



Colonel Hays.



COLONEL JOHN COFFEE HAYS.



COLONEL HAYS is twenty-nine years of age, about five feet eight inches in height, with a complexion once fair, but now weatherbeaten and dark, dark brown hair, a hazel eye, broad forehead, Roman nose, large mouth, and a thoughtful, careworn expression, amounting to a frown, always upon his face, which as a whole expresses the utmost firmness and determination on the part of its possessor. His adventures would fill a large volume. He was born in Wilson county, Tennessee, emigrated to Texas, as a surveyor, at the age of nineteen, and soon became distinguished as a successful Indian fighter, as

well among the Indians themselves as among the Texans. He was made commander of the frontier with the rank of major in 1840. A story is told of his having defended himself alone, for three hours against a large party of Indians on the top of the Enchanted Rock, a hill on the frontier of Texas. He had his rifle and "five shooter," and the Indians knew their man so well, that for a long time he had only to raise his rifle when they approached and they would drop back. At length becoming exasperated, they determined on taking this "devil Jack," as they called him, and he laid several of them low. As two or three of them would rush up to the spot where he had intrenched himself, he would shoot them, reload in the pause that would follow, and give the next customer a similar reception. At last, just as they were determined to take him at any cost, his men having learned his danger by the report of his rifle, came to his relief. A battle ensued, the Indians were routed, and Captain Jack was more firmly believed to bear a charmed life than ever.

One day talking with some chiefs at San Antonio, one of them asked him why he so often went out alone, incurring danger without a chance of aid. Another Indian answered for him. "Blue Wing and I," pointing to his companion, "no afraid to go to hell together—Captain Jack, great brave—no afraid to go to hell by himself." By which handsome compliment he meant to imply that Hays was not afraid to face any danger or death alone.

The following anecdote of a ranger will show to what an extent he carries his discipline, and perhaps develop the secret of his success as a partisan soldier. At the time the advance of General Worth's division had

reached the foot of the hill, on which stood the Bishop's Palace, before his attempt to capture the heights around, and while the enemy were raining grapeshot among his command from Federation hill and Independence hill. One of the rangers was ordered by Colonel Hays to ascend a large tree, in the corn-field, and reconnoiter the Mexican infantry. The ranger reported, that the enemy kept their position, without any seeming intention of advancing; and receiving no order to descend, being within direct range of the enemy battery, and the shot flying high, he asked the colonel if he should come down.

"No, sir," said Hays, "wait for orders."

Soon after, the Texans were directed to return, when they moved rapidly off, leaving the ranger up the tree; and Hays's attention being called to the fact, he ran back, and cried out,

"Holloa, there—where are the Mexicans?"

"Going back up the hill," replied the ranger, without knowing who it was that addressed him.

"Well, hadn't you better come down from there?" said Hays.

"I don't know," said the ranger, "I am waiting for orders."

"Well, then, I order you down," said Hays.

The ranger discovering it to be his colonel, without waiting for a second call, like Martin Scott's coon, forthwith descended from the tree.



COLONEL W. H. WATSON.

IN the prime of life, Colonel William H. Watson left his home and his profession as a lawyer, in Baltimore city, and enrolled his name among the patriots who were defending by arms his country's rights. He performed well his duty: he fulfilled all that the most sanguine of his friends expected of him, and when he fell, there was a calm triumphant smile upon his face that spoke a double victory—one over his country's enemies, and the other over the great destroyer himself. So much was he esteemed in his native city, that when the news of his fall was received, the flags of the shipping were lowered halfmast, the different military and civic societies were convened to pay tributes to his memory and worth. At the meeting of the members of the bar, J. V. L. McMahon, Esq., offered a number of resolutions, among which was the following testimonial of the excellence of his private character.

His gallantry.

"*Resolved*, That while we deplore the loss of a youthful warrior, whose patriotism, courage, and untiring energy, gave the brightest promise to his country, we most deeply mourn the death of one who, as a member of this bar, was respected by all for his professional bearing, and loved by those who best knew him, for the warmth and steadfastness of his friendship."

The gallantry with which he led his beloved Baltimore battalion to victory, has been well described by one of its officers whose letter we quote.

"I saw Colonel Watson shouting, but as to hearing a command, that was an impossibility, owing to the deafening roar of the cannon and musketry. I saw the head of our line changing its direction, and I knew at once that the point of attack was changed, and ran to the head of my company to intercept the head of the column. I reached it just as Colonel Watson was dismounting from his horse, which the next moment fell from a shot. The colonel cried out to his men, 'Shelter yourselves, men, the best way you can.' At this time, the battalion was scattered over a space of about an acre, and the men were lying down, the shot in most instances flying over our heads; but the guns were soon depressed and the shot began to take effect.

I was lying close to Colonel Watson, alongside of a hedge, when he jumped up and cried out, 'Now's the time, boys, follow me.' We were now in a street or lane, with a few houses on either side, and within a hundred yards of three batteries which completely raked it, in addition to which, two twelve-pound guns were planted in the castle on the right, and completely enfiladed the whole distance we had to make. Add to this,

The Baltimore battalion.

the thousand musketeers on the house-tops, and in the barricades at the head of the street up which we advanced, and at every cross street, and you may form some idea of the deluge of balls poured upon us. (Bear in mind that the four companies of regulars were now with us, the one intermingled with the other.) Onward we went, men and horses falling at every step. Cheers, shrieks, groans, and words of command added to the din, whilst the roar of the guns was absolutely deafening.

We had advanced up the street under this awful and fatal fire, nearly two hundred yards, when we reached a cross street, at the corner of which all who had succeeded in getting this far alive, halted, as if by mutual consent. I was shaking Colonel Watson by the hand, while he was complimenting me, when a shower of grape, round, and canister shot came from the corner above, and five officers fell, and I do not know how many privates. Each man sought some place of apparent shelter.

I sat down on the ground, with my back to the wall of a house. On my left were two men torn nearly to pieces. One of them was lying flat on his back, with his legs extending farther into the street than mine. Crash came another shower of grape, which tore one of his wounded legs off. He reared up, shrieked, and fell back a corpse. I never moved, for I was satisfied that one place was as safe as another. Directly opposite to me was my brevet 2d Lieutenant Aisquith; on the right hand corner was Lieutenant Bowie, also of my company; and close to me sat Colonel Watson and Adjutant Schäler. In a few minutes, I saw our colour-sergeant, old Hart, come past with his right arm shattered, (it has

since been amputated,) and in a few minutes, there came our battalion flag, borne by one of the colour-guards, our glorious stars and stripes; and, note this, that it was the first American flag in the city of Monterey—an honour which we know belongs to our battalion. * * * * Above, below, alongside, between legs and arms, every where the balls whistled and howled. The air seemed cut to pieces by the quantity that the artillery hurled at us, and it would be childish to tell *how close* they came to me, and what and how many escapes I had. I was exposed to shot in that fight for nine hours. * * * * Colonel Watson met with a gallant soldier's death—his face to the foe. His loss is deplored by all who know his generosity of heart and chivalry of character. To me, individually, it is great, but to the battalion it is irreparable."