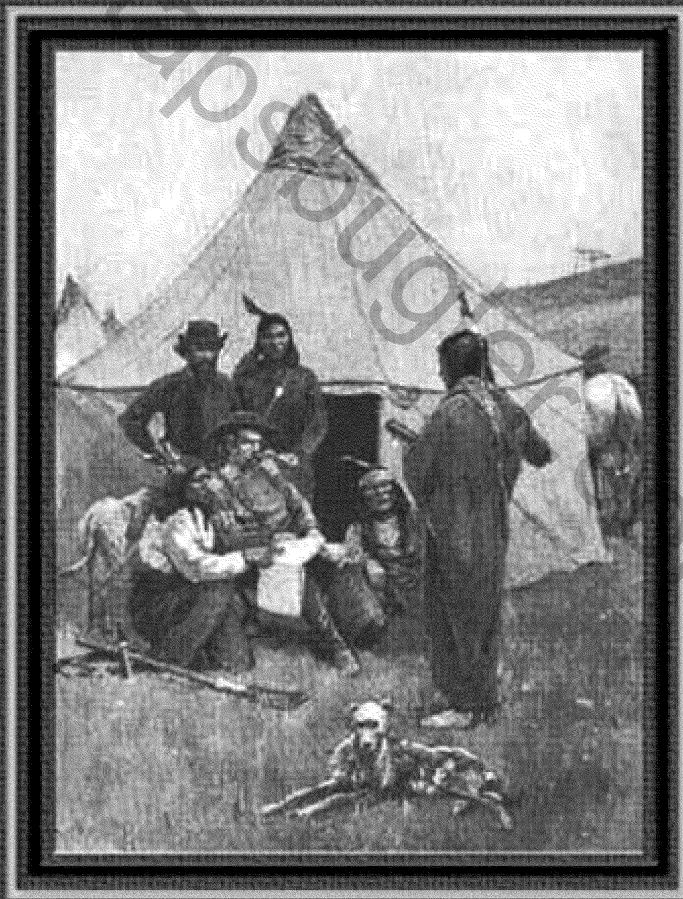




# FOLLOWING THE GUIDON

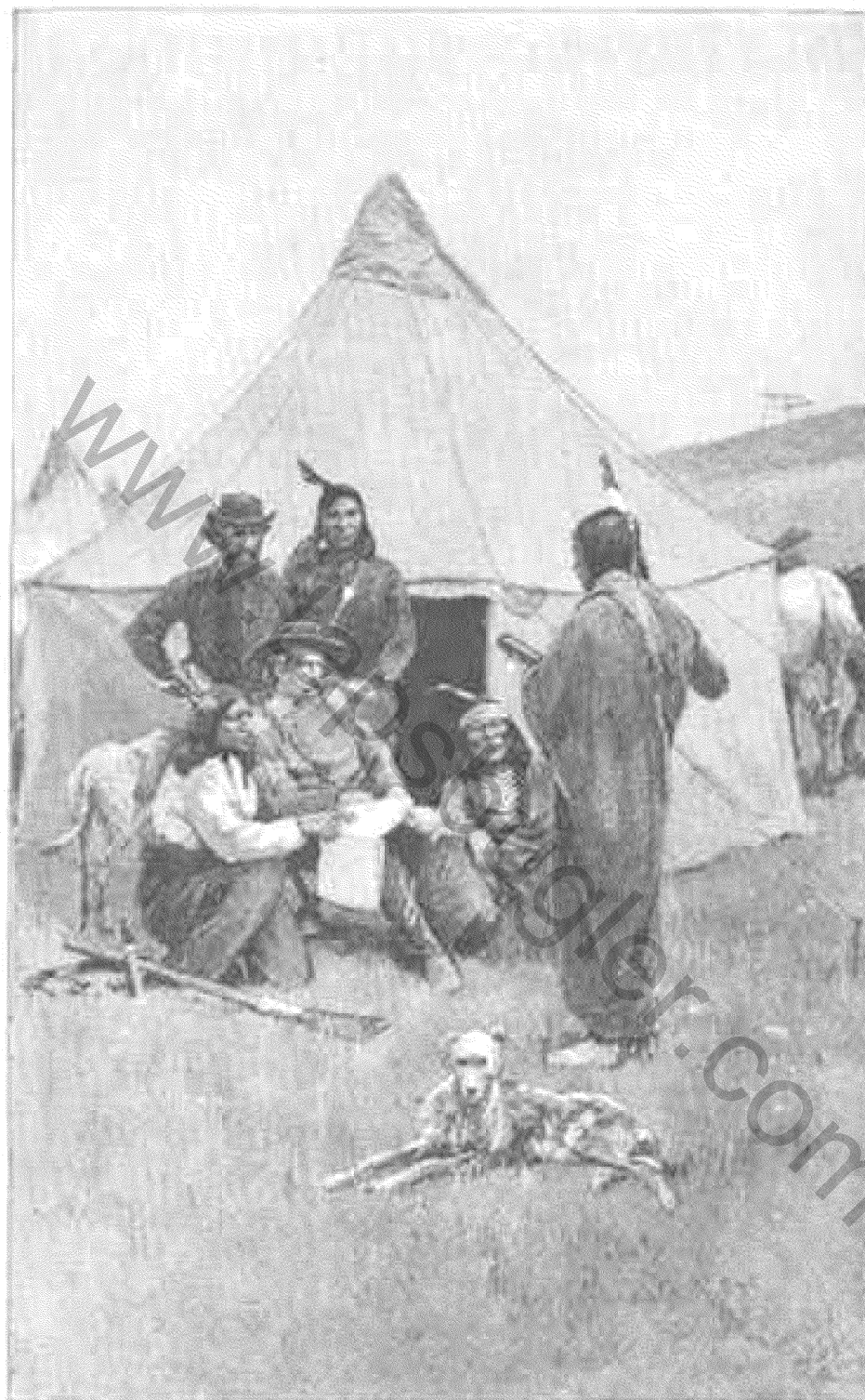


ELIZABETH BACON CUSTER



AS PUBLISHED IN 1890





GENERAL CUSTER AND HIS SCOUTS

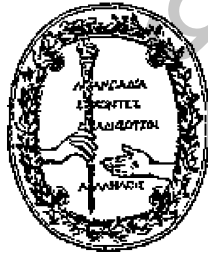
[Page 2/8]

# FOLLOWING THE GUIDON

BY

ELIZABETH B. CUSTER  
AUTHOR OF "BOOTS AND SADDLES" ETC.

ILLUSTRATED



NEW YORK  
HARPER & BROTHERS, FRANKLIN SQUARE  
1890

TO

ONE WHO HAS FOLLOWED THE GUIDON  
INTO THAT REALM WHERE

*“The war-drum throbs no longer  
And the battle-flags are furled.”*

## PREFACE.

---

BEFORE beginning the story of our summer's camp on Big Creek, Kansas, I should like to make our bugle a more familiar friend to those who know it only by hearsay. It was the hourly monitor of the cavalry corps. It told us when to eat, to sleep, to march, and to go to church. Its clear tones reminded us, should there be physical ailments, that we must go to the doctor, and if the lazy soldier was disposed to lounge about the company's barracks, or his indolent officer to loll his life away in a hammock on the gallery of his quarters, the bugle's sharp call summoned him to "drill" or "dress parade." It was the enemy of ease, and cut short many a blissful hour. The very night was invaded by its clarion notes if there chanced to be fire, or should Indians steal a march on us, or deserters be discovered decamping. We needed timepieces only when absent from garrison or camp. The never tardy sound calling to duty was better than any clock, and brought us up standing; and instead of the usual remark, "Why, here it's four o'clock already!" we found ourselves saying: "Can it be possible? There's 'Stables,' and where has the day gone?"

The horses knew the calls, and returned from grazing of their own accord at "Recall" before any trooper had started; and one of them would resume his place in the ranks, and obey the bugle's directions as nonchalantly as if the moment before he had not lifted a recruit over his head and deposited him on the ground.

The horses were often better tacticians than the soldiers,

for it frequently happened that one of them had served our country through one enlistment of five years, and was well on through another when assigned to a recruit who had never before mounted. The intelligent beast, feeling himself insulted by being called upon to carry a green trooper, seemed in very scorn to empty the saddle. I sometimes thought the wise animals thus disposed of their riders and went back to the line, as if to say, "I'll teach that greenhorn that I know military life better than he does."

In large posts, like Fort Leavenworth or Fort Lincoln, there was a corps of trained buglers, and it was a surprise to strangers that such good music could be evolved from instruments with so few notes. On a summer's day the sound of the buglers came wafted to us from some divide over the plain, where they had gone to practise, and hoped to deaden the sound. Though the bugles might blow, they could not "set the wild echoes flying" out there, for we had neither the rocky fastness nor the hill and dale of Scotland or Switzerland. I should have liked to transport a band of our drilled buglers to the land of Roderick Dhu. The clans could have been summoned for miles by the clear reverberating notes, and there the stirring music, reproduced by enchanting echoes, would have been far finer than on our monotonous plains.

In the telling of this story of our summer's camp there is often reference to both the trumpet and the bugle. When I was first in the army the bugle was used for the infantry and cavalry, but later the trumpet was given to the mounted regiments. In this way it has occurred that the names have been used indiscriminately. The difference between them may be sufficiently indicated by calling the bugle the tenor and the trumpet the barytone of military music.

The soldiers, for no one knows how long, have fitted rhymes to the calls, and as the men pour out of the barracks to groom their horses for the morning or the evening hour

a voice takes up the call, to be quickly joined by others, and after the bugles cease the humming of "Go to the stable," etc., continues until the sergeant gives the signal for work to begin with the curry-comb. A few of these jingles have been attached to the calls that were in most frequent use during the day. The words of these simple rhymes are just as familiar to military people as the household tales of infancy, and as indelibly impressed on an army child as "Twinkle, twinkle, little star," or "Now I lay me down to sleep."

The calls that are in almost daily use head the chapters throughout the book. Possibly a few of them may need some explanation. "Reveille" is the first roll-call of the day. The morning gun is fired as the first note sounds. The soldiers all come out of their quarters, and the sergeant calls the names alphabetically, and reports to the captain the whole company as "present, or accounted for," or certain ones as "absent without leave," etc. There are three of these roll-calls during the twenty-four hours – at Reveille, Retreat, and Tattoo. "Retreat" sounds at sunset, when the flag is lowered and the evening gun is fired at the last note of the call. "Tattoo" is sounded about nine o'clock, and soon after comes "Taps" – a signal to extinguish lights. "Assembly" is the signal for forming the company in ranks, and precedes the three calls described above. "The General" is the signal for packing up, striking tents, and loading the wagons for marching. "Boots and Saddles" is the first signal for mounting.

As there was a great deal of formality and "circumstance" about all these calls, and not the slightest infringement of the dignity of the routine was permitted, the rhymes which the soldiers made, in their rollicking off-hand fashion, were most violently in contrast with the solemnity of the martial forms to which they were attached.

The infantry mess-call evidently dates back a long time, as the soldiers' words to the drum-call for mess are "pease upon a trencher." "The dirty, dirty, dirty dough-boy" – the

origin of which is referred to in *Boots and Saddles* – is also an infantry call.

It often happened that the soldiers changed their names in enlisting, and sunk their identity in the ranks of our army; but sometimes even there an irate wife, who had been deserted in the States, found out her culprit husband, and compelled him to send her money out of his pay for her support. Or, in another instance, though the man may have been angry enough, at the time of his enlistment, to feel that he would never return to his virago of a wife, he eventually melted when attacked with nostalgia, and confided to his comrades that he was married. It must have been on some such occasion that a scoffer suited these lines to the marching step in the drill, which begins “Left foot forward” always:

“Left–left–left my wife and seven small children behind me.”

There is a legend that women never keep step. One of my friends, who is now a civilian, and the commanding officer of only one small woman, marshals his trooper out, when husband, and wife go for a stroll, repeating the old lines of volunteer days. I imagine that a sergeant who drilled the men was the original poet, for the order of march runs after this fashion:

“Left–left–left – had a good home and he left!”

Then, referring to the step:

“Now you’ve got it, d–n you, keep it – left–left–left!”

Some children having asked questions to which I could not reply, I was obliged, not long since, to visit the Astor Library to look up answers. I give a condensed summary of the results of my research. One of the old books I consulted had not had many readers, I imagine, for as I turned the mildewed, musty pages armies of tiny creatures chased each other to and fro in wild alarm, while bookworms were eating out the foundations of the volume. Still, unconsulted as

Grose's *Military Antiquities* seems to be, I found information there that must have some interest for a cavalryman.

The trumpet, of which our bugle is the sister, seems to antedate all musical instruments, as it appeared on the Egyptian bass-relief at Thebes, and was also used by the Israelites. The trumpets of the Romans were both straight and crooked. A shell bored at the end, and a horn with the point removed, were the most primitive forms of the instrument. The tuba, represented in the bass-reliefs of the triumphal arch of Titus, was a kind of straight bronze clarion, about thirty-nine inches long. Fra Angelico (1455) painted angels with trumpets with straight or zigzag tubes, the shortest being five feet in length. A change from the straight tube of the trumpet to one bent into three parallel lines was made about the middle of the fifteenth century. Luca della Robia represents the tube bent back in that way, and this shape was retained for more than three hundred years. A capistrum, or muzzle, was used by the ancients to preserve their cheeks in blowing the trumpet. Trumpets were in use during the crusade of 1248.

At one time the hautboy and kettle-drums were used in mounted regiments. There is, even now, one of the latter, captured from the English in the Revolutionary War, at the Military Museum on Governor's Island.

Hinde, in his *Discipline of the Light Horse*, says: "In the year 1764 his Majesty thought proper to forbid the use of brass side-drums in the Light Cavalry, and in their room to introduce brass trumpets; the trumpets are slung over the left shoulder and hang at their backs."

Grose says: "The banners of the kettle-drums and trumpets to be of the color of the facing of the regiment; the badge of the regiment or its rank to be in the centre of the banner of the kettle-drums, as on the second standard; the King's cipher and crown to be on the banner of the trumpets, with the rank of the regiment in ciphers underneath;

the depth of the kettle-drum banners to be three feet six inches; the length four feet eight inches, exclusive of the fringe; those of the trumpets to be twelve inches in depth and eighteen inches in length. The trumpets to be of brass; the cords to be crimson mixed with the color of the facing of the regiment; the King's Own Regiment of dragoons and the Royal Irish are permitted to continue their kettle-drums."

The chief beats of the drum formerly used by the infantry, according to Colonel Bariffe (1643), were a Call, a Troop, a Preparative, a March, a Bataille, a Retreat.

"By a Call, you must understand to prepare to hear present proclamation, or else to repair to your ensign; by a Troop, understand to shoulder your muskets, to advance your pikes, to close your ranks and files to their order, and to troop along with or follow your officer to the place of rendezvous or elsewhere; by a March, you are to understand to take your open order in rank, to shoulder both muskets and pikes, and to direct your march, either quicker or slower, according to the beat of the drum; by a Preparative, you are to understand to close to your due distance for skirmish, both in rank and file, and to make ready, that you may execute upon the first command; by the Bataille, or Charge, understand the continuation or pressing forward in order of bataille without lagging behind, rather boldly stepping forward in the place of him that falls dead or wounded before thee; by a Retreat understanding an orderly retiring backward, either for relief, for advantage of ground, or for some other political end, as to draw the enemy into some ambushment, or such like."

"The present different beats of the drum," says Grose, "for the infantry are these:

"The General: this is beat instead of the Reveille, when the whole camp and garrison are to march.

"Reveille: beat at daybreak to awaken the camp or garrison, after which the sentinels cease challenging.

“Assembly, or Troop: at this beat the troops fall in, the roll is called, and baggage loaded.

“Foot March: to march.

“Grenadiers’ March: beat only to that company.

“Retreat: this is beat at sunset in garrisons and at gun-firing in camp, at which time the pickets are formed; in fortified places it is a signal for the inhabitants to come in before the gates are shut.

“Tap-too [our modern name is tattoo]: the signal for soldiers to retire to their quarters or barracks, and to the sutlers to draw no more liquor, from whence it derives its name. The tap-too is seldom beat in camp.

“To Arms: a signal to summon the soldiers to their alarm-posts on some sudden occasion.

“The Church Call (called also Beating the Bank): a beat to summon the soldiers of a regiment or garrison to church.

“The Pioneers’ Call: known by the appellation of Round Heads, come dig. This is beaten in camp to summon the pioneers to work.

“The Sergeants’ Call: a beat for calling the sergeants together to the orderly-room, or in camp, the head of the colors.

“The Drummers’ Call: beat to assemble the drummers at the head of the colors, or in quarters, at the place where it is beaten.

“The Preparative: a signal to make ready for firing.

“The Chammade: a signal to desire to parley with the enemy.

“The Rogue’s March: this is beaten and played by the fifes when a soldier is drummed out of the regiment.

“The Long Roll: for turning the regiment out in camp or garrison.

“There was in the King’s household an officer titled Drum-major-general of England, without whose license no one could, except the King’s troops, formally beat a drum.”

The different sounds or signals given by the trumpet were, according to Markham, in his *Soldiers Accidence*, as follows:

“The first is Butte Sella [modern Boots and Saddles], or put on your saddles, which, as soon as the souldiere heareth (in the morning or other times), he shall presently make ready his horse and his own person, trusse up his sack of neccessaries, and make all things fitting for his journey.

“The second is Mounte Cavallo, or mount on horse backe, at which summons the souldiere shall bridle up his horse, bring him forth, and mount his backe.

“The third is A la Standarde: goe to your colours, “or standard, whether it bee standard, cornet, or guidon; upon which sound, the souldiere, with those of his fellowship, shall trot forth to the place where the cornet is lodged, and there attend until it is dislodged. Also this sound, in the field or in service, when men are disbanded, is a retreat for the horseman, and brings him off being engaged; for as oft as he heares it he must retire and goe back to his colour.

“The fourth is Tuquet, or march; which beinge hearde simply of itself without addition, commands nothing but marching after the leader.

“The fifth is Carga, Carga, or an alarm, charge! charge! which sounded, every man (like lightning) flyes upon his enemy and gives prooffe of his valour.

“The sixth and last is Aquet, or the Watch: which, sounded at night, commands all that are out of duty to their reste; and sounded in the morning, commands those to reste that have done duty, and those that have rested to awake and doe duty; and in these sounds you shall make the souldiere so perfect that, as a song he may lanquet or sing them, and know when they are sounded unto him.”

The instruments used in battle are mentioned in a quaint ballad of King Edward III., made on the victory over the Scots at Hallidowne Hille, in which are these lines:

“This was do with merry sowne,  
With pipes, trumpes, and tabers thereto,  
And loud clariones thei blew also.”

In the prose account of the same battle we read: "Then the Englishe mynstrelles beaten their tabers and blowers their trompes, and pipers pipe clene loude and made a great schowte upon the Skotles."

The guidon told the soldiers in color what the trumpet or bugle said in sound. If, after a long march, the men of each company detailed to carry the guidon were ordered to the front, the hearts of the weary troopers saw them depart with relief, for it meant that, after joining the commanding officer, the little band of men swinging aloft the fluttering pennants would take their place behind the color-sergeant carrying the guidon of the colonel, and after a brisk little gallop each standard-bearer would be posted at a given point to guide the company as it came up to the place where the tents were to be pitched for the night. The guidon is also posted as a line of march at guard mount, or at drill. The private flag of a general can be of his own design. It is placed in front of his tent or headquarters, or follows on the march or in battle. If the troopers value their general, and have faith in him as a dauntless soldier, they will rally round his flag in case the fight is so desperate as to endanger the colors.

Markham, an old authority, says: "The guidon is the first color any commander of horse can let fly in the field. It was generally of damask fringed, and usually three feet in breadth, lessening by degrees towards the bottom, where it was by a slit divided into two peaks. It was originally borne by the dragoons,\* and might be charged with the armorial bearings of the owner."

The present cavalry guidon is a small United States flag sharply swallow-tailed, and mounted on a standard with a metal point, so that it can be thrust into the ground when in use as a marker.

---

\* Troops trained to act on foot or on horseback.

## CONTENTS.

---

| CHAP.                                             | PAGE |
|---------------------------------------------------|------|
| I. THE MARCH INTO THE INDIAN TERRITORY            | 1    |
| II. GENERAL CUSTER'S LETTERS DESCRIBING THE MARCH | 11   |
| III. WHITE SCOUTS                                 | 24   |
| IV. BATTLE OF THE WASHITA                         | 35   |
| V. INDIAN TRAILS, COUNCILS, AND CAPTIVES          | 51   |
| VI. IN CAMP ON BIG CREEK                          | 66   |
| VII. INDIAN PRISONERS                             | 83   |
| VIII. CORRAL OF THE CAPTIVES                      | 98   |
| IX. PETS OF THE CAMP                              | 112  |
| X. A SLOW MULE-RACE                               | 131  |
| XI. TALES OF SOLDIERS' DEVOTION AND DROLLERY      | 147  |
| XII. WILD BILL AS A MAGISTRATE                    | 159  |
| XIII. HOME OF THE BUFFALO                         | 178  |
| XIV. FIRST WOMEN TO HUNT BUFFALOES                | 194  |
| XV. HUNTING RECORDS                               | 213  |
| XVI. ARMY HOUSE-KEEPING                           | 226  |
| XVII. NECESSITY THE MOTHER OF INVENTION           | 241  |
| XVIII. "GARRYOWEN" LEADS THE HUNT                 | 263  |
| XIX. ARMY PROMOTIONS                              | 278  |
| XX. A FLOOD ON BIG CREEK                          | 289  |
| XXI. RATTLESNAKES AS NEIGHBORS                    | 299  |
| XXII. DANDY                                       | 324  |

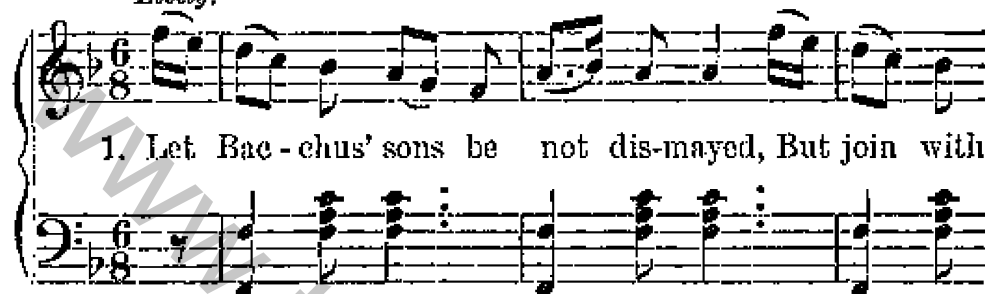
## ILLUSTRATIONS.

---

|                                             |                      |               |
|---------------------------------------------|----------------------|---------------|
| GENERAL CUSTER AND HIS SCOUTS               | <i>Frontispiece.</i> |               |
| INDIANS PREPARING TO MOVE                   | <i>faces</i>         | <i>page</i> 6 |
| INDIANS ON THE WAR-PATH                     | “ “                  | 18            |
| CALIFORNIA JOE                              | “ “                  | 26            |
| RECONNOITRING THE SITUATION                 | “ “                  | 38            |
| INDIAN PRISONERS ON THE MARCH.              | “ “                  | 46            |
| DISTRIBUTING THE MAIL                       | “ “                  | 54            |
| INDIAN VILLAGE                              | “ “                  | 92            |
| CAPTURED CHIEFS – FAT BEAR, DULL KNIFE, BIG |                      |               |
| HEAD – IN TRAVELLING COSTUME                | “ “                  | 106           |
| A SCALP-LOCK                                | “ “                  | 112           |
| WARRIOR IN WAR-BONNET                       | “ “                  | 120           |
| THE SCOUT                                   | “ “                  | 164           |
| SHOOTING BUFFALO FROM CAR-WINDOWS           | “ “                  | 184           |
| BUFFALO BROUGHT TO BAY                      | “ “                  | 206           |
| PAYMASTER’S ESCORT                          | “ “                  | 286           |
| DANDY                                       | “ “                  | 324           |

## Garryowen.

*Lively.*



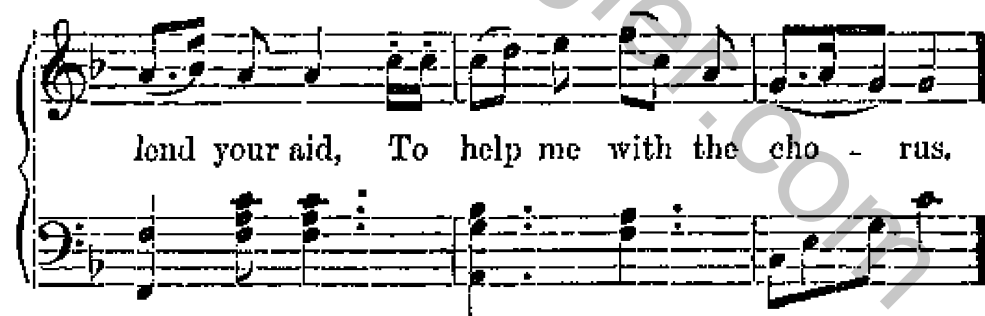
1. Let Bac - chus' sons be not dis-mayed, But join with

The first system of musical notation for the song 'Garryowen'. It consists of a treble and a bass staff joined by a brace. The treble staff has a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a time signature of 6/8. The melody begins with a quarter note G4, followed by an eighth note A4, a quarter note Bb4, and an eighth note A4. The bass staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and single notes.



me, each jov - ial blade; Come booze and sing, and

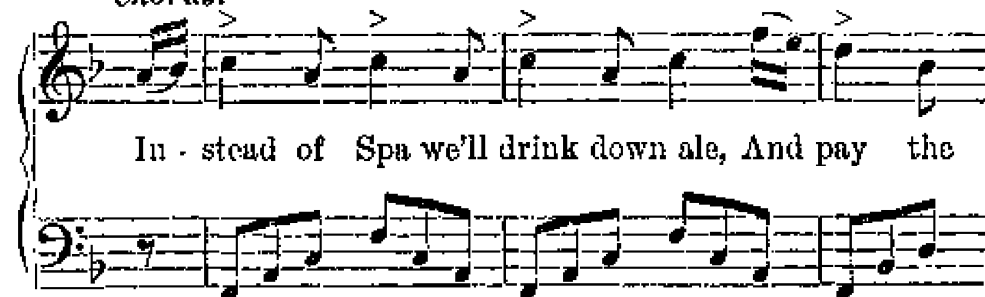
The second system of musical notation. The treble staff continues the melody with a quarter note G4, an eighth note A4, a quarter note Bb4, and an eighth note A4. The bass staff continues the accompaniment.



lend your aid, To help me with the cho - rus.

The third system of musical notation. The treble staff continues the melody with a quarter note G4, an eighth note A4, a quarter note Bb4, and an eighth note A4. The bass staff continues the accompaniment.

*Chorus.*



In - stead of Spa we'll drink down ale, And pay the

The chorus system of musical notation. The treble staff begins with a quarter note G4, followed by an eighth note A4, a quarter note Bb4, and an eighth note A4. The bass staff continues the accompaniment.

reck - 'ning on the nail; No man for debt shall

go to jail From Gar - ry - owen in glo - ry.

We are the boys that take delight in  
Smashing the Limerick lights when lighting,  
Through the streets like sporters fighting  
And tearing all before us. — CHORUS.

We'll break windows, we'll break doors,  
The watch knock down by threes and fours;  
Then let the doctors work their cures,  
And tinker up our bruises. — CHORUS.

We'll beat the bailiffs out of fun,  
We'll make the mayor and sheriffs run;  
We are the boys no man dares dun,  
If he regards a whole skin. — CHORUS.

Our hearts so stout have got us fame,  
For soon 'tis known from whence we came;  
Where'er we go they dread the name  
Of Garryowen in glory. — CHORUS.

## FOLLOWING THE GUIDON.

---

### The Assembly.



### CHAPTER I.

#### THE MARCH INTO THE INDIAN TERRITORY.

AROUND many a camp-fire in the summer, and in our winter-quarters before the huge fireplaces, where the wood merrily crackled and the flame danced up the chimney, have I heard the oft-told tales of the battle of the Washita, the first great fight of the Seventh Cavalry. The regiment was still new, having been organized during the year after the war. It had done much hard work, and had not only accomplished some genuine successes in a small way, but its records of long untiring marches in the chill of early spring, during the burning heat of a Kansas summer sun, and in the sharp frosts of a late autumn campaign, were some-

thing to be proud of. Still, the officers and men had little in the way of recognized achievement to repay them for much patient work, and they longed individually and as a regiment for a war "record." This would not have been so powerful a desire had not the souls of our men been set on fire by the constant news of the torture of white prisoners by the Indians. History traces many wars to women; and women certainly bore a large though unconscious part in inciting our people to take up arms in attempts to rescue them, and to inflict such punishments upon their savage captors as would teach the Indian a needed lesson.

From the Department of the Platte, which has its headquarters in Nebraska, to the Indian Territory and Texas the trails of the regiment could be traced. It is customary to keep a daily record of each march, and a small pen-and-ink map is added. From these a larger one is made after the summer is over, and when the War Department issues yearly maps the new routes or fresh discoveries are recorded. One of these regimental journals lies before me. The map for each day marks the course of the stream, the place where the regiment encamped overnight, the "ford," the "rolling prairie," "high ridges," "level prairie," with dots to mark the line of the Pacific Railway, in course of Construction; "small dry creek," "marshy soil," "level bottom," "stone bluff," etc. One of the written records goes on to state where, as the days advanced, the troops encamped at night without water, and all the men and horses had to drink was got by digging down

into the dry bed of a stream; or where, at another time, they found a "stream impassable," and "halted to build a bridge," together with such hints of experience as these: "struck an old wagon trail"; "marched over cactus-beds and through a deep ravine"; "made camp where there was standing water only"; "banks of stream miry — obliged to corduroy it"; "grass along the stream poor, sandy soil"; banks of next stream "forty feet high — great trouble in finding a crossing"; "obliged to corduroy another stream for each separate wagon"; "took four hours to cross twenty wagons"; "timber thick, grass poor"; "struck what is called by the Indians Bad Lands, being a succession of ridges with ravines fifty feet deep between; two wagons rolled over and went down one ravine"; "passed four ranches destroyed by the Indians and abandoned"; "left camp at 5 A.M.; so misty and foggy, could not see a hundred yards in advance;" "distance of march this day guessed, odometer out of order"; "marched up a cañon with banks fifty feet high"; "Company E left the columns to pursue Indians"; "all this day marched over Captain S—'s old trail"; "this was a dry camp, poor grass and plenty of cacti"; "found water-holes, the head of the river"; "total distance of march, seven hundred and four miles."

The names of the streams, the elevated points of ground, or the gulches were seldom taken from the musical nomenclature of the Indian; they seemed to have been given by the outspoken, irreverent pioneer or miner.

Evidently, if these first wayfarers had difficulty in making a crossing of a stream, they caused the name to record the obstacles. Our refined officers sometimes hesitated in their replies if asked by peace commissioners from the East, whom they were escorting to an Indian village, what the place was called. For instance, one of them said when he replied to such a question, "Hell Roaring Creek," etc. He looked out over the surrounding scenery till the effect of these shocking names had passed. A humorous Western paper, in commenting on this national idiosyncrasy, wonders, since the law requires that our national cruisers shall be called after cities, if "You Bet," "Hang Town," "Red Dog," "Jackass Gap," and "Yuba Dam" would answer. The worst of it all is that these names, given by a passing traveller with careless indifference to the future of the places on which they were bestowed, rest as an incubus upon localities that afterwards became the sites of places of prominence; and it is as hard for a town or region so afflicted as for the traditional dog to get rid of a bad name.

The brief itinerary of this one march, out of the many the Seventh Cavalry made, gives a faint idea of the daily history of a regiment. Concise as is the record, it served to point the way for many a tired pioneer who came after; for, on his map, compiled from these smaller ones, were the locations of places where he could stop for wood and water, as well as the warning where neither of these necessities could be obtained.

Still, there was often a weary sigh among the young-

sters who had no war record, and who longed to make some sort of soldier's name for themselves. Besides, they passed the dismantled, deserted home of many a venturesome frontiersman; they saw the burned stage stations; they met in forts or small settlements placed in a safe position ranchmen whose wives had been killed, or, worse still, made captives; they came upon the mutilated and horribly disfigured bodies of Lieutenant Kidder and eleven soldiers; everywhere on all its marches the regiment followed the trail of the Indian on his frightful career of rapine, murder, and outrage. Many a time the question was asked, what was the good of galloping after foes who knew the country thoroughly, who were mounted on the fleetest, hardiest animals in the world, that needed no grain, and who could go directly to rivers or streams where they could graze their ponies for a few days and start off refreshed for a long raid, and who each day could be bountifully fed on the game of the country without being hampered with a train of supplies. The odds were all against our fine fellows.

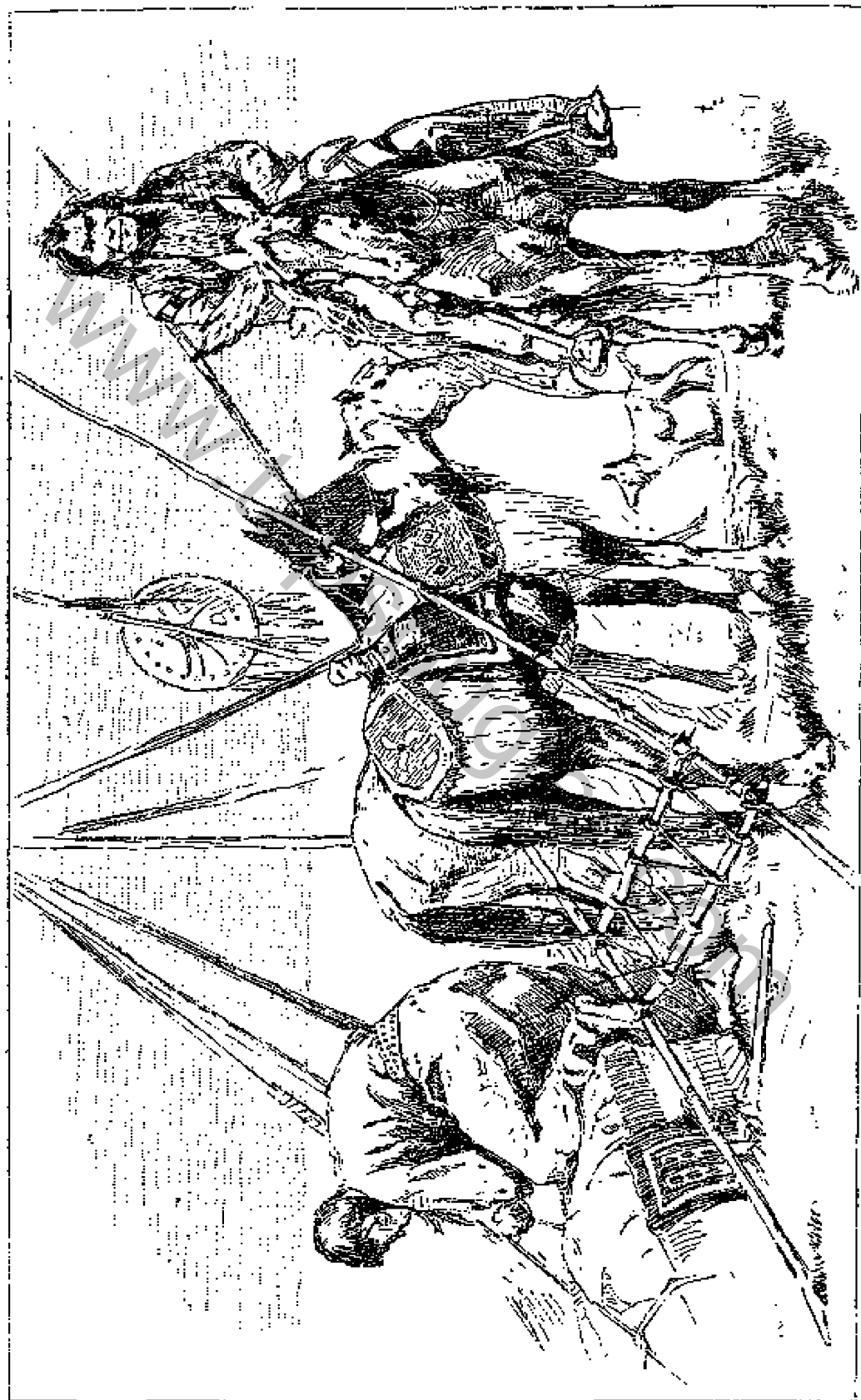
They had marched and countermarched over the country so constantly that the wit of the regiment said to the engineer officer who made the daily map: "Why fool with that? Just take the pattern supplement of the *Harper's Bazar*, and no better map of our marches could be found."

Much enthusiasm was felt when the announcement was made that a winter campaign was to be undertaken. "Now we have them!" was the sanguine boast.

The buffalo-hunting among the tribes was over for the year. Enough meat had been jerked or dried to keep them during cold weather, and the villages were established for the winter. In the summer the tribes travelled great distances. As soon as the grass in a river valley was exhausted by the ponies, everything was packed, the village moved, and another point was chosen. At certain seasons of the year there was a journey to timber lands, where lodge poles could be cut; another was made to certain clay-beds, where material for pipes was obtained; another to regions where the buffaloes were most numerous, and the winter's meat was prepared, or the hides dressed for robes or tepee covers. It is difficult to estimate the hundreds of miles that the villages traversed in the summer; but in the winter a remote spot was chosen, on a stream where the timber offered some protection from the winter storms, and the grass would last longest, and here the nomad "settled down" for a few months. It was such a village that our regiment was seeking.

The command starting into the Indian Territory was formidable enough, and had not the Indians been much emboldened by former successes, they would not have dared dash upon the rear-guard or rush in from a ravine to stampede the animals of the wagon train, as they often did on that march.

General Custer, in an unpublished letter to a friend in the East, describes the first attacks of the Indians after the march south began. "I had not been in my camp where I first joined two hours, when we were



INDIANS PREPARING TO MOVE.

attacked by a war party. I wish that you could have been with us. You would never ask to go to a circus after seeing Indians ride and perform in a fight. I took my rifle and went out on the line, hoping to obtain a good shot, but it was like shooting swallows on the wing, so rapid were they in their movements. Their object had been to dash into camp and secure some of our horses. Disappointed in this, they contented themselves with circling around us on their ponies, firing as they flew along the line, but doing no injury. As it was late in the evening and our horses all unsaddled, I prevented the men from going from camp to fight. Sometimes a warrior, all feathered and painted, in order to show his bravery to his comrades, started alone on his pony, and with the speed, of a quarter-horse would dash along the entire length of my line, and even within three or four hundred yards of it, my men pouring in their rifle-balls by hundreds, yet none bringing down the game. I could see the bullets knock up the dust around and beneath his pony's feet, but none apparently striking him. We shot two ponies, however, in this way, and may have inflicted greater damage; but in this as in all things pertaining to warfare, the Indians are so shrewd as to prevent our determining their losses. Occasionally a pony is captured. I have one now which is white, with a tail dragging on the ground. We have also captured an article of great value to them, an Indian shield. It is made of the thickest part of the buffalo-hide, adorned with rude paintings, and is usually hung in front of a tepee to keep off evil spirits."

It gave the men excellent practice, this running fire on the march. The necessity for troops was so great that raw recruits were sent out, without taking time to drill them in target practice. It came to pass that many a soldier drew his carbine on an Indian in the first shot he had ever fired. A corps of forty sharpshooters was formed from men who day by day showed unusual skill in the use of fire-arms, and these were allowed some privileges, such as being marched as a separate organization, which of itself is a great favor. It is far from agreeable to submit to the irksome rules of a marching column. No guard or picket duty was expected from these sharpshooters, so that they attained what is the supreme good of a soldier's life, "all their nights in bed." The soldier detailed for guard duty has two hours on and two off for twenty-four hours, and unless the command is large these times of duty come very often – in the estimation of the men.

In looking over some of the war poetry that filled the papers from 1861 to 1865, I came across a little jingle that describes a soldier's glory and grumbling, whether he be fighting the white or the red man:

"And how we fought and how we tramped,  
Too long a tale perhaps I'll spin ye;  
But, first and last, I think we camped  
In every field in old 'Virginny!

" 'Twas a gay old life, but Lord! 'twas hard –  
No rest for the good, no peace for the wicked;  
When you didn't fight you were put on guard,  
And when you came off you went on picket."

On the expedition the cavalry marched in a column of fours; then came a long wagon train, hauling the forage, tents, rations, and extra ammunition, and following all this was the rear-guard. The great struggle of the Indian when not actually ready for battle – which he never is unless all odds are in his favor – is to cut off the wagon train; this he tries to accomplish by frightening the mules. Sometimes the country admitted of the wagons being marched in four lines – an arrangement which required fewer soldiers to be deployed on either flank and in the rear for their protection.

In letters to his Eastern friend, from one of which quotations have been made, General Custer speaks with the greatest enthusiasm of the stag and fox hounds his correspondent had given him. The former were a new breed to him, and their feats, while only puppies, were daily marvels to their proud owner.

“Maida and Blucher both seized the first buffalo they saw while running, which was pretty plucky for pups, I think. The dogs have gone beyond my highest expectations. Three days ago Maida alone ran down a jack-rabbit and killed it, and they are the fleetest animals we have, except the antelope. Yesterday while looking for camp, accompanied by a few scouts and headquarters men, we jumped a prairie-wolf. Maida and Blucher, Rover and the other little fox-hound, started after it, the stag-hounds, of course, leaving the other two far behind. Blucher was the first to come up with the wolf; he had never seen one before. As soon as he reached it he seized it across the back, and never

relinquished his hold until he had killed it, and this he did by breaking its backbone. Blucher held on like a bull-dog. A wolf is one of the ugliest animals a dog can handle. Of the many dogs that are in this regiment there is but one that will attack a wolf, and he needs to be encouraged. Don't you think that is pretty good for a pup? The other day all the dogs went in chase after a jack-rabbit quite out of sight. An officer mounted and started after them, and met the dogs, Blucher at the head carrying the rabbit in his mouth. What do you think of a stag-hound as a retriever?"