

was murdered in his own house by some person who had a previous difficulty with him. *Mi almi* is inconsolable, nothing I believe could affect him more. He heard the rumor at 9½ O'clock A. M. and tho' it made him feel miserable enough, the severest blow was not yet given; late this evening I heard the straited account. After a long hesitation I summoned courage to tell him, and may the like task never devolve upon me again. At the words "I fear there's no hope," his pent up feeling burst forth in one groan, followed by tears. How my heart aches to write it, but it aches far more to see the agony of *mi alma*. Dctr. Hewitson has been down and offered all the consolation he could; he can feel for him for he knows well the attachment that years of a life together in a foreign land has wrought between the two brothers: though he endeavoured to cheer him with the probability of its falsity as being the news of Mexicans mostly, he told me at the door that from what Mr. Meeds tells him it comes too straight to hope. Oh, that I could see one little ray, one beam to cling to. *Mi alma's* grief poured forth in deepest sighs will undo me; tonight is one of misery to him.

Tuesday 27th. How hard it is to deceive my husband but the Dctr. charges me by the love I bear him, to tell him nothing of the news of tonight, at least a part of it, the better half he knows, and his drooping spirits raised a little. A Mr. Chapman from Parras, to which place all news flies quickly, has heard nothing of it; this the doctor told my dear, and I hope he feels something easier in mind, that is a relief to me, though I am intrusted with the secret of its confirmation by an

Irishman in Mr. Meed's employ who talked with the express man from Chi. and hears from his own lip that *he had seen my brother's body*, that he was murdered in his own bedroom just before daylight, but on what day Mr. Kelly did not ask him.

To tell him I cannot, the Dctr. warns me not, and yet I know he must hear it ere long. But I'll wait; the news must come and the way may be easier than I can contrive.

August 1847.

Sunday 1st. My gratification is better conceived than written, at receiving a letter this A. M. from sister Letty after a silence so long that I had concluded myself no longer thought of by the dearest of friends, and to hear too that all are well, no deaths save that of Aunts McDowell and Taylor each of whom we have every reason to believe has made the brightest exchange, that of sickness, earthly sufferings temptations &c. for peace and never ending happiness, we can better envy than bewail them. The marriage of several cousins and births of a few more children, among the no. sister Anna has an *Isaac Shelby*—meaning for taking the name from me, she might have waited a few months longer. I do think a woman *em beraso* [*embarazada*—pregnant] has a hard time of it, some sickness all the time, heart-burn, head-ache, cramp etc. after all this thing of marrying is not what it is cracked up to be.

Sunday 8th. A letter from Papa today all well, and since Letty's, answered it immediately.

Friday 14th. We had quite a fright last night from

I suppose intended house breakers, as we are left entirely to suspicion, and this morning tells us that some gents. of the same calling were caught a few doors from ours while complimenting the family. About 12 O'clock we were aroused by foot steps on the roof of our room, *mi alma* sprang to the window and I of course after him, and called out "who is that" both in English and Spanish, when the parties immediately ran to the front of the house answering in the latter tongue most confusedly "munchos Mexicano" [*muchos Mexicanos*—many Mexicans]' "*munchos ladrones*" [many robbers], and when called to for explanation no one knows what they said, 'twas so mysteriously confused, at the same time the light of a lantern was thrown into the patio. *Mi alma* now called to the sentinel at the quartermaster's door in front if he could see any one, and he responded two men. At this the rogues ran down the roof to the coral and disappeared, when we retired again.

Sunday 15th. No news from Chi.[huahua] till today when Mr. Spyles¹⁰⁵ received a letter, say[ing]

¹⁰⁵ Albert Speyers, whose name was spelled with many variations, was a merchant trader, for many years transporting goods by caravans to Santa Fé and other places in Mexico. He was a Prussian Jew and always carried with him both British and Prussian passports.

On the occasion previously mentioned, Speyers was carrying two wagon-loads of arms and ammunition for delivery in Mexico. This was denied by him and others, but subsequent events have proved conclusively that such was the fact. General Kearny got information on June 5, 1846, from George T. Howard, government agent and then on the Santa Fé Trail, that Speyers in partnership with Governor Armijo was carrying a large quantity

all has gone on well except the murder of Mr. Aull—nothing is said of bro. James so we infer the news we heard to be false. A few days must bring us some news.

Friday 20th. Received marching orders, for Monterey tomorrow 2 O'clock P. M., today at 12 O'clock scarcely giving me time to turn around. Gen. Cushing¹⁰⁶ is going down and as it is probably the strongest

of arms and ammunition, and that two companies of Mexican dragoons were marching from Santa Fé to meet and escort the ammunition in safety. He also got word from Captain Waldo that Armijo was getting a large shipment of goods into Mexico. Kearny therefore ordered Captain Benjamin Moore with a squadron of dragoons to pursue Speyers and detain him. Captain Moore was unable to overtake him. Speyers was traveling forty-five miles per day, but he afterwards claimed that his haste was not due to the fact that he carried ammunition. He said he wanted to get a certificate from the custom house at Santa Fé before the United States should take possession of it.

Speyers was dispossessed, forcibly, of most or all of the arms and ammunition by the Mexicans. He went to Chihuahua and made complaint to Governor Trias, saying to him that he had come to present "a claim on the Government of Mexico for arms forcibly seized, in payment of which I only have a bond." Speyers left Independence in the middle of May and arrived at Chihuahua in September, shortly after Kearny took possession of Santa Fé. He proceeded from there into the interior without molestation from the authorities and sold his goods at a handsome profit.

On March 21, 1848, Speyers arrived at New Orleans and proceeded from there to Europe to purchase goods for the Mexican market. He finally quit the Mexican trade, probably sojourning for awhile in Kansas City, Missouri, and then went to New York. There he became involved in a Wall Street crash and committed suicide.

¹⁰⁶ General Caleb Cushing, born in Salisbury, Massachusetts,

escort for some time, we embrace it, bidding farewell to Saltillo with few regrets on my part, for tho' not going immediately home my situation not admitting of a sea voyage for three or four months yet, we shall be

January 17, 1800, was educated at Harvard University and graduated with honors in 1817. Later he studied law and practiced in his native town until 1825, when he was elected representative in the lower house of Massachusetts as a Whig. He was elected again in 1833, and in 1834 was elected to the United States Congress, continuing in that office until 1843, when President Tyler sent him to China. There he made the first treaty between that country and the United States. Returning to the United States he was elected again to Congress. In January, 1847, he raised a regiment of volunteers, equipped them at his own expense, and was commissioned colonel. Subsequently he was promoted to brigadier-general. He joined General Taylor during the summer, but was afterwards ordered to Vera Cruz. He was honorably discharged July 20, 1848.

Soon after his discharge from the army General Cushing was nominated by the Democratic party of his state for governor, but failed in the election. From 1850 to 1852 he was again a member of the legislature of his state, and at the expiration of his term appointed associate justice of the Supreme Court of Massachusetts. In 1853 President Pierce appointed him United States attorney-general. At the close of 1860 he was sent to Charleston by President Buchanan as confidential commissioner to the Secessionists of South Carolina, and in 1866 he was appointed one of three commissioners to revise and codify the laws of Congress. In 1873 he was nominated for office of chief justice of the United States, but the nomination was subsequently withdrawn. A year later he was appointed minister to Spain. General Cushing wrote a number of books, among which was a life of President William H. Harrison. He died at Newburyport, Massachusetts, January 2, 1879. (Appleton's *Cyclopædia of American Biography*, vol. 2, p. 38.)

so much nearer, letters can be received twice as often. I shall meet at Monterey a female companion in Mrs. Hunter wife of Maj. H. paymaster there, she is spoken of by officers here, as a fine companion and 'twill be a feast to see one of my countrywomen again. I've done all the packing this P. M. and no little is it, and tonight I am sick and weary. Mrs. Hewitson called to bid me good bye—gave her a little hair pin as a memorial of me, and she this afternoon sent me a beautifully worked napkin, along with some delicacy for the road.

Wrote to Mama Magoffin this morning, but shall have to carry the letter myself till I meet with a mail, whether at Monterey or Matamoras, to which place we shall probably go immediately.

Wrote a long letter to brother James, who we now know positively to be safe in Chi. a letter from Mr. Belden¹⁰⁷ of Durango to Mr. Chapman of Parras giving us the wished for intelligence, he, Mr. B. having received a letter from him some ten days since in which he speaks of our supposed departure for the U. S. as his reason for not having written.

Monterey August 23rd. Arrived here last night after two days of the roughest ride I ever had. Yesterday in particular was almost insupportably rough for a carriage yet notwithstanding through necessity

¹⁰⁷ John Belden went to Mexico from the city of New York. He was successful in business and had accumulated a large fortune. Either to please himself, or the Mexicans, he often wore costly diamond jewels, and hence he was called the "Prince of Diamonds." (Gilliam, *Travels in Mexico during the Years 1843 and 1844*, p. 215.)

as William was riding my horse, I stood it out nearly the entire day, having my husband to hold me as steady as could be under the circumstances, or otherwise I could not have reached here without some accident. But dear me what a dreadfully warm place this is. Saltillo certainly has the advantage in climate. Cloaths are almost insupportable.

Mrs. Hunter called soon after breakfast, being quite as anxious to see a "white woman" as I am. She is tall, good looking about thirty years of age, and affable in her manners. We are to spend this evening with her, and as we are beginning quite well, I think we'll be sociable. *Mi alma*, with Cpt. Thompson¹⁰⁸ who came down with us called on Gen. Taylor at his encampment "Walnut Grove" near town.

Tuesday 24th. Mrs. Hunter called tonight, (I have been unable to fulfill an engagement to ride this P. M. from great soreness) sat some time. We dine with her tomorrow. Gen. Cushing and Cpt. Thompson called.

¹⁰⁸ Philip R. Thompson was born in Georgia, and appointed from that state to the United States Military Academy July 1, 1830. By successive promotions he reached the rank of captain of the 1st Dragoons, June 30, 1846. He was engaged in the battles of Brazito and Sacramento, and was acting inspector-general of General Wool's column on its march through Chihuahua, May to October, 1847; brevetted major February 26, 1847, for gallant and meritorious conduct in the battle of Sacramento. Major Thompson served in New Mexico and Indian campaigns 1851-1855. He was cashiered September 4, 1855, for disrespect to a court-martial, and after his dismissal became adjutant-general with the rank of captain of a filibustering expedition to Nicaragua, February 11, 1856, to May 1, 1857. He died June 24, 1857, in the Gulf of Mexico, aged forty-five years. (Cullum, *Biographical Register*, vol. 1, p. 481.)

Wednesday 25th. Well we've lost no time today. I can well say that two women meeting after an entire sepperation of twelve months from female society, are certainly a curiosity. We talked *all* the morning till dinner, and after eating, on account of the great heat, in part, and *to be alone* leaving the gents, one Cpt. Ramsey¹⁰⁹ beside our husbands, to take care of themselves, we undressed ourselves and layed down for a couple of hours, loosing not a minute of the time for our tongues were as incessantly in motion as the bell clappers in Mexico, telling of our adventures in travel, anxiety to reach home, the wishes of our friends &c &c. We stayed to tea, and came home after 9 O'clock, having made an engagement to ride out to the General's tomorrow evening.

By the way I had almost forgotten to say that the wonder of all present wonders, the American Lyon or "emphant" has called on me today In the old general I am agreeably disappointed; from the cognomen

¹⁰⁹ George Douglas Ramsey was born in Dumfries, Virginia, February 21, 1802; entered the United States Military Academy from the District of Columbia, August 20, 1816; served in the artillery, topographical and ordnance departments, from 1820 to 1835. During the military occupation of Texas, 1845-1846, was ordnance officer at Corpus Christi and Point Isabel. Took part in the battle of Monterey, September 21-23, 1846, and was brevetted major for gallantry in that battle. He was chief of ordnance of the army commanded by General Taylor; major of ordnance April 22, 1860; lieutenant-colonel August 3, 1861, and brigadier-general and chief of ordnance of the United States Army September 15, 1863. Retired from active service September 12, 1864. Brevetted major-general March 13, 1865, for long and faithful services. Died in Washington, D. C., May 23, 1882.

he has received—"rough and ready,"¹¹⁰ I had not thought to find him possessed of so mild manners, such apparent high regard for female character; he is very talkative, agreeable and quite polite, tho' plain and entirely unassuming.

He wore his uniform which I am told is *no common custom* with him, and I should think so from the number of wrinkles in it, the work of many weeks packing. I am told the honour is worth remembering. His aide-de-camp Maj. Bliss¹¹¹ called with him, a placid coun-

¹¹⁰ Mrs. Magoffin's comment on General Taylor's personal appearance suggests the reason for his sobriquet. Because of indifference to his personal appearance, and his blunt readiness for meeting any emergency, his troops in the Mexican War dubbed General Taylor "Rough and Ready."

Much against his judgment and inclination, he became a candidate on the Whig ticket for president. In protesting against his nomination, the general remarked that he was a plain, simple soldier, bred to the profession of arms, knowing nothing of the intricacies of statecraft, and he distrusted his fitness for high civic position. He was elected in 1848, and, notwithstanding his modest depreciation of himself, his administration began well, and with the promise of successful continuation. General Taylor served as president of the United States for only sixteen months, dying in the White House July 9, 1850.

¹¹¹ William Wallace Smith Bliss was born in August, 1815, at Whitehall, New York. He was graduated from the United States Military Academy in 1833, and served in the campaign against the Cherokees in 1834. He was a professor at the Academy for six years, chief of staff in the Florida War, and served against the western Indians. During the Mexican War he was conspicuous for gallant conduct in the battles of Palo Alto, Resaca de la Palma, and Buena Vista. He acted as adjutant to General Taylor during his campaign in Mexico. After General Taylor was inaugurated president, Colonel Bliss became his private secretary.

tenance he has, talks little, forehead very high or rather bald.

Thursday 26th Returned the General's call this afternoon: he has a beautiful camping spot four miles from town on the Matamoras road, in a thick grove of trees. The old gentleman was very glad to see us, talked a great deal, handed cake and champagne, and proved himself exceedingly hospitable. His tent is characteristic of the man, very plain and small his sleeping apartments, but just in front a little separated from it is a large awning affording a pleasant shade and is termed the "*drawing-room*." The general was dressed in his famed old gray sack coat, striped cotton trowsers blue calico neck-kerchief. With all this I am most agreeably disappointed in him. Most of the wild stories I've heard of him I now believe false and instead of the uncouth back-woodsman I expected to have seen I find him polite, affable and altogether agreeable.

Friday 27th. This evening we road out to see the famous "black-fort."¹¹² It has been thoroughly re-

After the death of the President he became adjutant-general of the western division of the army, with headquarters at New Orleans. On December 5, 1848, he married Miss Mary Elizabeth, daughter of General Zachary Taylor. Colonel Bliss died in East Pascagoula, Mississippi, August 5, 1853. He was affectionately nicknamed "Perfect Bliss."

¹¹² Was called "Black Fort" because the Mexican Black Flag floated over the fort during the battle of Monterey. It was a large rectangular fortress, known as the citadel, and covered nearly three acres of ground, with four bastion fronts, surrounded by a work of solid masonry and supplied with heavy guns. At the time of General Taylor's attack it was not finished. After-