FIFTY-FIVE YEARS AGO

IN THE

WILDERNESS,

OR THE

Old Ringtail Panther of Missouri.

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FIFTY-FIVE YEARS AGO IN THE WILDERNESS;

Or, the Old Ringtail Panther of Missouri.

As the humble writer has spent most of his life in the wilderness of Missouri and Texas, and as many remarkable occurrences happened in his presence, and others that I had perfect knowledge of, that is perfectly vivid before me, although it has been fifty years ago,—and knowing that your humble old grey-head writer is the only living witness, and he passing away to the happy hunting ground of the buck-skin-clad warrior, where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest, there were many little scraps of history lost—for in the wilderness there was no paper, ink, nor pen, —none to write; therefore, these things have never come to light: and, dear reader, when you read this scrap, please recollect that you read the writing of a man of the wilderness that never heard preaching until he was 16 years of age, and necessity learnt him to write; his preaching was Nature, and Nature's God. I could see the Great Spirit in the snow-topped mountains, in the grandeur of the marble-faced precipices, where you would have to strain your eyes to see the top, the moss-covered rocks—the myrtle and fern hanging lazily down, down, its giant form; the majesty of the mountain was preaching to me that its builder is God; the wilderness—the pure wilderness—with its vast prairies spread out before your view that has never been polluted by whisky; never has been cursed with an oath; never has drank the blood of a murdered man,—with thousands of acres of strawberries; the bear pacing before you; the gallant buck gazing

as though he thought man an intruder on so sacred a spot of the garden of the Most High; see the wild plum orchards, the hazelnut rows, the rush-brakes, the mighty oaks, the gurgling rivulets dancing at your feet,—these are views of the wilderness. It will enlarge the soul and cause the man to raise his eyes to the Builder and adore Him. Such was the wilderness of Missouri and Texas fifty years ago; but man has come in with his fire-water and weapons of death, and, alas! there is a sad change now.

There was a man moved from Virginia to Missouri in the year 1818. He settled where Clay county is now, fifty miles above any white settler; Chariton, at the mouth of Grand river, being then the uppermost, white settlement. This man was a lover of Nature in its purity; he built him a camp, killed him a bear and buck, took the venison ham and turkey breast, dried them and beat them up in a mortar, pouring a little bear's oil and honey over it, then cooked it; that makes the bread of the wilderness. You have no taxes to pay, no lawyers to fee, no juries to set on, nor debts to pay—you are free! Such was the condition of this man that had just moved into the wilderness of Missouri. We had the wild un-Americanized Indians for our neighbors—two powerful tribes, the Big Osage and the Sioux–the Osage numbering fifteen hundred warriors, and the Sioux 2000 braves. They had never shed white man's blood. Their law was, eye for eye, and tooth for tooth; but the whites had never been among them. They were glad to see us, by their gestures and signs. We smoked the pipe of peace, and was comforted. It was our great desire to remain in perfect peace with these superstitious wild men of the wilderness. Now, here, I will give you my humble opinion of a Providence, if you please to call it so. I believe, under the hand of Providence, the great Washington was raised up to be the Father of his country—therefore, the ball could not kill him; Daniel Boone to be the first pioneer of Kentucky—the Indian could not kill him.

Martin Parmer was to break the way for the settlers of Clay county—the ball couldn't kill him. Such are the wonders of the wilderness! But, nine of the Osages went to Chariton; they there found the white man's fire-water, or, the medicine-death. All Indians love whisky. They got drunk; they learned to steal; they stole from old McElwee his little red-headed daughter, believing she would be a great

show in their wigwams, as they had never seen a red-headed person. They believed, also, that her red head would keep their lodges warm; and, finding her out gathering berries, grabbed her and made for their village. They camped near our cabin, in Clay county. We didn't know the child, but saw it was a white child. We pled with them to give her up; they, in great fury, refused to do so. Man, if you have a soul, listen! Oh, take me from these ugly men—they have red stripes on their faces, feathers in their heads. I want to see my poor ma; I wasn't a naughty girl; I was only picking some berries. That was no harm, was it? By this time the soul of the white man had swelled to a giant. He looked at his little boy that was with him, and with one simultaneous bound, he screamed fire! It was a solid fire; but while his clothes were on fire, from the muzzle of their guns, the stock shot off of his gun, he caught the naked barrel in his hands with a giant's grip, his eyes blazing as a wounded tiger. A few steps before him was the little shivering weeper kneeling, with the Osage hatchet coming down upon her little devoted red head; the child threw up her right hand and caught the hatchet, severing her hand from her thumb and wrist. With one bound, as a wild beast, and an unearthly scream, his gun-barrel high lifted in the air,—"I'm the Ringtail Panther of Missouri!" (he was ever after called the Ringtail Panther of Missouri), and, as a thunder bolt from the upper world, it fell upon the head of the Osage brave, which sank him at his feet, there yet were five more with their hatchets striking at him, giving him three little wounds, but they fell before him as snow would melt before the noon-day sun; they were all dead at his feet, except the one that the boy shot—he got off a short distance, stopping the bullet-hole up with leaves, and died. And, as one went to spring his bow at the beginning of the fight, and broke the string and ran to the Nation, the little shivering, maimed, bleeding, captive babe of the wilderness was returned to its frantic mother, to tell her it didn't know it was acting badly to pick berries. It has now been fifty-two years since the morning of that day, and yet, to me, it is as yesterday!

As I mentioned in the outset, I am passing away! and, being the only one living that witnessed this glorious little fight of the wilderness, I have thought, for twenty years I, would write it down; but I never had confidence in my ability to do so, as I am a rough bear-hunter and an old Texan

veteran. I am not used to writing; therefore, my friends, my diction and spelling may be bad. But I will give you as near the truth of the wilderness, as I can. I can look back through the mists of fifty-two years with pleasure, and see the hand of Providence that shielded the breast of the Ring-tail Panther in that unequal combat. The child must be taken was prophecy enough. The Great Spirit of the wilderness willed it so, and it was done!

The appearance and customs of the Osage are peculiar. They are all (that are grown), about six feet three inches in highth, look about as much alike as if they had been moulded in the same mold—a dirty red, dull color—long, coarse, coal-black hair, and eyes, high cheek-bones, large nose and eyes —eyes dull, without an expression—large mouth, no decayed teeth, (stand erect and all alike), gaudy-colored feathers in their hair, lead rings in their nose and ears. They say the cause of this wearing lead in their nose and ears, was an order from a great Chief. While on the war-path, he got out of bullets and came near starving, and, on his return to his tribe, he gave orders that the Osage should always wear lead in their nose and ears, so they would never be out of lead. They talk almost entirely by gestures, using mostly their upper lip. They could twist it to the right or left, or straight out, as they pleased, using their hands and shoulders with a guzzling grunt. They have but little to talk about—war, something to eat, and their hunting-ground, generally winds up their conversation. They are all of one mind. They appear to be rather serious, and scarcely ever laugh. They say their squaws and papposes may laugh, but it is unbecoming a great brave to indulge in so low an amusement,—especially when they are dancing the green-corn dance—their great annual worship—or walk the war-path, or tread the path of death, you can't get a smile, or a jest, out of one of them. These were laws given to them by their great chief, Plenty-to-eat, a thousand moons ago, which they have kept ever since. They believe there is a life after death that excels this in pleasure, and they can't imagine how any one could be happy without hunting; therefore, they call it the happy hunting-ground of the Great Spirit—when the buck will be gentle, and fire keep in their flints, the pappoose no cry, the lodge of the squaw mighty warm. That would seem to be the greatest desire of these strange, wild, red men. If one dies, they were all equally interested—the Osage had lost a

brother; the Nation had lost a brave! They are not as we are. After they kill their first deer, they have no more to do with their parents—they then belong to their nation; therefore, they all equally feel for them; there is an hour of deep sadness in the tribe. They then hunt a spreading limb on some tall tree; they haul him up there and confine the corpse to this limb and leave him, believing they have left him as near the happy hunting ground as possible.

But to return when the child was sent home to its parents; their grateful feelings knew no bounds. The old man had two sons—one 18 and one 20 years of age; he told them to go to the cabin of the man of the wilderness and protect him at the cost of their own lives—to live with him, or die with him, for he was worthy. They come—two fine young men, brave enough. We knew we would have trouble. We had built us a little log fort and prepared for a siege; we had a good old-fashioned flint-lock rifle apiece; some extra flints; some powder and lead. But here is the great mystery to me: why did we stay? I can only answer by saying we had become hardened to danger and trials, and I think it was not intended we should run—for the man of the wilderness makes so many hair-breadth escapes, lays down so often of a night, expecting every moment to hear the savage war-whoop, the scalping-knife or bloody hatchet, until he becomes used to it. It seems to be a natural consequence for him to be killed by an Indian—it would be nothing new. Therefore, day after day he remains- Such was the case of the old Ringtail Panther of the wilderness of Missouri; and while at camp, things were going on in this way. But now he knew he would be attacked by a large force soon. Our little fort was built between a steep cliff of rocks where there was but one way to get up to it, and that was up a small hollow that ran up to the fort. He had ten 5 lb. canisters of powder planted along this hollow, some ten steps apart, running a little trail of powder through hollow canes from canister to canister, and from the last canister to where he expected to stand when he marched out to meet them, intending for them to come to the middle of the first-planted powder, he would cause them to stop by a motion that he wanted to talk. He knew they were superstitious and easily deceived, for he had already heard that they believed him to be the great Medicine Man, or Big Thunder, from the Great Spirit, sent to punish the Osage. He knew it would be an easy matter to

practice deception upon them; therefore, he was ready, keeping continually on the watch. The Indian who got away from the fight, went to the village. They called the hunters and all their chiefs and braves in council, and inquired of the escaped Indian where the other eight Osage warriors were. His testimony was something like this: that they had gone to where the white man made the paper-talk; the white man gave them fire-water—heap; Osage big; mighty fight —heap; we find one pale-face pappoose; whisky too much; we fetch her; me sleep one time; one pale face come from the Great Spirit, with his big gun; Osage put the muzzle of their guns against his body, and all fired, and didn't kill him; Osage ball no kill Big Thunder; Big Thunder shoot gun-lock, gun-stock at Osage; kill Osage with the barrel till all gone; Osage no kill Big Thunder! That was his oath before the nation, that he couldn't be killed; but in council they supposed the witness had spoken the truth. But their eight warriors were gone to the happy hunting ground, and would see no deer till their deaths could be revenged. Big Thunder must die; his squaw and pappooses must die, or the great spirit would be mad at Osage.

Blundo, their great war chief, made a speech to them and gave orders for two hundred of the mightiest braves of the great Osage nation to put their best flints in, and be ready. Your great chief will lead you. They paint black; they tread the path of death!

By this time we had good news at the Fort. As a present sent from Heaven, six young men came to our assistance, well armed,—the right men in the right place—Doxey, Jamison, Moody, Carmen, and two of the Browder boys—and, they come to see us through! We had now ten good fighters; we had no fears; we itched for an attack. We didn't have to wait long. Two hundred warriors, in deep black, marched up the hollow, looking very fierce and brave, Blundo leading them, simply demanding the scalps of Big Thunder and family. The Ringtail marched out to meet him, which they did not expect. He got to the end of the trail by the time they got to the center of the buried powder. With his nine men, he waved them to stop. Blundow made a partial halt, and, in a loud voice, said—"Big Thunder has killed our brave; the Great Spirit is mad; we come!" At that instant the ten whites, with a solid fire, and yelling "Big Thunder comes!" The powder was touched—the mountains quaked; the trees,

and ground was rent; the Indians howled, "Big Thunder comes! Big Thunder comes!" Every savage that could run, made for his wigwam; Blundow had seen enough! When he got back, he called a council, and declared that Big Thunder was the great Medicine from the white man's land, where the paper talks; that the pale face and Great Spirit of pale face, —both, both—fight poor Osage heep; pale face shoot his gun-lock, gun-stock, gun-barrel, at Osage, till he all gone. The Great Spirit shoot the rocks, the trees, the ground, at poor Osage and run Osage,—Big Thunder coming till Osage all gone; Big Thunder and Osage *bobby shelies;* Osage no more heap! They called off their dogs—they had seen enough! The eighteen that was left at the battle, was put in a pile and covered up, on their way to the happy hunting ground.

We now, with our brave little crowd, remained in fort nearly two months, until all had become still; the boys went home, and left us in possession of the field; peace reigned; honey plenty; bear fat; and 'Clinch,' our old bear dog, in fine order for a chase.

How different is my situation now!—cramped up in a little town—so crowded that I can hardly scratch my own head for fear of scratching somebody else's head; ringing and striving for the precious dime, for, in the dime, we live, move, and have our being. Oh! give me the wilderness—the pure, grassy wilderness—that I found in Missouri! I don't believe a man's soul will ever get grown in a little cramped town. The merchant may sell his matches, and the doctor may roll his pills; but I tell you his little soul will become so shattered that it will never get its growth. That's what ails me. It has been so long since I have seen a thousand elk in the grand prairie of Missouri, marching in a deep column,—the gang perhaps a mile long—old buck running up and down its line of travel keeping all to their place, with their horns laid back, on a balanced condition; and in one of those marches of the elk, you must give way—they won't—if you wish to save your bacon: its been so long since I have seen one of these sights that used to make me feel that I was a man when I was only a boy; and since I have taken old 'Clinch' and 'Clady,' and the rest of the dogs and gone out into the hazelnut roughs and killed an old he' steaked his ribs before the fire, greased my head and shoulders with bear's oil, and, with the foot-steps of a monarch, I would tread

home to Sallie, and be happy. That will stretch out all of the wrinkles of a stunted soul, if you will do it in time; otherwise, you must take what follows. And it will be town fashions and high taxes and rents that will keep the farmer grubbing, and his wife milking and washing, to keep up with his neighbors, the balance of your life. Give me the outside track; give me room to pick my teeth.

The Osages were very unfriendly. They principally embodied the forks of Grand river, about one hundred miles from Chariton; but were sullen and distant, and that just suited us—for we had seen enough of the Osage! After the heroes of the fort returned to the settlements and told of the fat living and fine country—that was about the year 1820—there were four families moved up in my county—a county between Clay and Chariton—built them houses where old Bluffton was built afterward. We then had neighbors near enough, within 25 miles, if I recollect right. The names of the families who moved in, were Officer, Lee, Whitesides and Cameron. We now planted us a patch of corn on the banks of a big lake, happy to think that in three months more we would have regular old-fashioned bread. The Ringtail went to Chariton and bought him a sow and another bear dog —old Boman; and while there, the people of Chariton, Ray and Clay counties elected the Ringtail as colonel of the three counties, and one of the young Browder's as captain of Chariton county. The Governor of the State, McNair, sent him his commission, with the State seal, on a blue cross of ribbon.

Gen. Ned Burlison, of Texas, and Gen. Duff Green, of Washington City, with many other great men, were raised up then on bear-meat and honey; that never had their soul's stunted for want of a dime. I have called a few names, and could call many more of our old Missouri and Texas friends who were as dear to the old Ringtail Panther's heart as his own blood; but he has gone to the happy hunting-ground of the great braves of every State and Nation; and the humble writer being the only one of his family left, and with my hat off, let me, full of big, whole-soul devotion, give our old Missouri friends and Texas veterans, a warm, genuine, old-fashioned 'howdy-do,' for I love to love the Indian-fighter and bear-hunters; and, my old friends, if this ever reaches you, I bid you God-speed, with Great happiness.

TOM PARMER.

But I have said nothing in my piece yet about the patient, industrious wife of the wilderness. You will see her—a pure woman; her cheeks resembling the tints of the delicate wild-rose unassisted by art, cheerful and happy, which is caused by having good health; her health not trammeled by French trickery and artificial show. According to my notion of things, a lady is not as a lady's clothes. I think I have seen as pretty women in the wilderness as ever I saw anywhere. They seemed to be made by the first pattern; they were pure women; they had never lived on starch and snuff, and musk and paint, and other trickeries; they were pure women. They had so many advantages then; their calico dresses didn't quite touch the ground; they didn't have to carry a great pile of store-goods on their backs, and some dragging after them; they didn't have to wear a goose-nest on their heads, made of wool, bark, or hair; their own hair was prettier than any they could get. Therefore, they could skip along unincumbered by luggage or baggage; they never had the headache; they were always pleasant, cheerful, and happy; they were able to cook a nice meal's victuals, and sit down with the husband and their little ones, and enjoy life without fiction.

As I said before, the Osages were yet sullen, and watching out for scalps. There was a company that went out from Chariton, up Grand river, on an elk hunt. They were attacked by a large body of Osages. After a stubborn fight, the whites were overpowered and gave way, leaving two dead—Splawn and Brammitt. They returned to the settlement, where it created great excitement. They applied to the Governor for help. He ordered the Ringtail to take a company of militia, and attend to their case; but it was in the spring of the year, and water very high, which greatly retarded their progress. He ordered Capt. Browder to raise a company of able, active men, and report. He did so. In a few days thereafter, they were on the march; but the difficulties of high water were so great, it was impossible to succeed. After swimming, wading, crossing rivers in elk-skin canoes, and spending many days of the hardest trials men ever went through, they returned without finding the Indians. The Ringtail made his report to the Governor that it was impossible to carry out his orders on account of high water. It passed off so, awhile; and, after the waters began to abate, the Ringtail not being fully satisfied, was examining the

country about the forks of Grand river, not far from their village. And, while on this secret exploration, preferring to be alone, he could occasionally see some slight moccasin sign, which kept him entirely on his guard; and after spending many laborious nights and days, fearing to shoot lest he should be found out, and the weather being very cold, and having nothing on his feet but buckskin moccasins, his feet became frost-bitten. He being worn out, he started home, having one hundred miles to walk with frost-bitten feet. But he soon found he was pursued by a large body of Osages. He kept always in readiness for an attack; but the Indians seeing he had turned for home, knew the route he would travel, and a certain crossing of the fork of the river he would be apt to cross, and, Indian shrewdness, they got to the crossing first and lay in ambush on both sides of the river. With the light footsteps of the Panther, the old Ringtail came to the crossing, but the Indians were too well hid to be seen. After taking a good look all around, he got him a log and rolled it in the water, and got on it and started across, paddling with a stick. When he got about half way the river, the Osages' war-whoop bursted from each shore as a legion of devils from the bottomless pit. He went to wheel on the log and got his gun wet. The blazing fires from each shore showed him he had no chance. If he could have killed one Indian, it would have been some consolation; but his gun was wet—he couldn't shoot. He held up his cap, and surrendered. He came to shore, wounded in the thigh, and feet badly frost-bitten. His miseries were so great he was ready to yield to anything they might say. They bound him tight with raw-hide tugs and started to their village. They forced him on with every kind of punishment that fiends could invent; they got to their village with their great enemy, and there was general rejoicing; they went through their lamentations for their dead, around him; tied him to a stake put down for that purpose; held a council; sentenced him to be burnt at the stake, to appease the great Spirit for the loss of their braves; they trod the path of death around him, throwing their hatchets at him, with every manner of insult that they could invent. Every hope of life had disappeared from the mind of the old Ringtail. He felt that he had bid his wife and eight children the last adieu when he left them in tears at home, and that there were none there to say good-bye; none to take his last words back home to his

family. The torture of his wounds and mind was so great, that he longed for death. While in that condition, Blundo made a speech to him, saying Big Thunder had killed their braves until they were all gone, and now he must die! He ordered wood piled around him, which they eagerly did. They then handed him his buckskin wallet, which he asked for, intending to divide his little notions that he had with him among them before he died. He gave his pipe to the Chief, and, in distributing other little things, he pulled out his Colonel's commission from the Governor, with a blue cross of ribbon on it, sealed with the State seal. When they saw that, they exclaimed, Great Father! It seemed to bring awe upon them. Finally, the old chief says: "make the paper talk!" A hope struck him that they believed him to be their agent. He read the paper as from the President to him, directing him to go and see the Osages, and see if their guns were good; their flints good, and if their blankets were not worn out, etc., and send him word, and he would send them new ones. It had its effect—the chief ordered him released, and his wounds attended to. They then met him—the Ringtail, in council. He told them he was sent by their Father to attend their wants. Blundo told him he should not be hurt so long as he came from the Great Father; but at any other time, when he was not on the Great Father's business, and they could take him, they would burn him.

They then called for the great dog feast, and had dog-soup on a large scale, and dismissed him under the escort of fifteen warriors, for home. After crossing the high waters of Grand river, making canoes of elk-skins, at which they were experts, they left him to make his way to the settlement, which he did gladly—his family not knowing what had been his fate, as there was danger in every step he had taken with the Osages; but he had left them to return no more, for his trials on this trip had been great.

He got back to his little cabin in the wilderness; found his joyful wife well, and his eight children—four girls and four boys—and one had killed a bear and several deer. We then had a just right to pity poor people, and those who lived this narrow-minded dime life, for we had no wants nor fears, for the Osages had been dispensed with. There were none to molest or make us afraid. The rush-bake cream, the sheets of honey, the fat bear meat, nice venison and turkey, the fish, strawberries, raspberries, plums, hazelnuts, grapes,

would make a man look back upon the memory of the pleasures that he had seen with the greatest pleasure of his life. We had never had a death, for we had no calomel; we had no money for the lawyers to come after; no chickens for the Methodist preachers; no whisky for the Baptist: therefore, we could rest in peace from all men. We had no wants, no annoyances. Such was the life of the wilderness fifty years ago. Men then knew some things, and some things they didn't know—not like they are now. You find men now too smart for one man, which spoils him, and not quite smart enough for two: still spoils him. He can tell you as much about the sun, moon and stars, as you know about your truck-patch. Such men I pity. If they would let these stay right where they found them, and go and kill a bear, they might yet be happy, for it is true wisdom to learn to be happy. Give me freedom and happiness, and the globe may impoverish itself with gifts to me, and it could not add to my wealth. A man in the wilderness can be free and happy—he can claim the whole country; he can be his own Judge, his own juror; his law-suits will all be in his favor; his horse don't have to steal the grass he eats off from other people's land; his hog can root on his owner's soil. But I will give you but few of the pleasures of the wilderness, for fear I may dissatisfy you with your present cramped life. Excuse me, reader, I want to take a good smoke!

But the Sioux had remained in peace with us so far, and were often about our little log-cabin, professing great friendship by constantly calling for something to eat, as a wild Indian is always hungry, and appears to be very grateful for every morsel you give them. We knew these Indians were more war-like and better fighters than the Osage, therefore it suited us to give them every thing we well could, to keep the peace. The greatest brave of their nation was named Two-heart; and the old Ringtail inquiring of him one day how he got the name, he told him he had killed a white man and ripped him open and took out his heart, and ate it before the man was dead. Pale face, as they called him, was so indignant at his confession of his greatness that entitled him to the honors of the second man of the Nation, that he determined to do away with him some how, if possible; therefore, the Sioux still continued to visit us, as usual.

The Ringtail now making his visits to Chariton pretty often, and having many friends in the settlements, it was

usual for him to take a little old corn-whisky when he got to Chariton and among his friends. Whisky then had no tobacco nor soap in it. It made a man funny, but not mad; and, finally, he brought a bottle or two home with him; still keep funny and rather rich, willing to run any risk; and, just at his arrival, Two-heart walks up as usual; was very hungry; he ordered plenty to be brought to Two-heart. Thinking now would be a good time to carry out his intentions of making away with him, he ordered Two-heart to eat on, and not stop. He forced him on—made him cram the bread and meat in his mouth. Finally, he made him a swab and forced it down his throat until he became smothered, speechless, and near lifeless. The Indian lay on the floor choked senseless, when two other warriors came up by chance. The Ringtail told them he had given the great brave, Two-heart, plenty to eat, and he had eaten too much. It didn't seem to exactly take with them; nevertheless, they picked him up and started to their village, three miles off. As they went on, he died. He was never able to tell them what had happened; yet, they had suspicions. They met in council; they called their wisest men together; closely examined the dead Indian, and decided there had been some violence used in some way. The pale face was a great brave, and had always fed the hungry Sioux; but they feared there was treachery at his wigwam. They decided that pale face and family must die; that they had in some way killed the great brave of Sioux nation. Therefore, Bigmush, their chief, gave orders for fifteen hundred Sioux warriors to paint for death, tread the path of death, that evening, and bewail the dead, and be ready at the rising of the next sun to walk the war-path. They were ready the next morning at sun-rise. But by this time, the Ringtail's whisky had given out, and he was fearful of the consequences, as no Indians had been about him since the two that left with the almost lifeless Indian. He had not yet heard that he was dead. His chance seemed to be dark enough. He looked upon his helpless family, with a feeling of the fearful butchery. He was sad, indeed, and full of thought. If he had a thousand lives, he would lose them all to save his wife, or one little child. He feared not for himself. Oh, no! but my pale wife, my devoted children! I can die,—but can they die! They must not.

At sun-rise, fifteen hundred fierce warriors surrounded

our house! Reader, if you could have seen what I then saw; if you could have felt what I then felt, I could, perhaps, in some feeble way, describe this worse than death scene. They had placed an interpreter near the little gallery, where we stood. They gave an order for all to raise their war-hatchets above their heads. Great God, the sight! As far as the eye could see, the weapon of death was raised. It seemed to theaten each life fifteen hundred times. Long, long has it been since that awful moment, but yet my blood freezes in my veins when I look back upon it. Pale face stood as a marble statue and looked upon his frozen wife and children for the last time, and says, "Our time has come—let me die first." It was the only word that was spoken. There was not a sound, not a word from mother to child, nor child to mother. More than a thousand deaths stared us in the face; more than a thousand weapons of death were raised for our devoted heads. Our time had certainly come. The interpreter spoke: the pale face may sing his death-song; he must die; his squaw and pappooses must die! Pale face said to the interpreter—"Pale face, squaw and pappooses are ready to die; but can I see the great chief before I bow my head to the Sioux hatchet? Pale face can't see the great chief; he must die now. But, I know something that is a great secret to me that the Sioux Nation must know. If I see not the chief, your Nation must suffer. This word was conveyed to the chief. He gave orders for him to come to his presence. They gave way for him to pass to the chief. When he met him, the Ringtail said to the chief—"I fear not to die, but what have I done? When did the Sioux warrior ever come to the white man's cabin hungry, and he gave him not of his bread and meat? How many of these warriors that you see now, have eaten in my cabin? How many have I given my hand to as brothers, and smoked the pipe of peace with, and why should I die? Pale face don't fear to die, but let me not die as a squaw, for nothing, but let pale face die as a great brave of the Sioux nation. Let me die for something. Before the hatchet that now, already raised, falls, tell me what I have done? Big mush speaks: Two-heart, the great brave of our Nation, was found in pale face's cabin, and died on his way to the village of the Sioux. Who killed Two-heart? speak! lie not! Two-heart came to my cabin; he was very hungry. I gave him plenty, and went out. When I came back he was lying on the floor—he

had eaten too much! Why should I die? is the question!

If Two-heart eat too much; if he killed himself, you shan't die. Big Mush love great brave, Pale face; great brave Pale face and Big Mush, brothers; the braves go home. When we stood waist-deep in death; when there were none to help, no hope, the great God willed it otherwise, and we were spared in the wilderness! The Ringtail had not yet fulfilled his destiny. The dead began to live; hope revived, and the inmates of our cabin were once more happy. The terrors of death had passed over, and for some purpose we were spared. It has now been fifty-two years since that little family stood on that little gallery of that unpretending little log-house, and yet, when I speak of it or write of it, I feel sad! I can't fully think of it—my mind fails me; and when I go to write it, my pen grows feeble and weary. The darkest hour of my unworthy life was when I stood at that little cabin in the little group—my mother, dear, and seven children speechless, frozen in death at the sight of fifteen hundred demons, with the bloody hatchet lifted above our helpless heads. My father—my dear father—asked the favor of dying first! What a favor it would be to die first—to be spared the sickening sight of the blood that was to be spilt; that he might not hear the pleadings, "oh, my father, save me from these bloody men!"

They brought all of their warriors with them, that their eyes might enjoy the feast of the death of pale-face and family; but the great God forbid it. Praised be His name! But I was spared to write that scene down fifty years after it happened. I have written it down, in my poor way. I have been fifty years in Texas, and seen some dark days here; but that day—that hour—when we stood helpless under the Sioux hatchet, was my darkest hour! I am through writing it down, and am glad of it. The little group that were there have all crossed the Jordan of death, except the humble writer. I am yet spared. God knows what for—I do not.

Before I dismiss this subject, I feel that I would boil over if I were to fail speaking of the dear woman that stood with her little group on the gallery, ready to exchange worlds at the order, *Strike!* Such worth the world has never sufficiently appreciated—the dear, calm, trusting, faithful lady; her devoted life and peaceful walk makes her a heroine of the first class. I have seen such ladies ever since.

I see them now, every day, that would act as that blessed lady acted while under the Sioux hatchet. Such a wife is the brightest star in her husband's crown; such a mother is a blessing to her race. If it were not for the ladies, I believe the devil would come and sweep the trash that would be left from off the face of the globe. But, a thousand blessings upon their dear heads and on their pathway through life, and finally land them in the green fields of the wilderness of immensity, where God eternally reigns!

And, now, Clay county began to settle up. John Huchins settled within one mile of us, and several others close by. "Clinch" died, and times looked gloomy enough. By this time, the Ringtail had 200 hogs, and he divided them with his new neighbors, as he had no use for hog meat; bear yet plenty. The country now—1824—began to settle up in earnest. They flocked there from every quarter. It was soon laid off in Senatorial districts. The election came on for Representatives and Senators from the different districts, which I will here give, as many of them left for Texas at an early day and assisted in wringing the Republic of Texas from the government of Mexico. The Ringtail Panther of Missouri, or, Col. Martin Parmer, the hero of my sketch, and Col. Kerr, his colleague, left in 1825, with many more such men, for the Far West, which would account to any one who the first settlers of Texas were, and why they could not be whipped.

The two above-mentioned Senators of Missouri died in Texas in the year 1850, leaving a name that is a rich heritage to their many friends and relatives that are yet behind. I will give the following names so their friends will see, though they may be dead, they yet liveth:

Senators.	*County.* *Representatives.*
MARTIN PARMER.	Clay : John Thornton. Lillard : Abraham McClellan. Ray : Isaac Martin. Chariton : George Burkhardt.
GEO. CRAWFORD.	Saline—Wm. M. Chick. Cooper : B. F. Hickox, G. W. Wright, Jordan O. Bryan.
STEPHEN TRIGG. N. BURKHARDT.	Howard : Alfred Baysye, John Miller, Wm. J. Redd, E. V. Warren, William Ward.

BENJAMIN YOUNG.	Franklin : Jas. North, E. Jamison. Callaway : Israel B. Grant. Gasconade : John Woollums.
C. K. DUNKAN.	Montgomery : Alexander Pursiner, A. H. Young. Lincoln : John Ruland.
A. J. WILLIAMS.	Boone : Peter Wright, D. G. Westerfield, John Slack.
FELIX SCOTT.	St. Charles : Samuel Wells, Robt. W. Wells, Joseph Evans.
WM. BIGGS.	Pike : Jas. Jones, Chas. C. Turbune. Ralls : Achiles McGinnis.

St. Louis county: Joseph C. Brown and John O'Fallon in the Senate, with Spencer Pettis, Samuel Magill, Frederick Wyatt, Samuel Morris, Henry S. Geyer, and Horatio Cozzens in the House.

Jefferson and Washington counties: Samuel Perry in the Senate, with Samuel Worsham, Chauncy Smith, Phillip Cole, R. M. Stephenson, and J. S. Brickery in the House.

St. Genevive, Perry and St. Francis counties: James Kerr in the Senate, with Joseph D. Grafton and Peter Dagnet, in the House from St. Genevive; Isadore H. Moore, from Perry, and Wm. Alexander, from St. Francis.

Madison and Wayne counties: John Burdett in the Senate, with Walter H. Brooks, of Madison, and Elijah Bettis, of Wayne, in the House.

Cape Gireadau county: Alexander H. Buckner and Wm. McGuire in the Senate, with James Russell, E. Johnson, R. M. VanHorn, and John Johnson, in the House.

[Note.—James Kerr, Senator, in the above list, from St. Genevive district, had been sheriff of St. Louis county, and previously in the House, from St. Genevive. At the close of the session, 1824-5, he resigned, and went to Texas. He was long Surveyor General of DeWitt, and a revolutionary patriot in Texas, member of Congress, and died December 23d, 1850. He located in south-west Texas, while his colleague in the Missouri Senate, Martin Parmer, located in Eastern Texas.]

For the above list and attached note, I am indebted to Major John Henry Brown, of Dallas—a Texan for forty years; a native of Pike county, Missouri, and a nephew of Col. Kerr.

GOVERNORS OF MISSOURI SINCE 1820

Alexander McNair elected August, 1820, for 4 years.

Frederick Bates elected August, 1824; died August, 1825; John Miller elected for the unexpired term.

John Miller re-elected in 1828, for 4 years.

Daniel Dunklin elected in 1832, for 4 years.

Lilburn W. Boggs elected in 1836, for 4 years.

Thomas C. Reynolds elected in 1840, for 4 years; committed suicide February 9th, 1841. M. M. Marmaduke served out the term.

John C. Edwards elected in 1844, for 4 years.

Austin A. King elected in 1848, for 4 years.

Sterling Price elected in 1825, for 4 years.

Trusten Polk elected in 1856, for 4 years. Resigned in 1857, and Hon. Cook Jackson, Lieut. Governor, served out the term.

Robert M. Stewart elected in 1857, for 3 years.

Claiborne F. Jackson elected in 1860, for 4 years; vacated by his acts in favor of secession, in 1861. Hamilton R. Gamble served until 1864.

Thomas C. Fletcher elected in 1864, for 4 years.

Joseph W. McClurg elected in 1868, for 2 years.

Benjamin Gratz Brown elected in 1870, for 2 years.

Silas Woodson elected in 1872, for 2 years.

And now, my friends, I feel like closing this little bo k, as I am short of means that would enable me to have a larger one printed, by promising to write a volume for Texas, beginning at the crossing of the Sabine in the year 1825. Your humble servant has been here ever since, and his wife has been in Texas ever since the year 1824, we being well acquainted with old Texas times. I will close by putting in my book, two receipts that I have often wished could go to the world and hunt up some poor sufferer. I hope I may do good, in that way, to some. I have tried the following receipts, and know they will cure a cancer, or white swelling.

FOR A WHITE SWELLING, AT ANY STAGE

Take the root of what is called barren willow. It has a thick red bark on its roots. It is a hard swith or shrub; the leaf long,—pale green on top; and white on bottom of leaf. Boil the root down strong; sweat the affected part over the ooze; then make a poultice of said ooze and of wheat bran;

bind the same to the sore twice a day. It will certainly cure you.

TO CURE A CANCER.

Take three bushels of ash-bark ashes; put them in a sack; add water; and collect the lye; boil and strain the lye until several times, until it is pure; then boil until it is nearly as thick as molasses. Take a three ounce vial and fill one-third full of the potash; then add one half as much of the gum of camphor as potash, and one-half as much blue-stone as potash; then fill the bottle with alcohol.

Directions for use—Take a little of the solution and weaken to about the strength of common lye; take lint of cow's horn and saturate it in the solution, and lay it in the cancer. To prevent it getting to the sound flesh, grease the edges well with tallow, or oil of any kind; or, if the cancer be in a critical place, get lead-leaf and cut a hole over the cancer, and press the edges of the leaf around the sound flesh. If it should become too severe for the patient, it may be stopped with a little oil or sweet milk. It will take the cancer out by the roots; then you have to cure up the wound.

"I cast my bread upon the waters, and hope after many days, to find it." TOM PARMER.

Dallas, Texas, September, 1874.