

and had marched into Sonora and captured the leading officers and some of the most prominent men of the only town north of the bay and which was the headquarters of the Mexican authority north of the bay. General M.G.Vallejo, Commandante, his brother, Captain Don Salvador Vallejo, Col.Victor Purdue and two or three leading citizens, and what arms was

in the Mexican barracks, and held them as hostages to protect themselves against an attack from the _____ and friends of these captured prisoners, until they could rally sufficient force to hold the country, and the fortunate arrival of Col. Fremont back into California and his coming to Sonoma with his party, ^{of} about 80 men, including Kit Carson and a number of other experienced scouts, enabled the Bear party to hold off the Californians until the ships of war arrived and hoisted the American flag at Monterey. The Bear Flag party were having an engagement with the Californians in Petaluma Valley or near by, and drove them back toward San Rafael and old Mission now the City of San Rafael. Fremont's party arriving about this time to give aid and encouragement to the Bear Flag party, undertook to pursue the retreating Californians, ^{under} Juan Padilla, an experienced and educated Mexican artilleryman, but the Californians were too fleet for the Americans. Fremont went as far as San Rafael and halted there to rest and sent Kit Carson and one of his best men in advance as scouts. A boat containing three Californians landed at the embarcadore, when Carson and his two comrades captured them. Kit left the prisoners in charge of the two men with him and rode back to where Col. Fremont and his party were resting, and reported the capture of three Californians, who had brought their saddles across the Bay with them, and Kit asked Col. Fremont what he should do with the three prisoners. His reply to Carson was: "Mr. Carson, I have no use for prisoners, do your duty," and that was all that passed; when Kit returned to where his comrades Capt. Swift and Jack Neil were standing guard over the three men, they held a short consultation, and decided to kill the prisoners, and shot them dead. This I had from both Swift and Kit Carson himself, and I was inclined as well as many others who arrived a short time after this occur-

rence to blame Kit Carson for what I thought to be a cold-hearted crime, having the men in their power. So when my brother Thomas, a life-long friend of Kit Carson visited our family in Sonoma in 1849, some three years nearly after this affair, in speaking of the bravery of Kit, I mentioned this affair of the killing of these three Californians, at San Rafael. My brother claimed that Kit was never on the north side of the Bay of San Francisco in 1846. So the subject was dropped at that time, as I had positive proof that he was, and I knew the men, and others who were well acquainted with circumstances. However, knowing my brother's friendship for Kit I said no more about the matter, and after I had served in the service of the U.S. in the closing of the war in the conquest of California, I settled down in old Sonoma, and became intimately acquainted with nearly all of the leading men of the Bear Flag Party, and all agreed on the same story, and one of the men who was with Kit at the time, Capt. Grenville P. Swift, who became one of Fremont's most famous captains, told me of the part that he took in the killing of these three prisoners. And in about the year 1852 my brother Tom and Kit came to California and were at my house together, and it occurred to me to ask Kit in brother Tom's presence if he was not at San Rafael with Fremont in 1846. He said he was. I then said "You took some prisoners there, you and Swift?" "Yes," he replied. "And you killed them," I said. "Yes." "Well," I said to him, "what did you kill them for, after you had them in your power." He then related how he had reported them to Fremont and he told him to do his duty, and it was soon after the Californians at Santa Rosa ranch had captured two young men of the Bear Flag Party on their way to Fort Ross on the coast to get ammunition for the party at Sonoma, a large party of these Californians had assembled at this ranch and were boasting how they were going to drive all the Americans out of the country and slaughter them as fast as they could find them. Just as these two

young Americans came along in plain view. These Californians saw them and pursued them and lassoed them and dragged ^{them} with their lassoed to trees and lashed their bodies to the trees and literally tore their limbs from their bodies, and cutting holes in their jaws ran their ropes through and tore their jaws out, and cut and mutilated their bodies, cutting off and putting portions of their own flesh in their mouths, and left their remains tied to the trees. An Indian who had witnessed this horrible affair reported it to Old Moses Carson, ~~the~~ [Kits] elder brother ^[of Kit] who was living on a ranch in the ^{Russian River} Valley, about 16 miles above Santa Rosa, ^[The latter] and took the remains of these young men and buried them; and Kit gave as his reason for the killing of these three Californians, to retaliate for the horrible manner in which the Californians treated these two Americans; and it so enraged the few American settlers that the act of the Americans retaliating was approved by nearly every one. But Carson afterward did many brave and generous deeds, risking his life and going on dangerous journeys in pursuit of Indians to rescue white women and children, at the risk of his life, without reward or compensation from any source. His was a noble soul--none of your "Buffalo Bill" show acting kind, but plain "Little brave" Kit Carson, unassuming in manners. I knew several of the older brothers of Kit Carson. An older brother named Andy Carson was engaged in the Santa Fe trail taking out goods as early as early in 1833 or 1834; when the writer was a small boy his goods were stored for a short time in my father's house at Independence, Missouri, when that town was a small place. Moses Carson was the oldest of the Carson brothers, and was living in California on the ^{Fitch's} Pitell Grant, in 1846, when our family arrived, and being an old acquaintance of my father

L. W. Boggs, he came to see him at Sonoma. Another brother, and younger than Kit, named Lindsay Carson, came to California later and married, settling in Lake County, and left a very interesting family. One of his married daughters lives at the present time in Napa Valley, California, where they have a good home. Another brother, older than Kit, named Bob, or Robert Carson, came to California some time in the fifty's, perhaps about 1851, reaching Sonoma on foot accompanied by a nephew named Moses Briggs. Old Bob Carson was a dissipated old man, and was intoxicated when he arrived on foot in Sonoma during the rainy season without any means whatever, hunting his way to his brother Lindsay Carson who lived some forty miles north of Sonoma. The writer, seeing he was in a destitute condition, gave the nephew five dollars and put them on the way to his brother's home.

The Carson family lived near Columbia, Missouri, and Christopher Carson, commonly known as "Kit Carson", left home in his youth and went with some trapper to the Rocky Mountains; becoming familiar with the habits and customs of the many tribes of Indians with whom these hardy adventurers came in contact, he soon became famous as a hunter and scout. His history has never been published in full. He was unassuming in manners and modest, but brave and daring to a fault. His associate Thomas O. Boggs, brother of the writer of these pages, left his father's home when a boy of about sixteen or seventeen years old, accompanied a Santa Fe merchants' train, known as McGoffin's train, as far as the Cimarron Mountains, and meeting with a trader from William Bent's post on Little Red River going to Bent's Fort, Thomas left the Santa Fe company and accompanied him to Bent's Fort on the Arkansas. Losing their horses on the way, they had to walk and carry their saddles

the greater part of the way. On reaching the Fort he remained there and became one of the company's most useful traders, and was sent to trade with the Arapahoes, and would remain with them until the winter and fall trade was over. After a few years' absence among the Indians, Thomas visited his father's family in Missouri, but having led a life on the plains so long and accustomed to the diet of the hunter, and having lived on game and buffalo, he did not remain long, but went back to Bent's Fort, and remained there in company with William Bent and Kit Carson until the trade was broken up during the passing of troops to Mexico. The writer of these pages knows but little of what transpired at Bent's Fort after leaving there in the spring of 1845; when William Bent went into St. Louis, Mo., the writer accompanied him into Missouri and never saw him afterward, as the writer came to California with his wife and father's family the following year--1846--across the plains, reaching California in time to take a hand in the war with Mexico. I recruited a few men and enlisted at "Yerba Buena" now "San Francisco" and served until the close of the war.

Fremont was in command of the Land Forces, and Commodore Stockton of the Navy or Pacific Squadron, serving under a marine officer that was stationed at Monterey, California, after cruising around in the Santa Cruz mountains with a mounted company of sailors and marines that our captain, the commander of the Middle Department of the Military Forces of California, was at Monterey when the old Ship of War Independence arrived with Commodore Shulvick. About this time some of the leading commanders of the Californians came in to Monterey and surrendered to Capt. Maddox, our commander. Commodore Shulvick relieved Commodore Stockton, and on receiving news of the Treaty of Peace with Mexico he ordered the volunteers that accompanied me discharged and

paid off. While at Monterey and at Yerba Buena I became acquainted with a number of the naval officers, and on one occasion I met Lieut. Silas Bent. I also met him afterwards at Benicia on the Straits of ^{Carquinos} Chackinas, while he was an officer on board of the U.S. Sloop of War Preble, and spent one day and night with him on board of the ship and slept in his berth. He had been with the fleet to Japan and gave me a number of curios collected while in foreign ports, among which was a ^{Tartar} bow and arrows, which would not compare with our Cheyenne bows and arrows that were used by our Indians on the plains to kill buffalo with. They looked more ornamental and with their long clumsy looking arrows looked more like the bows and arrows used by our ladies at target shooting. They did not have the force or spring of one of our stiff straight Cheyenne bows covered with buffalo skin, that would send an arrow through a buffalo, as they often did when making a surround. I have seen one of the Cheyenne arrow points sticking cross-way through one of the broad ribs of a buffalo, and I have partaken of many side ribs of the fat buffalo that was brought into the villages on hundreds of ponies after a big surround. The Indians would send out on the plains, when buffalo were plenty, some forty or fifty or perhaps a hundred select braves on their best hunting horses, and cut off a large herd of buffalo from the main herds, and surround and kill all that were enclosed in the circle of hunters, being bareback and armed only with their bows and quiver full of arrows, and after slaying all that they had surrounded, they rode back to their village, and the old men and squaws with bands of ponies would go out and skin and pack in the robes as much meat as would last for several weeks.

Had the Indian tribes on the plains of Colorado been left unin-

interrupted by the whites, there would have been hundreds of thousands of buffalo now ranging over the plains of Colorado and Nebraska. Their rules of hunting and killing the buffalo were strictly observed and strictly enforced. They never hunted or killed the buffalo in the spring time when the cows were dropping their calves, or in the running season. They might kill a few bulls; the bull hide was not a merchantable hide; they only dressed them for the men to wear. A single large bull robe, breech-clout and leggings and moccasins was a full dress for an Indian warrior. They only killed the cows in the fall and winter when they were fat and their robes were fine and slick. Some of them were very superior and known among the traders as "silk robes." They were very fine haired and shone like satin, of a slightly lighter color, and would sell for double what a common robe would. The buffalo increased under the rules adopted and enforced among the Indians. The chiefs appointed stated times for the surround, and only killing what was cut off from the main herd, and then a space of two to three weeks before they would make another hunt or surround. I learned much from the Indians about the buffalo and their mode of hunting them. I also learned considerable from the hunters of Bent's Fort, particularly from ^{Charbonneau} Charlien, an educated half breed. His father was a French-Canadian, his mother said to be a ^{Blackfoot} ~~Blackfoot~~ Indian squaw. His name was Baptiste ^{Charbonneau} ~~Charlien~~. His father and mother accompanied the Lewis & Clark expedition in their journey to the Pacific shores via the Columbia River, as guides. Char ^{bonneau} ~~lien~~ and his squaw were very useful members of the Lewis & Clark expedition. This Baptiste Char ^{bonneau} ~~lien~~ at Bent's Fort was only a papoose at the time of the Lewis & Clark expedition, but his mother took him the entire ride, according to Genl. Clark's account in his published letters.

The squaw was as useful as a guide as the man Char^{Louneau}~~bonneau~~ himself, being raised in the country they were passing over, and familiar with mountain passes and trails. This Baptiste Char^{Louneau}~~bonneau~~, the hunter of Bent's Fort, was the small Indian papoose or half breed of the elder Char^{Louneau}~~bonneau~~, that was employed by the Lewis & Clark expedition as guide when they descended the Columbia river to the Pacific ocean. He had been educated to some extent; he wore his hair long, that hung down to his shoulders. It was said that "Char^{Louneau}~~bonneau~~" was the best man on foot on the plains or in the Rocky Mountains. Another half breed at the fort was Tesson. His father was French and his mother an Indian, but the writer was not informed of what tribe. Tesson was in some way related to Char^{Louneau}~~bonneau~~. Both of them were very high strung, but Tesson was quick and passionate. He fired a rifle across the court of the Fort at the head of the large negro Blacksmith, only missing his skull about a quarter of an inch, because the negro had been in a party that chivariated Tesson the evening before. Being dangerous, Capt. St^{Vrain} gave him an outfit and sent him away from the Fort, and such men as these heretofore described were employed by the Bents and were perfectly reliable and devoted to the interest of the company. The company would entrust them with thousands of dollars' worth of goods, and send them to distant tribes of Indians to barter for robes, furs, and *paltres* with pack animals to carry the outfit. The trader thus outfitted would remain away for months, or until the season for trade was over, and then return to the Fort with the robes and *paltres* that they had accumulated, and I never heard of one of those men accused of abusing the confidence placed in them by their employers. The writer does not know the history of Cap. St^{Vrain}, a partner of the Bents, only that he acted as a perfect gen-

tleman, and was beloved by all that knew him. He was exceedingly kind to all with whom he came in contact, was extremely hospitable, and obliging at the Fort. He presided at the table, which was always provided with the best of food and well cooked. He was a man of fine tastes. So were Charles Bent and William Bent and George. Silas Bent, Jr., was the first cadet to enter the U.S. Navy from Missouri. There was an older brother I understood from my father L. W. Boggs, that was named John Bent, but I never met him, as I never was at St. Louis where the Bents resided. Jud Carr also married a Bent. He became wealthy and there is a place in St. Louis called the Carr Place-- a public park. The family must have come from Virginia to St. Louis, as the family record of L. W. Boggs, whose first wife, ^{was} Julia Ann Bent, states that she was born in Charlestown, Virginia, and from that record I presume that Judge Silas Bent, Senior, was a Virginian. [Incorrect.]

The writer of this narrative of Colorado history intended to close on page (50) but I desire to relate a circumstance that took place in my presence where William Bent's life was saved by an Indian, a Cheyenne, called by the white men of the Fort "the Lawyer." I do not know his Indian name. I never saw him at the Fort and only saw him once at the Cheyenne village at the Big Timber in the winter of 1844. He belonged to a band of the Cheyennes that lived some distance away. William Bent was living in his lodge in the village close by the lodge of old Cinemo, where the goods were kept, and I stayed in that lodge in charge of the goods. William Bent had contracted a severe cold, and sore throat, putrid sore throat, and ^{it} became so bad that he had ceased to swallow food and could only talk in a whisper until his throat closed, and his wife fed him with broth by taking a mouthful and squirting it through a quill which she forced down his throat. I went into his lodge

to see how he was and he told by writing on a piece of slate that he had with him that if he did not get relief in a very short time that he was bound to die, and that he had sent for an Indian doctor called "Lawyer" and was expecting ^{him} every hour. The Indian came while I was there, a plain looking Indian without any show or ornamentation about him. He proceeded at once to examine Bent's throat by pressing the handle of a large spoon on his tongue just as any doctor would do, and on looking into Bent's throat he shook his head, got up and went out of the lodge and returned very soon with a handful of small sand burrs. They were about the size of large marrow fat pease, with barbs all round as sharp as fish hooks and turned up one way. They were so sharp that by touching them they would stick to one's fingers. He called for a piece of sinew and a lump of marrow grease. He made five or six threads of the sinew and tied a knot in one end of each, took an awl and pierced a hole through each burr, and ran the sinew through it down to the knot. Then he rolled the burr in marrow grease until it was completely covered over the barbs of the burr, took a small flat stick about like a china chop stock, put a notch in one end, wrapped one end of the sinew around his finger and placed the notched stick against the burr and made Bent open his mouth, and he forced that burr or ball down Bent's throat the length of the stick and drew it out the throat and repeated that three or four times, drawing out all the dry and corrupt matter each time, and opened the throat passage so that Bent could swallow soup, and in a day or two was well enough to eat food, and he told me that he certainly would have died if that Indian had not come to his relief and saved his life. The Indian was laughing while he performed the operation. Those sand burrs and the marrow grease and sinew strings and notched stick to force the burrs down his throat by

the Indian, did the work of clearing out the dried matter that closed
 the passage of the throat. He was ^{the} most unassuming Indian I saw among
 the Cheyennes, but was considered by all the whites that knew him to
 be the shrewdest Indian belonging to the tribe. No medicine would have
 had any effect in removing these obstacles in Bent's throat. It had
 become as dry as the bark on a tree, and but for this simple remedy
 Bent would have died. No one but an Indian would ever have thought
 of resorting to such a remedy. William Bent concluded to go into the
 states in the spring, and the writer had the pleasure of accompanying
 him so far as Independence, Missouri, my native home.

(Signed) W. M. Boggs

Original manuscript comprises 53 pages, written
 in longhand and is now in Colorado State
 Historical Society Museum.
 Written about 1905 - for Harry Lubero, husband
 of grand daughter of Wm Bent, says Mrs. De Compté
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