLIAM LIGHTFOOT VISSCHER

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CONTENTS

IN THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS
"Where Nature unto Nature's God her sonorous Aves speaks."

THE WESTWARD TRAIL

Rising, the sun points westward, by the shadows of the trees
The shadows of the mountains, and of monuments and men,
And westward is the trending from the continents and seas;
From all the earth, within the scope of mortal sight and ken.

From where the murky waters of the dark Missouri flow,
And blot the blue of Mississippi's clear and placid tide,
Since the dawn of Western Empire, a hundred years ago,
Have ridden bands of hardy men, with Progress for their guide.

Amid the forests and along, where to the tawny stream,
Come branches, lazing eastward, across the desert plain,
They rode, and on, twixt castled buttes, to where the mountains gleam,
'Neath helmets of eternal snow, 'mid Nature's rugged reign.

Among the Sioux and Shoshone, and Cheyenne tribes that roamed,
The region where the riders bold, undaunted took their way;
Along the placid rivers, and where cascades dashed and foamed,
They blazed the way of Empire; lit its wider, brighter day.

Over the mountain ranges, and among the crags and peaks;
Adown the streams that turn toward the great Pacific Sea;
Where Nature unto Nature's God her sonorous aves speaks,
Along the cañons and the dalles, the forests and the lea.

Highways of steel have stretched along the trail the seekers made;
Great mountains have been rent in twain, deep valleys bridged and spanned;
As if by magic, cities rose, and arteries of trade
Have pulsed the blood of enterprise through all this gloryland.

This gloryland where Nature's mood is wild, and free, and strong,
Where awful rise the mountain kings, where sweep the river queens,
In majesty unspeakable, and where the forest's song,
In high hosanna, rolls above its sea of evergreens.

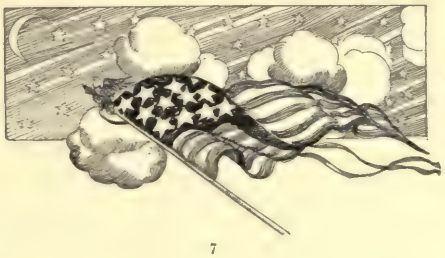
Now hers is high prosperity, and happiness, and health,
With life that throbs in ecstacy amid the golden gifts;
Now the favored land rejoices in blest, God-given wealth,
And in thanksgiving, ardently, its grateful voice uplifts.

Then Ho! for the land of plenty, under the western sun!
And Ho! for the land of flowers, land of the vine and tree!
Ho! for the land of grit and gold, the land by heroes won!
Ho! for the land of Fortune's home, along the western sea!

And shout for the flag—"Old Glory!" Shout for its waving bars,
Where blaze the crimson tintings of the sunset's lustrous dyes,
And gleams the snow of the mountains that reach toward the stars;
The bravest flag that ever rose to kiss a nation's skies!

'Twas borne by heroes, valiantly, along the Western Trail,
The young republic's light and pride, "Old Glory," Hail! All hail!

W. L. V.



BLAZING THE WESTWARD WAY

THE STORY OF THE FAMOUS PONY EXPRESS ACROSS THE PLAINS AND MOUNTAINS

CHAPTER I

"THE GREAT AMERICAN DESERT"

THE school-boy of half a century, and more, ago was taught by his geography that a large area west of the Missouri River, and not very far from the banks of that dark stream, was the "Great American Desert."

In somewhat uncertain lines that arid waste was shown on the map of the republic in his atlas, less known than the sirocco-swept Sahara. But before this almost unknown territory had been eliminated from his books, he began to learn through the every-day sources of information that this region was being encroached upon by the advance skirmishers of civilization.

HON. THOMAS HART BENTON
Famous U. S. Senator from Missouri

The boy did not comprehend it all, but as he stepped along in years it became plainer and plainer, and by the time he had reached manhood and its affairs, his own progress and that of the far West had so broadened and improved that what he had learned of the "Great American Desert" had become a dim reminiscence.

First, the boy had seen a few of the volunteer soldiers of the Mexican War, who had come back to the States, and who had brought with them a mustang pony, curious Mexican jewelry and Indian trappings, a sombrero, and a serape of bright colors, a buffalo robe, and other things that specially impressed his youthful fancy. He heard the returned soldier talk to the "old folks" about the West and Southwest—not yet touching the Great American Desert, but getting quite close to it.

GEN. JOHN CHARLES FREMONT
"The Pathfinder"

This set the boy to looking westward.

Then he heard of the discoveries of gold in California. Sutter's mill-race was his property, in a way, and he was well acquainted with neighbors who went away, far toward the "jumping-off-place," to the "diggings." Then came the song "Joe Bowers," that told the sad tale of a man who went to "Californy" to win a fortune for his sweetheart, and how she proved false because Joe had gone so far that he never could possibly get back, and she married a red-headed butcher and had a red-headed

SUTTER'S MILL-RACE, CALIFORNIA
Where gold was first discovered

baby—according to Joe's wail of woe.

Then, through letters home, from the argonauts and other adventurers, the boy learned of emigrant trains that crossed the vast plains, and of the Overland Stage coaches, the great, swinging ships of the plains that were nearly like the caravels of Columbus, but following one after another, until there was an undulating line of them stretching from start to finish across the map, in his mind, of billowy prairie, sand-bottomed and treacherous streams, white-faced desert, mountain defiles, snow-crowned peaks, and so on to Sutter's Mill, and thereabout.

And the boy was close to the beginning of the facts.

Much was printed in the newspapers and magazines of the day concerning all this, and the boy devoured it. Now and then a book came within his reach that fairly teemed with the wonderful West and the exploits of men and women, and even some boys, like himself, in the long journey across the continent, and actually over the Great American Desert.

The tales of almost ceaseless fighting with the Indians; the descriptions of the varying way; the pictures of camps on the plains, where the great and curious covered wagons of the emigrant trains and the freighters made a corral, and where some skulls of buffalo, Indian wickiups, Indians themselves, with little else than a head-dress of feathers and a bunch of bows and arrows about them, entered into the striking detail; the riders of the Pony Express who flashed by in a streak of shapeful color, followed by a long-drawn, quivering whoop; the wealth of hardihood, horse flesh, and brilliant dash

that gleamed from these fleet messengers of commerce and romance—all this, and more of its sort, crowded the boy to the very heights of sensational enthusiasm. He reveled in it and wanted it. Sometimes he went after it. When he did, it became his, or he became its.

To the boy who only saw it from afar, it was a glorious mental panorama.

To those who were really of it, and in it, and for it, there were manhood, womanhood, bravery, patriotism, trial, pain, fatigue, joy, sorrow, loss, gain, achievement, conquest, success, satisfaction.

To the civilized world, it brought the addition of a vast area of redeemed wilderness.

To the republic it opened an empire of opulent resource and many splendid states.

To "Old Glory" it was a sprinkling on the blue firmament of another shower of sparkling stars.

To the "Great American Desert" it brought the rains of heaven and the waters of the earth with sane and human climate, undulating meadows, prolific fields, flowering gardens, fruitful orchards, homes, cities, villages, farms, roads, railways, intelligence, wealth, comfort, art, strength, health and happiness; prosperity in all its tints and shades, its elements and degrees.

From the beginning, when man was told to "possess the earth and subdue it," he has thus aspired, and he has thought that he could see afar. According to his individual cosmos, he has looked into the future of the world by aid of reason, science, philosophy and high thought, a great distance, but the vista has been shadowy and without detail—merely a long streak of shimmering light. Time, industry, experience, experiment, necessity, ceaseless seeking, have accomplished the world's success, and the same will accomplish far more.

When Greece was the republic of art and science, and Rome had learned from her and advanced to be the mistress of the world, even yet the supply of heat was safeguarded in temple fires, and an emperor was chief priest thereof.

To-day, any tramp, or the most indigent beggar, is supplied with matches wherewith he may start a blaze that Caesar might have shivered for the lack of.

When, nearly a century ago, Benton stood in the Senate of this republic, and pointing dramatically toward the west, exclaimed, "There lies the East; there lies India," he saw only a road that led to a point on the Pacific sea from which ships might sail and shorten the way to our trade with the Orient. The mighty empire that arose from the western desert, wilderness, and arid expanse over which he was pointing, was not seen by even so great a mind as his. He simply saw "through a glass, darkly."

Before Benton, a few decades, it was believed that there was more land on the eastern slope of the Allegheny Mountains, and a line running north and south from them, than the people of the United States would ever need, for any purpose, and when Iowa, Missouri, and Arkansas were the western border states, the Great American Desert and the awful Rockies were squat in the middle of an inconceivable area of sand, stone, bleakness, aridity, death, and desolation.

For ages and eons Nature has been building in the space of this desolation the vast heritage that belongs to-day to the people of the West,

and through them to the people of the world.

The hunter, the freighter, the pony express rider, the emigrant, the telegraph, the railroad, irrigation—each in turn—blazed, opened, improved the way; the keys of Energy and Enterprise unlocked the treasure vaults, and Prosperity, before undreamed of, arose as if a special and all-covering benediction from Jehovah. The crops alone from this "desert" are annually more than all the gold money in the world. Days of travel carry the beholder through good growth until the eye becomes weary with it. Millions of prosperous people enjoy it; many, many more millions will be added to these.

The waste places have become a glory to the world, under the dancing shadow of the Star Spangled Banner.

An Emigrant Train

CHAPTER II

THE GOLD FEVER

THE discovery of gold in California, in the richest and most accessible deposits ever known in the world, of which there is authentic account, had sent a mighty stream of humanity to that region. Its currents had arisen throughout the earth, and converging there, had flooded the region.

"The fall of '49 and spring of '50" were the times of the greatest tides of immigration. By sail from the uttermost parts of the earth people had gone along all the ways necessary to reach the land of gold and from the relatively eastern regions of this republic, men, women, and children had taken the "Isthmus Route" and "Round the Horn," long voyages by sea, for the same goal. Countless thousands had also toiled across the plains and mountains, "The Overland Route." To use the mildest terms, it was a strenuous journey. Disease, fatigue, flood, cold, heat, storms, and savages killed thousands. The trail was marked with skeletons and scattered bones of human beings and animals of all kinds. The history of it all groans with pain, privation, and death. The details of adventure that have been written and printed would load a long railway train, and yet the half has not been told.

Notwithstanding the struggle necessary to get there, people in long and lustful lines arrived and immediately sought "the diggings," or fell into other ways of attaining the yellow bait. Commerce in all branches of trade, gambling, robbery, anything to get gold was done. Not all men in all these ways struggled for it, but some men in each. At any rate the magnet drew people in such numbers that California quickly received inhabitants enough to be admitted to the Union as a State, and as the territory belonged to this republic, one of the United States.

"The Central Route"

Abraham Lincoln

Government was rapidly systematized, and business with "the States," was needful, mandatory, strong, and intense. The distance and the perilous and time-consuming means of communication made an ever-pending obstacle to all the ramifications of life between the new state and the older states, commercial, governmental, social. Leading men were constantly calculating ways and means and endeavoring to evolve plans for the bettering of these conditions.

Hon. W. M. Gwin, one of the United States Senators from California, proceeding in the fall of 1854 from San Francisco to Washington City, to take up his legislative duties, rode, horseback, from the Pacific Ocean to the Missouri River, by the way of Sacramento, Salt Lake City, South Pass, and down the Platte to St. Joseph, that way then known as "The Central Route."

One of the standing jokes of that day was that the term of a member of Congress from California might run out while he was on the way to the national capital, if he was much delayed, en route.

On a long distance of the journey mentioned, and for many days, Senator Gwin had for a traveling companion Mr. B. F. Ficklin, general superintendent of the pioneer freighting firm, Russell, Majors and Waddell. Between these two earnest, observant, and practical men grew the idea, on this journey, of what afterward culminated in the famous "Pony Express." Both were enthusiastic for closer communication between California and the East, and the Senator became an active and untiring advocate of the freighter's scheme for the unique express service mentioned.

In January following (1855), and almost immediately after Senator Gwin's arrival in Washington, he introduced a bill in Congress looking to the establishment of a weekly mail express between St. Louis and San Francisco. The time schedule of this service was to be ten days between the two cities. Five thousand dollars for the round trip was to be the compensation and the Central Route to be the line traveled.

That bill went to the Senate Committee on Military Affairs, and it was relegated to the reserves. At any rate its front never showed again.

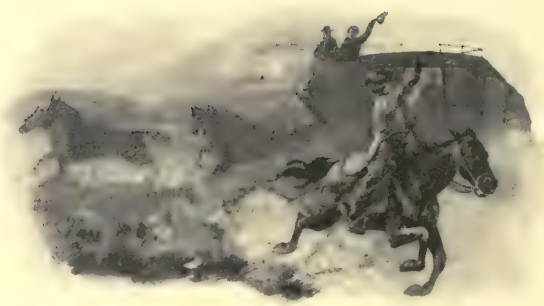
"The Irrepressible Conflict" was on for the following five years, until the election of Mr. Lincoln as president precipitated the Civil War, and during all this time Congress and the country east were so entirely absorbed in the impending struggle that nearly all thought of Pacific Coast business was submerged in the intensity of sectional affairs. But the far West, especially California, clamored more and louder for accelerated mail service. The people of these regions desired to know what was going on and were insistent. The war talk was added to all the other causes of the demand for quicker information. Thus, the West did not cease to agitate the subject.

The South, however, was strongest in Congress. Its interests, pending the struggle, demanded the prevention of legislation favorable to the routes north of "Mason and Dixon's Line" and sought the confining of all government aid in that direction to the southern routes.

In those days there were three trans-continental mail routes, very slow ones, but the great bulk of the mail was sent by the Isthmian Route, via Panama, and the time between New York and San Francisco, at its

best, was twenty-two days.

The first overland mail route west of the Missouri was a monthly stage line from Independence to Salt Lake, 1,200 miles. Its first trip began July 1, 1850, and its continuance was four years. In 1854, the Government paid $80,000 per annum for a monthly mail-stage from Missouri, via Albuquerque, to Stockton, California. It was one of the failures of the period—during the nine months it ran, its receipts were $1,255. Thus early, as well as later, there were many serious interruptions in the service. The eastern mails for November, 1850, reached California in March, 1851; and the news of the creation of Utah Territory by Congress in September, 1850, arrived at Salt Lake the following January, having gone via Panama by steamer to San Francisco, and thence east by private messenger.



THE NEWS OF LINCOLN'S ELECTION

CHAPTER III

WINNING THE WEST

IN 1756, it took our great-great-grandfathers three days to "stage it" from New York to Philadelphia; and under Washington's administration, two six-horse coaches carried all the passenger traffic between New York and Boston—six days each way. It was a long step from this to the Overland travel of half a century later. The first great transcontinental stage line, and probably the longest "continuous run" ever operated, was the Butterfield "Southern Overland Mail." Its route was 2,759 miles, from St. Louis to San Francisco—being far south, via El Paso, Yuma, and Los Angeles, to avoid the snows of the Rockies. For this tremendous distance, its schedule time was at first twenty-five and then twenty-three days; its record run, twenty-one days. Its first coaches started simultaneously from St. Louis and San Francisco, September 15, 1858; and each was greeted by a mighty ovation at the end. Through fare, $100, gold; letters, ten cents per half ounce. The equipment consisted of more than 100 Concord coaches, 1,000 horses, 500 mules, and 750 men, including 150 drivers. It began as a semi-weekly stage, but was soon promoted to six times a week. The deadly deserts, through which nearly half its route lay, the sand storm, the mirage, the hell of thirst, the dangerous Indian tribes, and its vast length—40 per cent greater than that of any other stage line in our history—made it a colossal undertaking; and the name of John Butterfield deserves to be remembered among those Americans who helped to win the West. This "Southern Overland Mail" was operated till the Civil War utterly precluded mail-carrying so far south, and the Overland had to be transferred to a shorter northern route, where it took its chances with the snows. The first daily Overland stage on the "Central" line left St. Joe and Placerville simultaneously July 1, 1861, and each finished its 2,000 mile trip on the 18th.

There have never been compiled even approximate statistics of the overland travel and freighting from 1846 to 1860; nor would it be possible to list the vast throng of emigrants that crossed the Plains. Roughly speaking, 42,000 people did it in 1849 alone. There is no tally of the freighting enterprises that sprang up on the heels of this vast migration, and grew to proportions now-a-days incredible. By the sixties, 500 heavily laden wagons sometimes passed Fort Kearney in a day. In six weeks, in 1865, 6,000 wagons, each with from one to four tons of freight passed that point. At about this time also, express messenger Frank A. Root—whose book "The Overland Stage to California" deserves to be better known—counted, in one day's ride, 888 westbound wagons, drawn by 10,650 oxen, horses and mules, between Fort Kearney and old Julesburg. A curious connotation as to the relative speed of the Overland stage and the Overland freighting is the fact that Root, starting from Atchison one day, spoke to a bull

THE GREAT AMERICAN DESERT OF TODAY

whacker just "pulling his freight" in the same direction; got to Denver; doubled back, meeting his friend somewhat advanced, and so on; finally bespeaking him as he trundled into Denver. Root had made the single trip five times (3,265 miles) with eighteen days' lay-over, while the freighter was covering the 653-mile road once.

The height of this freighting was the period 1850 to 1869; its climax was from 1863 to 1866. The floating population then on the Western Plains was nearly 250,000. In 1865, over 21,000,000 pounds of freight were shipped from Atchison alone, requiring 4,917 wagons and 8,164 mules, 27,685 oxen, and 1,256 men. That is more oxen than there are to-day in the states of Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont; and more mules than the census of 1900 gives all New England, New York State, Utah, and the District of Columbia. And this was but a drop in the bucket. The firms engaged were many; their men an army; their "cattle a host." One firm alone—the greatest, but only one of a multitude—Russell, Majors and Waddell—at topnotch employed 6,250 big wagons and 75,000 oxen. The twelfth census fails to give statistics of working oxen—perhaps this mode of transport has so fallen off in the decade since 1890 (when it was itemized) as no longer to be reckoned important—but probably there are not to-day so many oxen working in

the United States as this one firm used half a century ago. This may give some faint idea of the mighty traffic whose wheels wrinkled the face of the far West, and the smoke of whose dusty torments "ascended up forever" and reddened the prairie sunsets for a generation.

The standard organization of such a train was twenty-five of the huge, long-geared "prairie schooners" flaring from the bottom upward, and sometimes seventeen feet long, with six feet depth of hold and capacity of from 5,000 to 16,000 pounds each; and each with six to twelve yoke of oxen. The men of the outfit were —a captain or wagon-master, his assistant, a night herder; and the "cavvyard driver" (who had charge of the spare riding horses—a plains corruption of the Spanish caballada), and a driver for each wagon. The ox drivers were universally known as "bull whackers," and their beasts as "bull teams." The Jehus, who had long-eared "critters" instead of horned ones, were "mule skinners." "Trailers" did not come in until after 1859.

At high tide, the investment reached a figure beside which the earlier Chihuahua trains seem insignificant. The huge "Conestoga," or "Pittsburgh," or "Pennsylvania" wagons cost $800 to $1,500 each; first-class mules (and no other sort would do), $500 to $1,000 a pair; harness, $300 to $600 to the ten-mule team—a total of $2,600 to $7,100 per wagon, besides salaries, provisions, and incidentals. In other words, a first-class freighting outfit on the Plains, half a century ago, cost as much as an up-to-date vestibuled passenger train of to-day.

The largest train ever organized on the Plains was that of General Custer, in his 1868 campaign. He had over 800 six-mule teams—single file four miles long.

The establishment of regular freight caravans from the Missouri River westward greatly reduced the cost of transportation and vastly developed business and immigration. In the days of pack-trains, it was—and still is, where that institution survives in the remotenesses of the West—no uncommon thing to pay $1.00 per pound per 100 miles, or $20 per ton per mile. There have been regular tariffs much in excess of this, but this was common. Nowadays it costs a railroad, even on the mountainous grades of the far West, only about seven-eighths of a cent per ton per mile to haul its freights. The tariff of the Overland freighters, between Atchison and Denver (620 miles), averaged as follows:

Flour	9 cents per lb.
Sugar	13½ cents per lb.
Bacon and dry goods	15 cents per lb.
Whisky	18 cents per lb.
Glass	19½ cents per lb.
Trunks	25 cents per lb.
Furniture	31 cents per lb.

and so on. Everything went by the pound. The above trip took twenty-one days for wagons drawn by horses or mules; five weeks for ox teams.

The quickest time ever made across the continent, before the Pony Express, was twenty-one days by the Butterfield stage line, its schedule for mail from New York to San Francisco being twenty-three days. The Pony Express more than cut this in half. Not only did it never once fail to span the transcontinental desert in ten days; it more than once surpassed any other courier record in history. Buchanan's last message was carried by it from St. Joe to Sacramento, 2,000 miles, in seven days and nineteen hours; and the news of

HORACE GREELEY
Famous Editor who crossed the plains by stage-coach

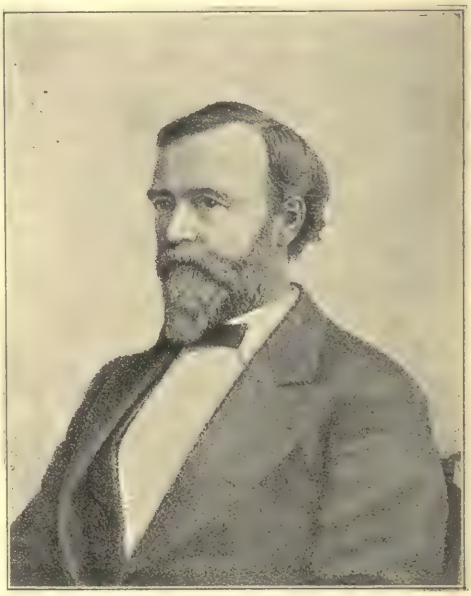
Lincoln's election to Denver (665 miles) in 2 days, twenty-one hours. It whisked Lincoln's inaugural across the 2,000 mile gap in the Nation's continuity in seven days and seventeen hours. This latter is still the world's record for dispatch by means of men and horses.

There have been times when a railroad train could not reliably cross the continent as swiftly as did the best of the Centaur-Mercuries, organized by that typical frontiersman, Alex Majors, who died about the year 1900, the Kentucky Christian who never drank, never swore, and made his employes sign a contract not to drink, nor gamble, nor swear, under penalty of being "fired" without the pay that was coming.

In his young manhood Majors made the broad-horn record on the Santa Fe Trail—a round-trip with oxen in ninety-two days. Later, he took up government contracts, and in 1858, aside from other activities, was using over 3,500 large wagons merely to transport government supplies into Utah, employing there 4,000 men, 1,000 mules, and more than 40,000 oxen.

Majors was also one of the two stage-line kings. For debt, folly of his partners, or other reasons alien to his choice, in his own despite he became responsible head of more miles, and harder miles, more animals, and less "gentled" ones, more Concord coaches, and more "king whips" than any man before or since, save only Ben Holladay. Between Leavenworth and Denver, Majors had 1,000 mules and fifty coaches. The first of these "hoss-power Pullmans" reached Denver May 17, 1859, six days for the 665-mile journey. Horace Greeley, Henry Villard, and Albert D. Richardson were passengers. The Hockaday and Liggett stage line from St. Joe to Salt Lake had (in 1858) frittered twenty-two days in its semi-monthly trips. Majors cut the 1,200-mile-run to ten days, with a coach each way daily. The stage from Denver to Salt Lake had a run of over 600 miles without a single town, hamlet, or house on the way.

By 1859 there were no less than six mail routes to California (counting the Panama steamer), but Ben Holladay was king. No other one man, anywhere, has owned and managed a transportation system at once so vast and so difficult. He had sixteen first-class passenger steamers plying the Pacific from San Francisco to Oregon, Panama, Japan, and China. At the height of his Overland business



William Gilpin

Governor of Colorado in Gold-Fever days

he operated nearly 5,000 miles of daily mail stages, with about 500 coaches and express wagons, 500 freight wagons, 5,000 horses and mules, and a host of oxen.

On the main line he used 2,750 horses and mules and 100 Concord coaches. It cost $55,000 for the harness; the feed bill was a million a year. To equip and run this line for the first twelve months cost $2,425,000. The Government paid Holladay a million dollars a year in mail contracts. In 1864, grain was worth 25 cents a pound along the line, and hay up to $125 a ton. In one day, Dave Street contracted, at St. Louis, for seven Missouri River steamers to load with corn for the Overland's army of mules and horses.

Holladay, whose whole career reads like fiction, was the Overland Napoleon for about five years, beginning in December, 1861. The Indian depredations of 1864–66 greatly crippled his stage line, nearly all the stations for one hundred miles being burned, his stock stolen, and his men killed. The loss was upward of half a million. In November, 1866, he sold out the Overland stages to Wells, Fargo & Co., in whose hands the romantic enterprise continued till the railroads drove romance off the plains forever.

STAGE-COACHING ACROSS THE PLAINS

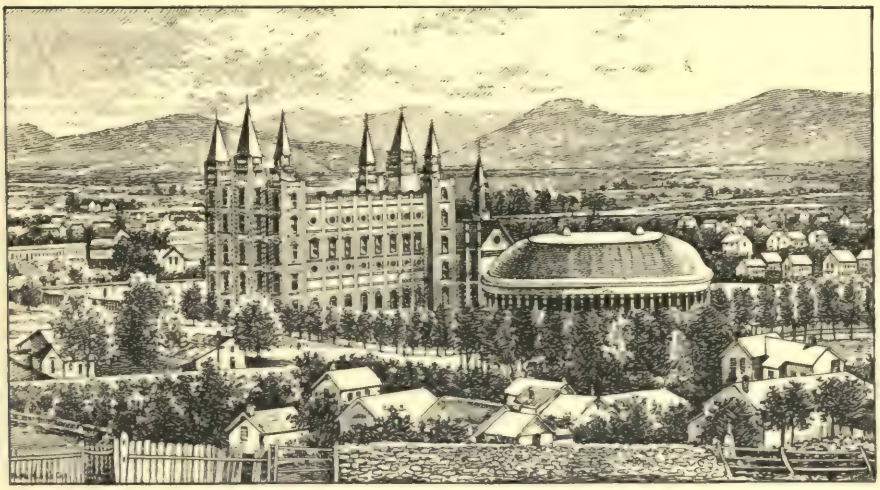
CHAPTER IV

THE PONY EXPRESS

THE MOST UNIQUE AND ROMANTIC MAIL SERVICE EVER ORGANIZED

DESPITE the consuming interest in the coming war, Senator Gwin kept up his fight for a quick mail route and the reduction of time in sending news to the Pacific Coast and receiving news from that region. Notwithstanding that it was found impossible to obtain any subsidy from Congress, at that time, for the purpose in view, in the winter of 1859–60, Senator Gwin and several capitalists of New York, and Mr. Russell of the Overland transportation firm of Russell, Majors and Waddell, met in Washington City, and the result of that meeting was the real start of one of the most romantic and daring business ventures this country, or any other country, ever knew. That was the Pony Express. By that the time of transmitting news across the continent was reduced from twenty-one days to ten days. It is about 3,500 miles by our most direct railway route from New York to San Francisco, and it took seven days, three hours, and forty-five minutes actual time to cover the distance on our fastest express trains during the first years of railroad history. In 1859, there was not a mile of railroad west of the Missouri River. St. Joseph, Missouri, was the western terminus of railway communication, and between that city and the young city of the Golden Gate there intervened but one city, Salt Lake, and 2,000 miles of wild, uninhabited country, infested with warlike Indians. Through this uninviting region led the trails over which it was proposed to ride the flying ponies.

Genghis Khan, the remarkable conqueror of Tartary and China, who flourished in the years between A. D. 1203 and 1227, has lately received the credit of having originated the Pony Express. Some one has looked up the fact in the writings of Marco Polo, who says that the ancient Tartar had stations every twenty-five miles over the territory that he wished to send messages, and that his riders made nothing of covering 300 miles a day. However, things have ample time to grow in some centuries, and these rides may have been stretched considerably on the elastic paper used in Polo's time. It is certain, though, that the system has been used in Asia and Europe, even within a century, and may be used there yet in remote regions. It is also certain that pony express was used in this country about the middle of the first half of the last century. That is to say, two or three decades before the Pony Express across the Great American Desert. David Hale, an enterprising New York newspaper man, used it about 1825 in collecting state news. In 1830, Richard Haughton, editor of the New York Journal of Commerce, afterward founder of the Boston Atlas, utilized the system in the collection of election returns. James Watson Webb, of the New York Courier and Enquirer, established a pony express in 1832



TEMPLE AND TABERNACLE AT SALT LAKE

between New York and Washington that wrought dismay among his competitors until railways and telegraphs overlapped him.

These enterprises were, however, as simple and harmless as roller skating compared to the dangers and tests of endurance to which the Pony Express riders of the western plains and mountains were subjected in 1860–61.

Majors, Russell and Waddell established and maintained for a number of years a fourteen-day mail schedule by rail and pony express between New York and San Francisco, making the trip of the running ponies from St. Joseph to Sacramento as exactly upon the schedule time as do our mails to-day. By using the telegraph to St. Joe and the pony express beyond, news was carried from ocean to ocean in ten days.

Senator Gwin's strongest argument was that if the operating company could carry the mails to the Pacific Coast in quicker time than was then being accomplished, and if it could be shown that the line might be kept open the year round, increased emigration and the building of a railroad by the Government would result. The sequel has far exceeded the most extravagant hopes of all who were then concerned.

This able and patriotic statesman who had so deeply interested himself in the project under consideration, not only for the reasons already given, but also in the interest of accelerating communication between the Unionists of the Pacific Coast and the Federal authorities, ended strangely. Stalwart Union senator that he was, he afterward espoused the cause of the Southern Confederacy, when his native state, Mississippi, seceded, and by so doing lost his great prestige, influence, and fortune in California. After the war he drifted into Mexico and the service of the ill-starred Emperor Maximilian, who, in 1866, made him Duke of Sonora in the furtherance of the visionary scheme of western empire. But Gwin shortly afterward died.

Col. Alexander Majors, who long survived his partners, and wrote a highly interesting and instructive book of strictest authenticity, entitled "Seventy Years on the Frontier,"

A Matter of Moment

gives in substance the following history of the Pony Express, which account necessarily repeats in a few brief instances some of the preceding matter in this chronicle.

Col. Majors says that in the winter of 1859, while the senior member of the firm was in Washington, he became intimately acquainted with Senator Gwin, of California, who, as stated previously, was very anxious that a quicker line for the transmission of letters should be established than that already worked by Butterfield; the latter was outrageously circuitous.

The senator was acquainted with the fact that the firm of Russell, Majors, and Waddell were operating a daily coach from the Missouri River to Salt Lake City, and he urged Mr. Russell to consider seriously the propriety of starting a pony express over the same route, and from Salt Lake City on to Sacramento.

After a lengthy consultation with Senator Gwin, Mr. Russell consented to attempt the thing, provided he could induce his partners to take the same view of the proposed enterprise as himself, and he then returned to Leavenworth, the headquarters of the firm, to consult the other members. On learning the proposition suggested by Senator Gwin, both Colonel Majors and Mr. Waddell at once decided that the expense would be much greater than any possible revenue from the undertaking.

Mr. Russell, having, as he thought, partly at least, committed himself to the Senator, was much chagrined at the turn the affair had taken, and he declared that he could not abandon his promise to Mr. Gwin, consequently his partners must stand by him.

That urgent appeal settled the question, and work was commenced to start the Pony Express.

On the Overland Stage Line, operated by the firm, stations had been located every ten or twelve miles, which were at once utilized for the operation of the express; but beyond Salt Lake City new stations must be constructed, as there were no possible stopping places on the proposed new route. In less than two months after the promise of the firm had been pledged to Senator Gwin, the first express was ready to leave San Francisco and St. Joseph, Missouri, simultaneously.

The fastest time ever thus far made on the "Butterfield Route" was twenty-one days between San Francisco and New York. The Pony Express curtailed that time at once by eleven days, which was a marvel of rapid transit at that period.

The plant necessary to meet the heavy demand made on the originators of the fast mail route over the barren plains and through the dangerous mountains was nearly five hundred horses, one hundred and ninety stations, and eighty experienced riders, each of whom was to make an average of thirty-three and one-third miles. To accomplish this, each man used three ponies on his route, but in cases of great emergency much longer distances were made.

As suggested by two members of the firm, when they protested that the business would not begin to meet the expenses, their prophecies proved true; but they were not disappointed, for one of the main objects of the institution of the express was to learn whether the line through which the express was carried could be made a permanent one for travel during all the seasons of the year. This was determined in the affirmative.

In the spring of 1860, Bolivar

Roberts, superintendent of the western division of the Pony Express, went to Carson City, Nevada, to engage riders and station agents for the Pony Express route across the Great Plains. In a few days fifty or sixty riders were engaged—men noted for their lithe, wiry physiques, bravery and coolness in moments of great personal danger, and endurance under the most trying circumstances of fatigue. Particularly were these requirements necessary in those who were to ride over the lonely route. It was no easy duty; horse and human flesh were strained to the limit of physical tension. Day or night, in sunshine or in storm, under the darkest skies, in the pale moonlight, and with only the stars at times to guide him, the brave rider must speed on. Rain, hail, snow, or sleet, there was no delay; his precious burden of letters demanded his best efforts under the stern necessities of the hazardous service; it brooked no detention; on he must ride. Sometimes his pathway led across level prairies, straight as the flight of an arrow. It was oftener a zigzag trail hugging the brink of awful precipices and dark, narrow cañons infested with watchful savages, eager for the scalp of the daring man who had the temerity to enter their mountain fastnesses.

At the stations the rider must be ever ready for emergencies; frequently double duty was assigned him. Perhaps he whom he was to relieve had been murdered by the Indians, or so badly wounded that it was impossible for him to take his tour; then the already tired expressman must take his place and be off like a shot, although he had been in the saddle for hours.

The ponies employed in the service were splendid specimens of speed and endurance; they were fed and housed with the greatest care, for their mettle must never fail the test to which it was put. Ten miles distance at the limit of the animal's pace was exacted from him, and he came dashing into the station flecked with foam, nostrils dilated, and every hair reeking with perspiration, while his flanks thumped at every breath.

Nearly two thousand miles in eight days must be made; there was no idling for man or beast. When the express rode up to the station, both rider and pony were always ready. The only delay was a second or two as the saddle pouch with its precious burden was thrown on and the rider leaped into his place, then away they rushed down the trail, and in a moment were out of sight.

Two hundred and fifty miles a day was the distance traveled by the Pony Express, and it may be assured the rider carried no surplus weight. Neither he nor his pony were handicapped with anything that was not absolutely necessary. Even his case of precious letters made a bundle no larger than an ordinary writing tablet, but there was $5.00 paid in advance for every letter transported across the continent. Their bulk was not in the least commensurable with their number; there were hundreds of them sometimes, for they were written on the thinnest tissue paper to be procured. There were no silly love missives among them nor frivolous correspondence of any kind; business letters only that demanded the most rapid transit possible and warranted the immense expense attending their journey found their way by the Pony Express.

The mail-bags were two pouches of leather, impervious to rain, sealed, and

BRIGHAM YOUNG

strapped to the rider's saddle before and behind. The pouches were never to contain over twenty pounds in weight. Inside the pouches, to further protect their contents from the weather, the letters and despatches were wrapped in oil silk, then sealed. The pockets themselves were locked, and were not opened between St. Joseph and Sacramento.

The Pony Express, as a means of communication between the two remote coasts, was largely employed by the Government, merchants, and traders, and would eventually have been a paying venture had not the construction of the telegraph across the continent usurped its usefulness.

The arms of the Pony Express rider, in order to keep the weight at a minimum, were, as a rule, limited to revolver and knife.

The first trip from St. Joseph to San Francisco, 1966 in exact miles, was made in ten days; the second, in fourteen; the third, and many succeeding trips, in nine. The riders had a division of from one hundred to one hundred forty miles, with relays of horses at distances varying from twenty to twenty-five miles.

In 1860, the Pony Express made one trip from St. Joseph to Denver, 625 miles, in two days and twenty-one hours.

The Pony Express riders received from $120 to $125 a month. But few men can appreciate the danger and excitement to which those daring and plucky men were subjected; it can never be told in all its constant variety. They were men remarkable for their lightness of weight and energy. Their duty demanded the most consummate vigilance and agility. Many among their number were skillful guides, scouts, and couriers, and had passed eventful lives on the Great Plains and in the Rocky Mountains. They possessed strong wills and a determination that nothing in the ordinary course could balk. Their horses were generally half-breed California mustangs, as quick and full of endurance as their riders, and were as sure footed and fleet as a mountain goat; the facility and pace at which they traveled was a marvel. The Pony Express stations were scattered over a wild, desolate stretch of country, 2,000 miles long. The trail was infested with "road agents" and hostile savages who roamed in formidable bands, ready to murder and scalp with as little compunction as they would kill a buffalo.

Some portions of the dangerous route had to be covered at the astounding pace of twenty-five miles an hour, as the distance between stations was determined by the physical character of the region.

For the most part, the employes of the Pony Express were different from the plainsmen of the time, generally. The latter were usually boisterous, profane and intemperate. The organizers of the Pony Express were abstemious, moral and truthful men, and they sought to have their employes observe a high standard of integrity.

When the plans for the Pony Express had been sufficiently matured and all was in readiness to start on the day set, the enterprising firm that had organized the enterprise, and which owned it entirely and without Government subsidy, or other, that is to say the firm of Russell, Majors & Waddell, through Mr. Russell, who was the most enthusiastic and insistent, at first, of the members, caused the following advertisement to be published in the "New York Herald" of March 26, 1860, and the "Missouri Republican" of St. Louis, on the same date:

TO SAN FRANCISCO IN EIGHT DAYS

—)BY(—

THE CENTRAL OVERLAND CALIFORNIA

—)AND(—

PIKE'S PEAK EXPRESS.

The first courier of the Pony Express will leave the Missouri River on Tuesday, April 3d, at 5 o'clock p. m., and will run regularly weekly thereafter, carrying a letter mail only. The point of departure on the Missouri River will be in telegraphic communication with the East and will be announced in due time.

Telegraphic messages from all parts of the United States and Canada, in connection with the point of departure will be received up to 5 o'clock p. m. of the day of leaving, and transmitted over the Placerville and St. Joseph telegraph wire to San Francisco and intermediate points, by the connecting express in eight days.

The letter mail will be delivered in San Francisco in ten days from the departure of the Express. The express passes through Forts Kearney, Laramie, and Bridger, Great Salt Lake City, Camp Floyd, Carson City, the Washoe Silver Mines, Placerville, and Sacramento.

Letters for Oregon, Washington Territory, British Columbia, the Pacific Mexican ports, Russian possessions, Sandwich Islands, China, Japan, and India will be mailed in San Francisco.

Special messengers, bearers of letters to connect with the express of the 3d of April, will receive communications for the courier of that day at No. 481 Tenth Street, Washington City, up to 2.45 p. m. on Friday, March 30, and in New York, at the office of J. B. Simpson, Room No. 8, Continental Bank Building, Nassau Street, up to 6.30 a. m. of March 31st.

Full particulars can be obtained on application at the above place and agents of the Company.

W. H. RUSSELL, President.

Leavenworth City, Kansas, March, 1860.

Office in New York, J. B. Simpson, Vice-President.

Samuel & Allen, Agents, St. Louis.
H. J. Spaulding, Agent, Chicago.

The Civil War began in nine months after the Pony Express was started, and never has news been more anxiously awaited than on the Pacific Coast during the existence of this enterprise. The first tidings of the attack on Fort Sumter was sent by the Pony Express, and its connections, to San Francisco in eight days, fourteen hours. From that time on a bonus was given by California business men and public officials to the Pony Express Company to be distributed among the riders for carrying war news as fast as possible. For bringing the news of the battle of Antietam to Sacramento one day earlier than usual, in 1861, a purse of $300 extra was collected for the riders.

During the last few weeks preceding the termination of the Pony Express, by the opening of the transcontinental telegraph, the express riders brought an average of 700 letters per week from the Pacific coast. In those last few weeks, after the telegraph had been completed to Fort Kearney, the "pony" rates were reduced to $1.00 per half ounce, and each letter was enclosed in a 10-cent Government stamped envelope for each half ounce, and this was the only financial interest the Government had, at any time, in the Pony Express enterprise, until the remnant of it was transferred by Russell, Majors & Waddell to the Wells-Fargo Company.

In all the trips across the continent, and the 650,000 miles ridden by the Pony Express riders of the Russell, Majors & Waddell Company, the record is that only one mail was lost, and that a comparatively small and unimportant one.

Notwithstanding that the packages of letters were wrapped in oil silk,

they were sometimes injured by water when, occasionally, a rider was forced to swim his horse across a swollen stream. Once under such circumstances the horse was drowned, but the rider, with his mail, escaped.

When, on one occasion, the rider was killed by Indians, the pony escaped with the letter pouch which was subsequently recovered, and the letters were promptly forwarded to their destination.

CHAPTER V

OFF BOTH WAYS

THE day of the first start, on the 3d of April, 1860, at noon, says Colonel Majors, Harry Roff, mounted on a spirited half-breed broncho, left Sacramento on his perilous ride, covering the first twenty miles, including one change, in fifty-nine minutes. On reaching Folsom he changed again and started for Placerville at the foot of the Sierra Nevada Mountains, fifty-five miles distant. There he connected with "Boston," who took the route to Friday's Station, crossing the eastern summit of the Sierra Nevada. Sam Hamilton next fell into line and pursued his way to Genoa, Carson City, Dayton, Reed's Station, and Fort Churchill, seventy-five miles. The entire run was made in fifteen hours and twenty-minutes, the entire distance being 185 miles, which included the crossing of the western summit of the Sierra Nevada through thirty feet of snow! Here Robert Haslam took the trail from Fort Churchill to Smith's Creek, 120 miles through a hostile Indian country. From that point Jay G. Kelley rode from Smith's Creek to Ruby Valley, Utah, 116 miles. From Ruby Valley to Deep Creek, H. Richardson, 105 miles. From Deep Creek to Rush Valley, old Camp Floyd, 80 miles; from Camp Floyd to Salt Lake City, 50 miles, the end of the western division—in all 130 miles—was ridden by George Thacher.

JAMES BUCHANAN
President of the United States in those days

On the same day, and the same moment, Mr. Russell superintended the start of the Pony Express from its eastern terminus. An arrangement had been made with the railroads between New York and St. Joseph for a fast train which was scheduled to arrive with the mail at the proper time. The Hannibal & St. Joseph Railroad also ran a special engine, and the boat which made the crossing of the Missouri River was detained for the purpose of instantly transferring the letters. Mr. Russell in person adjusted the letter pouch on the pony. Many of the enthusiastic crowd, who had congregated to witness the inauguration of the fast mail, plucked hairs from the hardy little animal's tail as talismans of good luck. In a few seconds the rider was mounted, the steamboat gave an encouraging whistle, and the pony dashed away on his long journey to the next station.

There has been much discussion among those interested as to who rode the first horse out of St. Joseph at the opening of the Pony Express service, many claiming that the rider was John Frey. Mr. Huston Wyeth, a native of St. Joseph, and one of the most distinguished citizens of Missouri, wrote to his friend, J. H. Keetley, one of the first of the Pony Express riders, now at the head of an extensive mining concern at Salt Lake City, Utah, and Mr. Keetley replied in the following letter, a copy of which

Mr. Wyeth gave to the author of this book:

Salt Lake City, Utah, August 21, 1907

Mr. Huston Wyeth,

St. Joseph, Mo.

Dear Sir:—

Yours of the 17th inst. received, and in reply will say that Alex Carlyle was the first man to ride the Pony Express out of St. Joe. He was a nephew of the superintendent of the stage line to Denver, called the "Pike's Peak Express." The superintendent's name was Ben Fickland. Carlyle was a consumptive, and could not stand the hardships, and retired after about two months trial, and died within about six months after retiring. John Frye was the second rider, and I was the third, and Gus Cliff was the fourth.

J. H. Keetley
When he was a Pony Express Rider

I made the longest ride without a stop, only to change horses. It was said to be 300 miles, and was done a few minutes inside of twenty-four hours. I do not vouch for the distance being correct, as I only have it from the division superintendent, A. E. Lewis, who said that the distance given was taken by his English roadometer which was attached to the front wheel of his buggy which he used to travel over his division with, and which was from St. Joe to Fort Kearney. The ride was made from Big Sandy to Ellwood, opposite St. Joe, carrying the eastgoing mail, and returning with the westbound mail to Seneca without a stop, not taking time to eat, but eating my lunch as I rode. No one else came within sixty miles of equaling this ride, and their time was much slower. The Pony Express, if I remember correctly, started at 4 o'clock p. m., April 16, 1860, with Alex Carlyle riding a nice brown mare, and the people came near taking all the hair out of the poor beast's tail for souvenirs. His ride was to Guittard's, 125 miles from St. Joe. He rode this once a week. The mail started as a weekly delivery, and then was increased to semi-weekly inside of two months. The horses, or relays, were supposed to be placed only ten miles apart, and traveled a little faster than ten miles per hour so as to allow time to change, but this could not always be done, as it was difficult then in the early settlement of the country to find places where one could get feed and shelter for man and beast, and sometimes horses had to go twenty-five to thirty miles, but in such cases there were more horses placed at such stations to do the work, and they did not go as often as the horses on the shorter runs. At the start the men rode from 100 to 125 miles, but after the semi-weekly started, they rode about 75 or 80 miles. My ride and those of the other boys out of St. Joe was 125 miles, to Guittard's, but later we only rode to Seneca, eighty miles. The first pony started from the one-story brick express office on the east side of Third Street, between Felix and Edmond streets, but the office was afterwards moved to the Patee House. At 7 o'clock a. m. we were ordered from the stables two blocks east of the Patee House by the firing of a cannon in front of the Patee House which was the signal for the ferry boat to come from Ellwood and to lie in waiting at the landing

until our arrival. We rode into the office and put on the mail, which consisted of four small leather sacks six by twelve inches, fastened on to a square macheir which was put over the saddle. The sacks were locked with little brass locks much like one sees to-day on dog collars, and the sacks were sewed to the macheir, one in front and one behind each leg of the rider. When the mail was put on, and the rider mounted on his race horse, which was always used out of St. Joe to the Troy Station, nine miles from Ellwood, he bounded out of the office door and down the hill at full speed, when the cannon was fired again to let the boat know that the pony had started, and it was then that all St. Joe, great and small, were on the sidewalks to see the pony go by, and particularly so on the route that they knew the pony was sure to take. We always rode out of town with silver mounted trappings decorating both man and horse and regular uniforms with plated horn, pistol, scabbard, and belt, etc., and gay flower-worked leggings and plated jingling spurs resembling, for all the world, a fantastic circus rider. This was all changed, however, as soon as we got on to the boat. We had a room in which to change and to leave the trappings in until our return. If we returned in the night, a skiff or yawl was always ready and a man was there to row us across the river, and to put the horse in a little stable on the bank opposite St. Joseph. Each rider had a key to the stable. The next day we would go to the boat, cross the river, bring our regular horse and our trappings across to the St. Joe side. We stayed in St. Joe about three days and in Seneca about the same length of time, but this depended pretty much on the time that we received the mail from the West. The Pony Express was never started with a view to making it a paying investment. It was a put-up job to change the then Overland mail route which was running through Arizona on the southern route, changed to run by way of Denver and Salt Lake City, where Ben Holladay had a stage line running tri-weekly to Denver and weekly to Salt Lake. The object of the Pony Express was to show the authorities at Washington that by way of Denver and Salt Lake to Sacramento was the shortest route, and the job worked successfully, and Ben Holladay secured the mail contract from the Missouri River to Salt Lake, and the old southern route people took it from Salt Lake City to Sacramento. As soon as this was accomplished and the contract awarded, the pony was taken off, it having fulfilled its mission. Perhaps the war also had much to do with changing the route at that time. I hope the data I have given you will be satisfactory and of value to you. I have been asked for it many times, but have always refused. You will please excuse me for not sending my photo or allowing my people at home to furnish the old daugerrotype there that was taken when I made the ride as I am much opposed to publicity and newspaper notoriety or any other puffs, but it is impossible to always keep clear of reporters and to keep them from saying something. I will add that the letters were all wrapped in oil silk, in case the pony

A Pressing Situation

had to swim, to keep the mail dry, and the regular charge was $5.00 a half ounce.

Yours truly,

J. H. KEETLEY.

The route of the riders from St. Joseph, after crossing the Missouri River, lay a little southwest until it struck the old military road forty-four miles out, at Kennekuk, then it turned a little northwesterly across the Kickapoo Indian Reservation, by the way of Grenada, Logchain, Seneca, Ash Point, Guittard's, Marysville, Hollenburg, up Little Blue Valley to Rock Creek, Big Sandy, Liberty Farm, over prairies to Thirty-two-mile Creek, across the divide, over sand hills and prairies to Platte River, and due west up that valley to Kearney. This was the trail taken by the Mormons in 1847, and afterward by the gold seekers to California in 1848–9, and by General Albert Sidney Johnston and his army of 5,000 men, who marched from Fort Leavenworth to Salt Lake City in 1857–8.

From Fort Kearney the train led westward 200 miles along the Platte to old Julesburg, then across the South Fork of the Platte northwesterly to Fort Laramie, then over the foothills at the base of the Rockies to South Pass, by Fort Bridger to Salt Lake. Thence by the route of the riders from the Sacramento end, as given heretofore, to the steamer at Sacramento for San Francisco.

J. H. KEETLEY
As he is to-day, a prosperous Salt Lake business man.

Of the riders from the St. Joseph start, after those mentioned by J. H. Keetley in his letter to Mr. Wyeth, printed earlier in this chapter, Alex Carlyle, John Frye, Keetley himself, and Gus Cliff; the first named died of consumption shortly after the service was inaugurated. Frye joined the Union army as a member of Gen. Blunt's scouts, and was killed in Arkansas in 1863 in a hand-to-hand fight with a company of "Arkansas rangers" in which battle he killed with his own hand, before being overcome, no less than five of his antagonists. Gus Cliff died in Los Angeles, California, in 1865, of bronchitis, while serving with a government freighting outfit.

Melville Baughn was another of the riders who alternated with Carlyle, Frye, Keetley, and Cliff from St. Joseph to Seneca, but was afterward transferred to the Fort Kearney and Thirty-two-mile Creek. Once on this run his pony was stolen. Baughn followed the thief to Loup Creek, secured his pony, and rode back to Kearney where he found the mail pouch and finished his trip, a little behind schedule time. The record is that Baughn, a few years afterward, lost his life at the hands of the law, at Seneca, upon a charge of murder.

Jim Beatley, whose name "in the States" was Foote, rode from Seneca to Big Sandy, fifty miles, and doubled his route twice a week. He was a native of Richmond, Va., and was

killed in a quarrel at Farrell's ranch in Southern Nebraska in 1862, by an Overland employe named Milt Motter.

Will Boulton, who rode opposite to Beatley, was living in Minnesota at last accounts. Once while Boulton was within five miles of his station, Guittard's, his pony becoming disabled, he was forced to abandon the animal and "foot it" with his pouch and accoutrements to the station, where he received another mount and completed his trip.

Don C. Rising for a time rode from Big Sandy to Fort Kearney. He was not seventeen, but it is reported that he made two runs, on special orders, when he averaged twenty miles an hour. He was from Steuben County, N. Y., and now resides at Wetmore, Neb.

"Little Yank" rode between Cottonwood Springs and Julesburg, and often covered 100 miles at a trip. He weighed not over one hundred pounds, and was twenty-five years old.

Hogan was the name of the rider from Julesburg to Mud Springs, near historical Chimney Rock, about eighty miles. He lives somewhere in Nebraska.

Theodore Rand's run was 110 miles, from Box Elder to Julesburg. He covered the entire distance always at night. He was a Pony Express rider from the time the system was inaugurated until it was withdrawn. While the schedule time was ten miles an hour, he generally averaged twelve miles an hour. When he first went on the line he rode each animal twenty-five miles, but later he was given a fresh horse every fifteen miles. Rand is now a railroad man living at Atchison, Kansas. James Moore, whose most remarkable rides and adventures are mentioned elsewhere in these chronicles, was one of the riders between St. Joseph and Salt Lake, as was W. F. Cody, who is also spoken of at length in a separate chapter.

Col. W. F. Cody
As he was in Union Pacific Building Days.

Bill Cates was one of the riders along the Platte who had many exciting adventures with Indians.

James W. Brink was one of the early mail-carriers on the plains, and was one of the first Pony Express riders on the eastern half. He was known as "Dock" among the early stage drivers, and was with Hickok—Wild Bill—in the fight at Rock Creek Station when five of the McCandless band of outlaws were killed.

Upon the day of this writing the author talked with Charles Cliff—brother of Gus Cliff—at St. Joseph, Mo., where he is engaged in merchandizing. Charles was only seventeen when he was a Pony Express rider, and he was one of the most

daring. He rode on alternate days from St. Joseph to Seneca, and generally covered his eighty miles in eight hours. Three years after the closing of the Pony Express enterprise he was freighting on the plains and one day became engaged in a battle with Indians. In this fight he received three bullets in his body and twenty-seven more in his clothes. His party, composed of the men necessary to the piloting of nine wagons, was besieged three days by a war band of 100 Sioux, which was held at bay until the arrival of a large train with men enough to put the Indians to flight.

Will D. Jenkins, now a distinguished citizen of Washington State, residing at Olympia, the capital, and who has frequently held high office in that commonwealth, was at times employed as a Pony Express rider, his home being at Big Sandy, Nebraska, in those days. Writing of the Pony Express he says:

"Although only a substitute, I shall always retain a certain degree of pride in the fact that I rode stations on the old Pony Express, and that at a time and place when it was far safer to be at home. I remember also Bob Emery's wild stage drive from 'The Narrows.' I was an eye witness of that exciting event. During my boyhood days on the plains I witnessed many exciting chases, but none that would compare with that wild drive. One Sioux warrior mounted on a fleeter pony than the other Indians would make a complete circle of the stage, and at each circle would send in a volley of arrows. But Bob succeeded in landing his passengers at the station, none of them injured."

Captain Levi Hensel has been for many years an honored citizen of Pueblo, Colorado, and is well known to this writer. He says in a letter:

"I had the contract to shoe the Overland stage and Pony Express horses that ran from Kennekuk to Big Sandy up to the time that I threw down my hammer and went into the army. I missed the best three years to make money by doing so, but don't regret that I helped to save the Union. Sometimes they ran ponies in from Fort Kearney and beyond to be shod. The animals that John Frye and Jim Beatley used to ride were the worst imps of Satan in the business. The only way that I could master them was to throw them and get a rope around each foot, stake them out, and have a man on the head and another on the body, while I trimmed the hoofs and nailed on the shoes. They would squeal and bite all the time I was working with them. It generally took half a day to shoe one of them. But travel! They seemed never to get tired. I knew John Frye to ride one of them fifty miles without change. He was about as tough as the ponies, and Jim Beatley was another off the same piece. Jim was murdered in some sort of a cowboy row up the road, and poor Johnnie Frye was killed on the Canadian River by bushwhackers. I saw him within a few minutes after he was killed. He was one of General Blunt's sharp-shooters, along with W. S. Tough, John Sinclair, and other of the pony riders who had turned soldier. We were returning from chasing Stan Watie and gang through the Indian Nation, almost to Bogy Depot, Texas. The scouts ran into a band of Indian bushwhackers at Canadian Crossing. Frye was one of the most noted of all the Pony Express riders, and had many hair-

breadth escapes from Indians on the plains. He never knew what fear was, and several times made runs through hostile bands when others weakened."

The large newspapers of both New York and the Pacific Coast were ready patronizers of the Express. The issues of their papers were printed on tissue manufactured purposely for this novel way of transmitting the news. On the arrival of the pony from the West, the news brought from the Pacific and along the route of the trail was telegraphed from St. Joseph to the East the moment the animal arrived with his important budget.

To form some idea of the enthusiasm created by the inauguration of the Pony Express, the St. Joseph Free Democrat said in relation to this novel method of carrying the news across the continent:

"Take down your map and trace the footprints of our quadrupedantic animal: From St. Joseph, on the Missouri, to San Francisco, on the Golden Horn—two thousand miles—more than half the distance across our boundless continent; through Kansas, through Nebraska, by Fort Kearney, along the Platte, by Fort Laramie, past the Buttes, over the Rocky Mountains, through the narrow passes and along the steep defiles, Utah, Fort Bridger, Salt Lake City, he witches Brigham with his swift pony-ship—through the valleys, along the grassy slopes, into the snow, into sand, faster than Thor's Thialfi, away they go, rider and horse—did you see them?

"They are in California, leaping over its golden sands, treading its busy streets. The courser has unrolled to us the great American panorama, allowed us to glance at the home of one million people, and has put a girdle around the earth in forty minutes. Verily the riding is like the riding of Jehu, the son of Nimshi, for he rideth furiously. Take out your watch. We are eight days from New York, eighteen from London. The race is to the swift."

The expenses of the Pony Express during the part of two years that it was operated were, approximately, as follows:

Equipping the line	$100,000
Maintenance, $30,000 per month	480,000
Nevada Indian War	75,000
Miscellaneous	45,000
	$700,000

While it is true that the receipts did not reach as high as $1,000 per trip, in all they did not exceed $500,000, leaving a net loss of $200,000.

CHAPTER VI

FAMOUS RIDES AND RIDERS

A Flank Movement

OF the brave deeds, stirring incidents, and romantic adventures of the gallant riders of the West, and especially of the Pony Express riders and other employes of that unique organization, volumes have been written, and much must forever remain unwritten, as it cannot ever be known. Nearly all of the participants in the memorable enterprise have "gone over the Divide," and the bullet of Indian or border ruffian "blue penciled" many a story that would have been startling, ere the man who knew it best could turn it in.

Perhaps the greatest physical achievement of all the performances of the horsemen of the West, as a matter of endurance, was the ride of F. X. Aubrey from the plaza of Santa Fe, N. M., to the public square at Independence, Mo., a distance of nearly 800 miles, through a country inhabited by warlike Indians, a large part of which was then a sandy desert. It was about the year 1851 that Aubrey gave his wonderful test of human endurance, before which all other attempts of the kind pale into insignificance. He was a short, heavy set man, thirty-eight years of age, in the prime of manhood and strength. His business for ten years as a Santa Fe trader had made him perfectly familiar with the trail and all the stopping places. He was a perfect horseman, and although there were great riders in those days, none of them cared to dispute the palm with Aubrey. On a wager of $1,000, he undertook to ride alone from Santa Fe to Independence inside of six days. It was fifty-five years ago that he undertook the terrible feat. It was to be the

supreme effort of his life, and he sent half a dozen of the swiftest horses ahead to be stationed at the different points for use in the ride. He left Santa Fe in a sweeping gallop, and that was the pace kept up during every hour of the time until he fell fainting from his foam-covered horse in the square at Independence. No man could keep up with the rider, and he would have killed every horse in the line rather than to have failed in the undertaking. It took him just five days and nineteen hours to perform the feat, and it cost the lives of several of his best horses. After being carried into a room at the old hotel at Independence, Aubrey lay for forty-eight hours in a dead stupor. He would never have recovered from the shock had it not been for his wonderful constitution. The feat was unanimously regarded by western men as the greatest exhibition of strength and endurance ever known on the plains.

The ride of Jim Moore, a noted frontiersman of the pioneer days, was another remarkable performance. Moore was a man of almost perfect physique; in fact, by military standards he was a model. He weighed 160 pounds, stood five feet ten inches, straight as an arrow, with good neck well set on his shoulders, small waist, but good loins, and had the limbs of a thoroughbred. No finer looking man physically ever rode a broncho than Jim Moore. He could run like an Indian, was as active as a panther, the best natured man in the world, but as courageous as a lion. He was one of the first Pony Express riders.

His route was from Midway Station, half way between Fort Kearney and Cottonwood Springs, to Julesburg, a distance of 140 miles. Moore rode the round-trip of 280 miles once a week. The stations were from ten to fourteen miles apart, and a fresh horse, Spanish blood, was obtained at each station. There was little delay in these changes of horses, as the rider gave the "coyote yell" half a mile away, and, day or night, the station men had the pony ready, so that the rider had only to dismount from one horse, saddle and mount the other, and with a dig of his spurs, he was on a run again. On each route there were two express riders, one going each way. As easy as it may seem to some for a man to bestride horse after horse for 140 miles, there were few men able to endure it. Upon the occasion of which I speak, Moore's route partner had been ailing and Moore was anticipating and dreading that he might have to double the route. In this anticipation he realized that there is a time limit to endurance, and therefore he gave the "bronchos" a little more of the steel than usual and made the trip to Julesburg in eleven hours. Arriving at Julesburg, he had his fears confirmed. His partner was in bed. He had hoped that he might have a few hours for rest, but before he had time to dismount and stretch his cramped and tired muscles, the "coyote yell" of the east-going rider was heard. He drank some cold coffee, filled his pocket with cold meat, and was in the saddle again for another 140-mile ride. In order to be able to live the route out, he sent his ponies for all there was in them, with the result that he arrived at Midway after having ridden 280 miles in twenty-two hours from the time he had left there. Ben Holladay gave him a gold watch and a certificate of this remarkable performance. Many of the old frontiersmen now living knew Moore, knew of his 280-

mile ride in twenty-two hours, and have seen the watch and certificate.

J. G. Kelley, one of the veteran riders, now living in Denver, tells his story of those eventful days, when he rode over the lonely trail carrying despatches for Russell, Majors and Waddell.

"Yes," he said, "I was a Pony Express rider in 1860, and went out with Bolivar Roberts, and I tell you it was no picnic. No amount of money could tempt me to repeat my experience of those days. To begin with, we had to build willow roads, corduroy fashion, across many places along the Carson River, carrying bundles of willows two and three hundred yards in our arms, while the mosquitoes were so thick that it was difficult to tell whether the man was white or black, so thickly were they piled on his neck, face, and arms.

"Arriving at the Sink of the Carson River, we began the erection of a fort to protect us from the Indians. As there were no rocks or logs in that vicinity, it was built of adobes, made from the mud on the shores of the lake. To mix this and get it to the proper consistency to mould into adobes, we tramped all day in our bare feet. This we did for a week or more, and the mud being strongly impregnated with alkali carbonate of soda, you can imagine the condition of our feet. They were much swollen and resembled hams. We next built a fort at Sand Springs, twenty miles from Carson Lake, and another at Cold Springs, thirty-seven miles east of Sand Springs. At the latter station I was assigned to duty as assistant station-keeper, under Jim McNaughton.

THE LAST STATION

"The war against the Pi-Ute Indians was then at its height, and as we were in the middle of their country, it became necessary for us to keep a standing guard night and day. The

Indians were often skulking around, but none of them ever came near enough for us to get a shot at him, till one dark night when I was on guard, I noticed one of our horses prick up his ears and stare. I looked in the direction indicated and saw an Indian's head projecting above the wall. My instructions were to shoot if I saw an Indian within rifle range, as that would wake the boys quicker than anything else; so I fired and missed my man.

"Later on we saw the Indian campfires on the mountain and in the morning many tracks. They evidently intended to stampede our horses, and if necessary kill us. The next day one of our riders, a Mexican, rode into camp with a bullet hole through him from the left to the right side, having been shot by Indians while coming down Edwards Creek, in the Quaking Aspen Bottom. He was tenderly cared for, but died before surgical aid could reach him.

"As I was the lightest man at the station, I was ordered to take the Mexican's place on the route. My weight was then one hundred pounds, while I now weigh one hundred and thirty. Two days after taking the route, on my return trip, I had to ride through the forest of quaking aspen where the Mexican had been shot. A trail had been cut through these little trees, just wide enough to allow horse and rider to pass. As the road was crooked and the branches came together from either side, just above my head when mounted, it was impossible for me to see ahead for more than ten or fifteen yards, and it was two miles through the forest. I expected to have trouble, and prepared for it by dropping my bridle-reins on the neck of the horse, putting my Sharp's rifle at full cock, and keeping both my spurs into the pony's flanks, and he went through that forest 'like a streak of greased lightning.'

"At the top of the hill I dismounted to rest my horse, and looking back saw the bushes moving in several places. As there were no cattle or game in that vicinity, I knew the movements to be caused by Indians, and was more positive of it, when, after firing several shots at the spot where I saw the bushes in motion, all agitation ceased. Several days after that two United States soldiers, who were on their way to their command, were shot and killed from the ambush of those bushes, and stripped of their clothing by the red devils.

"One of my rides was the longest on the route. I refer to the road between Cold Springs and Sand Springs, thirty-seven miles, and not a drop of water. It was on this ride that I made a trip which possibly gave to our company the contract for carrying the mail by stage coach across the Plains, a contract that was largely subsidized by Congress.

"One day I trotted into Sand Springs covered with dust and perspiration. Before I reached the station, I saw a number of men running toward me, all carrying rifles, and one of them with a wave of his hand said, 'All right, you pooty good boy; you go.' I did not need a second order, and as quickly as possible rode out of their presence, looking back, however, as long as they were in sight, and keeping my rifle handy.

"As I look back on those times I often wonder that we were not all killed. A short time before, Major Ormsby of Carson City, in command of seventy-five or eighty men, went to Pyramid Lake to give battle to the Pi-Utes, who had been killing emi-

grants and prospectors by the wholesale. Nearly all of the command were killed. Another regiment of about seven hundred men, under the command of Colonel Daniel E. Hungerford and Jack Hayes, the noted Texas ranger, was raised. Hungerford was the beau-ideal of a soldier, as he was already the hero of three wars, and one of the best tacticians of his time. This command drove the Indians pell-mell for three miles to Mud Lake, killing and wounding them at every jump. Colonel Hungerford and Jack Hayes received, and were entitled to, great praise, for at the close of the war terms were made which have kept the Indians peaceable ever since. Jack Hayes died several years ago in Alameda, California. Colonel Hungerford, at the ripe age of seventy years, is hale and hearty, enjoying life and resting on his laurels in Italy, where he resides with his grand-daughter, the Princess Colonna.

"As previously stated, it is marvelous that the pony boys were not all killed. There were only four men at each station, and the Indians, who were then hostile, roamed over the country in bands of from thirty to a hundred.

"What I consider my most narrow escape from death was being shot at by a lot of fool emigrants, who, when I took them to task about it on my return trip, excused themselves by saying 'We thought you was an Indian.'"

Stories of the pony express riders, their adventures with Indians and outlaws, and "hairbreadth 'scapes by field and flood" could be told at sufficient length to fill a hundred volumes as large as this, but many of them were so much alike that they would appear in the narration to be simply repetition, yet one required as much dash and nerve as another. The service created the greatest enthusiasm, not only among the riders, but among all others of the employes and all along the route, and to aid a "pony" in trouble was jumped at as a high privilege. For instance, on the first trip the west-bound rider, between Folsom's and Sacramento, was thrown and his leg broken. A stage of the Wells-Fargo Company found him in this plight, and the special agent of the stage company volunteered to finish the ride, which he succeeded in doing so well as to arrive at Sacramento only one hour and thirty minutes late. This agent was J. G. McCall who was for many years afterward the Pacific Coast agent of the Erie Railroad. McCall often afterward told of the great reception that he got at Sacramento, and how the whole town turned out to enthusiastically welcome him.

The service also created much interest among Eastern newspapers, the more prominent of which kept representatives at St. Joe to collect news from this source. Henry Villard, afterward president of the Northern Pacific, was at the time under consideration the representative of the New York Tribune.

Beside "Buffalo Bill" and "Pony Bob," written of at length later in these chronicles, those of the pony riders who have been heard of within the last few years are these:

Jay G. Kelley was captain of Co. C., First Nevada Infantry, during the Civil War, after which he resumed the business of mining and was engaged at that at last accounts. Sam and Jim Gilson long ago became millionaires at mining in Utah. Mike Kelley became a successful miner at Austin, Nevada.

Jim Bucklin, "Black Sam," Jim and Bill McNaughton died many years ago. Bill Carr was hanged at Carson, Nevada, for the murder of Bernard Cherry, his being the first legal execution in that territory. H. J. Faust became a prominent physician in Utah. Of "Irish Tom" and Jose Zongoltz, nothing has been learned since the service ended.

Among other noted Pony Express riders, not specially mentioned elsewhere in these pages, were Jim Clark, George Spurr, Henry Wallace, George Towne, Jim McDonald, Wm. James, John Burnett, Jim Bucklin, Wm. Carr, Wm. Carrigan, Major Egan, J. K. Ellis, H. J. Faust, John Fisher Jim Gentry, Jim Gilson, Sam Gilson, Lee Huntington, James William, Bob Martin, J. G. McCall, Jim McNaughton, Josh Perkins, Johnson Richardson, Bart Riles, George Thacher, Henry Wallace, Dan Wescott, and as many more whose names and gallant deeds are lost from the records as have been the names and deeds of thousands of other heroes who helped to make the great West the rich heritage of pioneer valor, endurance, and enterprise.

Among the humorous incidents associated with the Pony Express was one associated with "Artemus Ward" — Charles Farrar Browne — that has come to be a joke classic.

ARTEMUS WARD

Artemus was at the zenith of his fame as a humorous writer and lecturer at the time of the starting of the Pony Express. Thomas Maguire, the most prominent promoter of amusements in San Francisco at that time, desired to employ Ward for a series of entertainments in California. He sent one of the expensive dispatches from San Francisco to New York asking Ward:

"What will you take for a hundred nights?"

Ward promptly responded, by the same means:

"Brandy and water."

Artemus made the trip to California, going by steamer via Panama, and returning overland. The engagement was profitable and hilarious to Artemus and Maguire, and gave much joy to the genial humorist's audiences everywhere, en route.

CHAPTER VII

"PONY BOB"—ROBERT HASLAM

"Pony Bob"—from a painting by H. H. Cross
The rider is pictured as carrying the news of Lincoln's election as President, riding 120 miles, in 8 hours, 10 minutes using 13 relays of horses. He was ambushed by Indians, shot with flint-head arrows through the lower jaw, fracturing it on both sides and knocking out 5 teeth.

AS nervy and daring as possible for a man to be, and the most famous of the Pony Express riders, except Col. W. F. Cody, "Buffalo Bill," was Robert Haslam, known throughout the West as "Pony Bob," and yet so-called by his intimates. He was the hero of many fights with Indians and "road agents," and the principal actor in such a number of hair-breadth escapes and all manner of peril incident to the westward trail that they alone would make a great volume of intense and strenuous adventure.

In his own modest way Mr. Haslam tells here of some of these and others are briefly told by persons acquainted with the facts as participants in the history-making of those times.

"About eight months after the Pony Express was established, the Pi-Ute War commenced in Nevada," says Mr. Haslam. "Virginia City, then the principal point of interest, and hourly expecting an attack from the hostile Indians, was only in its infancy. A stone hotel on C Street was in course of construction and had reached an elevation of two stories. This was hastily transformed into a fort for the protection of the women and children. From the city the signal fires of the Indians could be seen on every mountain peak, and all available men and horses were pressed into service to repel the impending assault of the savages.

"When I reached Reed's Station,

on the Carson River, I found no change of horses, as all those at the station had been seized by the whites to take part in the approaching battle. I fed the animal that I rode, and started for the next station, called Bucklands, afterward known as Fort Churchill, fifteen miles farther down the river. It was to have been the termination of my journey, as I had changed my old route to this one, in which I had had many narrow escapes, and been twice wounded by the Indians.

"I had already ridden seventy-five miles; but, to my great astonishment, the other rider refused to go on. The superintendent, W. C. Marley, was at the station, but all his persuasion could not prevail on the rider, Johnson Richardson, to take the road. Turning then to me, Marley said:

" 'Bob, I will give you $50 if you make this ride.'

"I replied, 'I will go at once.'

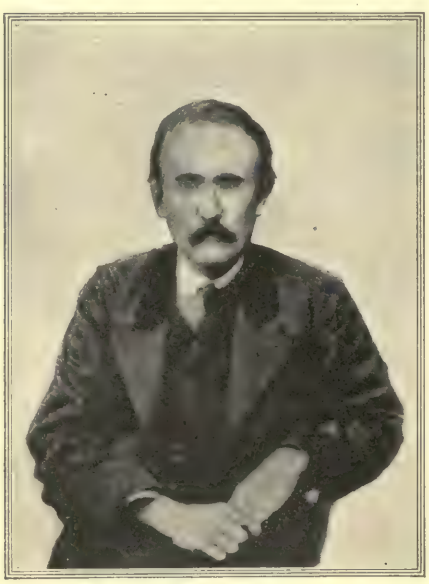
"Within ten minutes, when I had adjusted my Spencer rifle, which was a seven-shooter and my Colt's revolver, with two cylinders ready for use in case of emergency, I started. From the station onward it was a lonely and dangerous ride of thirty-five miles, without a change, to the Sink of the Carson. I arrived there all right, however, and pushed on to Sand Springs, through an alkali bottom and sand hills, thirty miles farther, without a drop of water all along the route. At Sand Springs I changed horses and continued on to Cold Springs, a distance of thirty-seven miles. Another change and a ride of thirty more miles brought me to Smiths Creek. Here I was relieved by J. G. Kelley. I had ridden 190 miles, stopping only to eat and change horses."

This run is on record as the fastest of the entire route of 2,000 miles.

Continuing, Bob says: "After remaining at Smith's Creek about nine hours, I started to retrace my journey with the return express. When I arrived at Cold Springs to my horror I found that the station had been attacked by Indians, the keeper killed, and all the horses taken away. I decided in a moment what course to pursue—I would go on. I watered my horse, having ridden him thirty miles on time, he was pretty tired, and started for Sand Springs, thirty-seven miles away. It was growing dark, and my road lay through heavy sage brush, high enough in some places to conceal a horse. I kept a bright lookout, and closely watched every motion of my poor pony's ears, which is a signal for danger in an Indian country. I was prepared for a fight, but the stillness of the night and the howling of the wolves and coyotes made cold chills run through me at times; but I reached Sand Springs in safety and reported what had happened. Before leaving, I advised the station keeper to come with me to the Sink of the Carson, for I was sure the Indians would be upon him the next day. He took my advice, and so probably saved his life, for the following morning Smith's Creek was attacked. The whites, however, were well protected in the shelter of a stone house, from which they fought the savages for four days. At the end of that time they were relieved by the appearance of about fifty volunteers from Cold Springs. These men reported that they had buried John Williams, the brave keeper of that station, but not before he had been nearly devoured by the wolves.

"When I arrived at the Sink of the

Carson, I found the station men badly frightened, for they had seen some fifty warriors decked out in their war-paint and reconnoitering. There were fifteen white men here, well armed and ready for a fight. The station was built of adobe, and was large enough for the men and ten or fifteen horses, with a fine spring of water within a few feet of it. I rested here an hour, and after dark started for Buckland's, where I arrived without a mishap and only three and a half hours behind schedule time. I found Mr. Marley at Buckland's, and when I related to him the story of the Cold Springs tragedy and my success, he raised his previous offer of $50 for my ride to $100. I was rather tired, but the excitement of the trip had braced me up to withstand the fatigue of the journey. After a rest of one and a half hours, I proceeded over my own route from Bucklands to Fridays Station, crossing the Sierra Nevada. I had traveled 380 miles within a few hours of schedule time, and was surrounded by perils on every hand."



KIT CARSON
Famous scout who guided Fremont's Exploring Expedition

After the Pony Express was discontinued, Pony Bob was employed by Wells, Fargo & Company as an express rider in the prosecution of their transportation business. His route was between Virginia City, Nevada, and Friday Station and return, about one hundred miles, every twenty-four hours; schedule time, ten hours. This engagement continued for more than a year; but as the Pacific Railway gradually extended its line and operations, the Pony Express business as gradually diminished. Finally, the track was completed to Reno, Nevada, twenty-three miles from Virginia City, and over this route Pony Bob rode for more than six months, making the run every day, with fifteen horses, inside of one hour. When the telegraph line was completed, the Pony Express over this route was withdrawn, and Pony Bob was sent to Idaho, to ride the company's express route of 100 miles, with one horse, from Queen's River to the Owyhee River. He was at the former station when Major McDermott was killed at the breaking out of the Modoc War.

On one of his rides he passed the remains of ninety Chinamen who had been killed by the Indians, only one escaping to tell the tale. Their bodies lay bleaching in the sun for a distance of more than ten miles from the mouth of Ives Cañon to Crooked Creek. This was Pony Bob's last experience as Pony Express rider. His successor, Sye Macaulas, was killed by the Indians on his first trip.

Bob bought a Flathead Indian pony at Boise, Idaho, and rode to Salt Lake City, 400 miles away. Joshua Hosmer, his brother-in-law, was United States

Pony Bob as he is to-day

marshal for Utah, and Haslam was appointed deputy marshal, but that business not being to his liking, he became again an employe of the Wells-Fargo Company, as first messenger from Salt Lake City to Denver, 720 miles by stage, and filled that position for several years.

At this writing, the autumn of 1907, Mr. Haslam, who is still called "Pony Bob" by his intimates, is a hale, happy, and prosperous citizen of Chicago, attending industriously every day to his business, which is associated with the management of the vast Congress Hotel organization that includes the Auditorium Hotel and its magnificent annexes.

To see Mr. Haslam as he is in the conventional garb and quiet calling that are now of his life, one would find a test of credulity when informed that the bland, mild mannered, and affable gentleman indicated had ever experienced the dangers, privations, and hazardous adventures that have marked the career of "Pony Bob" in blazing the western way.

CHAPTER VIII

"BUFFALO BILL"—COL. W. F. CODY

ON "Cody Day" at the Trans-Mississippi Exposition in Omaha, in the summer of 1898, this writer had the good fortune to be among the guests at a banquet given by distinguished citizens to Col. W. F. Cody, famed throughout the world as "Buffalo Bill." On this occasion Col. Alexander Majors, frequently mentioned in these chronicles, told in a speech at the table of how Will Cody, a fatherless western lad, whose sire had been slain by Indians, came to him for employment, and how he had engaged the boy to ride as a messenger between the freight trains of great wagons that the firm of Russell, Majors and Waddell were at that time sending to and fro in long caravans across the western plains.

Col. Majors spoke in high laudation and deep affection of Cody, both as man and boy, and told much concerning this famous plainsman's career as messenger, Pony Express rider, guide, hunter, and Indian fighter. Among other things he told of how Will Cody, when he received his first month's pay, which was a considerable sum for a boy in his "teens" to earn, took the coin to his mother, and in his exhilaration spread it out over the table and said: "Ain't it splendid, mother, that I can get all this money for you and my sisters?"

Some one in the party exclaimed, much to the amusement of the banqueters: "Yes, and he has been spreading it ever since."

Col. Majors dwelt with the eloquence of truth, high character, earnestness, and affection upon the faithfulness and intrepidity of Cody, and mentioned that part of the line over which Cody rode in the express service as being particularly hazardous. This route lay between Red Buttes and Three Crossings, so called because the trail ran through a cañon where the Sweetwater reached from wall to wall, and had to be crossed three times in a short distance. It was a most dangerous, long, and lonely trail, including the perilous crossing of the North Platte River, which at that place was half a mile wide, and, though generally shallow, in some places reached a depth of twelve feet, a stream often much swollen and very turbulent. An average of fifteen miles an hour had to be made, including change of horses, detours for safety, and time for meals.

He passed through many a gauntlet of death in his flight from station to station, bearing express matter that was of the greatest value.

Colonel Cody, in telling the story of his own experiences with the Pony Express, says:

"The enterprise was just being started. The line was stocked with horses and put into good running order. At Julesburg I met Mr. George Chrisman, the leading wagonmaster of Russell, Majors and Waddell, who had always been a good friend to me. He had bought out 'Old Jules,' and was then the owner of Julesburg Ranch, and the agent of the Pony Express line. He hired me at once as a Pony Express rider, but

as I was so young he thought I was not able to stand the fierce riding which was required of the messengers. He knew, however, that I had been raised in the saddle, that I felt more at home there than in any other place, and as he saw that I was confident that I could stand the racket, and could ride as far and endure it as well as some of the old riders, he gave me a short route of forty-five miles, with the stations fifteen miles apart, and three changes of horses. I was fortunate in getting well-broken animals, and being so light I easily made my forty-five miles on my first trip out, and ever afterward.

"As the warm days of summer approached, I longed for the cool air of the mountains; and to the mountains I determined to go. When I returned to Leavenworth I met my old wagon-master and friend, Lewis Simpson, who was fitting out a train at Atchison and loading it with supplies for the Overland Stage Company, of which Mr. Russell, my old employer, was one of the proprietors. Simpson was going with this train to Fort Laramie and points farther west.

" 'Come along with me, Billy,' said he. 'I'll give you a good lay-out. I want you with me.'

" 'I don't know that I would like to go as far west as that again,' I replied. 'But I do want to ride the Pony Express once more; there's some life in that.'

" 'Yes, that's so; but it will soon shake the life out of you,' said he. 'However, if that's what you've got your mind set on, you had better come to Atchison with me and see Mr. Russell, who, I'm pretty certain, will give you a situation.'

"I met Mr. Russell there and asked him for employment as a Pony Express rider; he gave me a letter to Mr. Slade, who was then the stage-agent for the division extending from Julesburg to Rocky Ridge. Slade had his headquarters at Horseshoe Station, thirty-six miles west of Fort Laramie, and I made the trip thither in company with Simpson and his train.

"Almost the first person I saw after dismounting from my horse was Slade. I walked up to him and presented Mr. Russell's letter, which he hastily opened and read. With a sweeping glance of his eye he took my measure from head to foot, and then said:

" 'My boy, you are too young for a Pony Express rider. It takes men for that business.'

" 'I rode two months last year on Bill Trotter's division, sir, and filled the bill then; and I think I am better able to ride now,' said I.

" 'What! Are you the boy that was riding there, and was called the youngest rider on the road?'

" 'I am the same boy,' I replied,

SITTING BULL AND COL. CODY

confident that everything was now all right for me.

"'I have heard of you before. You are a year or so older now, and I think you can stand it. I'll give you a trial, anyhow, and if you weaken you can come back to Horseshoe Station and tend stock.'

"Thus ended our interview. The next day he assigned me to duty on the road from Red Buttes on the North Platte to the Three Crossings of the Sweetwater—a distance of seventy-six miles—and I began riding at once. It was a long piece of road, but I was equal to the undertaking, and soon afterward had an opportunity to exhibit my power of endurance as a Pony Express rider.

"For some time matters progressed very smoothly, though I had no idea that things would always continue so. I was well aware that the portion of the trail to which I had been assigned was not only the most desolate and lonely, but it was more eagerly watched by the savages than elsewhere on the long route.

"Slade, the boss, whenever I arrived safely at the station, and before I started out again, was always very earnest in his suggestions to look out for my scalp.

"'You know, Billy,' he would say, 'I am satisfied yours will not always be the peaceful route it has been with you so far. Every time you come in I expect to hear that you have met with some startling adventure that does not always fall to the average express rider.'

"I replied that I was always cautious, made detours whenever I noticed anything suspicious. 'You bet I look out for number one.' The change soon came.

"One day, when I galloped into Three Crossings, my home station, I found that the rider who was expected to take the trip out on my arrival, had gotten into a drunken row the night before and had been killed. This left that division without a rider. As it was very difficult to engage men for the service in that uninhabited region, the superintendent requested me to make the trip until another rider could be secured. The distance to the next station, Rocky Ridge, was eighty-five miles and through a very bad and dangerous country, but the emergency was great and I concluded to try it. I, therefore started promptly from Three Crossings without more than a moment's rest: I pushed on with the usual rapidity, entering every relay station on time, and accomplished the round trip of 322 miles back to Red Buttes without a single mishap and on time. This stands on the records as being the longest Pony Express journey ever made.

"A week after making this trip, and

JOHN NELSON
Typical Frontiersman

while passing over the route again, I was jumped on by a band of Sioux Indians who dashed out from a sand ravine nine miles west of Horse Creek. They were armed with pistols, and gave me a close call with several bullets, but it fortunately happened that I was mounted on the fleetest horse belonging to the express company and one that was possessed of remarkable endurance. Being cut off from retreat back to Horseshoe, I put spurs to my horse, and lying flat on his back, kept straight for Sweetwater, the next station, which I reached without accident, having distanced my pursuers. Upon reaching that place, however, I found a sorry condition of affairs, as the Indians had made a raid on the station the morning of my adventure with them, and after killing the stock tender had driven off all the horses, so that I was unable to get a remount. I, therefore, continued on to Ploutz' Station, twelve miles farther, thus making twenty-four miles straight run with one horse. I told the people at Ploutz what had happened at Sweetwater Bridge, and went on and finished the trip without any further adventure.

Gen. George Crook

"About the middle of September, the Indians became very troublesome on the line of the stage road along the Sweetwater. Between Split Rock and Three Crossings they robbed a stage, killed the driver and two passengers, and badly wounded Lieutenant Flowers, the assistant division agent. The red-skinned thieves also drove off the stock from the different stations, and were continually lying in wait for the passing stages and Pony Express riders, so that we had to take many desperate chances in running the gauntlet.

"The Indians had now become so bad and had stolen so much stock that it was decided to stop the Pony Express for at least six weeks, and to run the stages only occasionally during that period; in fact, it would have been impossible to continue the enterprise much longer without restocking the line.

"While we were thus all lying idle, a party was organized to go out and search for stolen stock. This party was composed of stage drivers, express riders, stock tenders, and ranchmen—forty of them altogether—and they were well armed and well mounted. They were mostly men who had undergone all kinds of hardships and braved every danger, and they were ready and anxious to 'tackle' any number of Indians. Wild Bill, who had been driving stage on the road and had recently come down

MAJ. GEN. EUGENE A. CARR
Wounded in 1854 with Indian Arrow

to our division, was elected captain of the company. It was supposed that the stolen stock had been taken to the head of the Powder River and vicinity, and the party, of which I was a member, started out for that section in high hopes of success.

"Twenty miles out from Sweetwater Bridge, at the head of Horse Creek, we found an Indian trail running north toward Powder River, and we could see by the tracks that most of the horses had been recently shod and were undoubtedly our stolen stage stock. Pushing rapidly forward, we followed this trail to Powder River; thence down this stream to within about forty miles of the spot where old Fort Reno now stands. Here the trail took a more westerly course along the foot of the mountains, leading eventually to Crazy Woman's Fork—a tributary of Powder River. At this point we discovered that the party whom we were trailing had been joined by another band of Indians, and judging from the fresh appearance of the trail, the united body could not have left this spot more than twenty-four hours before.

"Being aware that we were now in the heart of the hostile country and might at any moment find more Indians than we had lost, we advanced with more caution than usual and kept a sharp lookout. As we were approaching Clear Creek, another tributary of Powder River, we discovered Indians on the opposite side of the creek, some three miles distant; at least we saw horses grazing, which was a sure sign that there were Indians there.

"The Indians, thinking themselves in comparative safety, never before having been followed so far into their own country by white men, had neglected to put out any scouts. They had no idea that there were any white men in that part of the country. We got the lay of their camp, and

GEN. N. A. M. DUDLEY
Noted Indian-fighter

then held a council to consider and mature a plan for capturing it. We knew full well that the Indians would outnumber us at least three to one, and perhaps more. Upon the advice and suggestion of Wild Bill, it was finally decided that we should wait until it was nearly dark, and then after creeping as close to them as possible, make a dash through their camp, open a general fire on them, and then stampede the horses.

"This plan, at the proper time, was very successfully executed. The dash upon the enemy was a complete surprise to them. They were so overcome with astonishment that they did not know what to make of it. We could not have astounded them any more had we dropped down into their camp from the clouds. They did not recover from the surprise of this sudden charge until after we had ridden pell-mell through their camp and got away with our own horses as well as theirs. We at once circled the horses around toward the south, and after getting them on the south side of Clear Creek, some twenty of our men, just as the darkness was coming on, rode back and gave the Indians a few parting shots. We then took up our line of march for Sweetwater Bridge, where we arrived four days afterward with all our own horses and about one hundred captured Indian ponies.

Red Cloud
Chief of Ogallala Sioux

Sitting Bull
Chief of Dakota Sioux-Uncapapas

"The expedition had proved a grand success, and the event was celebrated in the usual manner—by a grand spree. The only store at Sweetwater Bridge did a rushing business for several days. The returned stock hunters drank and gambled and fought. The Indian ponies, which had been distributed among the captors, passed from hand to hand at almost every deal of cards. There seemed to be no limit to the rioting and carousing; revelry reigned supreme. On the third day of the orgy, Slade, who had heard the news, came up to the bridge and took a hand in

the 'fun,' as it was called. To add some variation and excitement to the occasion, Slade got into a quarrel with a stage driver and shot him, killing him almost instantly.

"The boys became so elated as well as 'elevated' over their success against the Indians, that most of them were in favor of going back and cleaning out the whole Indian race. One old driver especially, Dan Smith, was eager to open a war on all the hostile nations, and had the drinking been continued another week he certainly would have undertaken the job, single handed and alone. The spree finally came to an end; the men sobered down and abandoned the idea of again invading the hostile country. The recovered horses were replaced on the road, and the stages and Pony Express again began running on time.

"Slade, having taken a great fancy to me, said, 'Billy, I want you to come down to my headquarters, and I'll make you a sort of supernumerary rider, and send you out only when it is necessary.'

"I accepted the offer and went with him down to Horseshoe, where I had a comparatively easy time of it. I had always been fond of hunting, and I now had a good opportunity to gratify my ambition in that direction, as I had plenty of spare time on my hands. In this connection I will relate one of my bear hunting adventures. One day, when I had nothing else to do, I saddled up an extra Pony Express horse, struck out for the foot-hills of Laramie Peak for a bear hunt. Riding carelessly along, and breathing the cool and bracing mountain air which came down from the slopes, I felt as only a man can feel who is roaming over the prairies of the far West, well armed and mounted on a fleet and gallant steed. The perfect freedom which he enjoys is in itself a refreshing stimulant to the mind as well as the body. Such indeed were my feelings on this beautiful day as I rode up the valley of the Horseshoe. Occasionally I scared up a flock of sage hens or a jack rabbit. Antelopes and deer were almost always in sight in any direction, but, as they were not the kind of game I was after on that day, I passed them by and kept on toward the mountains. The farther I rode the rougher and wilder became the country, and I knew that I was approaching the haunts of the bear. I did not discover any, however, although I saw plenty of tracks in the snow.

"About two o'clock in the afternoon, my horse having become tired, and myself being rather weary, I shot a sage hen, and, dismounting, I unsaddled my horse and tied him to a small tree, where he could easily feed on the mountain grass. I then built a little fire, and broiling the chicken and seasoning it, with salt and pepper which I had obtained from my saddlebags, I soon sat down to a 'genuine square meal,' which I greatly relished.

"After resting for a couple of hours, I remounted and resumed my upward trip to the mountain, having made up my mind to camp out that night rather than go back without a bear, which my friends knew I had gone out for. As the days were growing short, night soon came on, and I looked around for a suitable camping place. While thus engaged, I scared up a flock of sage hens, two of which I shot, intending to have one for supper and the other for breakfast.

"By this time it was becoming quite dark, and I rode down to one of the little mountain streams, where I found an open place in the timber

suitable for a camp. I dismounted, and after unsaddling my horse and hitching him to a tree, I prepared to start a fire. Just then I was startled by hearing a horse whinnying farther up the stream. It was quite a surprise to me, and I immediately ran to my animal to keep him from answering as horses usually do in such cases. I thought that the strange horse might belong to some roaming band of Indians, as I knew of no white men being in that portion of the country at that time. I was certain that the owner of the strange horse could not be far distant, and I was very anxious to find out who my neighbor was, before letting him know that I was in his vicinity. I, therefore, resaddled my horse, and leaving him tied so that I could easily reach him, I took my gun and started out on a scouting expedition up the stream. I had gone about four hundred yards when, in a bend of the stream, I discovered ten or fifteen horses grazing. On the opposite side of the creek a light was shining high up the mountain bank. Approaching the mysterious spot as cautiously as possible, and when within a few yards of the light, which I discovered came from a dugout in the mountain side, I heard voices, and soon I was able to distinguish the words, as they proved to be in my own language. Then I knew that the occupants of the dugout were white men. Thinking that they might be a party of trappers, I boldly walked up to the door and knocked for admission. The voices instantly ceased, and for a moment a deathlike silence reigned inside. Then there seemed to follow a kind of hurried whispering—a sort of consultation—and then some one called out:

" 'Who's there?'

" 'A friend and a white man,' I replied.

"The door opened, and a big ugly-looking fellow stepped forth and said:

" 'Come in.'

"I accepted the invitation with some degree of fear and hesitation, which I endeavored to conceal, as I thought it was too late to back out, and that it would never do to weaken at that point, whether they were friends or foes. Upon entering the dugout my eyes fell upon eight as rough and villianous looking men as I ever saw in my life. Two of them I instantly recognized as teamsters who had been driving in Lew Simpson's train, a few months before, and had been discharged.

"They were charged with the murdering and robbing of a ranchman; and, having stolen his horses, it was supposed that they had left the country. I gave them no signs of recognition, however, deeming it advisable to let them remain in ignorance as to who I was. It was a hard crowd, and I concluded the sooner I could get away from them the better it would be for me. I felt confident that they were a band of horse thieves.

Newspaper cut of a Pony Express Rider published in 1860

" 'Where are you going, young man, and who's with you?' asked one of the men, who appeared to be the leader of the gang.

" 'I am entirely alone. I left Horseshoe Station this morning for a bear hunt, and not finding any bears I had determined to camp out for the night and wait till morning,' said I; 'and just as I was going into camp a few hundred yards down the creek, I heard one of your horses whinnying, and then I came to your camp.'

"I thus was explicit in my statement, in order, if possible, to satisfy the cut-throats that I was not spying upon them, but that my intrusion was entirely accidental.

" 'Where's your horse?' demanded the boss thief.

" 'I left him down at the creek,' I answered.

"They proposed going after the horse, but I thought that would never do, as it would leave me without any means of escape, and I accordingly said, in hopes to throw them off the track, 'Captain, I'll leave my gun here and go down and get my horse, and come back and stay all night.'

"I said this in as cheerful and as careless a manner as possible, so as not to arouse their suspicions in any way or lead them to think that I was aware of their true character. I hated to part with my gun, but my suggestion of leaving it was a part of the plan of escape which I had arranged. If they have the gun, thought I, they will surely believe that I intend to come back. But this little game did not work at all, as one of the desperadoes spoke up and said:

" 'Jim and I will go down with you after your horse, and you can leave your gun here all the same, as you'll not need it.'

" 'All right,' I replied, for I could certainly have done nothing else. It became evident to me that it would be better to trust myself with two men than with the whole party. It was apparent from this time on I would have to be on the alert for some good opportunity to give them the slip.

" 'Come along,' said one of them, and together we went down the creek, and soon came to the spot where my horse was tied. One of the men unhitched the animal, and said, 'I'll lead the horse.'

" 'Very well,' said I; 'I've got a couple of sage hens here. Lead on.'

"I picked up the sage hens which I had killed a few hours before, and followed the man who was leading the horse, while his companion brought up the rear. The nearer we approached the dugout, the more I dreaded the idea of going back among the villainous cut-throats. My first plan of escape having failed, I now determined upon another. I had both of my revolvers with me, the thieves not having thought it necessary to search me. It was now quite dark, and I purposely dropped one of the sage hens, and asked the man behind me to pick it up. While he was hunting for it on the ground, I quickly pulled out one of my Colt's revolvers and struck him a tremendous blow on the back of the head, knocking him senseless to the ground. I then instantly wheeled around and saw that the man ahead, who was only a few feet distant, had heard the blow and had turned to see what was the matter, his hand upon his revolver We faced each other at about the same instant, but before he could fire, as he tried to do, I shot him dead in his tracks. Then jumping on my horse, I rode down the creek as fast as possible, through the darkness and over the rough ground and rocks.

"The other outlaws in the dugout,

having heard the shot which I had fired, knew there was trouble, and they all came rushing down the creek. I suppose by the time they reached the man whom I had knocked down, that he had recovered and hurriedly told them of what had happened. They did not stay with the man whom I had shot, but came on in hot pursuit of me. They were not mounted, and were making better time down the rough mountain than I was on horseback. From time to time I heard them gradually gaining on me.

"At last they came so near that I saw that I must abandon my horse. So I jumped to the ground, and gave him a hard slap with the butt of one of my revolvers, which started him on down the valley, while I scrambled up the mountain side. I had not ascended more than forty feet when I heard my pursuers coming closer and closer; I quickly hid behind a large pine tree, and in a few moments they all rushed by me, being led on by the rattling footsteps of my horse, which they heard ahead of them. Soon they began firing in the direction of the horse, as they no doubt supposed I was still seated on his back. As soon as they had passed me I climbed further up the steep mountain, and knowing that I had given them the slip, and feeling certain I could keep out of their way, I at once struck out for Horseshoe Station, which was twenty-five miles distant. I had very hard traveling at first, but upon reaching lower and better ground I made good headway, walking all night and getting into the station just before daylight—footsore, weary, and generally played out.

"I immediately waked up the men of the station and told them of my adventure. Slade himself happened to be there, and he at once organized a party to go out in pursuit of the horse thieves. Shortly after daylight twenty well armed stage drivers, stock tenders, and ranchmen were galloping in the direction of the dugout. Of course I went along with the party, notwithstanding that I was very tired and had had hardly time for any rest at all. We had a brisk ride, and arrived in the immediate vicinity of the thieves' rendezvous at about ten o'clock in the morning. We approached the dugout cautiously, but upon getting in close proximity to it we could discover no horses in sight. We could see the door of the dugout standing wide open, and we marched up to the place. No one was inside, and the general appearance of everything indicated that the place had been deserted—that the birds had flown. Such, indeed, proved to be the case.

"We found a new-made grave, where they had evidently buried the man whom I had shot. We made a thorough search of the whole vicinity, and finally found their trail going southeast in the direction of Denver. As it would have been useless to follow them, we rode back to the station, and thus ended my eventful bear-hunt. We had no trouble for some time after that."

A friend, who was once a station agent, tells two more adventures of Cody's: "It had become known in some mysterious manner, past finding out, that there was to be a large sum of money sent through by Pony Express, and that was what the road agents were after.

"After killing the other rider, and failing to get the treasure, Cody very naturally thought that they would make another effort to secure it; so when he reached the next relay sta-

tion, he walked about a while longer than was his wont.

"This was to perfect a little plan he had decided upon, which was to take a second pair of saddle pouches and put something in them and leave them in sight, while those that held the valuable express packages he folded up in his saddle blanket in such a way that they could not be seen unless a search was made for them. The truth was Cody knew that he carried the valuable package, and it was his duty to protect it with his life.

"So with the clever scheme to outwit the road agents, if held up, he started once more upon his flying trip. He carried his revolver ready for instant use and flew along the trail with every nerve strung to meet any danger which might confront him. He had an idea where he would be halted, if halted at all, and it was a lonesome spot in a valley, the very place for a deed of crime.

"As he drew near the spot he was on the alert, and yet when two men suddenly stepped out from among the shrubs and confronted him, it gave him a start in spite of his nerve. They had him covered with rifles and brought him to a halt with the words: 'Hold! Hands up, Pony Express Bill, for we knew yer, my boy, and what yer carried.'

" 'I carry the express; and it's hanging for you two if you interfere with me,' was the plucky response.

" 'Ah, we don't want you, Billy, unless you force us to call in your checks; but it's what you carry we want.'

" 'It won't do you any good to get the pouch, for there isn't anything valuable in it.'

" 'We are to be the judges of that, so throw us the valuable or catch a bullet. Which shall it be, Billy?'

"The two men stood directly in front of the pony rider, each one covering him with a rifle, and to resist was certain death. So Cody began to unfasten his pouches slowly, while he said, 'Mark my words, men, you'll hang for this.'

" 'We'll take chances on that, Bill.'

"The pouches being unfastened now, Cody raised them with one hand, while he said in an angry tone, 'If you will have them, take them.' With this he hurled the pouches at the head of one of them, who quickly dodged and turned to pick them up, just as Cody fired upon the other with his revolver in his left hand.

"The bullet shattered the man's arm, while, driving the spurs into the flanks of his mare, Cody rode directly over the man who was stooping to pick up the pouches, his back turned to the pony rider.

"The horse struck him a hard blow that knocked him down, while he half fell on top of him, but was recovered by a touch of the spurs and bounded on, while the daring pony rider gave a wild triumphant yell as he sped on like the wind.

"The fallen man, though hurt scrambled to his feet as soon as he could, picked up his rifle, and fired after the retreating youth, but without effect, and young Cody rode on, arriving at the station on time, and reported what had happened.

"He had, however, no time to rest, for he was compelled to start back with his express pouches. He thus made the remarkable ride of 324 miles without sleep, and stopping only to eat his meals, and resting then but a few moments. For saving the express pouches he was highly complimented by all, and years afterward he had the satisfaction of seeing his

prophecy regarding the two road agents verified, for they were both captured and hanged by vigilantes for their many crimes."

" 'There's Injun signs about, so keep your eyes open.' So said the station boss of the Pony Express, addressing young Cody, who had dashed up to the cabin, his horse panting like a hound, and the rider ready for the 15-mile flight to the next relay. 'I'll be on the watch, boss, you bet,' said the pony rider, and with a yell to his fresh pony he was off like an arrow from a bow.

"Down the trail ran the fleet pony like the wind, leaving the station quickly out of sight, and dashing at once into the solitude and dangers of the vast wilderness. Mountains were upon either side, towering cliffs here and there overhung the trail, and the wind sighed through the forest of pines like the mourning of departed spirits. Gazing ahead, the piercing eyes of the young rider saw every tree, bush, and rock, for he knew but too well that a deadly foe, lurking in ambush, might send an arrow or a bullet to his heart at any moment. Gradually far down the valley, his quick glance fell upon a dark object above the bowlder directly in his trail.

"He saw the object move and disappear from sight down behind the rock. Without appearing to notice it, or checking his speed in the slightest, he held steadily upon his way. But he took in the situation at a glance, and saw that on one side was a fringe of heavy timber, upon the other a precipice, at the base of which were massive rocks.

" 'There is an Indian behind that rock, for I saw his head,' muttered the young rider, as his horse flew on. Did he intend to take his chances and dash along the trail directly by his ambushed foe? It would seem so, for he still stuck to the trail.

"A moment more and he would be within range of a bullet, when suddenly dashing his spurs into the pony's side, Billy Cody wheeled to the right, and in an oblique course headed for the cliff. This proved to the foe in ambush that he was suspected, if not known, and at once there came the crack of a rifle, the puff of smoke rising above the rock where he was concealed. At the same moment a yell went up from a score of throats, and out of the timber on the other side of the valley darted a number of Indians, and these rode to head off the rider.

"Did he turn back and seek safety in a retreat to the station? No! he was made of sterner stuff and would run the gauntlet.

"Out from behind the bowlder, where they had been lying in ambush, sprang two braves in all the glory of their war paint. Their horses were in the timber with their comrades, and, having failed to get a close shot at the pony rider, they sought to bring him down at long range with their rifles. The bullets pattered under the hoofs of the flying pony, but he was unhurt, and his rider pressed him to his full speed.

"With set teeth, flashing eyes, and determined to do or die, Will Cody rode on in the race for life, the Indians on foot running swiftly toward him, and the mounted braves sweeping down the valley at full speed.

"The shots of the dismounted Indians failing to bring down the flying pony or their human game, the mounted redskins saw that their only chance was to overtake their prey by their speed. One of the number, whose war bonnet showed that he was

BRIG. GEN. JACK HAYES

a chief, rode a horse that was much faster than the others, and he drew quickly ahead. Below, the valley narrowed to a pass not a hundred yards in width, and if the pony rider could get to this wall ahead of his pursuers, he would be able to hold his own along the trail in the 10-mile run to the next relay station.

"But, though he saw that there was no more to fear from the two dismounted redskins, and that he would come out well in advance of the band on horseback, there was one who was most dangerous. That one was the chief, whose fleet horse was bringing him on at a terrible pace, and threatening to reach there at the same time with the pony rider.

"Nearer and nearer the two drew toward the path, the horse of Cody slightly ahead, and the young rider knew that a death struggle was at hand. He did not check his horse, but kept his eyes alternately upon the pass and the chief. The other Indians he did not then take into consideration. At length that happened for which he had been looking.

"When the chief saw that he would come out of the race some thirty yards behind his foe, he seized his bow and quick as a flash had fitted an arrow for its deadly flight. But in that instant Cody had also acted, and a revolver had sprung from his belt and a report followed the touching of the trigger. A wild yell burst from the lips of the chief, and he clutched madly at the air, reeled, and fell from his saddle, rolling over like a ball as he struck the ground.

"The death cry of the chief was echoed by the braves coming on down the valley, and a shower of arrows was sent after the fugitive pony rider. An arrow slightly wounded his horse, but the others did no damage, and in another second Cody had dashed into the pass well ahead of his foes. It

SHORT BULL, War Chief — KICKING BEAR, Medicine man
Ogallala Sioux, leaders of Ghost Dance War and Messiah Craze

was a hot chase from then on until the pony rider came within sight of the next station, when the Indians drew off and Cody dashed in on time, and in another minute was away on his next run."

On one of Cody's rides he was halted in the cañon one day by an outlaw named———, who said to him:

"You are a mighty little feller to be takin' such chances as this."

"I'm as big as any other feller," said Cody.

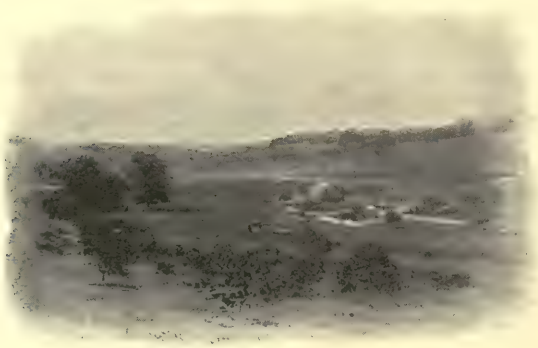
"How do you make that out?" the highwayman asked.

"Well, you see Colonel Colt has done it," the youngster replied, presenting at the same time a man's size revolver of the pattern that was so prevalent and useful among the men of the frontier. "And I can shoot as hard as if I was Gin'ral Jackson," he added.

"I spect you kin an' I reckon you would," was the laconic response of the lone highwayman as with a chuckle he turned up a small cañon toward the north. Cody flew on as if he were going for the doctor. The man escaped the law, reformed, and became a respectable citizen-farmer in Kansas, and in 1871 told this writer, in St. Joseph, Missouri, of the incident as here related.

Therefore his name is omitted.

Of all the Pony Express riders Cody has become the best known. His rank as colonel belongs to him by commission. Indeed, he has been commissioned as brigadier-general. He has also been a justice of the peace in Nebraska, and was once a member of the Legislature, which entitles him to the "Hon." that is sometimes attached to his name. But he only cares to be a colonel on the principle, perhaps, of the Kentuckian who, being addressed as "General," refused the title on the ground that there is no rank in Kentucky higher than colonel. But of all his titles Cody prefers that of "Buffalo Bill," by which he is known throughout the world, and which he obtained while filling a contract on the plains in furnishing buffalo meat to feed the workmen of General Jack Casement and brother, contractors in the building of the Union Pacific Railroad.



CHAPTER IX

A LITTLE PAWNEE

AMONG the many romantic stories connected with the Pony Express service is the following concerning old "Whipsaw" and "Little Cayuse."

"Whipsaw," if he ever had any other name than this rather sudden one, never informed his associates of it, and it was seldom in those days that any one cared to learn another's "story of his life" or what his name was "in the States." However, "Whipsaw" had been for many years a trapper until he became a station agent of the Pony Express on the Platte.

One day while "Whipsaw" was in his lonely camp attending to his work of packing his pelts, mending his traps, and the like, a Sioux Indian brought to him a captive Pawnee child about two years old. The little savage was stark naked and almost frozen. The Sioux, who was vividly marked by a long, repulsive scar across his face, desired to dispose of the child to the trapper, and the latter, as was every one of that class—now vanished forever—full of pity and kind hearted to a fault, did not hesitate a moment, but traded a knife for the helpless baby—all the savage asked for the little burden of humanity.

The old trapper took care of the young Pawnee, clothed him in his rough way, encased the little feet in moccasins, and with a soft doe-skin jacket the little fellow throve admirably under the gentle care of his rough nurse.

When the young Pawnee had reached the age of four years, the old trapper was induced to take charge of one of the overland stations on the line of the Pony Express. The old agent began to love the young savage with an affection that was akin to that of a mother; and in turn the Pawnee baby loved his white father and preserver. As the little fellow grew in stature, he evinced a most intense hatred for all members of his own dark-skinned race. He never let an opportunity go by when he could do them an injury, however slight.

Of course, at times, many of the so-called friendly Indians would visit the station and beg tobacco from the old trapper, but on every occasion the young Pawnee would try to do them some injury. Once, when he was only four years old, and a party of friendly Indians as usual had ridden up to the station, the young savage quietly crept to where their horses were picketed, cut their lariats, and stampeded all of them. At another time he made an attempt to kill an Indian who had stopped for a moment at the station, but he was too little to raise properly the rifle with which he intended to shoot him.

As it is the inherent attribute of all savages to be far in advance of the whites in the alertness and acuteness of two or three of the senses, the baby Pawnee was wonderfully so. He could hear the footsteps of a bear or the scratching of a panther, or even the tramp of a horse's hoof on the soft sod long before the old trapper could make out the slightest sound. He could always tell when the Pony Express rider was approaching, miles

OGALLALA SIOUX CHIEF AMERICAN HORSE

before he was in sight, if in the daytime, and at night many minutes before the old trapper's ears, which were very acute also, could distinguish the slightest sound.

The boy was christened "Little Cayuse," because his ears could catch the sound of an approaching horse's foot long before any one else.

In the middle of the night, while his white father was sound asleep on his pallet of robes, the little Pawnee would wake him hurriedly, saying "Cayuse, cayuse," whenever the Pony Express was due. The rider, who was to take the place of the one nearing the station, would rise, quickly put the saddle on his broncho, and be all ready, when the pony arrived, to snatch the saddle bags from him whom he was to relieve, and in another moment dash down the trail mountainward.

It was never too cold or too warm for the handsome little savage to get up on these occasions and give a sort of rude welcome to the tired rider, who, although nearly worn out by his arduous duty, would take up the baby boy and pet him a moment before he threw himself down on his bed of robes.

The young Pawnee had a very strange love for horses. He would always hug the animals as they came off their long trip, pat their noses, and softly murmur, "Cayuse, cayuse." "Cayuse" means horse in some Indian dialects.

The precocious little savage was known to every rider on the trail from St. Joe to Sacramento. Of course, the Indians were always on the alert to steal the horses that belonged to the stations, but where Little Cayuse was living they never made a success of it, owing to his vigilance. Often he saved the animals by giving the soundly sleeping men warning of the approach of the savages who were stealthily creeping up to stampede the animals.

The boy was better than an electric battery, for he never failed to notify

BRULE SIOUX CHIEF LONG DOG

GEN. CUSTER

the men of the approach of anything that walked. So famous did he become that his wonderful powers were at last known at the headquarters of the great company, and the president sent Little Cayuse a beautiful rifle just fitted to his stature, and before he had reached the age of six he killed with it a great gray wolf that came prowling around the station one evening.

One cold night, after 12 o'clock, Whipsaw happened to get out of bed, and he found the little Pawnee sitting upright in his bed, apparently listening intently to some sound which was perfectly undistinguishable to other ears.

The station boss whispered to him, "Horses?"

"No," replied the little Pawnee, but continued looking up into his father's face with an unmistakable air of seriousness.

"Better go to sleep," said Whipsaw.

Little Cayuse only shook his head in the negative. The station boss then turned to the other men and said, "Wake up, all of you, something is going wrong."

"What is the matter?" inquired one of the riders as he rose.

"I don't exactly know," replied the boss. "But Cayuse keeps listening with them wonderful ears of his, and when I told him to go to sleep he only shook his head, and that boy never makes a mistake."

A candle was lighted; it was long after the express was due from the east.

The little Pawnee looked at the men and said, "Long time—no cayuse—no cayuse."

They then realized what the Pawnee meant: it was nearly two o'clock, and the rider from the East was more than two hours behind time. The little Pawnee knew it better than any clock could have told him, and both of the men sat up uneasy, fidgeting, for they felt that something had gone wrong, as it was beyond the possi-

RAIN-IN-THE-FACE
The Ogallala Sioux who killed Gen. Custer

bility for any rider, if alive, to be so much behind the schedule time. They anxiously waited by the dim light of their candle for the sound of horses' feet, but their ears were not rewarded by the welcome sound.

Cayuse, who was still in his bed watching the countenances of the white men, suddenly sprang from his bed, and, creeping cautiously out of the door, carefully placed his ear to the ground, the men meanwhile watching him. He then came back as cautiously as he had gone out, and merely said, "Heap cayuses."

It was not the sound of the rider's horse whom they had so long been expecting, but a band of predatory Sioux bent on some errand of mischief; of that they were certain, now that the Pawnee had given them the warning. Little Cayuse took his rifle from its peg over his bed, and, walking to the door, peered out into the darkness. Then he crept along the trail, his ears ever alert. The men seized their rifles at the same moment, and followed the little savage to guard him from being taken by surprise.

All around the rude cabin which constituted the station, the boss had taken the precaution, when he first took charge, to dig a trench deep enough to hide a man, to be used as a rifle pit in case the occasion ever offered.

It was to one of these ditches that Little Cayuse betook himself, and the men followed the child's example, and took up a position on either side of him. Lying there without speaking a word, even in a whisper, the determined men and the brave Little Cayuse waited for developments.

GHOST DANCERS

Soon the band of savage horse thieves arrived at a kind of little hollow in the trail, about an eighth of a mile from the door of the station. They got off their animals and, Indian fashion, commenced to crawl toward the corral.

On they came, little expecting that they had been long since discovered, and that preparation was already made for their reception. One of them came so near the men hidden in the pit that the boss declared he could have touched him with his rifle. The old trapper was very much disturbed for fear that Little Cayuse would in his childish indiscretion open fire before the proper time arrived, which would be when the savages had entered the cabin. The child, however, was as discreet as his elders, and although it was his initial fight with the wily nomads of the desert, he acted as if he had thirty or forty years of experience to back him.

The band numbered six, as brave and determined a set of cut-throats as the great Sioux Nation ever sent out. The clouds had broken apart a little, and the defenders of the station could count their forms as they appeared between the diffused light of the horizon and the roof of the cabin.

On reaching the door the Indians stopped a moment, and with their customary caution listened for some sound to apprise them that the inmates were sleeping. Suspecting this to be the case, they pushed the door carefully open and entered the cabin, one after another.

Now had come the supreme moment which the boss had so patiently hoped for! Whipsaw rose to his feet, and without saying a word to them, his comrades, including Little Cayuse, followed him. He intended to charge upon the savages in the cabin, although there were six to three, for it would hardly do to count the little Pawnee in as a man. The rider who had been waiting for the arrival of the other then placed his rifle on the ground, and each taking their revolvers, two apiece in their hands, ready cocked, advanced to the door.

They knew that the fight would be short and hot, so with the Pawnee between them they arrived at the entrance. Now, the Sioux evidently heard them, and came rushing out, but it was too late! The Pony Express men opened fire, and two of the savages bit the dust. They returned the salute, but with such careless aim that their shots were perfectly harmless; but as the white men fired again, two more of the savages fell, and only two were left. The rider got a shot in the shoulder, but he kept on with his revolver despite his pain, while the boss, who had fired all his shots, was compelled to throw the empty weapon into the persistent savage's face, while Little Cayuse kept peppering the other with small shot from his rifle.

Then the Indian at whom the boss had thrown his revolver came at him with his knife, and was getting the best of it, when Little Cayuse, watching his chance, got up close to the savage who was about to finish his father, and let drive into the brute's side a charge of shot that made a hole as big as a water-bucket, and the red devil fell without knowing what had hit him.

Both of the men were weak from loss of blood, and when they had recovered a little, not far away in the hollow they found the horses the savages had ridden and that of the express rider, all together. About a mile farther down the trail they found the dead body of the rider, shot

through the head. His pony still had on the saddle and the mail pouch, which the Indians had not disturbed. In the morning the men carried the remains of the unfortunate rider to the cabin and buried it near the station, and it may be truthfully said that if it had not been for the plucky little Pawnee, there would have been no mourners at the funeral.

That afternoon the men dug a trench into which they threw the dead Indians to get them out of the way, but while they were employed in the thankless work, Little Cayuse was discovered most unmercifully kicking and clubbing one of the dead warriors; then he took his little rifle and cocking it emptied its contents into the prostrate body.

The boss then took the weapon away from him, but the boy cried out to him, "See! See!"

Looking down closely into the face of the object of the boy's wrath, he discovered by that hideous scar the fiend who had captured Little Cayuse when a mere baby, the scar-faced Sioux from whom Whipsaw had purchased the boy. (Cy Warman vouches for this incident in his "Frontier Stories." Copyright by Charles Scribner's Sons, 1898.)

CHAPTER X

THE TELEGRAPH

MR. EDWARD CREIGHTON—of blessed memory—had, during many years of his life, been engaged in constructing telegraph lines throughout the United States. He had long

EDWARD CREIGHTON

contemplated the construction of such a line from the Missouri River to the Pacific Coast. In 1860, after many consultations with the Western Union Telegraph Company, a preliminary survey for the line was agreed upon. Notwithstanding that the trip across the plains and mountains was a trying one at best, beset as it was in dangers from attacks by Indians and highwaymen. added to the chances of storm and flood, Mr. Creighton made the journey by Overland stage coach in the winter of the year mentioned. He halted at Salt Lake City, and there enlisted the very valuable interest and support of President Brigham Young, the great head of the Mormon church.

Desirous of also engaging the association of the California Telegraph Company in the enterprise, Mr. Creighton pressed, by saddle and horse, from Salt Lake to Sacramento, across the alkali desert and the Sierra Nevada range, in mid-winter, an appalling trip for even a hardy plainsman, inured to such journeyings, which Creighton was not. But he had a stout heart and a strong intent, added to a vigorous constitution, thus he accomplished the trip and his mission, and returned to Omaha in the spring of 1861, prepared to proceed with the work of construction.

The Government granted a subsidy of $40,000 per annum which was to go to the first company that should establish a telegraph line across that part of the continent, and this stimulated a mighty rivalry between the Creighton forces and those of the California company, the first building westwardly and the second eastwardly, each endeavoring to reach Salt Lake before the other.

Eleven hundred miles was the distance that the Creighton company had to build, while the California company's line for construction was only 450 miles, the obstacles, so far as nature was concerned, being about equal, mile for mile. The Creighton forces reached Salt Lake City with the completed line on the 17th of October, the California company connecting a week later. A telegram from ocean to ocean was sent October

24th, the line having been completed within little more than half a year from the time that construction began.

Mr. Creighton's financial interest in the line was eventually more than a million dollars. His original stock was worth $100,000 at 18 cents per share. This stock was afterward increased to $300,000, which rose to 85 cents per share, and Creighton sold an interest for $850,000, retaining $200,000 worth of stock.

Edward Creighton died in 1874, of paralysis, but there are many monuments to his memory not the least of which is Creighton College in Omaha, and the kindliest remembrance of the man by all who were acquainted with him in life.

The telegraph across the continent instantly, by the flashing of its first message, obviated the necessity for the Pony Express; the unique, highly romantic, and yet intensely practical and distinctly successful enterprise became a brilliant tradition.

Aside from the immediate purpose that it served so well, accelerating communication between the East and West at a particularly critical period, it demonstrated the feasibility of telegraph and railway lines across the continent at the latitude over which its course was laid, and was, in short, the avant courier of the mighty and progress-diffusing Union and Central Pacific Railway systems that have been, and are, the immeasurable agencies for the upbuilding of the vast and resourceful empire, the glorious West that was the "Great American Desert."

"On what a slender thread oft hang the weightiest things."

CHAPTER XI

AN INCIDENT THAT CHANGED A RAILROAD TERMINUS

NATIONAL FLAG ON TURNER HALL IN 1861

Turner Hall, in St. Joseph, Missouri, was located on Charles Street, between Sixth and Seventh streets.

SENATOR CHARLES SUMNER
Who changed a city's destiny

It was a 2-story stone and brick structure, say 30 x 50 feet, shingle roof, gable fronting north on street, flag staff about three feet south of street line, at summit of roof.

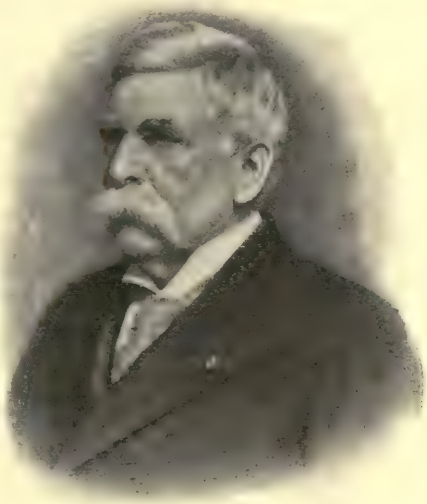
The St. Joseph Turn Verein Society was composed of "unqualified Union men." Their hall was the meeting place of men holding like views. The United States flag was kept flying over said building in token of their loyalty to the United States Government.

The City Council of St. Joseph, Missouri, early in April, 1861, passed an ordinance prohibiting the hoisting of flags, either United States or secession. The Turn Verein Society paid no attention to said proposition, but kept the national flag flying with the approval of Union men.

In 1860, the Hannibal & St. Joseph Railroad was the only line west of the Mississippi River and east of the Sierra Nevada range, in all of the then "far West," except a short line from St. Louis to Jefferson City, the capital of Missouri. The western terminus of the Hannibal & St. Joseph road was at St. Joseph, on the Missouri River and the starting point for the route westward of a transcontinental railway seemed, naturally, to be from St. Joseph, not only because it was the terminus of the only road so far west, but for topographical reasons, involving grades and other desiderata.

St. Joseph was at that time easily the most important city on the Missouri River. Kansas City was little known other than as "Westport Landing," a straggling village under the bluffs, most important as the steamboat landing for Westport, a small town a few miles inland, in Missouri, the outfitting depot for much overland traffic. Now, however, Kansas City is, as is well known, a mighty metropolis for a vast tributary region.

Omaha was then little more than a



GEN. GRANVILLE M. DODGE
Civil Engineer who surveyed the line of the Union Pacific

GEN. NELSON A. MILES

trading-post opposite Council Bluffs, Iowa. But there another great city has grown.

The designation of the termini of the transcontinental railway was an official prerogative of the President of the United States, and it is said that Hon. Charles Sumner, who was a highly influential United States Senator, from Massachusetts, and afterward Secretary of State in President Lincoln's cabinet, was an ardent partisan of St. Joseph as the starting point for the great road which was to be opulently subsidized by the Government.

After the election of Mr. Lincoln in 1860, and his inauguration in 1861, as President, which precipitated the secession of the southern states, Jeff Thompson, a prominent citizen of St. Joseph committed an act that, though an apparently trifling affair, comparatively, resulted in many wondrous changes.

Thompson became an intense secessionist and was afterward an officer of high rank in the Confederate army.

The tradition is that he, with some other young men, tore down the United States flag from the St. Joseph post office and replaced it with the flag of the Southern Confederacy. The story, which seems to be of strong foundation in truth and vouched for by many persons of the time and place, further relates that Mr. Sumner, when informed of the St. Joseph incident, became as strenuously opposed to that city, in the premises, as he had been in its favor theretofore, and that he had much to do with influencing Mr. Lincoln to name Omaha as the beginning of the "Iron Trail" westward.

Hon. John L. Bittinger, who was lately U. S. Consul General at Montreal, many years a leading journalist of St. Joseph, Mo., and now a highly esteemed citizen there, was post-master at St. Joseph at the time of this incident. He apprehended Thompson in the act of destroying the flag that he had pulled down and recovered the fragments at the muzzle of Bittinger's revolver.

Major Bittinger was one of the first three postoffice appointees of President Lincoln's administration that began March 4, 1861. This writer conversed with Major Bittinger on the subject of the flag incident, in October, 1907—since the foregoing statement was written—and he confirmed the story as here given. At the same time Mr. Purd B. Wright, Librarian of the St. Joseph Public Library, gave to this writer the following affidavit, made by Robert C. Bradshaw, which is self-explanatory:

On or about May 23, 1861, I, Robert C. Bradshaw, was going south on Second Street in the city of St. Joseph, Missouri. When opposite the post office I saw men rushing east on Francis Street. I followed the crowd, arriving at "alley" between Second and Third streets. On looking north where the crowd was going, I saw M. Jeff Thompson and others tearing into shreds the United States flag which had just been torn from the flag-staff of the post office building. The mob continued to increase, and in a few minutes fully five hundred men had assembled, when the cry was raised "Now for the dirty rag on Turner Hall." Hearing this I hastened to Turner Hall seven blocks away. On arriving there I found only a boy in charge of the building, whom I sent to notify members of the society that a "secession mob" was approaching the building with threats of destroying the same; therefore for them to come immediately to my assistance. I then locked the back or side door and took my stand in front of Main or Charles Street entrance. A few moments later the "mob" headed by M. Jeff Thompson appeared coming towards the building. They crossed Sixth Street, and when forty feet from the hall they were halted by M. Jeff Thompson. Then Alonzo W. Slayback and Thomas Thourghman (both well known to me) came forward, and in the name of peace and the welfare of the city, they asked me to take the flag down, saying that "Jeff" Thompson was drunk, and no one could tell what a "mob" under a drunken leader would do. I declined to comply with their request, and the parley was continued, when a Mr. Miller, a justice of the peace, came forward and demanded in the name of the "mayor and city council" that the flag be taken down immediately, or he would have me (Bradshaw) arrested, as I claimed to be in charge of the building, for violating the city ordinances.

I then asked Mr. Slayback if he would take charge of the door and not allow any one to enter during my absence. He said he would. I then told the parties I would take the flag down, but before doing so I claimed the right to salute it. Leaving Mr. Slayback in charge of the door, I went upstairs, then out on the roof. When half way from exit in roof to the flag-staff, the "mob" raised the cry to "Shoot him!" I stopped and told them I would take the flag down agreeable to the demands of the mayor and the city council, but no mob could compel me to do it, that I would salute the flag before lowering it, well knowing that ere long it would float in triumph over every seceding state. Again the cry "Shoot him! Shoot him!" Revolvers in great numbers were drawn and pointed at me; I could hear the click as they were being cocked. Therefore, I drew my revolvers (two, before concealed on my person), cocked one, then advanced to the flag staff, seizing the halyard; I gave three cheers for the national flag, and raising my revolver, I fired six shots over the flag in token of salute, then lowering it, I took the flag and returned to the second story where it was deposited in safety.

Going down stairs I found Mr. Slayback at his post, whom I thanked for his manner in keeping the promise. I also told him, while on the roof, I could see and face the mob, but I could not see him (Slayback) at the door; but when the "mob" yelled "Shoot him," I heard him tell them "that he would kill the first man that shot at Bradshaw."

The foregoing is a succinct but true report of the "Turners Hall" flag episode.

(Signed) *Robert C. Bradshaw.*

State of Kansas, } ss
County of Shawnee. }

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 28th day of November, 1905: I further certify that I am in no wise interested in the claim nor concerned in its prosecution, and that said affiant is personally known to me, and he is a credible person.

(Signed) *H. I. Monroe,*
Deputy County Clerk,
Topeka, Kansas.

Original on file in office of Librarian, Public Library, St. Joseph, Mo.
Purd B. Wright, Librarian.

At any rate Omaha became the starting point of the Union Pacific railroad, which has been immeasurably potent in the upbuilding of the mighty West, and in a few years afterward Kansas City was the starting point of another great line of the system, the Kansas Pacific Railroad, that, crossing Kansas and Colorado, joins other branches at Denver that ramify the Rocky Mountains, one line connecting at Cheyenne with the Union Pacific that connects at Ogden, Utah, with the Central Pacific, which two made the first of the lines that reached across the continent.

If it is true that Thompson's act in hauling down "Old Glory" from its staff in St. Joseph caused the change in the starting point for the transcontinental road, that act also did much for the initiatory of two splendid cities on the Missouri River as well as for that of many other thriving cities further west.

Saving for a short distance west of St. Joseph, the Union Pacific and Central Pacific original lines follow practically the route taken by the Pony Express, and thus did those gallant Centaur-Mercurys with the caduceus of courage, fidelity, and endurance pave the way to an empire of prosperity now, that, great as it is, glows only as a sign of what it will be to coming millions.

CHAPTER XII

"THE IRON TRAIL"

IN all the stories of romance, or reality, colossal performance and accomplishment under difficulties, energy, enterprise, push, and get-there, the building of the Union Pacific and

RED CLOUD
Big Ogallala Sioux Chief from another view

Central Pacific Railroad — the first transcontinental line—stands out in history as the greatest of all the achievements of its kind, in any age, when the conditions and facilities for the work are understood. However, it is all a matter of record and the story compiled, in all its phases, would make a vast volume. It is a history that lives in the reports of congressional proceedings in which the legislation necessary to the Government's official part in the work is set forth; in the reports of surveyors and civil engineers and of the work of contractors; in the details of the proceedings of the syndicates of capitalists who financed the scheme; in the narration of incidents of bloodshed and wild and startling adventure, Indian fighting, affrays with outlaws and desperadoes, the trying service of soldiers, the hardships and exposure associated with weather, rugged nature and thousands of other difficulties that can better be imagined than described when what has been told is considered.

Hundreds of books have been written and printed that, in varying ways, give disunited details, but the whole story of the great work in all its ramifications, atmosphere, and environment has not been written into one great volume and probably never will be. Certainly it will not be undertaken here, not only because it would require a thousand times the space contemplated in this book, but because only a casual glance at the great enterprise has been intended, and that merely as a result leading up from the success of the Pony Express.

Explorations and surveys, desultory, fitful, deviating, at first, by private parties and corporations, with spasmodic ambitions to build a road across the continent, began as early as 1853, and continued with increasing design and purpose until 1861, when Congress passed the bill favoring a Pacific railway, that was known as the Law of 1862. As a result of that bill, the Union Pacific Company was organized at Chicago, September 2, 1862. The effort to engage capital

in the scheme was a failure. The war being under way, the Government had its hands full and could only aid slightly in the enterprise. The road, however, was deemed by the administration a military necessity, and in 1864 a bill was passed by Congress that by subsidy and countenance so strengthened the situation that under it the Union and Central Pacific railroads, constituting one continuous line, from the Missouri River to the Pacific Coast, were built. Ground was broken at Omaha for the Union Pacific on the fifth day of November, 1865, and the last spike was driven at Promontory Point, Utah, where the Union Pacific met the Central Pacific, on the tenth day of May, 1869.

On the occasion of the ceremony of "breaking ground" at Omaha, George Francis Train, an enthusiastic speaker, declared that the road would be completed in five years. He was laughed at as a dreamer. The road was completed in three years, six months, and ten days, about a year and a half less time than had been estimated by Mr. Train.

At the beginning of the work of building the Union Pacific, the nearest railroad to Omaha was 150 miles eastward. Over this distance all the material for construction was hauled by wagon. This included rails, spikes and other iron, necessary machinery, that had been purchased in eastern cities. The laborers, the tools with which they were to work, and the supplies necessary for their sustenance were transported the same way.

West of Omaha for 500 miles the route of the railroad lay over a region bare of timber except for the few cottonwoods that grew along the banks of the streams, and they were useless for railroad building purposes. The ties that were used in the construction of the road were cut in Michigan, Pennsylvania, and New York, and were delivered at Omaha at $2.50 per tie.

In January, 1866, forty miles of the Union Pacific Railroad had been constructed. During the remainder of that year 265 miles further were completed, and in 1867 there were added 285 miles, a total of 550 miles. During the next fifteen months, the remaining distance, 534 miles, was completed, that being at the rate of about one and one-fifth miles per day.

General Jack Casement, who went into the Civil War as colonel of an Ohio regiment, and who rose to the rank of brigadier-general, and a command in the 23d Army Corps, was on the construction of the Union Pacific. Hundreds of his soldiers, and even soldiers of the Confederate army, went with General Casement from war to work. Thus, during this period of railway construction, his track train had with it, at any moment, a thousand men who at a word could be transformed into an army of veterans inured to war, and with men who had ranked from general to private, being thus entirely able to whip three times their number of undisciplined men. It was distinctly needful that this condition should exist, there and then, for occasions were frequent when the men in small or great detachments found it necessary to change a working line into a battle front on account of the attacks of Indians, generally in numbers five, or more, to one of the railroad hands.

The exigencies of the previous war and its diversified experiences were potent in the construction of this transcontinental road. The war had actually made the undertaking possible, physically and financially. Phys-

BUILDING THE UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD UNDER FIRE

ically it produced the men, and financially public consent.

Notwithstanding that the Government was already loaded monstrously with an almost inconceivable war debt, it floated for the enterprise fifty millions of a subsidy, and by this step created for the undertaking a credit that enabled the constructing organization to bond an equal amount, and this combination of capital, in the hands and at the disposal of the strong and courageous men in charge, who also ventured their personal fortunes and services in the work, triumphantly accomplished the scheme in a manner far beyond the most sanguine expectations of all concerned.

The proposition before the war to construct a railway across the continent 2,000 miles, and through an uninhabited wilderness, except for warlike savages, and for the most part over barren plains, shifting streams, and chaotic mountains, without a dollar of way traffic in sight, would have appalled the nation, had it been asked to give its credit, or even countenance, to such an apparently crazy scheme. In short, the people and their authorities would have promptly estopped even talk of an undertaking so utterly absurd, preposterous, and extravagant as this would have seemed to be.

The mighty achievements of the republic in carrying on a war so prodigious and stupendous in magnitude, and so far reaching in all its physical and financial ramifications, as well as in its social and commercial effects, widened and enlarged the public mind in many ways, and especially in the direction of structural possibilities in domestic utilities and internal improvements. Thus, the public became far more tolerant as to great undertakings by Government, particularly because the possibilities of finance on a huge scale were made more apparent and the viewpoint was generally widened. In short, ours had become a nation with a big "N."

Touching the matter of railroad construction, distinguished civil engineers declared that necessity brought our during the war bold structures that in their rough were models of economy in material and strength and brought about the adoption of principles in superstructure that are used to-day in the highest and boldest work of the builders. The simple principles thus evolved out of necessity were applied whenever demanded in the construction of this great work, the transcontinental road, and though they had been reported against at the outset, during the war, by experienced and reliable engineers, were found to be most effectual in this work that tested all the forces in that line because of the difficulties to be overcome.

The enterprising and venturesome men, who with brain, brawn, and capital persisted in forwarding this undertaking, that has since worked inconceivable benefit to the region of its locale, to the nation, and the world, were, notwithstanding the progressive bent of the time, deemed by many persons of importance to be "fools and fanatics" in this particular. But other and greater spirits applauded and encouraged them, and this was particularly true of the great military geniuses of the time and country. Oakes Ames, who was of the very soul of the enterprise, once remarked in this connection, speaking to an army officer of distinction, "What makes me hang on is the faith of you soldiers," and he was referring to such men of the army as Grant, Sheridan, Sher-

man, Dodge, Pope, Thomas, Augur, Crook, and many others who were in touch with the building of the road, in the field or otherwise officially. That part of the army which was brought into juxtaposition with the work was enthusiastic in aid of it, and there was nothing that the builders could ask, that the army could give, which was not at all times forthcoming, even in instances where the regulations did not authorize it, and where it took a violent stretch of authority to meet it. The commissary department was nearly always under requisition to the working force and was incalculably valuable. The troops guarded the line, and it was surveyed, located, and constructed within the army's picket posts.

A distinguished man, who has been a potent factor in the country's material advancement, and who had special advantages for observation of the things concerning which he was speaking, once said:

"But for the railroads the great central region of this continent would be indeed a howling wilderness."

Nothing has ever been plainer to those who have had the opportunity and the satisfaction of seeing it all—as have many thousands who are yet strong men and women—than the wondrous changes that have been wrought upon the region that they traverse by the transcontinental roads, of which the Union Pacific and Central Pacific were the pioneers and pace-makers. With the progress of civilization that followed, the turning of the soil and the planting of trees, associated with other attendant influences, the climate changed, the rain-belt advanced, agriculture took possession of the desert and all the adjuncts, accessories, benefits and beatitudes that adorn and embellish enlightened life, came along to stay and increase. In the history of the world there has been no event that did more to directly upbuild a mighty empire of resource and blessed reciprocity.

All in all, the Great Iron Trail has been the working arm of Civilization that has built for herself a palace and planted a garden in the desert, to the glory of the Republic and the benefit of the world.

For all this the fleet, nervy, and gallant riders of the Pony Express were advance couriers who definitely marked the Westward Way.

THE AMES MONUMENT

CHAPTER XIII

GENERAL SHERIDAN'S WAY

AMERICAN history, especially since the latter fifties, has been made so rapidly that it eclipses the revels of romantic dreamers and em-

GEN. PHIL. SHERIDAN

barrasses the writer with its abundance of thrilling episodes, scenes, incidents, and occurrences in the region whose first regularly transacted business affair was the Pony Express. So prolific are they that volumes could be filled, and consequently the latitude of this publication is confined to what was practically the last chapter of Indian warfare so far as it deals with that subject; as growing out of the great things that followed the Pony Express.

Every inch of ground on the historic Overland trail has been made sacred by events, adventures, and experiences that will fill libraries in the future when the local legends are compiled, and the time will come when the legendary lore of Europe, from the time of the Crusaders to historic Waterloo, will be eclipsed by the deeds of daring and hair-breadth escapes, trials, sufferings, and hardships of the early explorers, pioneers, scouts, and army folks that opened the way from the days of Lewis and Clark to the time of the fur traders, trappers from Fort St. Louis, led by the Choteaus and others; during the expeditions of Pathfinder Fremont, guided by Kit Carson, carving the way from the Missouri to the new acquisitions in California, on down to the time when it became necessary to grapple with the obstructing savage for final decision as inaugu-

CHIEF GALL
A Brilliant Ogallala Leader

CHIEF JOHN GRASS
Uncapapa Sioux Statesman

rated by General Sheridan with the superbly equipped army he found under his command at the finish of the Civil War.

Prolific as was and is the story of a most strenuous, sanguinary invasion of the lands west of the Alleghany Mountains, the crossing of the Ohio and reaching the Mississippi, the occupation of the great central plains, from the Missouri to the Rockies, and from the Red River in the North to the Rio Grande in the South, surpassed it in bloody story and rapidity of action, and there is no doubt that in no epoch of history were there so many startling incidents as resulted from the vigorous contest and settlement of the "Great American Desert."

The marvelous progress and prosperity succeeding the establishment of the Union Pacific Railroad has partaken almost of the miraculous, and the evolution from savage conditions to the height of civilization has wiped out apparently the scars so deeply made as to cause them to be almost forgotten. In fact, the transition has taken place during the lives—the adult active lives, of many of the participants, both red and white, still living. It is here but just, to refer to the nation's debt of gratitude to the army men and their associate scouts and guides that were the 'wedge' that ploughed the way in achieving the results. In this arena was fought, the reader must remember, the last battles of the struggle that had lasted nearly three hundred years with a gallant foe stubborn to almost the extent of suicide, as were the primitive protestors against the march of civilization. The fate of the American Indian is an example of the survival of the fittest. These people were once the sole owners of the trackless forests, the mighty rivers, the great mountains, woodlands, and plains of the then unknown and even unheard of country that we now call America. They were in the full sense of the term "monarchs of all they surveyed." As far as eye could reach or limbs could bear them, whatsoever the sole of their foot rested upon, was theirs. They had a religion, a history, traditions, a nation all their own, a Utopia. The poet Longfellow has done much to bring

CURLEY
A great Warrior of the Brule Sioux

before the mind's eye a true picture of the primitive life:

With the odors of the forest
With the dew and damp of meadows
With the curling smoke of wigwams,
With the rushing of great rivers.

From the Great Lakes of the Northland,
From the land of the Ojibways,
From the land of the Dacotahs
From the mountains, moor, and fernlands
Where the heron, the Shuh-shuh-hag,
Feeds among the reeds and rushes.

The centuries of deadly combat between the white man and the red was the result of the then existing belief on the one hand that the right of discovery gave the right of conquest and acquisition; and on the other that possession is nine points of the law, and that equity and honor demanded the defense of his home. The Indian knew nothing of the much-vaunted beauties of civilization or the fruit of the so-called progress, having only an innate sense of what was justice and equity.

The army and the scout were the ones who fell heir to precedence and consequent prominence on the firing line in this "irrepressible conflict," whose merit must be decided by the results of the greatest good to the greatest numbers. The pages of the world's history held nothing to equal it in sanguinary character and bitterness of feeling, no warfare required such strategic skill, personal qualities and resourcefulness.

In certain characteristics the Indian excelled, and this necessitated the acquisition of similar qualities by his white opponent ere success could be attained.

After the results, none respected each other more and none became more sympathetic than did the old white and red campaigners.

The red man of the western mountains and plains was brave, reckless, and wily; his white enemy had to keep every faculty on the alert to escape the results or counteract his cunning. The result was that American officers trained in that school acquired qualities that made them preeminent among military men when opportunity occurred in civilized warfare.

It is fitting here to remark and call attention of the reader to the difference between Indian warfare and civilized warfare. One was a fight to the death, with torture preceding it if captured, while the other was governed by certain amenities if captured. Capture generally meant good treatment. It was in this school of savage warfare where every faculty was developed that graduated the great chieftains of the Civil War on both sides. The Lees, Van Dorns, Wheelers, of the South, and the Shermans, Sheridans, Merritts, Crooks Emorys, Frenches, Royals, Hayses, and Carrs, of the North, became distinguished leaders in the great civil strife. At the finish of this struggle General Sheridan found himself possessed of an army of veterans recruited from both sides, when he took command of the Division of the West. While the whites were occupied with their own conflict of opinion and arms, the Indian had revelled almost unmolested on the plains, and in winter was perfectly immune on account of the climatic conditions, and lived in his isolated camp in luxurious ease and domestic comfort. In fact, up to that time the Indian and the white man, if possible, generally avoided each other, but Sheridan conceived the idea of inaugurating new methods. He introduced the new system of Indian fighting, which was to "trail,

hunt for, follow, find, and kill under any conditions at the time, season, or climate," believing this would strike a telling blow to the red marauder in winter when he dwelt in fancied security and was not prepared to make long forced marches as in the summer, when nature supplied his commissary with game and his horses and cattle with an abundance of grass. This, of course, meant the white man confronting the difficulties of campaigning in the deep snow, the death-dealing blizzards and the difficulties of climate, at times 40° below zero. We quote his own description of the conditions from his autobiography: Chapter XII, pp. 281–289, published in 1888, concerning the first winter campaign against Indians on the then uninhabited and bleak plains, in the winter of 1868; he says:

"The difficulties and hardships to be encountered had led several experienced officers of the army and some frontiersmen like old Jim Bridger, the famous scout and guide of earlier days, to discourage the project. Bridger even went so far as to come out from St. Louis to discourage the attempt. I decided to go in person, bent on showing the Indians that they were not secure from punishment because of inclement weather, an ally on which they had hitherto relied with much assurance. We started, and the very first night a blizzard struck us and carried away our tents. The gale was so violent that they could not be put up again; the rain and snow drenched us to the skin. Shivering from wet and cold, I took refuge under a wagon, and there spent such a miserable night that, when morning came, the gloomy predictions of old man Bridger and others rose up before me with greatly increased force. The difficulties were now fully realized, the blinding snow mixed with sleet, the piercing wind, thermometer below zero—with green bushes only for fuel—occasioned intense suffering. Our numbers and companionship alone prevented us from being lost or perishing, a fate that stared in the face of the frontiersmen, guides, and scouts on their solitary missions."

During these times occurred innumerable contests of various degrees and importance, such as the battle of The Wichita, under the dashing Custer; Summit Springs, under that wily commander in Indian warfare, the gallant Eugene A. Carr; and the fight on the Canadian between Gen. Sandy Forsythe and Roman Nose, in which Lieut. Beecher was killed; and numerous similar sanguinary contests, each worthy of extended attention from the pen of the historian and the pencil of the painter.

These covered the period of the days of the Pony Express, succeeded by the stage coach and the telegraph wire, and the railroad was thus enabled to be built under the protection thus afforded. It was in these times that Red Cloud, then Red Emperor of the American plains, became a terror, his very name creating confusion when his proximity was heard of, and who made such audacious forays as to attack, capture, and massacre the soldiers at Fort Kearney.

Then came the period when, with the aid of the telegraph and the railroad, rapidity of information and facility of transportation enabled the troops to beat back the savage hordes and drive them northward, culminating in the campaign of '76, giving the bloody chapter of Custer's annihilation with his entire command, but resulting in a very perceptible

breaking up of the red man's power. With some desultory forays this continued to fill the atmosphere with danger to the encroaching settlements until 1890 when it was destined to be fought out in the expiring effort of the despairing foe, "The Ghost-Dance War."

CHAPTER XIV

THE BEGINNING OF THE END

GEN. CROOK GOV. FOSTER SENATOR WARNER
The Sioux Commission

WE deem it of importance and interest to refer to this Ghost-Dance War and its causes, as its results have been so stupendous in accomplishing the absolute eradication of anything approaching Indian war again; it cleared the atmosphere so effectively that it is worthy of mention in detail as being the finish at the foothills of the Rocky Mountains of the contest waged from the shores of New England across a vast continent and settling forever the fate of the red man, which is assimilation into the political body and social conditions of its conqueror.

At this time the Sioux nation was the most powerful, possessing about twenty-five thousand members, distributed between the various tribes, from the Sitting Bull's Uncapapas of the North or Sitting Bull tribe and the Brule and the Ogallalas, or Red Cloud contingent in the south of Dakota. These Indians retained pretty much the "blanket Indian" condition and were somewhat morose in character, deprecating the loss of the Black Hills, and quietly resenting continued encroachments of the settlers, with thousands of the old warriors still living who regaled the young with stories of the glories of the times just alluded to when they roamed at will, gathered the trophies of war and the honors of

the chase. There were about three hundred thousand Indians on the different reservations from the British possessions to the Rio Grande. These Indians had become friendly with each other instead of as in old, being enemies; and the discontented rode from band to band on visits, until there became a community of sentiment and feeling among them as regards the wrongs that they felt they had suffered. This was quietly cultivated to an extent known to but few in the government service, but the argus eye of the army discovered that something was being done. In the summer of 1889, Government commissioners came among the Indians and persuaded them to sign away several million acres of land on promises that were not promptly kept; this was owing to the delay of Congress in appropriating the money.

Gen. Crook, who had conducted the negotiations, it was said, was so much affected by the delay and the breach of faith as it appeared to the Indians, which he regarded as a personal dishonor, that many believed it to have hastened his sudden death.

Add to this the influence of the Sioux Chief, Sitting Bull, the red man's Oliver Cromwell—from their view a patriot and a leader of rare ability—ever ready and eager to retrieve his poeple's birth-right, and it is easy to see that the material for general conflagration was at hand and the conditions for it were timely. This condition was created when the Utes through some machination of an inspector or some of their own fanatical medicine men claimed to have had a visit from the Messiah. The Messiah was the red man's Manitou or God, and the teaching of the missionaries had fully instructed the Sioux, and the Indians in general, in the story of our Saviour's coming on earth, his persecution and crucifixion, and they were taught by the white man that he was to return to earth again. This doctrine fitted well into the argument of the class of Indians that always desired to fight and played into the hands of the discontented and spread with amazing rapidity all through the Sioux nation, and eventually to every tribe, even inoculating the civilized ones, from the Red River in the North down to the Yaqui Indians of Mexico. In fact, it was like all religious crazes among our colored races, and even among the whites. It played upon the emotions and worked its victims up to a fanatical frenzy that made them invite death or torture if they could have the satisfaction of fighting or killing their enemies. Some of the teachings were, of course, of the glorious future in the happy hunting grounds that could be achieved by death in battle, accepted with as strong a faith as ever those of Christian martyrs.

To explain the attention they had paid to the arguments that our Saviour was coming on earth again, but to them only, this story, which the writer knows to be true from the lips of Short Bull, the Messiah high-priest of the Ogallala, will assist. When asked why he advocated the doctrine of the return at this time of our Saviour to the Indians and with the intention of annihilating the white man from the earth, he replied, through an interpreter, as follows:

"You white people here have three religious sects at the agency, three different churches; each one preaches to the Indian what you call Christianity. (He alluded to the Methodist, Episcopal, and Catholic churches

MAJOR JOHN M. BURKE
Assisted with Gen. J. M. Lee in peace negotiations

that were at the agency.) Now all these three medicine men of these churches differ in every respect and preach different things to us, but mainly impress us, each one, that the other two are very wrong. In fact, out of about fifty white people at the agency, they are the only people who do not speak as they pass by, but they all agree and all preach these four or five facts, agreeing on the same. They teach that the Messiah once came on earth for the good of the white man. They teach he is the Son of God and the wisest man that ever came on earth. They teach he had miraculous power. They teach that the white man tortured, crucified, and killed him, and they teach that he will return to earth again. These are about all the things they agree on, and we have a right to expect that they are nearer truth than anything they say. Now, if the Messiah came on earth, and was the wisest man, and if the white man tortured and killed him, and he is going to come on earth again, would he not be a heap fool to come back to the white man? That is the reason we believe he is coming again, and if he is all powerful, as they say, he must be coming to avenge himself by helping the red man and with his miraculous power annihilate the white man. How?"

This reply simply shows the thoughtfulness given and the argumentativeness created by delving into a subject so mysterious that it creates food for thought among the white men. The Indian, one can see from this, is a thinker, and really not so much of a fool as he looks. He is, for instance, a naturally gifted orator, when occasion requires, but he seems to know generally that silence is golden. Those who have met such men as "Sitting Bull,"

GEN. JESSE LEE
Burke's confrère in peace negotiations

"John Grass," "Running Antelope," "Red Cloud," American Horse," "Short Bull," and others with an intelligent interpreter found them in argument, foemen worthy of the most astute statesman's consideration.

On the occasion of the Congressional Committee visiting the northern Sioux at Fort Yates (Standing Rock Agency) for a consultation in regard to selling the land, Sitting Bull was as usual doggedly opposed to the scheme. This red statesman was always anxious to show his people his contempt for the white men and his aptness for repartee. The distinguished committee, individually, all referred to the fact that the red men and white men were brothers, and the same God of the white man was the Manitou of the Indian. After an exhaustive session, Sitting Bull arose after the last had concluded and alluded to the fact that each had reiterated and emphasized the fact of the universal God. Pointing his finger at them, he said:

"You say red and white have the same God, who created all mankind and everything in the world; that his all-seeing eye pervades the universe, and that he knows everything even to the fall of the bird (the sparrow). If such is the case, he must have known what he was doing when he created me. He made me a free man and not an agency Indian and by the Eternal (only a little more plainly) I will never consent to be one."

Rising, the old warrior walked out with impressive dignity, and the council would have ended but for the action of Indian agent, Major McLaughlin, who arrested Sitting Bull, and compelled him to permit the negotiations to proceed.

When one considers the Indians, numbering 300,000, North and South, could practically have recruited 50,000 able warriors, armed and mounted, one may conceive what might have occurred had the fanatical conspiracy broken out at the opening of summer, when nature's commissary was available for them, and the rich settlements, with myriad hordes of cattle and provisions of all kind, would have given a grand feast to these nomadic people such as has never been enjoyed by murdering marauders.

The craze as to the imminent return of the Messiah, man of supreme ability, who was to give back America to its original owners, wiping out the whites and their cities, and bringing with him great store of game with which to re-stock the purified plains and prairies, was started first among the Utes. That the Indians should have thereupon originated the Messiah dance should not be considered extraordinary. They have a special dance to suit every occasion. The was dance is the style of gyration most familiar to the white intelligence, and naturally when it was rumored that the Indians were dancing, the neighboring settlers took alarm. If it seems a ridiculous thing to invoke the Saviour by a series of frenzied jumpings and howlings, we have only to consider the peculiarities of many existing sects of our people, and it will be clear that we are not so far ahead of them in this respect. The dance, at first, was a form of prayer, engaged in by the young braves after a sort of Turkish bath, and accompanied by the singing of hymns after their own savage fashion.

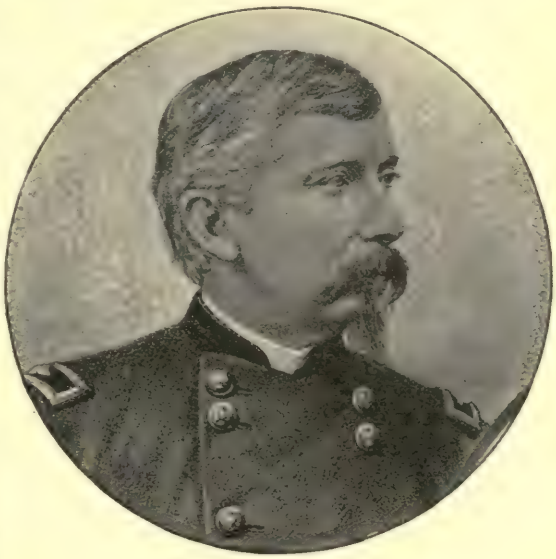
Some of the Pine Ridge Sioux went up on a visit to the Utes in July of 1890, and found this lively business going on. They were much inter-

JAMES B. HICKOK
Known as "Wild Bill." In one fight, single-handed and alone, he killed ten desperadoes

ested, and took back a report to their own tribes, who held that if the Messiah were really coming, it would not do to let him fall short of a welcome on their part. Their medicine men, accompanied by Short Bull, of the Ogallalas, saw that they must either lead the dancing or get left, so, like medicine men in all times, and all nations, they took it cordially in hand, provided the music, and arranged the figures. By the usual train of logic in such religious movements, they arrived at a further conclusion: If the Messiah were going to stamp out the whites, should his children sit idly by and let him do all the hard work unaided? Just as Peter the Hermit reasoned that as Heaven desired to drive the Turks out of Palestine, it was clearly the duty of the Crusaders to take a hand and go and knock the said Turks over the head with battle axes, so the Sioux, incited by Sitting Bull, The Right Reverend Short Bull—now become "High Priest"—and Kicking Bear, got out their guns and prepared to help divine Providence to the best of their ability whenever the Messiah should appear. It doesn't seem to have struck them as at all ridiculous that Wankantanka, the Great Spirit, being omnipotent, should require the help of the Sioux, Brules, or others, in working out his designs.

Let us not sneer at the half-starved Indians. The extent to which the armies of Europe have sought to assist the Almighty to crush out the opposition, even in recent times, may be read in the sermons of archbishops and the thanksgivings of emperors. In this respect the ancient Jews set them a pious example.

At this supreme psychic moment, when the dancing at Pine Ridge was waxing fast and furious, and the fanatical creatures were falling into swoons, seeing visions under the



GEN. "TONY" FORSYTH

BATTLE-FIELD OF WOUNDED KNEE—from special photographs
In the foreground is the pile of dead Indians under which two Indian baby girls were found on Wednesday who had been there since Monday, a blizzard raging all the time. These lives were saved.

influence of some sort of hypnotism when prophecies of earthquakes and drought were being strangely fulfilled, a superior genius of Washington stepped into the thick of the trouble and brought about a crisis. The agent in charge of the Pine Ridge reservation was ordered, with fourteen Indian police, up to the camp of a gentleman named White Bird to "stop the dancing" of five or six hundred crazy warriors. He was confronted by a score of braves, armed with Winchester rifles, and made to turn back to the agency. This, of course, was an act of rebellion. The report spread, the episode was magnified into a successful battle, and every pious Indian in America commenced dancing the Ghost Dance to the best of his ability. The settlers near the reservations packed up their traps and fled to the cities, and Kicking Bear, with Short Bull and a considerable following of enthusiastic braves, under the venerable Two Strike, High Pipe, and High Hawk, put on full uniforms of war paint, and made for what is known as the Bad Lands, in the central fastness of which is a natural fortress, approachable only by one path, twenty feet wide. Here they pitched their camp, and breathed defiance to sixty millions of Americans. The plateau was 150 feet above the surrounding country. They requisitioned all the cattle and everything movable for miles around, and while the young braves were out thieving, the High Priest made them highly decorative shirts, which he assured them were bullet-proof. The "medicine" in these shirts was so potent that they would turn a bullet or the edge of a sharp knife. But it was understood that any brave who attempted to cut them by way of

CHIEF GOOD HORSE AND WIFE
Prominent man of present-day Dakota Sioux

experiment would be suddenly paralyzed by divine interposition. These were the famous "Ghost Shirts."

This condition of affairs created intense excitement through the West, and the whole country being inflamed with incendiary reports, Washington became agitated, and the military was ordered to the points of danger. It might here be remarked that Gen. Nelson A. Miles, commanding the West, had been thoroughly informed, and was equal to the emergency. As usual, a great many divergent opinions contended for supremacy at Washington as to what should be done, and as usual "too many cooks spoiled the broth." In the course of a short time a conflict was precipitated that resulted in the death of Sitting Bull and a further inflaming of the excited red men of the North. But Gen. Miles had his troops quickly placed in position to prevent a general conflagration by preventing communication over an extensive area. Many bands deserted the Standing Rock Agency of the North and started to make junction with the Ogallalas, Brules, and other discon-

tented tribes of the South that had already thrown down the gauntlet and become hostile in quite formidable numbers and began to wage war upon the whites and also the neutral and conservative members of their own tribes who refused to join in the forays. These neutral and conservative Indians, hundreds of whom had travelled extensively with Col. Cody, became a great factor for peace in the stirring conditions. Some even enlisted as scouts and guides and assisted very materially. As the principal outbreak culminated in December, the reader can imagine what the climatic conditions were for a campaign amidst snow and blizzard and how trying it was on the white soldiers, to an extent only appreciated by those who have endured such privations. One of the first moves of the Indians had been to capture provisions, taking Government herds wherever possible, and supplies of all kind where available. Marches and counter marches, scalpings and skirmishes innumerable resulted in the efforts to corral the recalcitrants, at the same time prevent communications. This was fairly well accomplished, and eventually the Brules and Ogallalas were segregated and prevented from escaping southward and precipitating a guerrilla warfare on the settlements. The national troops were assisted by the Nebraska militia under Gen. Colby of the Nebraska National Guard, on whose staff was Brigadier Gen. W. F. Cody ("Buffalo Bill"), and was so placed as to be of great assistance, Buffalo Bill joining Gen. Miles as volunteer advisory scout with Frank Gruard as headquarter's scout.

The formidable bands under Chiefs Big Foot and Hump from the Northern Sioux escaped southward with the purpose of joining Kicking Bear and Short Bull in the Bad Lands. Miles had sent Capt. Baldwin (now major-general) and Capt. Maus (now colonel) under a flag of truce to talk with Hump and Big Foot for the purpose of getting them to come in, assuring them of proper treatment. He had previously defeated both of these chiefs, and Hump paid attention to the invitation and came in with a powerful band of warriors. All the Indians liked "Beaver Coat," as they called Gen. Miles. Big Foot's band refused to come in, but Hump and his warriors came. It was lucky they did. Had they been with the other band that attacked the white men at Wounded Knee or at Pine Ridge, it would have been a repetition of the Custer massacre. However, Gen. Miles, with his characteristic diplomacy, arranged places on his staff with rank and showy uniforms for Hump and seven of his leading warriors as scouts, taking them with him to Pine Ridge, and leaving the warriors in charge of military in Black Hill camp.

But Big Foot was not to be pacified so easily. He and his fighters passed Gen. Sumner and all the other outposts, succeeded in getting almost within hailing distance of Kicking Bear, and were discovered by Major Whiteside of the seventh cavalry, who was reinforced by General "Tony" Forsythe, who commanded in the battle. Little Bit, Lew Changrau, White, and "No Neck," and "Tanklin Charlie," Indian scouts, tried to induce the Indians to surrender. The terms were partly agreed upon. Capt. Wallace was with Phillip Wells in the village to superintend the surrender of Big Foot, when the medicine man, who

THE PRESS CONTINGENT AT WOUNDED KNEE
Reading from left to right the persons standing are: Buckskin Jack; Kelly, Lincoln Journal; Crissy, Omaho Bee; Charles Seymour, Chicago Herald; Bracket, Chicago Inter-Ocean; Smith, Omaha Herald; Clark, Chicago Tribune; Charles Allen, N. Y. Herald; O'Brien, Associated Press; Clark, Scout. Sitting are John M. Burke, McDonough, N. Y. World; Indian Commissioner Cooper.

believed in the bullet deflecting qualities of the ghost-dance shirt, gave a signal that precipitated the battle of Wounded Knee. There were about two hundred and forty-five Indians when the battle began. When it was over, 225 of them were dead and the rest wounded; three of the wounded escaped to the hostiles, and an immediate attack the same day was made on the Agency at Pine Ridge. The agency was garrisoned with 450 men under Gen. Brooks; the attack of the Indians came near being a surprise, but with the troops, the Indian police, and Indian scouts the attack was repulsed, and the agency was saved. The fight at Wounded Knee was about one of the first to demonstrate the destructiveness of the modern rifle, as nearly twenty years had elapsed since either Europe or America had tried perfected fire-arms. The fact that 60 per cent of the combatants, white and red, were killed or wounded, in the space of about half an hour, testified that a new epoch in war was at hand, which has since been demonstrated in Manchuria. The accuracy of the aim of Uncle Sam's boys was attested, and the dogged stubbornness of the Indian was proven. Seventy-eight of the soldiers were disabled and some of the Indian allies.

One peculiarity of the Indian in war is that he reaches a state of ecstasy of excitement when he wants blood and plenty of it, and in that condition regards the prospect of death as a pleasure. That feeling gives him an advantage over the white warrior, who, of course, does not desire to die uselessly. It makes the Indian reckless, daring, and aggressive.

In this instance, inspired additionally by the confidence in the

"Ghost Shirts," they stood up bravely until struck down to the last man.

The battle of Wounded Knee was a surprise as it was understood that Big Foot had agreed to surrender, and Capt. Wallace and some others—among them Scout Wells—were in the camp about to receive their fire-arms, when Big Foot's medicine man threw a handful of earth up and shouted out a cue that meant to fire and fight. Brave Capt. Wallace was killed, and afterwards his body was found surrounded by five dead warriors with five chambers of his revolver empty. His skull had been smashed and he was shot through the stomach. Philip Wells, interpreter, had his nose almost severed from his face, so close was their contact. His nose was only hanging by a shred when Surgeon Ewing, right there amid the flying bullets, sewed back the olfactory arrangement, plastered it over with strips, and with a handkerchief bound round it, Wells picked up his rifle and continued the fight. The temperature was so far below zero that the mended nose healed, and to-day, with pince nez spectacles on it, no one can notice the scar.

Capt. Capron (whose son, Capt. Capron, was killed in the battle of Santiago with Roosevelt's Rough Riders, while the father was commander of the artillery in the same battle) received a close call, the bullet penetrating overcoat, belt, and underclothes, and making a warm trail around his left side. Lieutenant Garlington (of Arctic fame) was desperately wounded, and Lieutenant Hawthorne (now colonel) was struck by a bullet that hit his watch, driving the works into his body, making a fearfully dangerous wound, but from which he recovered to become famous in the Philippines. Lieutenant Mann of Wallace and Garlington's company was so seriously wounded he died on reaching Fort Riley.

In this fight, young Corporal Heimer, after all his officers and the sergeant had been disabled, handled the gun single-handed, and with one shot, it is reported, killed seven Indians. He was honorably mentioned and received a congressional medal.

One little Indian boy, after the battle, was found behind a bush clapping his hands in childish glee in imitation of rifle fire, seemingly pleased with the racket the melee created. He is now a successful young ranchman on the reservation known as Johnny Burke No Neck, after his red and white adopters on the day of the fight.

That night there came up a terrible blizzard during which Forsythe succeeded in returning to the agency with his dead and wounded. It might here be remarked that three days afterward, under the pile of dead, was found two little Indian female papooses, one frozen so it died that night, and the other survived. The other is now a young lady in the family of Gen. Colby of Nebraska.

The next day there was a very heavy skirmish around the agency on what is called The Mission, in which the Indians showed considerable strategy and came near making another surprise. The arrival at an opportune moment of Gen. "Fighting" Guy Henry's cavalry, after covering 125 miles in twenty-four hours, turned the tide of events, and the Indians soon found themselves surrounded in a cordon of sixteen miles by about 3500 soldiers with gatling guns accompanying them, under the command of the flower of the old Indian fighters of experience, and

HOSTILE CAMP

Peace meeting of Gen. Lee, Major Burke, and Indian Leaders

the Indians, though outnumbering the whites, became amenable to suggestions from their friends under the circumstances.

Many of the conservative and neutral Indians, like Man-Afraid-Of-His-Horses, Rocky Bear, American Horse, Major MacGillicudy (one of their former celebrated agents), Charley Allen, Father Juet, and Major John M. Burke had spent weeks of hardship and toil in efforts to pacify and bring to reason the excited red skins. Major Burke had come from Alsace-Lorraine (Europe) with Col. Cody and seventy-five traveled Indians for the purpose of helping to stem the tide in a condition of affairs that threatened to give excuse for the eventual annihilation of the recalcitrant Sioux.

Red Cloud, He Dog, and others had been "rushed" out to the hostile camp by the war party during the attack on the agency, and Rocky Bear and a band of pacificators gained access to the leaders through a night march with instructions to give them an ultimatum. It was, that Gen. Miles prayed for, hoped for, and desired to lead them to an honored peace as their friend, but failing in which their chastisement would be such as to leave few of them to weep at the ensuing obsequies.

After repeated exchanges between the negotiants, a flag of truce party informed the general that hostilities would be stopped until they could meet some white friends "that would talk straight and not with forked tongues."

SPOTTED TAIL
Chief of the Brule Sioux assassinated by Crow Dog

An armistice was arranged, the Indians in the cordon anxiously waiting and the troops on hill and dale standing guard day and night—both at a tension liable at any moment to be broken by the most trivial incident or injudicious move of the lined-up guard or guarded.

Many names were parleyed over, and at last the general commanding was informed that the Brules Sioux would listen to and believe in the Great Father's "First Good Man" that had been sent to them as agent after the War of 1876, Capt. Jesse M. Lee. (Capt. Lee afterwards attained distinction in the Spanish-American War, in the Philippines, and was wounded at Tien Tsin in China, and lately retired as major-general.)

Capt. Lee was in California, and this necessitated a further delay of seven days before his possible arrival —seven days and nights of the most intense anxiety on the part of Gen. Miles and the white peace party as well as the red pacificators, as the younger warriors on both sides had had just enough "baptismal fire" to inspire them for further war.

An incident occurred that only the distance of the outpost, the lateness in the evening, the suppression at the moment of the fact, and the coolness of the old veteran commanders, prevented this tension from snapping and precipitating a sanguinary combat that would have eclipsed anything ever known in Indian warfare—a slaughter from the Gatling gun advantage of the whites that would have been simply appalling. At the same time it would have been unexplainable to the many well-meaning busy-bodies who presume to intrude their philanthropies on occasions of impracticability—who know the better side of the red man in repose, but cannot imagine the fanatical zeal, the terrible implacability with which when aroused he wages war to the death, torture to the limit, on the expiring victim, so that an engagement is necessarily a fight to the finish.

This incident was the killing of the brave and excellent young officer, Lieut. Casey, who, as chief of a band of Cheyenne scouts, had made a record for daring and ability that promised him a great future as a military man of rare initiative.

This time the pitcher went once too often to the well, for in trying to locate the topographical conditions of the hostile camp, in case of action, and while spying into its secrets, he was detected and killed by a young Sioux named "Plenty Horses."

Plenty Horses was afterwards acquitted in a civil trial for murder on the testimony of army officers that

"it was war" and excusable, and that similar action would have been justifiable on the part of an army outpost guard.

Fortunately the armistice lasted until Capt. Lee's arrival, as had it not, no doubt, an action might have permitted numerous bands to escape, bands sufficiently strong to have swept down through the settlements carrying death and devastation so disastrously as to check for years the growth of the great Northwest.

With little delay the two accredited peace commissioners, accompanied by Man-Afraid, legitimate hereditary leader of all the Sioux, Rocky Bear, in veracity the George Washington of red men, American Horse, famed as an orator, and other Indian allies, started for the rendezvous of Wolf Creek.

As the cavalcade moved out of sight over the Pine Ridge Hills, many a group of officers and men discussed the fate of former commissioners, and allusions were whisperingly made to the death of Gen. Canby and the massacre of Meeker. When, at sundown, the commissioners returned accompanied by cheering hostiles to within eye sight of their waiting, anxious friends at headquarters, cheers that presaged the success of their pacific efforts, thus assuring the prevention of the sacrifice of many gallant lives—the peans were taken up—the news ran around the cordon and mountain, plain and dale resounded with hosannahs of joy as the result was the promise of "peace."

The time will come when the picturesque scene of the racial conference on Wolf Creek will inspire some artist's pencil to adorn the capitol's walls with the reproduction of the "Red Man's Last Stand," as in a natural amphitheatre of hills rising from the valley, ten thousand blanket Indians (hostiles, friendlies, and neutrals having all assembled) gathered to listen to assurances to "come in and all will be forgiven." Hearkening to the voices of two men—Capt. Lee and Major Burke—whom they knew, respected, and could believe—men whose familiar faces dispelled the uncertainty and suspicion that such a generous clean-slate offer was not a deception—the next day a flag-of-truce party concluded with Gen. Miles the terms of surrender, liberal in every way, only stipulating that twenty-seven of the most active hostiles of Kicking Bear and Short Bull's followers should accompany him to (Fort Sheridan) Chicago as hostages.

Next came the surrender, followed by reviews of each other on opposite sides of the stream of both white and red warriors; reviews that inspired additional respect for each other, the red man's review challenging the admiration of veterans, some of whose experiences dated from the fifties in border warfare, such as Generals Carr, Wheating, Whiteside, Hayes, Henry, and others; from the sixties, Generals Miles, Brooks, Corbin; Shafter, Lawton, Chaffee, Young, Baldwin, Sumner, and King; Colonels Egbert and Worth, who figured in connection with the Spanish-American War, and the then young, now leading lights of improved war tactics, such as Generals Franklin Bell, Barry, Humphries, Hall—graduates of the prairies, Indian, Spanish, and Chinese campaigns.

Thus ended in the Ghost Dance War an epoch in American history that dates the finish of a racial strife—in "Wounded Knee," a battle more noted in its absolute finality of a question than Waterloo and Sedan, the Boyne Water, Magenta, Sol-

ferino, Appomattox, or Mukden in Manchuria, they not being so absolutely forever final.

Furthermore, it marks the finish of a "continuous performance" of defensive, desultory at times, concentrative at others, of a sullen foe that stood up valiantly against odds on a retreating line that covered nearly three thousand miles, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and three centuries of defeats. A setting of a resisting Red Sun, as it were, forever, with no possible rising of the orb again even in the great rally when Gabriel sounds the reveille for the eternal awakening.

To qualify the asserted time of this unique struggle, we quote of King Philip's War in the sixteenth century in New England:

"It was, so far as the English were concerned, much such a conflict as a man might wage with a swarm of hornets. The Indians would not meet the militia in open field. Instead, they attacked parties of churchgoers, ambushed small detachments of soldiers, slew unwary men who ventured alone into the forests, swooped down on an unprotected village, and killed and burned until the settlement was in ashes. Nor were they the arrow-armed, simple folk of the Pequot War. Thanks to long association with white men, they had guns and ammunition and knew how to use them. Deerfield, Northfield, Brookfield, and other towns were the scenes of indescribable massacres. Springfield was attacked, but, being warned in time, beat off the savages. Capt. Lathrop and eighty men were set upon and butchered at Bloody Brook, near Deerfield. Throughout New England, but chiefly in Western Massachusetts, rifle and tomahawk gleaned a horrible harvest. Women and little children, as well as armed men, fell victim to the red wave of destruction. Philip was amply avenging his people's wrongs.

Once, at Hadley, Mass., as the English townsfolk were huddled, panic stricken and leaderless, like scared sheep, before an impending Pequot attack, an old man is said to have rushed among them, formed them into military order, and by his brilliant strategic prowess enabled them to rout their assailants. Then the mysterious stranger disappeared. He is believed to have been Gen. Goffe, who (forced to flee from England for his part in the execution of Charles I) had taken refuge in a hillside cave near Hadley."

From the sixteenth to the nineteenth century, a history unequalled —a capitulation on terms with property rights, citizenship, and equality with the victors—having the advantages of every civil right and having the same self-abnegation, the traditional Saumri warrior blood will, without doubt, when occasion arises, be heard of as defender of "Old Glory."

We should now give charity to the Indian's deficiencies and lend a helping hand to his aspirations, as destiny now makes him one of us.

Our duty is done in thus giving importance to a page in American history, for when the full-blooded Indian historian writes the story of his people's last decades of swiftest decline, he will date its rapid downfall from the advent of the telegraph, the stage coach, and the Union Pacific Railroad era, whose way was paved and made possible by the first effective linking of the Great American Continent from east to west by the Pony Express.

THE END