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Frederick E. Phelps: a Soldier's Memoirs

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FREDERICK E. PHELPS: A SOLDIER'S MEMOIRS*

Edited by FRANK D. REEVE

(Continued)

I HAVE been asked many times if I was scared at the first sight of Indians, and this was my first experience. When I got to the top of the hill it took me several minutes to discover the village, so much were the wickiyups the color of the rocks and bushes. I did not see an Indian for some time, either, and when I did he was so far away I knew he could not hit anything at that distance, so I was cool enough and can honestly say I was not afraid. When we got to the creek and Stephenson explained his plan, I will frankly acknowledge I was mightily scared, and only hoped I did not show it. Pride came to the rescue at once: the knowledge that our men were looking to us for directions, the pride of the commissioned officer, and, above all, the pride that makes a man ashamed to show fear before his fellow-man.

I once heard an experienced soldier say, one whose record during the war was only equalled by the one he made as an Indian fighter, that "a man who says he is not afraid of Indians either don't know anything about it or he is a liar," and from all I have heard others say, I imagine my experience was similar to theirs. I always thought that if Stephenson had known how horribly scared I was he would hardly have spoken to me afterward so kindly as he did, so I guess I succeeded in hiding it fairly well.

* In preparing the material for the January, 1950, issue of the New Mexico Historical Review, uncorrected galley proofs were returned to the printer, resulting in certain errors in the Memoirs of Captain Phelps. The following should be read in conjunction with the Introduction:

Captain Phelps was again recalled to service when the United States participated in World War I. He was stationed at Detroit, Michigan, as recruiting officer, and then transferred for duty at the Port of Embarkation, Hoboken, New Jersey. Once again the veteran soldier retired to the more peaceful pursuits of civilian life, but with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. A few years later, in 1923, he passed away in Urbana, Ohio.

Since the Memoirs were not recorded from day to day, but were written in later life, it was thought permissible to improve the composition, although no change has been made in meaning.

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The reader is asked to forgive certain typographical errors, especially on page 38, where Urbana, Illinois, should read Urbana, Ohio. Ed.

Ten men were to stay with horses and pack mules while the rest of us, thirty-seven in all, were to go up that hill and come down again, if we could. That's what scared me. The rocks at the top were thick with howling Indians who yelled Apache and Mexican epithets at us. Nearly all the Mescalero Apaches understood, and many of them spoke, the Mexican language, and they defiantly dared us to come on, accompanied with gestures, grotesque, but not at all decent.

And now occurred a little scene that shows the man who refuses to fight fisticuffs is not always a coward. Among the men was one such named Zubrod. Shambling in his gait, with a little weazened face, weak, colorless eyes, dirty in person and in clothes as he dared to be, he was a butt for every joke of his comrades, and had been bullied and whipped by nearly every man in the troop; there was probably not a man there who did not consider him a coward, and in some way—I don't know how—I had gotten the same opinion. When Stephenson directed me to pick out ten men to remain with the animals, the first one I selected was Zubrod, and when the others were selected Stephenson directed Foster to take charge of them, a detail that surprised me; but I did not know much then, and it did not occur to me that the care of our animals and rations was no unimportant matter. But Zubrod broke out: "Lieutenant, can't I go? Every man in the troop says I am a coward! Let me go. I'll show 'em!" And he broke down, alternately crying and swearing. Stephenson gave him a keen glance, and reading him better than I, made a motion of assent, and Zubrod took his place with the party.

Stephenson told me to take ten men and try to work around to our right and, if possible, flank their position, for that stone wall, as we may call it, looked ugly, and the hill was so steep that the men would have to use both hands to cling to rocks and bushes, and could do no firing. When I had discovered a practicable way and had gone up as far as I could without being resisted, I was to fire a pistol shot and then make a rush, with as much noise and yelling as possible, so as to make the Indians think it was another troop coming

in on them, while he, with twenty-seven others, would go straight up, or try to.

All this time we were in plain sight and not more than five hundred yards from the Indians' position. Why they did not fire on us was a mystery; probably they had little ammunition and wanted to save it for close quarters. In that day the Apaches had few, if any, breech-loading guns, little ammunition for the muzzle-loaders they did have, and were poor shots. I went to our right, up stream, about three hundred yards, and finding a kind of spur or nose that looked as though it would be easy climbing, we worked up to within five or six hundred yards of the Indian position, fired a shot, and rushed on; but we had not gone over half the distance when we came to an immense deep cañon that we could neither cross nor get around and, worse still could not see the place where our enemies were. But we kept up a devil of a din, and if those Indians did not think the devil had broken loose over there on their left, it was not our fault. All the same we kept a sharp watch, hoping we would catch sight of something, and we were not disappointed.

Looking off to our left we saw Stephenson and his men leisurely climbing the hill, the carbines slung over their backs by the sling belts, and Stephenson himself in the lead, with his Winchester carried and used as a cane. Not a shot was fired at them; when half way up they came to a ledge of rock and halted to get their breath for a minute. The day was fearfully hot; they had been on the go since three A. M.; the hill was covered with small stones and loose shale, which slid back under the foot, and it was decidedly hard "getting up stairs."

For a moment they rested, then Stephenson's calm deliberate voice quietly said, "Come on," and as they started, from above came the ring of rifles, but too high. I saw Corporal Cooney, a magnificent-looking blue-eyed man, stagger; then he laughed grimly as a glance showed the bullet had only torn its way through his belt and shirt, just touching his side. Poor devil! five years later they shot better and he fell, fighting like a demon, alone and unaided, in a lonely

cañon, the very next day after he had sold his mining claim for a big sum and was going home to his sweetheart who had waited all these years.[35]

Then Stephenson's voice rang out clear and strong, "Now, men!" and with one whoop up they went, Stephenson's long, lank form well ahead, swinging his Winchester over his head by the muzzle, only speaking once more and then to yell at Zubrod,—Zubrod the coward who would not fight, but who was bounding ahead, his face as white as the sheeted dead, his eyes glowing like coals, ten yards ahead of everybody. "Zubrod! Zubrod! damn it, man, don't get ahead of me! Take it easy!"

Close behind Zubrod was Bullard, swinging something over his head and yelling like a maniac. I could not then imagine what he was swinging, but subsequently found it was a long-handled frying-pan he had picked up on the hill where a squaw had dropped it in her flight. He had lost his own and did not propose to risk losing his prize by leaving it behind.

Now they were almost to the crest, and then came another scattered volley that also went high; but the shooters were rattled and, beside that, they were shooting down hill, and a man almost invariably overshoots under such circumstances.

By this time the Indians concluded that the white man was going to accept his invitation to "come up the hill," in fact, had already accepted it with a demoralizing unanimity, and instantly every head disappeared. As the men swarmed over the hill, Stephenson, Bullard, and Zubrod well in advance, there was no foe to meet them, but some hun-

35. "An incident which created intense excitement throughout the western part of New Mexico in the spring of 1880 was the murder of James C. Cooney and a number of other miners by a band of Apaches under Victorio. Cooney had been Quartermaster Sergeant in the 8th U. S. cavalry, and while performing scouting duties in the Mogollon mountains in western Socorro county discovered silver. After his discharge from the army he organized the Cooney mining district and began development of extensive properties in Socorro county. His brother, Captain Michael Cooney, hewed from the solid rock, near the scene of the murder, a sepulcher for the body. The door is sealed with cement and ores from the mine, and in these ores has been wrought the design of a cross. His friends among the miners also hewed a cross of porphyry which was placed upon the summit of the rock tomb." R. E. Twitchell, *The Leading Facts of New Mexican History*, II, 439 note (Cedar Rapids, Iowa, 1912).

dreds of yards away were three or four Apaches just disappearing over a ridge, and from there they fled like deer in the labyrinth of cañons on that side. Through the wickiups, across the flat, to and beyond the cañons for a mile the men pantingly pursued, hoping for one fair shot, but they might as well have pursued shadows. These were mountain Indians and could run up or down hill with apparently the same ease.

But now my little party is to have a chance. Down a side ravine, gliding over the ground like ghosts, came three Indians into the main cañon some four or five hundred yards away, across and up the steep side of another hill, we firing at them, but though we kicked up the gravel all around them, we did not hit anything else.

In those days the cavalry were armed with the old Sharp's carbine with an open back sight, and a thick, stubby, front sight; and with a trigger supposed to be seven pounds pull, but near fourteen. Target practice was unknown practically, the allowance of ammunition being three shots per man per year, and the longest range three hundred yards. Think of sending out men to fight Indians who had had no target drill at all and, to quote Chambers McKibben[36] who, with that moustache, the pride of the 15th Infantry, elevated in the air, once declared, "could not hit a flock of haystacks at ten yards rise."

If we had had a chance to learn to shoot we might have killed more Indians, but as it was the almost universal rule was to "rush in to close quarters, *then* shoot." Fortunately the Indians were not as good shots as we were, poor as that was, so we nearly always got the best of them.

Meantime these three Indians were making remarkable time up the steep side of the mountain and two of them disappeared over the crest. One, however, could not resist the opportunity of showing his contempt for the white man and the white man's shooting and, turning at the very edge of the great cañon, he shouted the most opprobrious epithets in Mexican, accompanying them with gestures not at all

36. Chambers McKibbin was born in Pennsylvania. He volunteered as a private in the Union Army during the Civil War. He was promoted to 2nd Lieutenant, September 22, 1862; Captain, July 28, 1866; and retired with the rank of Brigadier General, October 3, 1902. He is listed in *Appletons' Encyclopedia.*

polite, but easy to comprehend. Corporal McNelly was standing near me, a pretty fair shot; kneeling down, he took deliberate aim at this rampageous Apache and fired. I was watching Mr. Indian through my glasses and saw him suddenly "hump" himself together, bound in the air like a ball, and in the next instant shoot over the edge of the cañon, end over end, going down with a crash on the rocks hundreds of feet below; one good Indian, anyhow. We found it impossible to get down to him, the walls of the cañon being two or three hundred feet high, and as straight up and down, almost, as the sides of a house. So we left him to the buzzards and the coyotes. By this time the men were returning from the fruitless pursuit, and the work of destruction began.

The wickiups were built of sotol[37] stocks, the lance-like stock of a species of cactus, and brush covered with pieces of canvas, hides and dirty, tattered blankets. Dozens of bridles, lariats, saddles, &c., and the numerous tracks of ponies and mules, showed that they had animals with them, but probably they were away with part of the band on a foray into Mexico at this time. One mule with a club foot was captured, instantly named "Apache," and adopted into the troop where he lived and flourished, being used as a hunting party pack animal until a snooping Inspector saw him and, lacking sense enough to know that there are times when an Inspector ought to be blind, ordered him to be turned into that capacious and rapacious receptable into which so much goes and from which nothing ever comes out —the Quartermaster's Department. The men readily offered to buy him at any price if he could be sold, for they delighted to taunt the other troop at the post when they would see them going over to our Quartermaster's to borrow a pack mule to go hunting: "Hello 'I' troop, why don't you get a mule of your own?"

Hanging to the limb of an oak tree was another mule,

37. Sotol was an important food for Apaches. The crowns of the plant were roasted in pits, dried, crushed into flour and baked in small cakes. Willis H. Bell and Edward F. Castetter, *Ethnobiological Studies in the American Southwest*, VII, 57f (Biological Series, University of New Mexico, 1941. V, no. 5). Castetter and Opler, *op. cit.*

freshly skinned and dressed, young, fat and tender, for Stephenson and I had a steak off him that night for supper. Our bacon was gone. It resembled coarse beef, rather red, but was sweet and tender and tasted mighty good.

Large tin dish pans, tin cups, canteens and so on were scattered everywhere, and finally a copy of a printed order from the War Department—something about transportation—was found stuck up in one of the huts. These things showed clearly enough that these Indians were Reservation pets. An uncut bolt of calico, with Mexican trade marks on the card, showed that they had recently been trading with Mexicans or, what was more likely, had recently raided a Mexican house or train. Besides these articles there were thousands of pounds of prepared mescal, all of which, together with saddles and everything, was soon in flames, and the work of destruction was thorough and complete. Going down to and around the base of the hill, and along the little stream, we soon found where the squaws had been making *tiswin*.[38] Some forty odd jars of earthenware, or *ollas*, were standing there filled with the unfermented liquor, and being cool, palatable and, at that stage, not intoxicating, we partook of it freely, then all the jars were broken. Had the stuff been fermented we would all have had the jimjams sure, but as it was, no harm was done.

When we finally got back to where our horses were we found Foster had captured another mule. While we were ascending the hill his quick ear caught a sound of something coming up the cañon; slipping quietly behind a big rock, some one hundred yards below the horses, he looked carefully around and saw two Indians mounted, one behind the other, on a mule, coming slowly up the trail and unconscious of danger. Why they did not hear the yells of their friends above I do not know; perhaps the winding of the cañon cut

38. "But the Apaches rivaled their pale-face brothers in the production of 'home-brew.' Their system was to bury grain on the sunny bank of a stream where the warmth and moisture caused the cereal to germinate. Then they stewed it—sprouts and all. The stew was then set aside and allowed to ferment. The Apaches called this brew "tuh-le-pah," but to the pale-face it was known as 'tiz-win.' It had a powerful 'kick'—particularly if the revelers fasted a day or two before imbibing." John P. Clum, "Es-kim-in-zin," NEW MEXICO HISTORICAL REVIEW, III, 419 (October, 1928).

off the sound. Cocking his carbine and taking a dead rest on the rock, he took deliberate aim at the foremost Indian and pulled the trigger. He was our best shot, the distance not over seventy-five yards, and he told me afterwards he was chuckling over his "easy pot shot," as he called it, but the cartridge missed fire. Just then one of the Indians caught sight of him, gave a whoop, and both of them rolled off and dashed into a side ravine and were out of sight in a second, leaving Foster dancing with rage and the proud captor of a sore-backed mule.

We camped that night on the little stream, and all night long the Indians kept up their yells from the surrounding cliffs; but they did not venture near camp. At daybreak they had disappeared, and we subsequently learned that they went straight back to the Reservation to get rations and get ready for another raid.

Two days after we rode into old Camp Bowie,[39] Arizona, situated at the eastern end of Apache Pass, a pass of which nearly every rod has been the scene of a tragedy, for this was a famous place for ambuscades. In the little cemetery there at the time I counted twenty odd graves, and all but two bore on the little head-boards, "killed by Indians."

It was raining in torrents when we rode into the Post, and the first thing I got was an invitation to dine with the commanding officer, a veteran Captain of the 5th Cavalry,

39. "Fort Bowie was located in Apache Pass, Chiricahua Mountains, on the road from Tucson to Mesilla. . . . The establishment of a military post at this site dates from July 28, 1862, when the 'California Column' under Brigadier General James H. Carleton, on its way to Santa Fé, passed that way, and detached a company to guard the spring at that point.

"Major T. A. Coult, Fifth California Volunteers, was assigned to command of the post on July 27, 1862. Temporary huts were erected, and the post was called Fort Bowie in honor of George F. Bowie, colonel of that regiment, then commanding the District of Southern California.

"On May 3, 1866, the Volunteer garrisons were relieved by Company E, Fourteenth U. S. Infantry, and from that date occupation of the post was continuous to 1894, when troops were withdrawn and the post abandoned. In 1894 the post was turned over to the Secretary of the Interior." *Post, Camps, and Stations, File,* cited in Martin F. Schmitt, ed., *General George Crook: His Autobiography,* pp. 163 (University of Oklahoma Press, 1946).

The Fort was located in Latitude 32° 10′ and Longitude 109° 22′. The reservation was declared by Executive Order March 30, 1870, and enlarged to 23,040 acres, November 27, 1877. See also William A. Bell, *New Tracks in North America,* p. 44 (London, 1869).

now a Lieutenant Colonel,[40] whose good wife was then, and is today, famous in the army for her generous hospitality and her good dinners.

I wanted that dinner, wanted it bad. I had been living for three days on mule meat, but how could I go? The only pair of trousers I had were minus a seat and, as I was built somewhat on the bean pole order, it was a problem where to beg, borrow or steal a pair of unmentionables. Finally at the Sutler's store, in exchange for seven dollars, I got a pair I could wear; the color was cherry-red, but I wanted that dinner. I heard they were going to have POTATOES, canned, to be sure, but still POTATOES, and I had not seen one for two years. At that time very few vegetables were raised at all, and we had been unable to raise potatoes at Bayard, so I was hungry for them, and go I did. If my hostess did notice the warm color of my trousers, she repressed her amusement and gave me that cordial welcome that characterizes army hospitality. They say no lady ever feels more highly complimented than when a man eats a hearty meal at her table; when "Pard" and I got through Mrs. S. S. Sumner must have been pleased, for we did our duty.

At the same table sat the genial Post Adjutant,[41] the First Sergeant of A Company at the Point when I was a First Classman, now the grave and dignified chief in charge of the publication of the *Records of the Rebellion.* Only a few weeks ago I saw him for the first time since that visit to Bowie, nearly twenty-five years ago, and I had scarcely entered his office in Washington when he asked, "Say, old man, what has become of your sanguinary breeches?"

40. Edwin Vose Sumner was born in Pennsylvania. He served in the Union Army during the Civil War, beginning as 2nd Lieutenant, 1st Cavalry, August 5, 1861. He attained the rank of Brigadier General, March 23, 1899.

His father was the distinguished soldier, Edwin Vose Sumner, Sr., whose career is discussed in the *DAB* and in *Appletons' Cyclopedia.*

41. George Breckenridge Davis was born in Massachusetts. He served in the Civil War as sergeant, 1st Massachusetts Cavalry, from September 10, 1863, until June 16, 1865. He was commissioned 2nd Lieutenant, June 17, 1865, and was mustered out, June 26th. Graduating from the United States Military Academy, he was commissioned 2nd Lieutenant, 5th Cavalry, June 12, 1871, and rose to the rank of Brigadier General, Judge Advocate General, May 24, 1901. His name appears on the *Records of Rebellion* as editor, serving from 1889 to 1895. See *DAB.*

We remained at Camp Bowie four or five days to let the horses and the men rest, have the horses reshod, and to arrange for the balance of our scout. The commanding officer of the Post appeared to be a good deal annoyed someway that we had found Indians within twenty miles of his Post. Years afterwards he told me that the very day before we came into Camp Bowie he had reported to the Department commander that there were no Indians within one hundred miles of his Post, and here we found a gang of them within twenty miles. He was in no way responsible, of course, as his scouts had simply failed to find them.

We moved out early on the fifth day. Marching into the San Simon valley, we turned short to the right and moved south along the eastern edge of Chirrechua [Chiricahua][42] mountains. About twenty miles south we went into camp where a beautiful mountain stream came roaring down the rocks of Horseshoe cañon.[43] This cañon we knew had frequently been a lurking place for Apaches, and some years before a desperate fight between Apaches and Lafferty's[44] troop of our regiment had taken place in it. The cañon was about three miles long and gradually narrowed until it was not more than one hundred yards in width, with rocks standing straight for hundreds of feet on each side. While searching the cañon, Lafferty had been attacked from both sides and only after a desperate fight, in which he lost several men killed and wounded and had both his jaws shattered by an Indian bullet, did he succeed in getting his men out.

Bullard and I determined to explore this cañon in hopes of getting a deer. When we drew rations at Camp Bowie, we

42. The Chiricahua mountains are in the southeastern corner of Arizona, ranging north and south. The famous Apache pass is located in their northern reaches, guarded at one time by Fort Bowie.

43. Horseshoe Canyon is on the east side of the Chiricahua mountains. W. H. Carter, *The Life of Lieutenant General Chaffee*, p. 79 (The University of Chicago Press, 1917).

44. This fight occurred October 20, 1869, when a detachment of 60 men from Fort Bowie under command of Colonel Barnard attacked the Apaches. Lieutenant Lafferty was wounded. The Indians defeated the soldiers. For the details see T. E. Farish, *History of Arizona*, VIII, 29f (State of Arizona, 1915).

John Lafferty was born in New York. He enlisted as 1st Lieutenant in the 1st Battalion, California Cavalry, July 21, 1864, and was mustered out, March 15, 1866. He re-enlisted the same year in the 8th Cavalry with the rank of 2nd Lieutenant and retired, June 28, 1878, with the rank of Captain.

found that there was no bacon there and we had to take in its place salt pork; in the intense heat of August this pork spoiled on our hands the first day, so we determined, if possible, to get fresh meat. We proceeded cautiously up the cañon for about two miles, picking our way slowly through the dense underbrush, seeing several deer, but not firing for fear there might be Indians in the pass. Finally we came to an open space several acres in extent at the very end of the pass and, as we appeared through the brush, there were the wickiups or huts of a large band of Indians within twenty yards of us. Dropping quickly to the ground we watched them for some time and finally came to the conclusion that they were abandoned, and it was a lucky thing for us that there were no Indians there, or we would never have gotten out alive. Returning toward camp we killed a deer and got back just at dark.

The next day we were marching leisurely down the western edge of the plain when we suddenly found in a little path, running at right angles to our course, two or three handfuls of Mexican beads and one or two pieces of porcupine or quill work, which we knew immediately meant that an Indian had passed that way and had dropped them. A close examination of the ground showed the tracks of one Indian; by the distance between foot steps we found that he had started to run at full speed, and we had no doubt that he had caught sight of us. The trail led up a broad valley; we followed it rapidly till we came to a high hill jutting two-thirds of the way across the pass. Here we halted while Foster and Bullard and two of the men crept to the top of the hill. They had scarcely peeped over when one of the men came sliding down and said that half a mile above, in the flat open valley, was an Indian camp and, from the confusion in the camp, they thought they were getting ready to escape. Bullard sent word that the flat was level and smooth and that a mounted charge was practicable.

Stephenson immediately directed me to take twenty men and charge at full speed, he following close behind with the balance, sending three or four men with the pack animals back into the open plain. With the twenty men I took the

trot, then the gallop and, as we turned the end of the hill, I motioned to the men to spread out to the right and left. We went up the valley at full speed for about fifty yards when the village came in sight, but almost immediately we found ourselves in a mass of broken rock and low brush through which a horse could not possibly move faster than a walk. I immediately dismounted the men, turned the horses loose and started on a run for the village. Almost at the same moment the three men at the top of the hill opened a rapid fire, yelled and motioned to us to move more to the right, which we did, and were soon in the village; but, of course, the Indians had escaped into the brush beyond, and were rapidly moving up the hill. One Indian could plainly be seen scrambling up a bare space of rock about two hundred yards distant and Sergeant Foster dropped him with a quick snap shot. We all saw him roll down, but immediately two other Indians seized him and dragged him out of sight. We hurried forward as rapidly as possible, but found only blotches of blood and then a mule track showing that they had some animals there, so they escaped with their wounded companion.

Six months afterwards the Post Surgeon at Fort Tularosa,[45] which was at the Indian reservation, told me that the Indians belonged to that reservation and that they brought this wounded man there. He was well known as "Big Foot," a notorious scoundrel who had committed many murders. The bullet had broken his leg just above the knee. As the surgeon at that time did not know that he had been away from the reservation, he took him into the post hospital to treat him, but knowing that he was a desperate and blood-thirsty Indian, he took advantage of the opportunity and put a stop to his raiding by amputating his right leg close up to the hip; he frankly acknowledged that it was entirely unnecessary,

45. Fort Tularosa was established in April, 1872, at the site of a new reservation for Apache Indians who had been located for a time at Cañada Alamosa which came to be considered unsuitable. The Indians, however, did not like the new location and were returned to Cañada Alamosa in the summer of 1874. The Tularosa reservation was located along the Rio Tularosa and tributaries in west-central New Mexico. For details see the NEW MEXICO HISTORICAL REVIEW, XIII, 296ff (July, 1938).

but as he explained it, he made a ——— good Indian of him anyhow.

In the camp, we found several Indian ponies and a very large amount of Mescal and other property, all of which we destroyed. We continued our march to the south until we had crossed the line into old Mexico.

One night, about ten days after leaving Camp Bowie, we camped in an open flat. There was a dry arroyo, or water course, running east and west perhaps ten feet deep and twenty feet wide, and in this was a small pool of water. Running at right angles to it was a smaller dry water course. We camped at the junction of these two, the men building their fire on the bank close down to where the smaller arroyo entered the larger. Just across this arroyo was quite a large thorn bush. Stephenson and I put our blankets under this bush and were perhaps thirty feet from the men's camp fire. Wood was exceedingly scarce, but by everybody turning out, except the herd guard, and roaming over the prairie, we succeeded in gathering a small quantity of dry sage brush, enough to boil our coffee.

The men had gathered around the camp fire just after dark to get their coffee. Stephenson and I were seated on our blankets under the brush. We had already filled our cups with coffee, for on this scout, as on nearly all scouts, we messed with the men, eating the same ration that they ate. Sentries had been put around the camp, perhaps fifty yards out, with orders to watch the skyline of the hills around us; suddenly there flashed a rifle shot and a bullet passed through the bush under which we were seated, cutting off a small branch about six inches above my head, it dropping into my lap. As quickly as a flash the cook upset the can of coffee into the fire and we were in darkness instantly. Stephenson and I both rolled into a small ravine and, climbing up the bank, found the men all lying flat on their faces in a circle with their carbines pointed in every direction, anxiously peering into the darkness in search of an enemy.

Dead silence reigned for several moments and then Stephenson called out, "Who fired that shot," and a piping voice

replied, "I did, sir." "Who are you," Stephenson asked, and the answer came, "Arenbeck, sir." "What did you shoot at?" "I did not shoot at nothing," he replied. "I wanted to see, sir, if my carbine was loaded, sir, so I snapped it, sir, and it was loaded, sir," and a roar of laughter broke out from the men. The call was a pretty close one, but we did not care so much for that as for the fact that the coffee had been upset on the fire. There was no more wood and it was too dark to gather any more, so the men had to eat their hard tack and drink muddy water instead of hot coffee. They did curse Arenbeck heartily all night, I presume, and the next day Stephenson ordered him to walk and lead his horse all day as a punishment for his gross carelessness, yet in less than a week this fool saved all our lives.

We then swung to the east, through a very rough broken country, and finally came out onto what was known as Rattlesnake plain. This was a dreary desert, probably one hundred miles long and forty or fifty miles wide, to the west of the Florita[46] mountains and, so far as known, there was not a drop of water on it. It was loose gravel and sand, thinly covered with scrub sage brush; the enormous amount of rattlesnakes we saw that day explained its name. I do not think I saw less than fifty in the twenty miles we made that day, and what in the world they lived on has been a mystery to me to this day. Rattlesnakes live very largely on frogs, toads, rabbits, and other small animals, but not a sign of life did we see that day except the snakes.

By four o'clock we were halfway across, hoping to reach Carselia springs[47] by daylight the next morning. The plain was not perfectly level, and, going over a swell, we were astonished to see a spot of vivid green just in front of us in the bottom of a large circular bowl-like depression. Going down to it, we found that it was a patch of green rushes perhaps three or four feet high. Stephenson and I immediately dismounted, walked out into the rushes, and soon discovered

46. Correctly spelled Florida. They extend southward from the present day town of Deming, southwestern New Mexico.

47. Carselia springs is marked as Carazillo spring on a Department of War map of 1867. The latter name is probably a corruption of Carrizalillo, or "little reed grass." The spring was near the Mexican border on the road to Janos.

that there was no water visible, but that the ground under our feet was bulb-like and shaky, and we had to proceed very carefully. We called two of the men and directed them, with their long hunting knives, which every man carried, to cut a hole in this turf to see if there was any water below it. Running his knife down through it, one of the men made a circular cut about two feet in diameter and, catching hold of the rushes, they lifted out a piece; peering down, we saw that the bulb was about one foot thick, and consisted of a tangled mass of the roots of the rushes. Upon examination of the ground the next morning, we came to the conclusion that this was the last part of what had been at one time a small lake. The water had evidently disappeared from this spot the last of all, and no doubt there were underground springs there. The rushes had grown up thick and strong and had then broken down, gradually covering the surface of the spring. The green rushes growing up year after year, perhaps for fifty years, had gradually formed a crust or bulb-like surface that we found. We called this Devin spring after the commanding officer of our Post and it was duly entered on the military maps of that part of New Mexico, so that scouting parties afterward had no trouble in finding it.

Below this was an open space perhaps six inches, and below that black liquid mud. Taking a tin cup, one of the men laid flat on his face, scooped a hole in the mud perhaps a foot deep, and almost immediately water commenced to trickle into the hole; he was soon able to take out his quart cup filled with sweet, palatable water. This was good enough for us. We went into camp at once and the men immediately cut a number of such holes; by being careful, they soon filled the camp kettles with water from which the men first filled their canteens and then commenced to water the horses; by nine o'clock every horse had had four quarts of water. The next morning we found the holes completely filled with clear sweet water, so we gave the animals all they wanted to drink and, filling our canteens, we struck across the sand once more for Carselia springs. The day was exceedingly hot and much of the ground was covered with alkali which is a kind of salty excrescence, white as snow and, crumbling as it did

under the horses' feet, rose in a cloud of dust like flour, settling on us and our animals and making us very uncomfortable. We did not reach the spring, so called, until eleven o'clock that night, and when we arrived, all we could discover were small pools of water about six inches below the level of the prairie. We drank greedily and the next morning found that the water was about one foot deep, full of fungus-like plant, small frogs, tadpoles, and lukewarm, but we remained there all that day, as the grass was thick and plentiful.

About ten yards from the spring was a little rocky knoll which, during the afternoon, I climbed to get a look over the country. Right on the top I found a circle of stones roughly piled perhaps a foot high enclosing the skeleton of a white man, and all around him a number of empty brass Winchester rifle shells. A hole in the center of the skull showed how he had met his fate. He undoubtedly was a lonely hunter or prospector caught at the spring by Indians, but had time to reach the top of the hill and make this little fort, and there had fought his last fight. There was not a particle of clothing or anything by which he could be identified, so we piled stones over his skeleton and left him.

We left this spring at three o'clock in the morning, striking down east to the foot of the Florita mountains where we knew there was a large tank or water hole. This was the hardest day's march I ever made in my twenty-one years on the frontier. The sky was cloudless and the August sun beat down on the alkali flat and, being reflected from the snow white surface, redoubled its heat, and the glare was terrible. The alkali was several inches deep with a thin crust through which the horses' feet broke, and it rose in stifling clouds, settling in every crevice of our clothing; by ten o'clock we were suffering intensely and every canteen in the camp was empty; the alkali, being slightly saline, made the thirst the greater. If I had known as much then about scouting as I did afterwards, I would not have touched my canteens, but would have kept them full for an emergency, but they were empty as soon as anybody's.

About three o'clock we struck the edge of the Floritas,

but on arriving at the tank where we expected to find water we found it entirely dry. There was nothing to do but keep along the foot of the mountains, examining every ravine and cañon in hopes of finding water, but as this water hole was the only one we had ever heard of in this range of mountains our chance seemed hopeless. By four o'clock we were in a bad state. I know that my lips were turning black; the lower lip cracked in the center and the blood, oozing out, congealed on my beard; my tongue was thick and I was absolutely unable to articulate.

Looking back at the men, I could see that they were in equally bad state. In a short while the first sergeant motioned to Stephenson and me; dropping back, we found three of the men were delirious. They had dismounted from their horses and thrown themselves upon the ground, making inarticulate noises and refusing to remount. We motioned to the other men and they seized these three men, put them in their saddles, tied their feet beneath the horse's body, and lashed their wrists to the pommel of the saddle; then another man took the bridle reins of each and we proceeded on our weary journey.

Stephenson picked out half a dozen of the men with the best horses, directed them to go ahead and, as they came to each cañon or ravine, one of them to go up in search of water, the others going ahead and doing likewise. One by one these men returned and, shaking their heads in token of failure, took their places in the weary column. We finally halted and I remember trying to stick my head under a small furze bush where there was a small spot of shade perhaps a foot in diameter. I had noticed that all the men had returned but one and that was Arenbeck, who was not supposed to have very good sense. I had scarcely been there more than a minute when I heard a faint sound in the distance which might have been a shot, followed a few seconds later by a second and then a third, and then a succession of shots evidently drawing near; suddenly, over the swell in the prairie a mile away, appeared a man on horseback, holding his gun over his head and firing into the air as fast as he could. The thought immediately struck me that

it was Arenbeck and that he had gone mad. We motioned to the men; they hurriedly mounted their horses and we moved forward at a slow walk. When Arenbeck arrived within one hundred yards of us, he put down his carbine and, coming up close, swung his canteen over his head; with a yell, he threw it straight to me and, when I caught it, I knew by the moisture on the cover and its weight that it was full of water. He told us that he had found a small supply of water about two miles farther on.

I shall never forget the temptation that almost overwhelmed me to take a swallow of that water but, of course, I did not; turning back, I went to the three crazy men, held the canteen to their mouths in turn, and let them drain every drop. We moved on as rapidly as possible and finally turned up a narrow valley. After going about two hundred yards, it narrowed to a width of only twelve or fifteen feet. Here an enormous rock extended from side to side sloping up at an angle of about forty-five degrees; Arenbeck pointed to this and I saw running over the surface of the rock a small stream of water perhaps as wide as my two hands and scarcely as thick as a knife blade. We instantly dismounted and, seeing a bank of clay close by, we took our cups and scooped out a hollow at the foot of the rock; wetting some of the clay, we lined it with the wet mud so that the water would trickle in and not be wasted in the ground. The horses had smelled the water and were plunging to get to it, so we moved them back several hundred yards, then motioned to the men one at a time to go forward. Each man was allowed to dip out his tin cup one-fourth full or half a pint. One of the men remarked that it tasted strongly of sulphur and almost immediately every man's stomach rejected it, but we knew that it would do no great harm. After each man had had his half pint, Stephenson and I took the same amount and it acted on us in the same manner. We waited half an hour and then allowed each man to have another drink, this time one pint and this stayed down. We then called for the camp kettles and were filling them one by one to give the animals water when I looked up and, approaching me, I saw one of the men who had been delirious.

This man's name was Gordon. He was a surly, savage brute, and when in the Post a hard drinker. When in the field he was one of our best men, and by far the best packer, being especially noted for his skill in using the famous "diamond loop," which is a particular method of securing packs with a rope and requires great skill. I was seated right at the spring and immediately said to him, "What do you want?" In a surly tone, he said, "I want another quart of that water and I am going to have it." I saw that the man was half crazy, but I said to him quietly, "You can't have anymore until the horses have had some. You have had the same amount as all the rest and you must wait." Quickly reaching down to his boot he drew out his long knife and, glaring savagely, he said, "I am going to have water and I will cut the bowels out of any man that interferes." I was totally unarmed, having removed my pistol and belt and laid them to one side some distance away, but the next moment a lean, brown hand came over my right shoulder, holding in its grasp a cocked revolver, and Stephenson's quiet voice said, "Gordon, this is mutiny, if you move a step I will kill you." Just at that moment I saw the first sergeant, Corcoran, slipping up quietly behind Gordon, his moccasined feet making no noise and, at a nod from Stephenson, he struck Gordon a terrific blow just below the ear and knocked him senseless; in a moment he had tied his hands and feet with a lariat lying near, and we rolled him to one side.

For ten days we had had nothing to eat but hard tack and coffee. Our pork had spoiled and had been thrown away, and we had not seen a deer since the one Bullard killed in Horseshoe cañon, now two weeks ago; but with plenty of water, we made our coffee and, although there were only two hard tack to a man, we were comparatively comfortable.

The next morning I climbed up over the rock. Finding a large flat rock perhaps six feet across and six or eight inches thick from under which the water trickled, we cut down a small pine sapling and, using this as a pry, lifted the rock; out gushed a stream of water several inches in diameter which, dashing down over the inclined rock, filled

our pool and ran out onto the prairie. We knew then what had happened, that it was a large spring which the Indians had placed a rock over to conceal.

From here to the nearest Post, Fort Cummings,[48] in Cooke's cañon, situated at the foot of Cooke's peak, was fifty miles as the crow flies across the desert. We could see Cooke's peak looming up clear and distinct and apparently not more than twenty miles away, but we knew that it was fully fifty and not a drop of water between. We filled our canteens and started at four o'clock in the morning, marched as rapidly as we could with our weakened horses, and about four o'clock in the afternoon were then within a mile of a large spring which was near the Post. Here the horses sniffed the air, smelling, of course, the water, and some of them actually broke into a jog trot, but before we reached the spring five of the horses dropped, never to rise again, dying almost instantly. The men stripped off their saddles and, throwing them on their shoulders, we went to the spring. Fort Cummings, now long abandoned, was a one company Post, garrisoned then by Company "E," 15th Infantry, under the command of First Lieutenant H. H. Humphreys,[49] who was the only officer then at the Post. It was situated in the mouth of a dangerous pass and did not cover more than an acre, and was entirely surrounded by an adobe wall, ten or

48. Fort Cummings was located near the mouth of Cooke's canyon in Cooke's range on a well traveled road westward from the Rio Grande. General Carleton established it in 1863 to keep the Apaches under control. The site was at Latitude 32° 27′ and Longitude 107° 35′. The reservation was declared by Executive Order, April 29, 1870, and embraced 2,560 acres. It was abandoned by the War Department about 1880.

"Hundreds of miles before we reached it, I listened with anxiety to the stories told me by the frontier men about the dreadful massacres perpetrated by the Indians in that dread gorge. It was said that even the soldiers dared not stir a mile from the post, and that it was 'just a toss up' whether any traveller got through alive. These reports were only the surviving echoes of events which have made Cooke's Cañon and the Miembres Mountains memorable in the annals of New Mexican massacres.

"It is said that as many as four hundred emigrants, soldiers and Mexicans, have lost their lives in that short four-mile gorge. I have conversed with a settler who has counted nine skeletons while passing through the cañon, and the graves and heaps of stones which now fringe the road will long bear record of those dreadful times." Bell, *New Tracks . . .*, II, 19, 24.

49. Henry Hollingsworth Humphreys was born in Pennsylvania. He enlisted in the Union Army during the Civil War with the rank of 1st Lieutenant (artillery), October 3, 1862, and was mustered out with the rank of Lieut.-Colonel, November 10, 1865. He re-enlisted, February 23, 1866, as a Lieutenant in the infantry. He attained the rank of Major in 1896 and retired three years later.

twelve feet high, as a protection against Indians. It was put there simply to guard the spring, which was the only water for forty-five miles on either side.

Lieutenant Humphreys, seeing us coming, hurried down to the spring and introduced himself to us, as we had never met him. He insisted that Stephenson and I go up to his quarters for supper, saying that his wife was there with him and would be glad to see us. We tried to beg off, for we were ragged and dirty; water had been altogether too scarce to use it for washing purposes, and I know that I had not washed my face but twice in the last three weeks, once at the Horseshoe cañon and once in the Florita mountains. He would take no denial. So we went up to his quarters at five o'clock and met Mrs. Humphreys, who was a nice little woman. She had been married only two months and had come straight from Philadelphia to this desolate place where there was not a woman within forty miles. She told me years afterwards that when her husband told her he wanted to invite us to dinner, she told him he must be crazy. The only thing she had in the house to eat, she said, was fresh beef, flour and coffee. She had a cow and plenty of butter and milk. Her husband told her that we had been living on hard tack and coffee for nearly a month and all she had to do was to broil two or three beef steaks, make a bushel of biscuits, a barrel of coffee, and we would do the rest.

We sat down and quickly cleared away one beef steak and two or three plates of biscuits. They were not large, were very light, and with fresh butter, the strong coffee, good cream, and a pitcher of cool milk, I don't think I ever enjoyed a meal better. Steak after steak and plate full after plate full of biscuits disappeared. In after years she told me that she was never better pleased in her life and appreciated what her husband had told her that "Quantity was what would count, not quality." She said, "Do you know how many biscuits you ate?" When I laughingly replied that I had been too busy to count, she said, "You two ate five beef steaks between you, had five cups of coffee apiece; Mr. Stephenson ate twenty-six biscuits and you ate twenty-eight, and I thought you would surely burst." I have no doubt that she

was right, but the biscuits were small, about the size of a dollar.

We remained here one day to rest and then returned to our post, Fort Bayard, fifty miles distant, taking two days for the trip, and thus ended my First Scout.

One Room and A Kitchen

Perhaps it is grand,
But I fail to see it;
To live at a "post"
As an officer's wife.
Unless you have "rank"
Above a Lieutenant,
'Tis one room and a kitchen
The rest of your life.

'Tis all very well
To "flirt" with brass buttons
But that's very different
From being a wife;
With children annoying
Your comfort destroying,
In one room and a kitchen
To drag out your life.

Now, girls, all take warning!
In life's early dawning
Don't marry at least
Till you're twenty or more;
Then try for the rank,
A Major or Colonel;
For then you'll be sure of
Three rooms or four.

I know "Uncle Sam"
Must be an old bachelor,
For he made no provision
For an officer's wife;
And the very worst fate
That I wish to befall him,
Is one room and a kitchen
The rest of his life.

—*Anonymous*

(Army Regulations prescribe the number of rooms in a post each officer may have. A Lieutenant is entitled to "one room and a kitchen"; a Captain "two rooms and a kitchen," and so on, up to a Colonel, who has "four rooms and a kitchen." "An officer's wife," who has spent fifteen years of her married life on the frontier, sends this as her contribution to the *Sabre*)

Answer to One Room and a Kitchen

One room and a kitchen
Is truly annoying,
But there are many worse things
In the army, I'm sure;
No one knows better
Than your humble writer
What we poor Lieutenants' wives
Have to endure.

First there is rank
Which we have to contend with;
No matter how nicely your house
Is arranged;
In comes an order
That your husband's superior
Is wanting the quarters,
And "yours" must be changed.

Up come the carpets
And down come the curtains,—
You must obey orders
And must not complain;
But while you are moving,
You take an oath, mental,
Never to have so much
Trouble again.

If our dear young ladies
Who are anxious to follow
The fortunes of our brave sons of Mars
"On the plains,"
Could visit but once
Our posts on the frontier,
I'm sure they would never
Be anxious again.

"Uncle Sam," truly, is a selfish old bachelor,
He treats well his nephews, but his nieces neglects;
I wish every one would rise in rebellion,
And never give up till our rights he respects.

—*Anonymous*

Fort Bayard at that time was one of the extreme frontier posts, situated in Grant county in the extreme southwest corner of New Mexico, about one hundred miles from the Arizona line. It was at the head of a small valley, and the only supply of water was a small spring, not over four feet in diameter, which trickled down through the grass several hundred yards and was finally caught in a wooden trough from which it was conveyed to the barracks and officers' quarters by a waterway. No attempt had been made to protect this water supply, and cattle tramped through the little stream. It was a great wonder that severe sickness did not occur, but this we escaped until 1872 when an epidemic of diarrhea set in among the men and nearly the whole command was laid up. The post at that time was commanded by Brevet Brigadier General Thomas C. Devin, Lieutenant Colonel, 8th Cavalry. General Devin had served through the War, coming out a Brigadier General, and was one of the best officers I ever served under. He was a little, short, stout Irishman, with steel gray eyes and an explosive temper. We all loved the old man, and most of us stood in a great deal of awe of him for, when anything went wrong, he was apt to break out in very vigorous language.

I was almost at once appointed Post Adjutant in addition to my duties as troop officer, and was Adjutant under him for over three years. When this sickness broke out, he and I went down to the water supply; when he saw the state of

affairs, his language was pointed and forcible to say the least. He immediately ordered the spring to be walled up, covered with planks, and a plank trough laid several hundred yards long, so that the water could be kept pure. Lumber at that time was exceedingly high, the only supply coming from a sawmill about twenty-eight miles distant; a common rough board cost the Government sixty dollars per thousand. There was no appropriation to buy lumber for this purpose, but he promptly issued a peremptory order to the Quartermaster to buy it anyhow. When the vouchers finally reached Washington they came back disapproved, and with directions that the entire cost be charged to General Devin; I have never seen a madder man, and have never heard more forcible language. Of course, he at once explained the absolute necessity of the purchase to protect life and the Government finally paid for it.

In August, 1871, I made my first scout, an account of which will be found in a previous chapter which I wrote for a little magazine published at the Pennsylvania State College, by request of the Kirby boys of Urbana who were attending that school, and were the editors. In 1872, in addition to my duties as troop officer and Post Adjutant, I was put in temporary command of two companies of infantry, all of whose officers were absent on various duties. I was also made temporarily Quartermaster and Commissary, Post Treasurer, Post Signal Officer, and Post Ordnance Officer. In the Quartermaster's Department I had one soldier clerk, and in the Commissary Department the same, so that I had to work from daylight to dark and frequently remained in the office till ten o'clock at night making up reports and papers. About this time my Post baker deserted with four others; I found at once that he had sold the supply of flour sent to the bakehouse to be made into bread, and had eloped with the money. Of course, I was personally responsible for this and instantly made it good, amounting to about fifty dollars. General Devin directed me to take four men and go in pursuit. As we had received word that they had been seen on the Rio Miembres, a small stream about twenty miles east and on the other side of the Santa Rita mountains, I

left the Post with my party, all mounted, carrying five days' rations in our saddle bags. By the time that we had arrived at the top of the mountains darkness had fallen and the trail was almost undistinguishable, but by walking ahead and frequently striking matches we managed to work down the trail, and just at daylight arrived at the ranch on the river. Here we rested for an hour and soon found the trail of the four men going down the Miembres. There was a slight fall of snow on the ground and the tracks were easily followed, especially as one of the deserters had a peculiar patch on the heel of his boot, and one of my party happened to be the shoemaker who had put that patch on. All day we trailed them down the valley, expecting momentarily to overtake them, but darkness fell and with it came a terrific snow storm. We had no tent, of course, and that night was the first time that I ever slept in the open in a blizzard, and without shelter, but we bivouacked in a patch of cedar trees where we could obtain plenty of dead timber. We had a big fire and, as each man was provided with a pair of blankets and an overcoat, we got along very well. Fortunately for me, I had a buffalo robe; wrapping up in this and drawing my soft wool hat over my face, I slept comfortably all night, and was astonished in the morning to find six inches of snow on top of my bed. The snow hid the trail completely, so we hurried down the creek as fast as we possibly could until we struck the little town of Rio Miembres. This consisted of about twenty miserable adobe houses all occupied by Mexicans. I stationed two men, one on each side of the village. I took the other two and searched every house, the Mexicans offering no objection, but without avail. We made a complete circuit of the town several miles out and finally struck the trail, where the snow had not fallen, heading toward the Rio Grande. We followed this up rapidly, camping that night at Mule springs,[50] and the next day reached a little settlement on the Rio Grande after a march of forty-five miles. Seeing the trail leading into a house, we promptly surrounded it and I tried to open the door, but found some-

50. Mule springs lies west of Fort Thorn (on the Rio Grande) on the road to Cooke's canyon.

one inside was holding it. Calling Sergeant Thomas, of my party, we threw ourselves against the door and burst it open; I seized a Mexican, who had drawn his revolver, just in time to prevent him from firing.

Sitting around the fire at the other end of the room were three of the deserters who promptly surrendered. I found that one of them, and that my baker, had purchased a horse, no doubt with money that he had obtained from the sale of the flour, and had fled up the Rio Grande; the other man had separated from the rest the day before. We stayed there that night and the next day. I took these three to Fort McRae[51] and placed them in the guardhouse. To get there we had to cross the Rio Grande, which was in flood and full of floating ice, but I placed each prisoner behind a man with a large horse and, plunging in the river, we swam our horses across. Here I left all my party except Sergeant Thomas and Captain Farnsworth,[52] of my regiment, who commanded the post. He let me have two fresh horses, and that night we crossed the Jornada del Muerto, which in English is "The journey of death," a flat level desert. Marching forty-five miles by moonlight, I reached my old station, Fort Craig, at daybreak. Here we obtained breakfast and pushed rapidly up the Rio Grande until we arrived at Los Lunas, where I secured the services of the Sheriff by telling him that there was a reward of thirty dollars for the men. He persuaded two Mexicans to let us have fresh horses, leaving our own as security. We hurried up the river, going at a trot and gallop all day, and shortly after dark swam the river at Albuquerque and soon found that my man had left there that morning. Here I halted and told the Sheriff to go ahead and arrest him, for if I or Sergeant Thomas were present, he could not get a reward; he soon overtook the man only twenty miles above and brought him back. On searching

51. Fort McRae was established in 1863 near Ojo del Muerto or the Spring of Death, on the north end of the Jornada del Muerto, for the protection of travelers along that dreaded road. The reservation was declared by Executive Order May 28, 1869, with an area of 2,560 acres. It was abandoned by the military about 1876.

52. Henry J. Farnsworth was born in New York. He served with the Union Army during the Civil War with the rank of Captain of Volunteers July 8, 1864, and was mustered out, September 1, 1867, as Brevet Lieut-Colonel. He re-enlisted as 1st Lieutenant, 34th Infantry, June 14, 1867, and was promoted to Captain, May 17, 1876.

him, I found about one hundred dollars in his pockets of which I, of course, took possession. He acknowledged that he had sold the flour for about fifty dollars and asked me to repay myself out of his money, which I did. From here I sent word to Santa Fe, and a man was sent out from there who captured the fifth and last man. I returned at once to Fort McRae, my prisoner riding his pony, which was one of the best Mexican ponies I ever saw. Before I arrived at Fort Bayard I bought it of him for twenty-five dollars cash, intending to present it to my wife for her own use, and she rode it frequently up to the time of her death. Arriving at Fort McRae, I found Captain Farnsworth on a scout, but his sergeant let me have a rickety old ambulance. We hitched up four wild pack mules; with one man leading each mule, and the prisoners inside, we led them out on the prairie, then turned them loose, and I verily believe they never stopped running under ten or twelve miles, we galloping along behind; but the driver kept the general direction, and that night we arrived at old Fort Cummings where there was one company of infantry stationed, having made forty-five miles in a little over six hours; the next day I sent the ambulance back, took the irons off my prisoners and marched them to Fort Bayard. On this trip I had made a distance of about four hundred miles in eight days, an average of about fifty miles a day, and shortly afterward received a strong letter of commendation from the Department commander, which afterwards became useful to me when I got into serious trouble with the District commander.

(To be continued)