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FREDERICK E. PHELPS: A SOLDIER'S MEMOIRS

Edited by FRANK D. REEVE

(Concluded)

In March, 1879, I received my long delayed promotion to First Lieutenant after nearly nine years' service as a Second Lieutenant. This promotion carried me to "F" Troop, which was stationed at Fort McIntosh, near Laredo. My commission dated from the 20th of March, 1879, but I was directed to wait at Fort Clark until further orders. On the 11th of May, 1879, my second daughter, Elsie L., was born at Fort Clark. Of course, I could not move my family for sometime and, in fact did not go down to Fort McIntosh until September. Just before Elsie was born, Auntie came to Fort Clark to live with us. Mary's sister, Maggie, had died at Celina the previous October of tuberculosis, and we at once wrote Auntie to make her home with us. She came by rail to San Antonio and from there to Fort Clark, a distance of one hundred and fifty-six miles, by coach, and the roads were in such a horrible condition that it took her three days to finish this coach ride. We had only three rooms in all. The front room was our bed room and sitting room. Immediately behind this was our dining room and we screened off one end of this to make a place for Auntie. The kitchen was immediately in the rear, but before Elsie was born, we moved into the other end of the house where we had five rooms, and we thought this was quite sumptuous. In September, I proceeded to Fort McIntosh by way of San Antonio, taking my family with me and all my household goods, which filled two six-mule wagons. When the order finally came for me to go to Fort McIntosh, I was out hunting and got home at nine o'clock that night, which happened to be a Saturday. Mary had a good supper waiting for me and after I had disposed of it, I was sitting on the porch smoking my pipe when she came out and told me that an order had come from the commanding officer, about four o'clock, that I was to start the very next morning for my new station. The temporary Post

commander was Major Wilcox.⁸⁷ I went over to his quarters and he told me there was an ambulance and some wagons at the Post belonging at San Antonio, that the Department commander had ordered them returned, and that he had telegraphed that I would leave the next day with them.

I was provoked, of course, over the exceedingly short notice, but said nothing. At reveille the next morning I told my first sergeant, for I was in temporary command of the troop, to send the entire troop to my quarters as soon as they had breakfast. The Quartermaster let me have a lot of rough lumber; by noon all of our furniture was packed, crated, and loaded on the wagons, and at one o'clock we pulled out for San Antonio. My family rode in the ambulance. We had a pleasant trip to San Antonio, and from there to Laredo, except that we were nearly devoured by mosquitoes a part of the time. On arrival at Fort McIntosh I reported to my new troop commander, Captain A. P. Carraher,⁸⁸ with whom I was fated to serve for some years. Carraher was a typical Irishman, had come into the regulars from the volunteers, and as an officer was absolutely worthless. He was noisy, overbearing, very harsh with his men, drank hard, and every time the troop went on a scout during the six years that I was with him he went on sick report promptly, leaving me to the command of the troop. I was immediately appointed Post Adjutant, and was practically placed in command of the troop, as I took reveille, the daily drill, and afternoon stables. The retreat and tattoo roll calls were taken by the Second Lieutenant, Mr. Pinder,⁸⁹ who had been recently transferred to the troop, and who was, I think, the handsomest man I ever saw in the Army. He was married. His wife was a fine young woman, and she became an intimate friend of Mary and me. I hear from her once in a while even yet. Pinder

87. John Andrew Wilcox was born in Washington, D. C. He was commissioned 2nd Lieutenant, 1st Cavalry, March 28, 1861, and advanced to the rank of Major, 8th Cavalry, March 20, 1879.

88. Andrew Patrick Carraher was born in Ireland. He enlisted as Captain, 28th Massachusetts Infantry, December 13, 1861, and was mustered out with the rank of Colonel, November 7, 1865. He re-enlisted as 1st Lieutenant, July 28, 1866, and was advanced to Captain, January 15, 1873.

The name is spelled with only one "r" in Heitman, *Historical Register*. . . .

89. Joseph William Pinder was born in Georgia. He was commissioned 2nd Lieutenant, 8th Cavalry, August 15, 1876.

was a reckless wild blade, careless in regard to his duties, more so in money matters, and did not last very long.

In July, Elsie was taken very ill and the doctor informed me that I must send her east to save her life. We started immediately and traveled one hundred and fifty miles to San Antonio whence Mary, Auntie, May and Elsie started for Urbana, and I returned to my station. The change of water and climate did wonders for Elsie, and she rapidly recovered.

In October, I took six months leave of absence and joined my family, who had gone to Saint Mary's, and that winter we lived with father and mother in the old house, Mary having charge of the household. On the 29th of the following January, my daughter, Margie, was born. That was one of the worst winters that I ever saw in Ohio, but we managed to get through very comfortably. When Margie was ten days old, I received a telegram from the War Department asking me if I was willing to give up the balance of my leave and go to Jefferson Barracks,⁹⁰ Missouri, just below St. Louis, for temporary duty; I promptly accepted and a week after I proceeded there and reported for duty.

Jefferson Barracks was then the Cavalry Recruit depot and I found that I was to be assigned to the command of one of the recruit companies. The commanding officer was my own Colonel Neill;⁹¹ I found Williams,⁹² of my class and regiment, there as Adjutant, and Captain Foote,⁹³ of my regiment, was the Quartermaster. Mary joined me about two months afterward, and we spent a very pleasant summer at this place, but in September I received an order to go to

90. For a brief history of this long-time western military post, established in 1826, see Henry W. Webb, "The Story of Jefferson Barracks," *NEW MEXICO HISTORICAL REVIEW*, XXI, no. 3 (July, 1946).

91. Thomas Hewson Neill was born in Pennsylvania. He graduated from the United States Military Academy and was commissioned 2nd Lieutenant, July 1, 1847. He held the rank of Brigadier General of Volunteers during the Civil War. He was commissioned Lieutenant Colonel, February 22, 1869, and Colonel, 8th Cavalry, April 2, 1879.

92. Richard Algernon Williams was born in Pennsylvania. He graduated from the United States Military Academy and was commissioned 2nd Lieutenant, 8th Cavalry, June 15, 1870. He was promoted to 1st Lieutenant, May 17, 1876, and Captain, April 24, 1886.

93. George Franklin Foote was born in New York. He enlisted as a private in the Civil War and was mustered out with the rank of Brevet Lieutenant Colonel, July 18, 1865. He re-enlisted as 2nd Lieutenant, July 28, 1866, and attained the rank of Captain, January 18, 1881.

Fort McIntosh to be assigned to duty as Quartermaster. On the first day of October, 1881, I assumed the duties of Quartermaster, Commissary, Adjutant, Post Treasurer, Post Signal Officer, and Post Ordnance Officer, all of these in addition to my duties as troop officer. It had been decided to build two new sets of barracks, an administration building, and two warehouses; I found that Major S. S. Sumner,⁹⁴ of my regiment, who was in command, had applied for me to do this work. He was one of the best officers to serve under that I ever knew, and I have always been very much attached to him, and to his lovely wife. He is now a Major General on the retired list. The Post Surgeon was Captain F. C. Ainsworth,⁹⁵ Medical Department, now Major General and Adjutant General of the Army. Major Sumner was a very easy man to get along with, prompt and active in the discharge of his duties. Captain Ainsworth and I did not get along so well together. He was a splendid surgeon and had a fine hospital, but was tenacious of what he thought were his rights; I suppose that I was equally tenacious on the other side, and we frequently clashed, but my acquaintance with him proved to be of very great value in after years. He gave me my present detail on recruiting service at Pittsburgh and helped me in every way to get Fred his commission in the army; the last time I saw him in Washington we had a good laugh over old times at Fort McIntosh.

With all these duties piled on to me, I worked exceedingly hard, getting up at four o'clock and five o'clock in the morning; I made the rounds of the stables and of the work shops, then went to where the buildings were being erected at six, checked off the workmen to see that all were present, had my breakfast at seven, mounted the guard at eight, and put in the whole day around the buildings and the office, doing nearly all the clerical work in my office after dark. I was

94. Samuel Storow Sumner was born in Pennsylvania. He was commissioned 2nd Lieutenant, June 11, 1861. He was promoted to Major, 8th Cavalry, April 2, 1879, and attained the rank of Brigadier General, February 4, 1901.

Samuel Storow Sumner was a brother of Edwin Vose Sumner, Jr. See note 40.

95. Fred Crayton Ainsworth was appointed Assistant Surgeon, November 10, 1874, from Vermont.

only allowed one clerk, P. A. Ord, a nephew of General Ord,⁹⁶ and generally known as "Buck." He was a stalwart boy of nineteen, and an excellent clerk; he messed with us, and we were the warmest of friends until his untimely death.

One of the most aggravating things that ever occurred to me was in the following June when I received a telegram from the Chief Quartermaster of the Department that there was about forty thousand dollars left in his hands for barracks and quarters, and that if I would get into his office, before midnight of June 30th, ground plans, cross sections and elevations, together with an estimate of the cost of materials and labor for another barrack and commanding officer's quarters, two or three sets of officers' quarters, and various other buildings, we could have the money. After consulting with Major Sumner, Ord and I went to work, drew the plans, cross-sections and elevations, and made blue prints of the same, showing all the dimensions; we made estimates for the stone, brick, sand, lumber, nails, glass, etc., and the necessary labor to put up the buildings, and at noon of the 30th day of June, sent a telegram to the Chief Quartermaster that the plans, etc., had been mailed. We had worked almost continuously for forty-eight hours, leaving our office that morning at three o'clock. To my disgust, on the first day of July we received a telegram stating that the telegram of June 28th had been sent to our post by mistake, and that it was intended for another post.

In November, 1882, Captain Carraher had a misunderstanding with the commanding officer of the Post in regard to the number of men he had absent from a dress parade, and the commanding officer required all company commanders to at once submit a statement of how many men were absent, on what duty, and by what authority. Captain Carraher's report showed that he had twelve or fifteen men absent on a hunting trip without any authority from

96. Edward Otho Cresap Ord was born in Maryland. He graduated from the United States Military Academy and was commissioned 2nd Lieutenant, July 1, 1839. He served with distinction in the Civil War and retired with the rank of Major General, conferred January 28, 1881. See the *DAB* and *Appletons' Cyclopaedia*.

the Post commander, who, of course, was the only one who could authorize it, and he received a sharp reprimand from Major Sumner for exceeding his authority. Up to this time I had had a soldier cooking for me and, of course, he belonged to my own troop. Captain Carraher also had one. Army regulations forbid this practice, but it was utterly impossible on the frontier to get civilian servants at any cost, and the practice of having soldier cooks was almost universal. I paid my man twenty dollars a month out of my own pocket; he attended target practice, muster, and Sunday morning inspections, but was excused from his other duties, and Captain Carraher's man was excused from everything, except target practice and muster. The next morning Captain Carraher ordered me to return my man to duty in the company, but did not turn in his own and, as I lived next door to him, I soon discovered this, but said nothing.

Auntie was with us and she and Mary did the cooking, but on the 25th of November Mary presented me with her second child, Fred; the very next day Auntie stepped on a rusty nail and was completely disabled for two weeks. There was no one to do the cooking but myself, and for two weeks I not only performed all my official duties but had to prepare all the meals and do the housework, for Mary and auntie were both in bed. One day Major Sumner asked me if I had attended to some important matter and I had to acknowledge that I had completely forgotten it. He looked at me a moment, then quietly said, "Phelps, you appear to be about worn out, have you too much to do?" I then told him the whole story, that besides working from daylight to midnight I had all the cooking and housework in my house to do. He asked me where my servant was and I told him that Captain Carraher had turned him in. He asked me if Captain Carraher had turned in his man, and I declined to answer the question, telling him that he could easily find out for himself. He immediately sent for Captain Carraher and asked him why he had taken away my man and kept his own, adding that I had declined to answer any questions about it. Captain Carraher, of course,

could offer no explanation. Major Sumner turned to me and asked me the name of the man that I had had, and immediately upon receiving the name, issued a written order detaching this man from the troop. He put it down in black and white that the soldier was to report to the Quartermaster, The Commissary, The Post Signal Officer, The Post Treasurer, and the Post Ordnance Officer for duty as cook in his kitchen, and sent a copy of the order to Department headquarters with a letter explaining the circumstances; to Carraher's utter amazement the order was promptly confirmed by the Department commander. Mary did not recover rapidly, and in the meantime an order came from the War Department transferring the troop to Fort Clark. Doctor Ainsworth immediately informed the Post commander that it would be dangerous to her life to move Mary at present, and I applied to Department headquarters for authority to remain behind until she could travel, but for some reason the Department commander disapproved it. Why, I never knew. I immediately went to Major Sumner and told him that he could put me in arrest, but that I positively declined to either attempt to move my wife in her then condition or to go away and leave her alone. He immediately telegraphed to Department headquarters that he had assumed the responsibility of ordering me to remain behind; he explained the matter more fully in a letter and then the Department commander approved it. The result was that the troop left without us, and Captain Carraher was directed to leave ten men behind to go with me. About the first of June we proceeded to Fort Clark, going the first day only seven or eight miles. Mr. Ord went with us that far and remained in camp with us that night. The next morning he said good bye to us and returned, and I never saw him again, for in a little over four years he died at old Fort Concho. When our regiment rendezvoused there, on the march to Dakota, I went to the cemetery and saw his grave. He was one of the best young men I ever knew. He was particularly attached to Margie, in fact to all my children, and was very kind to them.

Shortly after my transfer from Fort McIntosh to Fort Clark, Texas, in the summer of 1883, my troop was ordered for the summer to Meyers springs. This spring is under a pile of rocks in a desolate valley, about four miles from the Southern Pacific Railroad and one hundred and fifty miles from Fort Clark. For one hundred and fifty miles east and west of this place the Rio Grande flows through a large canyon; the only place in this three hundred miles that animals can be crossed was just opposite Meyers springs and forty-five miles distant from that place. At this point two canyons come down, one on each side of the river, and the water there was shallow, so that a party of raiding Indians could follow down one canyon, cross the river and reach the plains by the other canyon.

The Southern Pacific Railroad with working parties of five or six men each scattered along the road, asked that troops might occupy this canyon to keep the Indians from raiding from the Mexican side and threatening their working parties. It was impossible to keep troops down in this canyon on account of the awful heat, for it was not more than one hundred feet wide and the walls two or three hundred feet high; besides, in case of a flood, it would be a regular death trap, there being no escape.

Accordingly a troop of cavalry was kept at Meyers springs to pursue at once any parties crossing from the Mexican side. The troop was camped on a level plateau of sand and gravel, with not a tree within forty miles, and nothing green in sight. The plain was half gravel and half sand and thinly covered with long sage brush. The hot wind blew almost continuously all summer and brought clouds of dust on the camp; it was a very uncomfortable place. We could get no fresh meat and had to live on ham and bacon all summer and, of course, no vegetables at all. Doctor Blair D. Taylor,⁹⁷ Medical Department, was with us that summer. About the middle of July, Doctor Taylor and I took a dozen men and started for the Pecos river about sixty miles from our camp, partly to explore the

⁹⁷. Blair Dabney Taylor was born in Virginia. He was appointed Assistant Surgeon, June 26, 1875.

country and partly for a hunting and fishing trip. We struck the Pecos river about fifty miles above its mouth where, on the western side, came down a little mountain stream, roaring and plunging among the rocks, and making an ideal camping place. We got there Sunday afternoon and, shortly after making camp, I laid down under a big sycamore tree and went to sleep. I dreamed that my father had died. He was at home at Saint Mary's, and I had not received any information that he was even ill. The dream made such a strong impression upon me that it woke me up, and I immediately told Doctor Taylor that I should return at once to camp. By this time it was dark and I could not ride over the mountain trail, but at daylight the next morning I took two men and pushed rapidly from camp, leaving Doctor Taylor and the party on this stream for a few days. I made the sixty miles to Meyers springs by sunset. Captain Carraher came out of his tent and, the moment I saw his face, I knew that he had bad news. I asked him if there were any telegrams for me, and he said, "Yes." I said, "My father is dead." He replied, "Yes, but how did you know it, the telegrams only came last night by mail from Fort Clark. Your wife received them and forwarded them; she told my wife, who wrote to me by the same mail." He handed me two telegrams from my brother, one saying that father was very ill and the other, one day later, that he was dead. These telegrams had been delayed, and were both more than a week old, so that it was impossible for me to reach home in time for the funeral.

I have often thought of these circumstances, but cannot explain them. I had not the slightest idea that my father had been ill and yet the dream was so vivid that I could not mistake it. I went to my tent to write to my mother and, while doing so, a man rode into camp and informed Captain Carraher that a party of fifty Indians had crossed the river and the railroad and were raiding the cattle ranches. He said that he came from a little station four miles from our camp, and that the news came there from the telegraph operator at Langtry, a station twenty miles

further down the road, who reported that the working parties had come in greatly alarmed, saying they had seen the Indians. Instantly boots-and-saddles were sounded and, in thirty minutes, the whole troop, except a small camp guard, were moving toward the canyon mentioned above to take possession of it and prevent the Indians' return. Telegrams were hurried to Department headquarters notifying them of our action. Our rations were sent to us once a month from Fort Clark and a carload was due that day. We only had two days' rations in camp, so I took the pack mules, a dozen men, went to the station to see if the car had arrived, and procured ten days' rations, Captain Carraher going straight to the canyon. I found the car on the side track, but the station agent refused to allow me to open the car, which was sealed, as he had received no way bill. I insisted upon having the rations and he peremptorily refused to open the car, so I put him under a guard, broke open the car, took out ten day's rations, packed them on the mules, and started on Captain Carraher's trail. I marched as rapidly as possible and arrived at the head of the canyon way after dark. I knew the trail down the canyon was very narrow and steep in places, winding along the face of the cliffs, so I went down ahead on foot striking matches from time to time and we finally arrived at the bottom. We remained there all the next day; about dark one of the men from camp came down and brought a telegram that the whole story was a fake, that the operator at Langtry was suffering from delirium tremens, and had made up the whole story. The next morning we started back, Captain Carraher going through to camp at once, while I camped at a water hole where we found fresh deer tracks. As soon as we had watered the animals and filled our camp kettles, we moved half a mile away and camped behind a hill. Doctor Taylor, who was a keen hunter, and I went back to the water hole; he stationed himself about a quarter of a mile away in a little canyon where tracks showed deer were in the habit of coming down. I concealed myself within twenty yards of the water hole and patiently waited for the deer to come, but about sunset, getting tired, I returned

to camp. Doctor Taylor came strolling over and, to his astonishment, a large buck deer was drinking out of the pool, but immediately made off before he could get a shot. If I had remained at the pool ten minutes longer, no doubt I would have gotten him, and Doctor Taylor abused me for a week for my neglect. We returned to camp the next day; this little trip took my mind somewhat off my grief.

We had been at Fort Clark but a few weeks when we were ordered to Del Rio, a one-company Post thirty miles west. I dreaded this because Carraher would be in command and I knew that it would be very unpleasant for me. There were only two houses there and we each took one. About this time our new Second Lieutenant, Matthew F. Steele,⁹⁸ now a Major of the 2nd Cavalry, joined us. He had just graduated at West Point and was a young, active and energetic officer, one of the best I ever saw. We speedily became very warm friends and are to this day. In June, I was ordered to Fort Leavenworth in command of the Texas Rifle team for the rifle competition. Just before this it had been discovered that in surveying the limits of the Post at Del Rio the engineer had made a mistake, both sets of officers' quarters were just outside the line and on private property.

Land around there was not worth more than ten or fifteen cents an acre, and the strip we occupied was not more than half an acre in extent, but the owner thought he saw a chance to bleed the Government and immediately demanded one thousand dollars for that little strip. Naturally enough the Government refused and, pending some other arrangements, we were ordered to vacate the houses and go into camp. I knew Mary and the children could not stand tent life in that climate in summer and therefore arranged to take them home. To go east required three full tickets and two half tickets, amounting to about two hundred dollars, which was, of course, a heavy drain on me, and would even then only carry us to St. Louis.

98. Matthew Forney Steele was born in Alabama. He graduated from the United States Military Academy and was commissioned 2nd Lieutenant, 8th Cavalry, June 13, 1883.

While I was Quartermaster at Fort McIntosh, a young man came to Laredo in charge of the railroad terminus and brought me a letter of introduction from a classmate of mine. Of course, we had him to dinner the following Sunday; for that dinner Mary prepared a number of spring chickens and that young man ate two himself. I was always fond of raising poultry and at that time had a large number of chickens in the yard. This young man, whose name was Farley, took Sunday dinner with us every week for several months; when we went away he told me if there was anything in the railroad line that I wanted to let him know. He had been the private secretary of the General Passenger Agent, and was, I think, his nephew. Remembering this, I wrote him at once from Del Rio. I told him that I had to send my family east and asked him if he could get me half-fare tickets to St. Louis. Nearly a month elapsed and the time to start had arrived, but I had received no reply, so I concluded that he had forgotten all about me. The very day before we were to start I received a letter from him from the city of Mexico, to which place he had been transferred to represent the railroad interests, but I had not heard of it. He expressed the hope that it was not too late and inclosed a pass reading, "Pass Captain Phelps, wife, nurse, children and extra baggage, from Del Rio to Urbana, Ohio," which pass was signed by the General Passenger Agent of the Missouri Pacific System. The next day Captain Carraher took his wife and daughter down to the Depot and I was there with all my family. He had to buy tickets, and when he discovered that I had a through pass for my entire family he was astonished. He told me that he had asked for half-fare tickets and had been refused, and asked me how in the world I got the pass. I only laughed and told him that I paid for my pass with spring chickens, and I never did tell him the rest of the story. On arrival at some point in Missouri, Mary and the rest went on east while I proceeded to Fort Leavenworth. While on the rifle range there I received a telegram from the War Department directing that, as soon as I had taken my men back to Fort Clark, to proceed to Lexington, Kentucky, and

report to the President of the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Kentucky, at that place, for duty as instructor in tactical and military science. I had been making some effort to obtain a detail of this kind at Meadeville, Pennsylvania, where an officer in my regiment held that position and was about to be relieved, but had utterly failed. I knew nothing of a vacancy at Lexington and for a long time wondered how it happened that I was ordered there.

I learned a year later that it was through the efforts of a classmate of mine to whom I had been kind when he was down and out. This man graduated at the foot of our class. He was the son of a prominent politician in New York City. After serving a few years with his regiment he resigned. While I was Adjutant at Fort McIntosh, a detachment of recruits for the regiment came down. I took charge of them and when I called the roll each man stepped to the front and answered "here." Finally I came down to the "J's"; to my utter astonishment, there stood the name of "Lovell H. Jerome"⁹⁹ and, looking up, there stood my classmate in the garb of a recruit. I went on calling the roll; when through, I dismissed the men to their camp and called to Jerome, shook hands with him and asked him what he was doing there. He said he had enlisted in hopes of recovering his commission. I told him to come to my quarters that evening. I introduced him to Mary; she gave us a nice lunch on the porch and left us alone, and we talked of old times nearly all night. There were one hundred horses at the Post to be sent down to Ringgold Barracks, one hundred miles distant, and I suggested to Major Sumner to put Jerome in command of the men to take them there. Of course, as he was only a soldier, he had to eat the same food as the other men and in that country this meant the straight ration and nothing more. But just before he left I sent him a box containing a lot of good things to eat, not forgetting a box of cigars. He got the horses down in good shape and did very well for a year. He was then ordered before a

99. Lovell Hall Jerome was born in New York. He graduated from the United States Military Academy and was commissioned 2nd Lieutenant, 2nd Cavalry, June 15, 1870, and resigned from the service, April 12, 1879. He re-enlisted and served as private and corporal from March 16, 1880, to January 31, 1882.

board of officers for examination and passed easily, but he could not stand his good luck, at once went on a terrible spree, and ended up in the guardhouse. Of course, this killed all chances for his commission and shortly afterward he was discharged. I next heard of him at old Fort Duncan through a letter from his father in New York, who stated that he had heard that his son was actually suffering for food and raiment, that he knew by bitter experience that any money he might send him would be spent in dissipation, and asked my advice. I immediately wrote him to send fifty dollars to a firm of merchants there, whom I knew, who would furnish him a good suit of clothes and other necessities; I also gave him the name of a hotel there where he could board, suggested that he write the proprietor that he would send him a check each month for his son's board, and that in the meantime I would endeavor to get his son some employment. I knew the Collector of Internal Revenue; I also knew that he had eight or ten men whose duty it was to patrol the Rio Grande and intercept smugglers, and I asked him to give Jerome one of these places which carried good pay if I remember right, one hundred dollars a month, and the use of a horse, and he promptly appointed him. I heard nothing more of him until a short time after we went to Del Rio, when one day a carriage drove up to my quarters and to my astonishment there was Jerome dressed in the height of fashion. Of course, he stopped with me and told me that night that he had been transferred to the office of the Collector of Internal Revenue at Corpus Christi, that he was now the Deputy Collector and was out on an inspecting tour. He stayed with me two days and then went on. Shortly after I went on a scout; on my return Mary told me that he had stopped there on his return and spent a day with her. She had told him of my efforts to get a college detail, as they were called, and that I had failed. He expressed his sympathy, but said nothing more. I learned that he wrote his father in New York, that his father was an intimate personal friend of the then President of the United States, Arthur, and that his father asked the President to give me one of these details, as a partial

payment, as he expressed it, for my kindness to his son; this is the way that I obtained that detail. It was very acceptable to me for it took me away from Captain Carraher; it also enabled me to be with my family in civilization for three years, and to put May in school, for of course there was no school on the frontier. I reported at the college in September, shipping my household goods there also, and we were soon comfortably fixed in a small frame house on the college grounds. These Agricultural Colleges, by an act of Congress of 1862, were each given a grant of thirty thousand acres of land for each member of Congress that the state might have. Kentucky at that time had seven members of Congress and accordingly received two hundred and ten thousand acres of western land; the law required that they should sell it, invest the proceeds in good bonds, and apply the interest on the money to the college. Besides this, Congress gave each college the sum of fifteen thousand dollars in cash each year, so that I soon found that this college had an income of over twenty thousand dollars a year from the Government. The law further provided that any of these colleges should have not less than one hundred and fifty male students, above the age of fifteen, who should be subject to military drill, wear a uniform, and should be entitled to an officer of the Army to act as instructor, the Government furnishing the arms, equipments, and ammunition. When I arrived there, the college had already opened and they had about one hundred and fifty students, but I found that they had never drawn the arms and equipments from the Government; they had about fifty old muskets that had been used during the war, but not a sign of a cartridge box, belt or bayonet. The only excuse they gave for not obtaining these arms was that the Government required them to give bond in amount double the value of the arms, and this they had been unwilling to do. Well, I quickly persuaded them to do so and went to Washington to present the request in person. I had no trouble in obtaining two hundred new cadet rifles, just the same kind as were used at West Point at that time, with a full complement of equipments and blank cartridges, and I also procured two cannon with the

necessary equipments. Like most colleges, they were a great deal more anxious to get the appropriation than they were to have any military discipline or drill. I found that it was simply a farce, and that I was not expected to do much of anything, but was very promptly asked to take the position of assistant instructor in mathematics, without any pay, which I promptly but politely declined. I finally persuaded the President, J. K. Patterson, who had been at the head of the college since its organization in 1869, and who only retired last year, 1909, to allow me one hour a day for drill and instruction. The boys soon became interested in the drills and dress parades, and made rapid progress. The next year the college increased its roll of students, and by the time that my detail of three years was up they had over four hundred boys, fairly drilled and capable of making a respectable appearance, but the discipline was practically a farce. The faculty were not willing to punish a student for any offense except drunkenness, and it was all I could do to get one or two disciplined even for that. College closed in June and we immediately went to Urbana to spend the summer.

For several years my mother had had a cottage at Lakeside, a kind of Methodist camp meeting ground on Lake Erie, a few miles from Sandusky. I had never been there, but in August she wrote me and urged me to visit her there; accordingly I took May and went up to spend ten days in the latter part of August.

It is not necessary for me to describe Lakeside and its beauties, for all my children have been there and know it well, but on this, my first visit, I found the place practically deserted, there not being probably more than one or two hundred people on the grounds. My sister Sue had married, some years before, Reverend E. A. Berry, a Congregational Minister, and I found both at the cottage. I was then, as I always have been, a great smoker, and I took with me a box of cigars. The day after I arrived Mr. Berry had to go to Detroit, so I drove him across country about six miles to the nearest railroad station, for at that time the branch road to Lakeside had not been built. When I returned, I went

to my box to get a cigar, found it empty, and found in it Mr. Berry's card containing the inscription, "Ta, Ta, I hope you enjoy yourself." The villain had taken every cigar I had. I left and went down to the hotel on the ground; when I told the clerk that I wanted to buy a box of cigars, he almost fainted and told me that no tobacco could be had on the grounds, that its sale was absolutely prohibited. The nearest town was Sandusky, ten miles distant, and a terrific north-east storm, with high winds and heavy rain, was raging. There was no way to get to Sandusky except by boat, and that, a rickety old affair, was not running; the only other way to get there was to drive across the country six miles to the same depot that I had taken Mr. Berry. I was utterly disgusted and raged up and down the grounds, alternately cussing Lakeside and Mr. Berry, and for three long days I never had a smoke. On the fourth day I discovered a gentleman out on the wharf smoking a cigar; I supposed I looked longingly at it, for he gave me a quick look, then approached me, holding out his hand, and called me by name. I saw that he was the gentleman, Mr. Trueblood, who the previous year had been an instructor at the college at Lexington. He laughed and said, "I know what is the matter with you; you are out of cigars." He divided what he had with me, and I have blessed his memory ever since. The next day I got over to Sandusky, bought a supply of cigars and, a few days afterwards, returned to Urbana, declaring that I would never go back to Lakeside; but I have spent many happy days there since with my wife and children.

We spent the summers of 1876 and 1877 at Lakeside. Mary had a very intimate friend, a widow, from Sidney, Ohio, by the name of Jennie Zinn, who spent that summer with us, a jolly, lively little woman, to whom we were much attached. In August, I received my order relieving me from duty at Lexington on the first of September and to report to my troop at Fort Clark for duty. Leaving my family at Lakeside, I went to Lexington, shipped our household goods and went on to San Antonio.

While at Fort Clark in 1878 May developed a lameness,

the result of a fall down stairs; the surgeons announced that hip disease had set in and that she must be sent east immediately to have a support fitted to her limb, possibly to be operated upon. That was just before Elsie was born and I could not get away, Aunty took May to Cincinnati; I telegraphed my brother Charley to meet her there and have her examined by a specialist. He did so, and they decided that no operation was necessary at that time, but fitted a brace to her limb and told Aunty that she would have to wear it for some years. Aunty then took her to Urbana. In about a month I received a letter from her stating that the doctors had decided that they would have to perform a severe operation upon her, but that May had begged that it be postponed until I should get there. As she expressed it, "Don't let the 'Goctors' cut me till papa comes, I want him to hold my hand." At that time she could not pronounce the word "doctor" correctly. As soon as I got the letter I telegraphed to a classmate of mine, Charley Morton,¹⁰⁰ now a Brigadier General, who was then on recruiting service in St. Louis, asking him to get me, if possible, a half-fare round-trip ticket from San Antonio to St. Louis, and inclosed Aunty's letter to explain why I needed it. Three or four days after I received a telegram from Morton saying, "Wait, pass coming," and two days afterwards, I received a round-trip pass from San Antonio, to Urbana, good until used, and I hurried home. To my great relief I found Aunty had misunderstood the specialist and no operation was necessary. I had been granted ten days' leave to make this trip, but started back the next day, as I did not think it right to take any more of the ten days' leave than was necessary to get back, as my leave was granted under a mistaken supposition, that is that May was to be operated upon. I bought a ticket from Urbana to St. Louis, not deeming it proper to use the pass again; on arrival in St. Louis went to Morton's office to thank him and ask him how he got the pass. He told me that, immediately upon receipt of my letter,

100. Charles Morton was born in Ohio. He enlisted in the Union Army as a private, July 29, 1861, and served until September 14, 1864. He graduated from the United States Military Academy and was commissioned 2nd Lieutenant, 3rd Cavalry, June 15, 1869. He was promoted to the rank of Captain, November 17, 1883.

he went to the General Passenger Agent of the Missouri Pacific System and asked for a half fare ticket, handing him my letter, and also Aunty's, to explain the circumstances. He said the General Passenger Agent read the letters and, without saying a word, called his stenographer and told him to send a dispatch to me, "Wait, pass coming," and immediately wrote out a pass and handed it to Morton to send to me. Morton started to thank him when he held up his hand and said, "Captain, two years ago I was in California and I received a dispatch that my little girl was to be operated upon immediately for hip disease, and that she had begged the doctors to wait for me. I hurried home, but found that they could not wait and she had died under the surgeon's knife. So long as I am General Passenger Agent no parent shall be kept away from his child when an operation is to be performed, if I can help it." I asked Morton to take me around to his office and introduce me, which he did, and I thanked him and handed him back the pass, telling him that it was a mistake, that no operation had been or would be performed, and that as I had obtained the pass under an error I declined to use it. He looked at me a moment and then said, "Mr. Phelps, you Army officers are the 'damdest fools' in one way of any people that I know. You were not to blame for the misunderstanding in any way, and you will use that pass to go back or, by George, you will have to go over another line. You Army people are too honest and square. Now take that pass back," which, of course, I cheerfully did. May recovered very slowly but, by the constant and unremitting attention of Aunty and Mary, she finally recovered.

When I left Lakeside this time, I knew that my troop would shortly be ordered from Fort Clark to Fort Davis.¹⁰¹ I left them behind so that when they did join me they could go straight to Fort Davis, as I knew the march from Clark to Davis would be a very hard one. I joined my troop at Fort

101. Fort Davis was established October 7, 1854, on Limpia Creek, in Latitude 30° 36' and Longitude 103° 36' to protect the San Antonio-El Paso highway against Indians: It was abandoned in April 13, 1861, and reoccupied, July 1, 1867. The reservation embraced 300 acres. It was abandoned finally on June 30, 1891. The Fort was named in honor of Jefferson Davis.

Clark and found that my Captain, H. S. Weeks,¹⁰² who had been promoted vice Carraher, who had died the previous year, was on sick leave, and that the Second Lieutenant, Steele, had gone east to be married. Late in September I started for Fort Davis. "G" Troop, under command of Fechet¹⁰³ and "K" Troop, under command of Lieutenant Shunk,¹⁰⁴ and my Troop "F," marched together under Captain Fechet's command.

The weather was delightful and we had an exceedingly pleasant march. Ducks were plentiful and with my shot gun I kept the mess bountifully supplied. Captain Fechet and I were old and intimate friends, but that was the first time that I had met Lieutenant Shunk. He was over six feet tall, very slender and cadaverous, and the most rapid and continuous talker that I have ever met. He had a fund of anecdotes, and as we generally rode together at the head of the command, he kept us in a roar of laughter a good share of the time. I never met a more companionable man, and we have been warm friends to this day. On arrival at Fort Davis, I found Captain Weeks there, he having passed us on the road. I selected a good set of quarters, but did not send for my family until February following because it was constantly rumored that we were to go to Dakota in the spring. In February, Captain Weeks and I determined to put in a company garden to raise vegetables for the men, but we delayed doing so until we could get some assurance that the regiment would not move that spring. At his suggestion, I wrote to Major H. J. Farnsworth,¹⁰⁵ of the Inspector General's Department, then on duty in Washington, an old friend, and

102. Harrison Samuel Weeks was born in Michigan. He graduated from the United States Military Academy and was commissioned 2nd Lieutenant, 8th Cavalry, June 15, 1868. He was promoted to Captain, April 4, 1885.

103. Edmond Gustave Fechet was born in Michigan. He enlisted as sergeant in the Union Army, June 19, 1861, and was mustered out November 21, 1865, with the rank of 1st Lieutenant. He re-enlisted as 2nd Lieutenant, 8th Cavalry, July 2, 1866, and was promoted to Captain, May 23, 1870.

104. William Alexander Shunk was born in Indiana. He graduated from the United States Military Academy and was commissioned 2nd Lieutenant, 8th Cavalry, June 13, 1879. He was promoted to 1st Lieutenant, July 23, 1885.

105. Henry Joseph Farnsworth was born in New York. He enlisted with the rank of Captain of Volunteers, July 8, 1864, and was mustered out, September 1, 1867, with the rank of Brevet Lieutenant Colonel. He re-enlisted as 1st Lieutenant, June 14, 1867, and attained the rank of Major, September 22, 1885.

asked him to find out quietly for us if there was any danger of the regiment moving that year, explaining my reason. He answered that he had gone to the War Department and was authorized to say to us unofficially that the regiment would not move that year. So we put in our garden and I sent for my family. When the family came, my brother's daughter, Kate, came also, to my great delight. Kate was a lively girl, fond of dancing and company and a great favorite with all of us. Lieutenant Sayre,¹⁰⁶ of our regiment, became devoted to her at once, and I had unlimited fun joking them both. About the first of May Captain Weeks, with whom I had been at West Point for three years, and who was a very intimate personal friend, was in poor health and, at my suggestion, we went to a creek about twenty-five miles away to camp out for a week to fish and hunt. We took half a dozen men with us, a couple of tents, and for three days we had a great time, but one evening a soldier of our troop rode into camp and handed us letters, saying that the regiment was to march for Dakota in ten days. Of course, we hurried back to the Post to commence preparations. Kate and Mr. Sayre were engaged to be married. I arranged to send my family home, as no women and children would be allowed to accompany the regiment and Kate, of course, was to go with them.

Mr. Sayre informed me that as soon as he got to Dakota he intended to get a leave of absence for four months, go to Ohio, where they would be married, and have a wedding trip to West Point, New York, Washington and other places. I told him that when we got to Dakota he might be unable to get his leave of absence, in fact, I doubted it very much. I suggested that he and Kate should be married at once, that he should turn over to her the money they expected to spend on a honeymoon trip and that he should let Kate, under Mary's guidance, buy their household goods at Cincinnati and ship them to Fort Meade, South Dakota, where he knew his station would be. When he got there she could join him, or if he could get a leave of absence he could go east on a short leave. He thought the plan a wise one and, under the

106. Farrand Sayre was born in Missouri. He graduated from the United States Military Academy and was commissioned 2nd Lieutenant, 8th Cavalry, June 15, 1884.

advice of Mary and myself, Kate consented. The family was to leave the next day for the railroad station, twenty miles away. Sayre and I went down to the little Mexican town just below the Post and got the license. We there found a poor Methodist Minister and asked him to come to my quarters the next day at noon to perform the ceremony; but, as we wanted to spring a surprise on the other officers and ladies, he must come up at ten o'clock, come in the back way and keep out of sight, to which he laughingly agreed. The next day about ten o'clock, I sent out a circular notice requesting all the officers and their wives to appear at our house for a little surprise party. Not a soul knew what was going on; about half past eleven they all gathered on the big porch, full of curiosity to know what was to be done. The regimental band came marching across the parade ground and stopped in front of the house; immediately following them was Sayre, Troop "A," and my Troop "F," the men appearing in their blue shirts and campaign hats ready for the march. This aroused still more curiosity, but still nobody guessed. At sharp twelve o'clock Mary came out of the hall door with Mr. Sayre, I followed immediately after with Kate on my arm, and the little parson came sneaking out behind us. Quickly stepping into the middle of the porch, Mary and I lined up on opposite sides, the minister stepped forward, and, with a gasp of astonishment, everyone saw that a marriage was about to take place. Immediately after the ceremony there were shouts of congratulations, the band played the wedding march, Mary and I passed the wedding breakfast, consisting of lemonade and tea cakes, the ambulance drove up to the door and in thirty minutes they were on their way to the depot, I asking Sayre to look out for my family, as I was too busy to go. He returned that evening and said that they had gotten off safely at four o'clock. I had warned him to be careful and get the tickets via New Orleans and the Cincinnati Southern Railroad to Cincinnati, and he said he had, but a few days afterwards I got a letter from Mary stating that before they arrived at New Orleans they found that the agent had palmed off on him tickets to New Orleans, thence to Vicksburg, thence to Memphis, thence to

Louisville, thence to Cincinnati, which forced them to change cars at Vicksburg, Memphis, and Louisville, and added a whole day to their journey. I rubbed it in on Sayre for weeks afterwards for being so addled as not to be able to buy railroad tickets properly. I reported the agent to the Railroad Company and he lost his job, as I found out that he got a commission by selling tickets that way instead of the way that Sayre had asked for. He had asked for the tickets all right, but did not take the trouble to examine them.

On the 17th day of May, one troop having come down from Fort Bliss to join us, we formed a line on the parade ground ready for the long march to Dakota. Some years afterwards I wrote an article for the *Cavalry Journal* telling of this march and this article, which forms the next chapter in this little book, will give my children an idea of that march.

(THE END)