CHAPTER IX

Across the Plains from Kansas to New Mexico — Incidents of the Long Journey — A Paradise for the Hunter of Antelope and Buffalo — A Buffalo Hunt ending in a Sad Tragedy — Skirmishes with Hostile Indians — A Surprise and Defeat for the Comanches — The Record of the Rifles

MEANWHILE the Rifles had been transferred to the department of New Mexico, when I was appointed regimental adjutant, and ordered to Fort Union, the headquarters of the regiment. A number of officers *en route* to their commands, and two hundred cavalry recruits from Carlisle went along with us, and at Fort Leavenworth a remount of four hundred horses was turned over to me, to be distributed to the companies at Fort Union. We remained at Fort Leavenworth just long enough to organize our command and prepare it for the difficult duty of convoying nearly five hundred young cavalry horses across the desert and through the range of predatory Indians for eight hundred miles. The recruits had been in active drill at Carlisle for some months, and we had a fine set of young officers not long from West Point, who were assigned to duty with the squadron, which was mounted on the best broken of the remount horses, so that everything was soon in fair marching order. The horses which were not under saddle were driven out in strings, each string being made up of thirty animals and placed in charge of its own squad

of men. The picket rope of the string was secured to one end of the wagon, in which was hauled the tent of the squad, with their clothing and rations, etc. A pair of heavy, steady wheel horses were hitched to the wagon and driven by the teamster. Then came the led horses in spans, each secured by a short halter to the picket rope. The string was led off by a pair of steady leaders, hitched by a swingletree to the end of the picket rope, the whole thus presenting a team of about twelve or fifteen pairs of horses. The management of this team required no little skill on the part of the drivers and outriders of the squad. In the party there were a dozen or more of these strings, and they made the Indians' mouths water, I suspect, but they never got a horse.

In this respect we were more fortunate than an expedition which had preceded us the year before, under the command of Colonel Cooke. When he reached the Comanche country, old Mancho, the chief of the tribe, rode up one day, making overtures of peace, and requesting an interview, which Colonel Cooke granted. Mancho inquired of him by whose permission he undertook to travel across the country, and what his object there was. Cooke replied that he came by permission of the Great White Chief in Washington, and that he only wished to travel across the country that he might show it to his young men. To this Mancho retorted that it was *his* country, and neither the Great White Chief nor anybody else had the right to ride over it without his permission, but, if Cooke would give him a supply of provisions and whiskey and tobacco, he was willing to allow him to proceed. Cooke coolly told him to "go to Guinea," or its equivalent, adding that he would give him nothing, and would ride over the country as often as he pleased; and so the interview ended.

That night, while all the camp was wrapped in slumber, the Comanches swooped down upon it, dashing their horses through it at full speed, shaking their blankets and buffalo robes, and howling like demons. As a matter of course, every animal in Cooke's command, rendered frantic by the uproar, stampeded, and next morning he found himself on foot in the midst of the plains. He remained there until able to collect enough horses to pull his wagons to Fort Union, and he probably remembered Mancho in wrath until his life's end.

Such an experience would have been especially unfortunate for us, who had in our party women and children; for several families of officers living in New Mexico had joined our command. Happily, as I have said, we made the trip in safety, and we marched away from Fort Leavenworth before the middle of July, in fine health and spirits. Our route lay through Kansas, then in the full richness of its summer verdure, across the Kansas and Kaw rivers, across the Walnut Creek, Pawnee Fork at Fort Larned, the Arkansas at old Fort Atkinson, and thence by the Cimarron to Fort Union.

I had bought in St. Louis, for the use of my family, one of those excellent carriages constructed for travel on the plains, and the quartermaster at Fort Leavenworth gave us all the wagons we needed for transporting our furniture and supplies. After we got beyond the settlements, wood was very rarely seen, but for fuel we had an abundance of "buffalo-chips." Our water supply was far from what we should have desired, but we had to take it as we found it, one day out of a river and the next out of a mud hole. We were, fortunately, well supplied with charcoal filters, and at night we would set a bucket of muddy water on the table, drop the charcoal ball into it, and convey the rubber tube into

the mouth of a demijohn on the floor, which was sewed into a blanket cover and always kept thoroughly wet. Next morning the bucket would be empty, save for a liberal supply of dirt, and the demijohn would be filled with clear, cool water.

Our march across the plains was very interesting. There were six or eight travelling carriages for the families of the married officers. These followed the advance guard, and were followed in their turn by the Mounted Riflemen, close behind whom came the strings of horses, and then the rear guard. The herd of cattle and the milch cows were sent ahead early in the morning, under the care of a small escort. Extraordinary vigilance was necessary, for any Indians, after passing the Kaws and Osages, might be hostile, and four hundred fine young horses, besides some hundreds of mules, would prove a great temptation. We had some grouse shooting, until Council Grove was passed, where we saw the last inhabited prairies and entered fairly upon the great American Desert, the home of the buffalo, the wolf, the antelope, and the wild Indian.

Orton, the wagon-master, a six-foot plainsman, was a good hunter, and my constant companion in my many excursions out upon the flanks of the column. My rifle was a three-grooved Harper's Ferry barrel, mounted by the gunsmith at Carlisle, in a common shot-gun stock, with a wooden ramrod and horn sights. One day I surprised Orton by cutting down a fine antelope at a great distance. I told him to step it off, because his legs were long and would leave no occasion for cavil at short measure. Orton paced four hundred and seventy-five paces to the antelope. Next day I brought down a wolf at two hundred and twenty paces.

One morning Orton got off before I could leave the

command. We were then in the Comanche range, and must needs be as alert as possible. When at last I was ready to set out, I rode a long way to look for him, but could see nothing of him. Suddenly I saw three men galloping towards me from the direction of the column, and, supposing they were messengers sent for me, I went to meet them. We were in a rolling country, and as I rose on each ridge I noticed that the horsemen veered off from me. My horse, Black Jack, a famous hunter, became much excited. He quickened his pace until he seemed to devour the ground. At last, as I mounted a ridge, I came upon three Indians crossing it at full speed, about two hundred yards from me. I did not pursue them, but dismounted, and fired at the only antelope I had seen that day. He was several hundred yards off, and I was flustered by the Indians, and by the necessity of reloading before they could get to me, but on glancing towards them I saw that on hearing the crack of the rifle, they had plied their quirts and heels, and were making all speed in the other direction.

I then hastened to where I saw, several miles away, the dust of our column, and was surprised to learn on reaching it that nobody had seen the Indians, nor had Orton returned. So I rode out again to look for him, and finally found him, but he had not seen the Indians either, until I pointed them out to him, dismounted, on the crest of a ridge some miles distant, whence they watched our column. Observing our herders in charge of the milch cattle resting on a hill not far off, we joined them, and found the Indians had been after them. The lazy rascals had put their rifles into a wagon, and were sauntering along at ease, when all at once the Indians came down upon them, and insulted them by rubbing

their arrows under their noses, turning their pockets out, taking their tobacco, handkerchiefs, etc., and were galloping off triumphantly when they found me in their path. That night we doubled our guard about camp, but saw no more of them until we came to Walnut Creek, where we found them shooting buffalo.

Our first view of the buffalo was very exciting. There were thousands of them, and we were marching through them for three days, at thirty miles a day, and all day and all night the air resounded with their bellowing. The first one I shot lay down to die, and as I desired to get his tongue out, I dismounted, and was marching bravely up to the young bull, when all at once he sprang up and dashed at me. I turned and ran toward my horse, and as I mounted I saw the bull flat on his back, his legs quivering in the air. Being dead sure enough this time, I got his tongue without any further trouble or fright. Many buffalo hunters had this experience with their first bull.

John Omahundro, of Louisa County, Virginia, was an active scout for General Jeb Stuart during the late war. After the war, he went back to his wild life upon the plains. He was a remarkably handsome and pleasing young fellow, and very expert with his lasso and arms. He went about the country with Carver, the shooter, and was widely known as "Texas Jack."

One night in Montgomery, Alabama, General John G. Walker, "Texas Jack," and I were seated together, talking of our experiences on the plains, and found we had all had the same with our first buffalo. Jack had leaned over his and struck his knife into him, when the beast sprang up and chased him to the wagon, against which he put his head and fell dead just as Jack had succeeded in putting it between them. Unlike the ox

or the horse, the buffalo springs upon all four feet at once.

We had with us a smart young sergeant, Bowman by name, who was my companion on this run, and requested permission to go with me when I should make another. Next morning I saw a herd of buffalo grazing not far off from our camp, and was about to ride after them when Sergeant Bowman came up and, touching his cap, asked, "Will the Captain permit me to go with him?"

"Certainly, Sergeant, I would like to have you with me." He then inquired, "Will the Captain permit Alphonse to go, too?"

"No," I said. "He can't manage his horse or his pistol, and he may shoot himself or some one else." But Bowman urged that he would keep close by him, and look after him, and finally I unfortunately yielded, and said, "Well, let him come on." Bowman was a very bright, pleasant, young fellow, attentive to his duties, and a favorite with all the officers. Alphonse was a little French soldier fresh from Algeria. He was amiable, alert, and wholly ignorant of the English language, and full of the excitable enthusiasm of his race. He was very vain of his equestrian accomplishments, supposed to have been acquired during his African campaigns, and having been recently unhorsed in the presence of his command, his Gallic honor was now at stake, and he felt the importance of vindicating among the buffaloes the horsemanship of France.

As we cantered towards the herd, first one and then another of the young officers galloped out from the column, and joined us, until, to my regret, I found our party increased to eight, nearly all inexperienced hunters, and most of them mounted on wild horses

hardly less excitable than themselves. Alphonse was perched on the back of a big, hard-mouthed, powerful horse, and in his hand was an army revolver, which he had cocked before he was in cannon range of the game. His eyes gleamed with an eagerness that filled me with apprehension, and my prophetic soul misgave me as I looked at him. I halted my party in a hollow nearest the buffalo, pointed out to them the great danger from so large a party as ours running at once into the herd, ordered Alphonse to uncock his pistol and return it to the holster, and cautioned the others against either drawing or cocking until they should have closed in upon the buffalo.

Then, with an inward wish that I was well out of the affair, I led the way at a gallop over the ridge and straight for a thousand buffalo grazing four hundred yards away. The nearest bulls wheeled with a loud grunting as soon as we cleared the top of the ridge, and the whole herd went off at a full gallop, we dashing after at the speed of our horses. I was still in the lead, and had closed to within fifty yards of the hindmost of the herd, when suddenly a pistol cracked behind me, and a ball went singing through the air. I knew at once it could only be the Frenchman, and reining in my horse, I, like Mazeppa, "writhing half my form about, hurled back my curse" at his infernal carelessness. As I reined in my horse, the Frenchman tore past me, his eyes wide open with excitement, as he tugged at his bridle with both hands, in one of which was that pistol cocked again. Close by his side rode his friend, Bowman, as if trying to help him. They turned off toward the right, and I pushed my horse after the herd.

I had shot two or three buffaloes, when a pistol shot on my right attracted me, and, as I looked hastily in that

direction, I saw Bowman toss his arms wildly in the air. I felt he was a dead man, but being in the thick of the run, it was not till some seconds had elapsed, and his riderless horse, pursued by Alphonse, had galloped far off into the prairie, that I was able to follow back the trail to where my poor sergeant lay. He was the most ghastly picture of sudden death I have ever seen. He lay with his head thrown back, his wide-open eyes staring at the sky, and his clenched hands full of grass. There was not a spark of life left in him; all had gone out in that sudden wild toss that I had seen. The ball had entered his breast, and had gone straight through his heart. I dismounted, and leaning my head upon my horse's neck, I wept like a child. Only two or three minutes before he had passed me, looking so full of life and generous earnestness to rescue his friend, and now he lay with that friend's bullet through his heart. For we could only account for it by believing that, as he leaned over in his effort to check Alphonse's horse, the Frenchman, in his excitement, had discharged his pistol.

By the time I reached Bowman's side, all our companions, absorbed by the chase, had disappeared, and only the dead man and I were together on the wide expanse of prairie. After half an hour I was relieved to see Alphonse galloping toward me, leading the sergeant's horse. His success in accomplishing this feat filled him with inward satisfaction, which beamed from his face when he came up to me; but it was instantly replaced by a look of amazed horror, when I said, "Did you shoot this man?" Evidently he was unconscious of having done so. Indeed, I do not believe that he knew his pistol had gone off at all. On examination, I found two barrels were empty. I met Alphonse not

very long ago, and talked with him of this sad occurrence. He says the sergeant shot himself, and evidently believes it. Having at last succeeded in attracting one of the young officers who had come within hail in pursuit of a cow he had shot, I rode off to seek the column and get an ambulance. After galloping several miles, I returned with the surgeon and such assistants as he required, and placed the sergeant's body in his charge. By this time all our hunters had assembled save Lieutenant, now General, Frank. One of the party reported to me that he had seen Lieutenant Frank's horse throw him over his head, and then gallop off with the buffalo, and that, though he seemed considerably shaken up, he was evidently not seriously hurt, for he had gone on in pursuit of his horse. Having no confidence in the woodcraft of any of our party, I ordered the ambulance to be driven to the top of the highest ridge near us, to serve as a landmark for my return, and then galloped off in the direction I had been told Frank had taken. After going at a rapid pace for two or three miles, I overtook that young gentleman striding along over the prairie, pistol in hand, right away from his friends. The soft grass of the prairie deadened the sound of my horse's hoofs, and I was close behind him before he knew it.

"Hallo, Frank!" I shouted, "where are you going?" He wheeled around with an expression of intense relief, and replied that he was making for camp.

"Where is your horse?"

"Oh, he went off with the buffalo two hours ago."

"Is your pistol loaded?"

"No, by George! I forgot that."

"Well, old fellow, you are in a very bad neighborhood for an empty pistol, and you are making straight

for the Pawnee camp. Load up as quick as you can and jump up behind me, for we must lose no time in getting out of here."

Black Jack was a generous horse, and soon bore us back to where we found the melancholy group on the hilltop anxiously watching for our return. We overtook the column at Walnut Creek, and in a sequestered little nook, formed by a bend of the river, we prepared a grave for our comrade, and just as the sun was setting I read the service of the Episcopal Church over his body, and we left him to his rest.

In the department of New Mexico the Rifles had many affairs with the Indians, some of them brilliant. In one of these, Captain Alfred Gibbs was desperately wounded at the conclusion of a most energetic pursuit and action which had been a complete success; for the Rifles killed every Indian in the band, and took from them all their plunder and property. But our last Indian affair was perhaps the most important and creditable of all our encounters with these gentry. Colonel George B. Crittenden, having ascertained that the Comanches were in great force within two days' march of Fort Union, organized with secrecy and dispatch a party of about eighty-five Riflemen, and moved with great rapidity in pursuit of the Indians, who had, however, gone towards the Cimarron before he could reach their late camping-ground. He pushed on after them, marching over a country previously unknown to any but the Indians, and the Mexicans who trade with them. The road was difficult and rough. It lay through the mountains, and the weather was bitterly cold. Still he went on, travelling night and day, and enduring every privation, and using every precaution to avoid discovery. On the morning of the eighth day, about seven o'clock,

they galloped into the Comanche camp, of about one hundred and fifty lodges.

The surprise was complete. Many of the warriors were still rolled in their buffalo robes asleep when the first rifle cracked. Three hundred of them were absent, hunting buffalo, but over two hundred of them remained, and these were fearful odds against Crittenden's attacking force, which was only sixty Rifles, the remainder being left with the packs. A sharp fight ensued, but a few minutes sufficed to leave the Rifles in possession of the village. The women and children, to the number of four or five hundred, fled to the rocky hillside at the first alarm. The warriors fought only long enough to cover their retreat, and then followed their example. The Rifles remained in the village about eight hours, actively occupied all the time in destroying tents and stores, and maintaining a desultory fire with the Indians on the rocks above them. The results of this operation were thirty-five warriors killed, more than a hundred and fifty lodges with a large amount of stores destroyed, and forty horses captured. Not a woman or child was hurt. Four of the Rifles were wounded, none very dangerously. Soon after the Comanches sued for peace, and their request was favorably considered by the commander of the department.

Perhaps no regiment in the service was in its day more distinguished than the Rifles. In Mexico, during nine months, we engaged the enemy eighteen times, losing in killed and wounded, sixteen commissioned officers and several hundred men. Commencing with the Rogue River affair, in Oregon, detachments of this regiment had fifty-six successful encounters with the Indians of that State, of Texas, and of New Mexico, losing in these eight commissioned officers and many

men killed and wounded. So that from the day of our landing at Vera Cruz to the beginning of the late war, a period of fourteen years, this regiment, or portions of it, had encountered the enemies of our country more than seventy times, and had lost in killed and wounded twenty-four commissioned officers and a proportionate number of its rank and file.

CHAPTER X

A Story of Indian Barbarity — "Red Jackson's" Fight with a Grizzly — Wolf-hunting with Greyhounds — Exploits of Possum and Toots — Capturing a Grizzly's Cubs — Transferred to Santa Fé — Anxiety over the Tension between the North and the South — How the News of the Fall of Sumter was received

AFTER Sergeant Bowman's death, we continued our march without any incident of note, although, as I have said, we were in hourly danger of attack or molestation from our red-skin neighbors. When within two days' march of Fort Union, we reached the Point of Rocks, where a sad tragedy had been enacted not many months before. We watched the ominous spot with anxious eyes, as its outlines became clearer before us, and felt relieved when we had left it and its sorrowful associations far behind; for even the children of our party were familiar with the sad details of the savage barbarities which had been enacted there.

Some time before we reached it, a gentleman from Virginia, named White, was making his way to Santa Fé, where he had business matters awaiting him, carrying with him his young wife and little child. They had left Fort Leavenworth in company with a trader's train, with which they journeyed for protection until within two days of Fort Union. Their travelling companions were rough and undesirable associates, and the sojourn together had been so disagreeable from these causes that they decided

to shorten it as far as possible, and just before reaching the Point of Rocks said good by to the rest of the party, and pushed on towards the fort. The place, as the name implies, is a rocky point which juts out from the neighboring mountain range, and served to conceal the Indians sheltered behind it, who awaited there the coming of their victims. From the time a train left the settlements it was constantly under the espionage of its watchful enemies, and no detail which might afford them an opportunity for murder or robbery escaped their vigilant observation.

The Indians sprang upon the Whites' little party and killed him and the driver of the carriage, carrying Mrs. White and the baby off with them. The dead and mutilated bodies of the two men were found beside the empty vehicle by their late travelling companions, who sent couriers on to the Post to give the alarm. A party of the dragoons, commanded by Captain Greer, and guided by the famous Kit Carson, immediately went in pursuit of the marauders, who had fled to the mountains. It was two days before Greer could come up with them, for they had the advantage of thirty-six hours' start. On the evening of the second day, just at dusk, as the command was winding along a rocky defile, Kit Carson suddenly halted them, saying he heard a child crying. They stopped and listened, but no repetition of the sound met their ears, and they pushed on. Again he called a halt and listened, and again nothing could be heard.

Every moment was of value, and, deciding at last that it was the cry of a wildcat which had deceived them, they continued their rapid march, and finally surprised the Indians in their camp. Their fires were lighted, and they felt so secure from molestation that they had taken no

precaution against it. At the first volley they fled, making no attempt at a stand against Greer's men. Mrs. White had been bound to a tree, whether for torture or greater security will never be known, but most probably for the latter reason. Just before Greer, who led the attack, reached her side, an Indian, flying before him, turned and, with cold-blooded barbarity, transfixed her with an arrow. With such means as he could command, Captain Greer prepared a grave and laid her body in it, and then the command set out for its homeward march. There was no trace of the little child to be found in the camp, and they were forced to the conclusion that the Indians had carried it off in their retreat, although this was unlike their usual method of procedure.

They had left the scenes of their late encounter several hours' march behind them, and had arrived at the wild mountain pass where they had tarried the night before to listen for the cry which had reached them, when suddenly Kit Carson reined in his horse and pointed down the rocky side of the defile along which the road wound. There among the boulders lay the dead body of the child. The savages, finding it troublesome, and doubtless annoyed by its cries from hunger and fatigue, had snatched it from the arms of the agonized mother and thrown it down the precipice beside them, leaving it there to perish from cold and starvation or to fall a victim to some prowling beast.

There were many such heartbreaking scenes enacted in those days upon our frontiers, and no Indians were oftener the participants in them than the Apaches and Comanches, with whom we had to deal. After a man has been brought face to face with them in many years of frontier service, he is inclined to agree unreservedly with General Sheridan's verdict regarding a "good Indian."

We reached Fort Union in good time and with all of our horses in fine condition. It was then the regimental headquarters, but only one troop of Mounted Rifles remained there, the others having been sent out upon an expedition against the Indians, who had been making threatening demonstrations. It was during this campaign that an incident occurred, which evidenced the coolness and courage of one of our young officers, whose name is recognized to-day wherever lovers of fine horses are found. I allude to General William H. Jackson, of Bellemead, or, as his old army friends still call him, "Red Jackson." At the time of which I write, he was a lieutenant in the Rifles, and was out after the Comanches, with his company. Of course, on a scout of this sort, all hunting and shooting was strictly forbidden. One day a grizzly came down from the mountains and crossed the route of the column. Jackson coolly rode out to encounter the animal, armed only with his sabre. His horse was blind in one eye, and, by keeping that side turned to the bear, Jackson was able to get close to him. At his approach, the grizzly, nothing loath, rose on his hind legs ready for a fight, and Jackson cleft his skull with his sword. It is doubtful if such an exploit was ever elsewhere attempted or accomplished.

We found Major Simonson, Captain Morris, Dr. Baily, Lieutenant Julian May, and several other officers on duty at Fort Union when we reached there. I was Regimental Adjutant, and we had the regimental band, but very little to occupy us beside the usual routine of a frontier cavalry post, which allowed us plenty of leisure for hunting and wolf-chasing.

Captain Shoemaker was the officer in charge of the ordnance stores. He was a kindly gentleman, well known and respected in the army, and kept a fine

pack of greyhounds. His dog Possum was a cross of a breed left with our regiment, by Sir George Gore, some years before. He was the tallest and longest dog I have ever seen, and of great fleetness and power. He always led the pack of ten greyhounds, which I was enabled to make up and keep in the Commissary's corral, under charge of Corporal Thomson, a bright young Virginian and an ardent hunter. Three times a week in the season we would have the pack out to kill a wolf. As the prairie sloped gently up to the edge of the Turkey Mountains, some five miles distant, we had a good course in full view of the garrison, and almost always caught the wolf before he could reach the timber. Otherwise we didn't get him, for the hounds would not run in cover, and the coyotes seemed to know this, and always made for it from the start. Possum, invariably in the lead, would thrust his long snout between the wolf's hind legs as he closed on him, and toss him over his back, where he would hold him until the rest of the pack came up, when he was soon killed. Sometimes the riders would be up in time to beat the dogs off and tie up the wolf, taking him home for another day's run. Occasionally we would get an antelope, and Possum always threw him in the same way. No animal is so fleet as the antelope, with a good start and a fair field before him. Like the hare, however, he is timid, and, when headed off or turned, becomes bewildered, loses his running, and is easily caught.

Thus it was that Toots one evening started an antelope, and was running him along the little valley of the creek that watered Fort Union, when I galloped to head him where he would come out upon the prairie, over which the ten greyhounds were spread out "breasting." These, seeing me running, all took up the run in the same direc-

tion, and as the antelope came out upon the plain he saw a circle of enemies closing around him, and hesitated, bewildered. Toots was close behind him, and, seizing him by the leg, swung on to him until I rolled off Black Jack, caught him by the horn, and killed him before any dog of the pack had reached him. Toots was a wonderful dog, occasionally too zealous, as when one day he killed a polecat in our kitchen, and we had to vacate the premises for a week, taking refuge with our good friends, Dr. Baily and his wife.

Not long after, Corporal Thomson and I took the dogs out after a wolf. We ran one four miles, but he finally got into the brush of Turkey Mountains and escaped us. We were returning slowly, the hounds trotting behind the corporal's horse, and Toots, as usual, ranging out on the prairie, when all at once I saw him come running in towards us, his ears thrown back in alarm, and behind him came wabbling in pursuit a polecat, with tail erect, ready for action. Toots had learned something about polecats in that momentous encounter in our kitchen, but the greyhounds had yet to be initiated into the mysteries of that animal, so when they lifted up their eyes and saw this one coming, they gathered about him and with one consent rent him asunder. Then began high jinks ; such tumbling and whining and rubbing of noses and general gymnastics no ten dogs ever set up at the same time. The corporal and I nearly rolled off our horses with laughter, and Toots sat off beyond polecat range, laughing as if he would split his sides. Evidently, he enjoyed the joke more than any of us.

Toots was the only setter that ever lived to take hold of a buffalo. One morning, after Sergeant Bowman's death, I was riding at the head of the column, eagerly watching Lieutenant Tracy, who was running a cow with

a six-months-old calf. The cow suddenly charged Tracy, whose horse stampeded and ran away with him for a mile or more before he could check or turn him. The calf also stampeded and ran straight for me until it was within about fifteen yards, when I turned upon it and rolled it over. Toots sprang from the carriage where he was having a ride beside the driver, dashed past me, and swung to the calf while it was yet struggling upon the ground. Long afterward, near Fort Wise, I shot an antelope and broke his hind leg. Toots chased him with me for fully two miles, and caught and held him until I seized his horn and knifed him. Game was so plentiful then on the western frontier that there were few days in which we could not have good sport. My own experience in the field convinced me that there was no animal so wary, so enduring, and so dangerous as the wild bull of Texas. I except the grizzly bear always, who has not his equal for fierce and aggressive courage in all the catalogue of wild beasts.

One day at Fort Staunton a horse guard came galloping in and reported to Captain Claiborne of the Rifles, that an old she-grizzly and two cubs were in the timber near the horse pasture. Claiborne, who was a great hunter and a fine shot, snatched his rifle, and, accompanied by a friend, hurried out to meet his savage game. They soon found them and rolled the she-bear over, but the cubs, about the size of setter dogs, climbed up into some trees and went out upon the limbs, where no one could get at them. Claiborne's object being not to kill but to capture them, it was decided to shoot the limbs, cutting them away with rifle-balls until they would no longer bear the weight of the cubs. Being capital shots, this was soon accomplished, and they had the satisfaction of securing alive fine specimens by this novel plan for capturing grizzlies.

We passed one year at Fort Union, at the end of which we heard the news of John Brown's capture of Harper's Ferry. Then the Indians cut off mail communication, and we heard no more for many weeks, when by a system of escorts between the Rifles and the First Cavalry our mail-route was re-established, and a sergeant brought me a letter from Lieutenant Jeb Stuart, congratulating me upon my promotion to a captaincy in the Adjutant-General's department, with orders to repair to Santa Fé, then the headquarters of the department of New Mexico. This was a great gratification, as it was a position of high trust and importance, and carried with it assurance of a comfortable and permanent residence.

There were many officers stationed at Santa Fé, and the city, being the headquarters of the department, was much visited by officers from every part of it, and we all got on very cordially together until the quickening excitement of the approaching war separated us. Before the year was out we had to be upon our guard in our intercourse with each other; for, whereas we seemed to be in accord before the hostilities began, and nearly all were Southern in their sympathies, when the time came to prove the faith, there were but few who gave up the certain pay and emoluments of the established government of the United States for the uncertainty of one yet to be created. I remember that at our last Christmas dinner in Santa Fé, we carefully selected our guests according to their avowed intentions in the coming crisis.

At last the blow fell for which we had so apprehensively been watching. In these days of telegraph and rapid transit, it is hard to realize the suspense and anxiety from which we suffered as the days dragged their slow lengths along from the arrival of one mail to the next. We could only expect news once a week, and not

then if the Indians chose to interfere with its transmission, which they frequently did. As the mail-day would approach, our impatience would increase with each hour of suspense, and I well recall the anxious group which gathered in our parlor one evening in May, 1861, to await its arrival and distribution. There was Loring, our colonel, who had fought through two wars, and was again to win distinction in another, and Lieutenant John Pegram, who in the coming struggle would rise to the rank of general, and die bravely for his home and people, and Grayson of Virginia, and several others, who with my wife and me awaited with ill-concealed anxiety the coming of the orderly with the mail-bag. The mail for all the department came to my office, and had to be assorted there, but at last we were able to seize the papers and turn to the telegrams. Usually it was our home letters, with news of our dear ones far away, which were opened first, but that night these were cast aside unnoticed, while we read of the fall of Fort Sumter. Even then it was some time before we could grasp the details. One after another we took the sheet and tried to read aloud its contents, and each voice, broken with emotion in the effort, refused to do its owner's bidding.

The die was cast. The great war which was to bring to us and to our people ruin and desolation was upon us, and we must go to meet it. It was in no light or unappreciative mood that we sat looking at each other in the silence which followed the reading of the telegrams; for we realized the greatness of the sacrifice expected of us, and it was with sad hearts that we turned our backs upon the friends and associations of a happy past, and faced the issues of a future which had little to offer us save the consciousness of duty loyally performed. At last I awoke once more to the excitement of the moment, and to a

realization of the great crisis of which we alone were informed, and, seizing the papers, I ran out into the street and made my way to the officers' quarters, shouting aloud as I went that Fort Sumter had fallen, and war had begun!

CHAPTER XI

An Expedition against the Navajoes — The Modoc Chief, Captain Jack — The Journey Home from New Mexico, at the Outbreak of the Civil War — The Feeling among Army Men — "Stricken from the Rolls" — Experiences in Leavenworth, Topeka, and on the March — General George H. Thomas

AS soon as the news of Virginia's secession from the Union reached me, I sent in my resignation, and prepared to follow it to the States. No one had ever doubted that such would be my course, and all my friends regarded it as the only proper one for me to pursue.

The Navajoes had become hostile, committing many depredations that fall, and we had fitted out a formidable expedition to invade their country during the winter. It was placed under the command of Colonel Canby, who pressed it with severity. While the troops suffered much from the great cold and deep snows, the Indians perished in numbers. They are less savage and more thrifty than any other wild tribe, having permanent homes, flocks and herds, and some manufactures, and are therefore more assailable. They paid a heavy reckoning that winter, for their homes were destroyed and their herds taken from them, and it was said that they dared not stay long in any one place, and that all the children born to them during that campaign perished. They soon and earnestly sued for peace, and