war included the taking possession of California, and under his confidential instructions I had my warrant. Mr. Gillespie was directed to act in concert with me. Great vigilance and activity were expected of us both, for it was desired that possession should be had of California before the presence in her ports of any foreign vessel of war might make it inconvenient.

I had about thought out the situation when I was startled by a sudden movement among the animals. Lieutenant Gillespie had told me that there were no Indians on his trail, and I knew there were none on mine. This night was one of two when I failed to put men on guard in an Indian country—this night and one spent on an island in the Great Salt Lake. The animals were near the shore of the lake, barely a hundred yards away. Drawing a revolver I went down among them. A mule is a good sentinel, and when he quits eating and stands with his ears stuck straight out taking notice, it is best to see what is the matter. The mules knew that Indians were around, but nothing seemed stirring, and my presence quieting the animals I returned to the fire and my letters.

I saw the way opening clear before me. War with Mexico was inevitable; and a grand opportunity now presented itself to realize in their fullest extent the far-sighted views of Senator Benton, and make the Pacific Ocean the western boundary of the United States. I resolved to move forward on the opportunity and return forthwith to the Sacramento valley in order to bring to bear all the influences I could command.

Except myself, then and for nine months afterward, there was no other officer of the army in California. The citizen party under my command was made up of picked men, and although small in number, constituted a formidable nucleus for frontier warfare, and many of its members commanded the confidence of the emigration.

This decision was the first step in the conquest of California.

My mind having settled into this conclusion, I went to my blankets under a cedar. The camp was divided into three fires, and near each one, but well out of the light, were sleeping the men belonging to it. Close up along the margin of the wood which shut us in on three sides were some low cedars, the ends of their boughs reaching nearly to the ground. Under these we made our beds.

One always likes to have his head sheltered, and a rifle with a ramrod or a branch or bush with a blanket thrown over it answers very well where there is nothing better. I had barely fallen to sleep when I was awakened by the sound of Carson's voice, calling to Basil to know "what the matter was over there?" No reply came, and immediately the camp was roused by the cry from Kit and Owens, who were lying together—"Indians." Basil and the half-breed, Denny, had been killed. It was the sound of the axe being driven into Basil's head that had awakened

SAGUNDAI.

Carson. The half-breed had been killed with arrows, and his groans had replied to Carson's call, and told him what the matter was. No man, with an Indian experience, jumps squarely to his feet in a night attack, but in an instant every man was at himself. The Delawares who lay near their fire on that side sprung to cover, rifle in hand, at the sound of the axe. We ran to their aid, Carson and I, Godey, Stepp, and Owens, just as the Tlamaths charged into the open ground. The fires were smouldering, but gave light enough to show Delaware Crane jumping like a brave as he was from side to side in Indian fashion, and defending himself with the butt of his gun. By some mischance his rifle was not loaded when he lay down. All this was quick work. The moment's silence which followed Carson's shout was broken by our rifles. The Tlamath chief, who was at the head of his men, fell in front of Crane, who was just down with five arrows in his body—three in his breast. The Tlamaths, checked in their onset and disconcerted by the fall of their chief, jumped back into the shadow of the wood. We threw a blanket over Crane and hung blankets to the cedar boughs and bushes near by, behind my camp-fire, for a defence against the arrows. The Indians did not dare to put themselves again in the open, but continued to pour in their arrows. They made no attempt on our animals, which had been driven up by Owens to be under fire of the camp, but made frequent attempts to get the body of their chief. We were determined they should not have it, and every movement on their part brought a rifle-shot; a dozen rifles in such hands at short range made the undertaking too haz ardous for them to persist in it. While both sides were watching each other from under cover, and every movement was followed by a rifle-shot or arrow, I heard Carson cry out: "*Look at the fool. Look at him, will you?*" This was to Godey, who had stepped out to the light of my fire to look at some little thing which had gone wrong with his gun; it was still bright enough to show him distinctly, standing there—a fair mark to the arrows—turning resentfully to Carson for the epithet bestowed on him, but in no wise hurrying himself. He was the most thoroughly insensible to danger of all the brave men I have known.

All night we lay behind our blanket defences, with our rifles cocked in our hands, expecting momentarily another attack, until the morning light enabled us to see that the Indians had disappeared. By their tracks we found that fifteen or twenty Tlamaths had attacked us. It was a sorrowful sight that met our eyes in the gray of the morning. Three of our men had been killed: Basil, Crane, and the half-breed Denny, and another Delaware had been wounded; one-fourth of our number. The chief who had been killed was recognized to be the same Indian who had given Lieutenant Gillespie a salmon at the outlet of

the lake. Hung to his wrist was an English half-axe. Carson seized this and knocked his head to pieces with it, and one of the Delawares, Sagundai, scalped him. He was left where he fell. In his quiver were forty arrows; as Carson said, "the most beautiful and warlike arrows he had ever seen." We saw more of them afterward. These arrows were all headed with a lancet-like piece of iron or steel—probably obtained from the Hudson Bay Company's traders on the Umpqua—and were poisoned for about six inches. They could be driven that depth into a pine tree.

This event cast an angry gloom over the little camp. For the moment I threw all other considerations aside and determined to square accounts with these people before I left them. It was only a few days back that some of these same Indians had come into our camp, and I divided with them what meat I had, and unpacked a mule to give them tobacco and knives.

On leaving the main party I had directed it to gear up as soon as the men had breakfasted and follow my trail to a place where we had encamped some days back. This would put them now about twenty-five miles from us. Packing our dead men on the mules, we started to rejoin the main camp, following the trail by which we had come. Before we had been two hours on the way many canoes appeared on the lake, coming from different directions and apparently making for a point where the trail came down to the shore. As we approached this point the prolonged cry of a loon told us that their scout was giving the Indians warning of our approach. Knowing that if we came to a fight the care of our dead men would prove a great hindrance and probably cost more lives, I turned sharply off into the mountain, and buried, or *cached* them in a close laurel thicket.

With our knives we dug a shallow grave, and wrapping their blankets round them, left them among the laurels. There are men above whom the laurels bloom who did not better deserve them than my brave Delaware and Basil. I left Denny's name on the creek where he died.

The Indians, thrown out by our sudden movement, failed in their intended ambush, and in the afternoon we found our people on the stream where we had encamped three days before. All were deeply grieved by the loss of our companions. The Delawares were filled with grief and rage by the death of Crane and went into mourning, blackening their faces. They were soothed somewhat when I told them that they should have an opportunity to get rid of their mourning and carry home scalps enough to satisfy the friends of Crane and the Delaware nation. With blackened faces, set and angry, they sat around brooding and waiting for revenge.

The camp was very quiet this evening, the men looking to their arms, rubbing and coaxing them. Towards evening I went over to the Delaware fire and sat down among them. They were sitting around their

fire, smoking and silent. It did not need to speak; our faces told what we were all thinking about. After a pause I said, "Swonok, bad luck come this time. Crane was a brave. Good man, too. I am very sorry." "Very sick here," he said, striking his hand against his breast; "these Delaware all sick." "There are Indians around the camp, Swonok," I replied. "Yes, I see him. Me and Sagundai and Charley gone out and see him in woods." "How many?" "Maybe ten, maybe twenty, maybe more." "Where did they go?" "Up mountain. He not long way." "Listen, Swonok, we kill some. These same men kill Crane. How best kill him?" The chief's eyes glittered and his face relaxed, and all the Delawares raised their heads. "You go in morning? Which way?" "Only three, four mile, to creek which you know over there," said I pointing up the lake; "next day, big Indian village." Swonok turned to Sagundai and the two chiefs spoke earnestly together for a few moments, the others deeply interested, but gravely listening without speaking. "Captain," said Sagundai, "in the morning you go little way, stop. These Delaware stay here. Indian come in camp, Delaware kill him."

In the morning, when we were ready to start, the Delawares rode out some moments ahead, halting after a few hundred yards until we came up; then, leaving their horses with us, they returned on foot and got into a thicket among some young pines near the camp ground. We continued our way and halted, no one dismounting, at a little run about a quarter of a mile distant. It was not long before the stillness was broken by a scattered volley, and after that, nothing. Shortly Swonok came up "Better now," he said; "very sick before, better now." They had taken two scalps. The Tlamaths, as expected, had rushed into the camp ground, so soon as they thought it safe, and met the rifles of the Delawares. Two were killed and others wounded, but these were able to get away. Fortunately for them, the cracking of a dry branch startled the Tlamaths and the Delawares were too eager to shoot as well as usual. I moved on about three miles to a stream where the grass was good and encamped. Choosing an open spot among the pines we built a solid corral of pine logs and branches. It was six feet high and large enough to contain all our animals. At nightfall they were driven into it, and we took up our quarters outside, against the corral; the fires being at a little distance farther out and lighting up, while they lasted, the woods beyond. I obtained observations which put this camp in longitude 121° 58′ 45″ and latitude 42° 36′ 45″.

Continuing our route along the lake we passed around the extreme northwestern bay and after a hard day's march encamped in the midst of woods, where we built again a corral for the night. In the morning there were many canoes on the lake, and Indians had been about during the night, but the lesson they had learned served to keep them warily aloof