

# HORSE MARINES: CALIFORNIA, 1846<sup>1</sup>

By GEORGE WALCOTT AMES, JR.

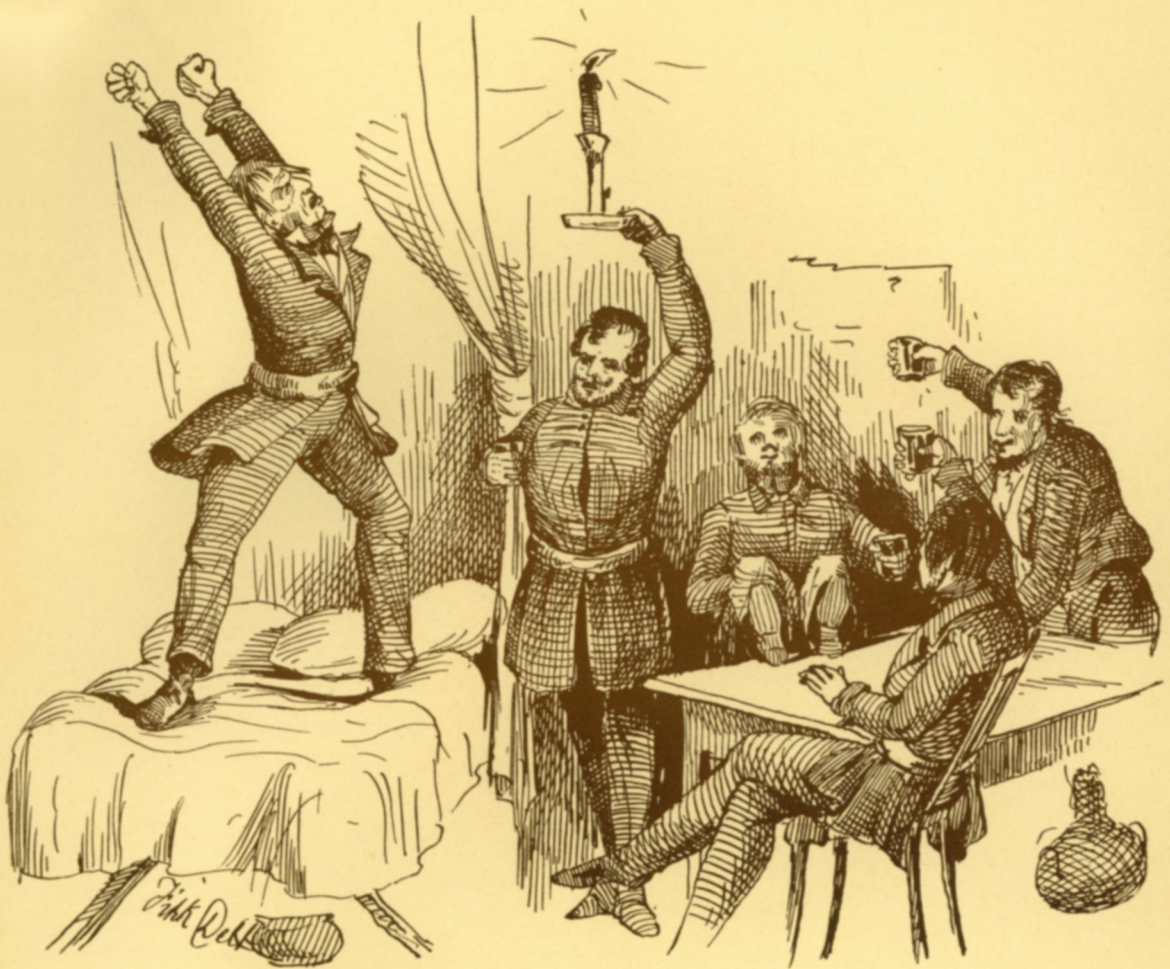
INFORMATION is a vital necessity in time of war. Successful offense and defense both depend upon the gathering of accurate intelligence whether the field of action is to serve for major battles or merely guerrilla warfare. Of the several methods used in acquiring information, reconnaissance is one of the most important. Reconnaissance in its turn depends upon mobility, while the terrain to a great extent determines the means employed. This was especially true in California, where the horse was predominant as a means of locomotion. Mobility which connotes speed as well as ease of movement, therefore, postulated the extensive use of cavalry in any tactical problem, not only because of the distances to be covered, but also because of the example in everyday life.

When on July 7, 1846, Commodore John D. Sloat raised the American flag in Monterey, he took upon himself, in addition to his duties as naval commander of the Pacific Fleet, the functions of a commander of land forces. As such his most pressing military duty was the maintenance and consolidation of his position in the capital of the country. His only immediate danger was from the Californian troops under José María Castro, who had retreated to San Juan Bautista, and from marauding bands who might take advantage of the situation to raid the inhabitants. Sloat wished to conciliate the peaceful citizens by every means possible, and felt, too, the moral obligation to protect them now that he had declared the territory to be in the possession of the United States. Evidently the Commodore had given some thought to the *modus operandi* of the conquest, because once the final step in raising the flag had been taken, quick action resulted. His letters of July 6 and 7 to Captain John B. Montgomery at Yerba Buena, the appointing of civil officials and the establishment of a permanent garrison on shore at Monterey, and the immediate negotiations with Castro all give indication of this fact.<sup>2</sup>

Sloat was well aware of the limitations of his troops, serious limitations indeed, when he contemplated extensive land operations. The only unit which could qualify for this type of service and with which he could join forces, was Captain John C. Frémont's, and Sloat was not entirely sure of that army officer's willingness to cooperate.<sup>3</sup> A prompt remedy for the situation was sought. On July 8, only one day after the occupation of Monterey—and before an answer was received from Castro—Sloat issued an order to Purser Daingerfield Fauntleroy, serving on the flagship *Savannah*:

Sir

Having volunteered your services for duty on shore and informed me that your duty on board this ship can be conducted by your clerk without detriment to the service or



Col. B. having gone the *strong* at the Fandango concludes to go the *loud* on Shakespear:

*"His eye in fine frenzy rolling"*

The humorous pen and ink sketches, here reproduced from a series in the Society's Melville Schweitzer Memorial Collection, are signed "Firk, delt." and were presented by the artist to "Dear Snyder" [Jacob R. Snyder, quartermaster of the California Battalion] with a brief illustrated preface reading in part, "Such as they are, they are offered to you as a memento of the scenes they represent, and of our acquaintance. Schooner 'Com. Shubrick,' Nov. 1847."



Passing home one night, after making a successful speech at a meeting; I was addressed by a gruff voice asking, "Who, Who, are you?" I was surprised at any one asking *that* question; but supposing it might be a new settler; (not having a card about me) answered him thus: "I am Col. W. Bellows, Sir, Member of the Legislature, Col. in the Florida War. Also Judge Advocate, Inventor of Gas, F.R.S., A.S.S. &c." But it did not satisfy him for he continued to inquire, "Who, Who are you?"

Note: The Colonel W. Bellows of the sketches was Col. William H. Russell, ordnance officer, with the title of major, of the California Battalion, and secretary of state during the short régime of Fremont as governor of California.



yourself, you are hereby authorized to organized [sic] and to command a company of dragoons not to exceed thirty-five in number from the men belonging to the squadron and volunteers, on shore and to purchase horses and equipments for them at the expense of the U States for the purpose of protection [sic] the peaceful inhabitants from the lawless depredations [sic] who infest the country and to keep a vigilant watch that the enemy do not approach the town without our knowledge.<sup>4</sup>

Passed Midshipman Louis McLane of the U.S.S. *Levant* also volunteered and was appointed first lieutenant of the troop.<sup>5</sup> Evidently several days were occupied in perfecting the organization and in obtaining volunteers for the ranks because the first group of men did not sign the muster roll until July 12. On that date, however, eighteen men, a guide, a second lieutenant, McLane, the first lieutenant, and Fauntleroy were enrolled as Fauntleroy's Company of California Dragoons.<sup>6</sup> In the main these men were drawn from the navy personnel on board the warships in Monterey Bay.<sup>7</sup> Whether these twenty-two were the only volunteers who answered the call remains unknown, but on the next day Sloat issued a proclamation in English and Spanish:

To the Good Citizens of California and others,

You are hereby invited to enroll yourselves to be organized as a troop of Cavalry to cooperate with the United States, land forces stationed in the town of Monterey and for the important purpose of affording protection to the good citizens of the Town and Country and to their property and such other duty as the commander in chief, of the United States Naval Forces in the Pacific Ocean and of the Territory of California may order and direct.

In consideration of such duty or service you will be paid fifteen hard silver dollars per month and all necessary arms and munitions of War, together with horses and their trappings and equipments will be furnished by the United States to be carefully used and returned on the discharge of said troop, which term of service will continue three months.

The said troop to be commanded by such officers as the Commander-in-Chief may appoint. Suitable provisions will be furnished to the troop at the Government expense.<sup>8</sup>

According to the muster roll, eleven more men answered this call to arms; three were probably navy men, the rest were civilians from California, among them being the famous and prodigious Dr. Robert Semple.<sup>9</sup> On the roll this last group is entered under the date of the 15th. If this date is correct, then the two days of July 14 and 15 were busy ones for Fauntleroy and his officers. On July 14, the sailors who had first enrolled were relieved from duty on board ship and sent ashore.<sup>10</sup> Presumably not until then were the men issued any equipment for their new profession of United States Dragoons. It is a nice question whether they even learned the names of their new mounts, let alone their idiosyncrasies, before they were ordered to take the field. On the following day, it is to be supposed, after their new comrades had received their equipment and joined the ranks, the troop left the town. Whether the expedition was in the nature of a "shake-down cruise" or had a more serious purpose is not known, because the only account thus far discovered is the laconic entry in the personal log of Captain William Mervine, navy commander of the

land forces:<sup>11</sup> "July 15. Fauntleroy with his Company of Dragoons made their first excursion. . . . July 16. Fauntleroy came in."

Little time was allowed the troop to repair any damage sustained on the expedition, as orders were received the next day to set forth once more, this time to San Juan Bautista. The purposes were several: the command was to reconnoitre the country, to take possession and raise the flag at the Mission and town, and to recover ten brass guns which Castro was reported to have buried there on his retreat south.<sup>12</sup> When the Dragoons arrived, they found that the place was in the possession of another force, fortunately a friendly one. Frémont and his battalion had gone from Sutter's Fort down the San Joaquin Valley, crossed the mountains through Pacheco Pass and reached San Juan about two hours before Fauntleroy appeared.<sup>13</sup> Of this important meeting and its conversation there is no reliable source, although there are several stories. Frémont ignores it, while if Fauntleroy wrote a report it has not been found. Henry Jubilee Bee, who was under arrest by order of Frémont at the time, has a detailed account. He says that after he met Fauntleroy,

Fremont came up while they were conversing, and as he did not deign to notice Fontleroy [sic], Harry introduced him. Fremont looked at him coldly without bowing and passed on. "What kind of a man is this Fremont, anyhow?" Fontleroy [sic] asked. Harry ventilated his opinion pretty thoroughly and the Captain was satisfied. He afterwards sought Fremont at his tent and after a lengthy conversation, the former left for Monterey. . . .<sup>14</sup>

Vallejo in his *Historia* has a different version and strangely enough does not mention Harry. He says that the two officers met and visited together. Kit Carson, who was present at the meeting, was very anxious to hear an account of the events of July 7 in Monterey. When Fauntleroy had told the story, he exclaimed, "Now I'm convinced that the whole country will soon be at our feet. It's certain that the Californians don't know how to fight!"<sup>15</sup> If this was the tenor of Carson's belief, it may well have a bearing on the advice he gave General Stephen W. Kearny later in the year before the battle of San Pascual. In any event, United States forces had taken San Juan together with a quantity of concealed ordnance and the companies camped there for two nights. Nor was excitement lacking, for there was an invasion of the peaceful little town on the very first night. A mad coyote dashed into the village, biting people right and left. "I believe that none died," reported an eye witness, and went on to say that on the following day after the officers had ordered all dogs in the town shot, "The rifle shots were heard on every side in the execution of this sentence."<sup>16</sup> At least it was good target practice.

On the 19th both commands proceeded to Monterey, while a small detachment of Frémont's battalion was left to garrison San Juan. At the seaport capital, the populace gathered in large numbers to greet the incoming troops. All the American forces in town were turned out in their honor, and the band of the *Savannah* was ordered ashore to add to the welcome.<sup>17</sup> One of the spec-

tators, an English officer from the *Collingwood*, gives a description of the Dragoons:

During our stay Captain Fremont and his party arrived, preceded by another troop of American horse. It was a party of seamen mounted, who were used to scour the country to keep off marauders. Their efficiency as sailors, they being nearly all English, we will not question. As cavalry they would, probably, have been singularly destructive *to each other*. Their leader, however, was a fine fellow, and one of the best rifle-shots in the States.<sup>18</sup>

If this last statement is true, it is probably one reason why Fauntleroy was chosen as the commander of the Dragoons.

The next four days were quiet ones for the Dragoons of Fauntleroy's troop; at least no activity for the command is reported. It is to be hoped that some drill was indulged in, so that the above condemnation was refuted to some degree. But the four days soon passed, and on July 23 they received marching orders. The orders were issued by Commodore Robert F. Stockton, who had succeeded Commodore Sloat in command of the armed forces of the United States in California, and reflected a new personality as well as a new concept in the conquest. Heretofore the keynote of the American occupation had been to a large degree conciliation and moderation, with the idea of more or less dependence upon time to bring about a natural amalgamation once the initial steps had been taken. The 23d marked an abrupt change, and the new policy seemed to be the successor to the vigorous ideas of the *Osos*, as those who had formed the Bear Flag party at Sonoma were called. Since the conquest was begun with force, why not carry it to a logical conclusion?<sup>19</sup>

Fauntleroy was told to leave one-third of his men in Monterey and with the remainder to proceed to San Juan. There he would relieve the detachment of Frémont's battalion, so that Frémont could gather his whole force for the projected campaign in the south.<sup>20</sup> Fauntleroy, in compliance with his instructions, marched the next day, reaching San Juan about nine o'clock in the evening, "without dinner." The next morning, July 25, he set about the task of taking inventory, and putting his position in as defensible a state as possible.

... of the 10 guns that were earthed here, I have mounted 8.— 4 long 12's; one long 9; one long 4., and two 18 lb carronades. The long 9. is mounted on a field carriage which is in good repair, the others are on old ships carronade carriages, 3 of them without trucks. Still I think they will bear several discharges; and I have so placed them that the Enemy cant attack us without being raked.

I have collected from different parts of the buildings 17 kegs and one Barrel of good Cannon Powder; about 350 Musket Cartridges; 200 stand of grape of different sizes; about 500 Round shot, three fourths of them Copper and about 5000 small Copper grape shot: In the loft over the kitchen, a quantity of loose Powder and 9. of the Kegs were placed, evidently with the hope that we would blow ourselves up.<sup>21</sup>

This activity and the list of ordnance is interesting in light of statements made later by two Californians, Vallejo and Alvarado. They declared that

the Americans found no war supplies at San Juan because Castro had recovered them before Frémont arrived on July 17.<sup>22</sup>

Life in the little town took on a very militaristic appearance with the coming of the Dragoons. From the very first day an ordered routine was set in motion. Sentinels walking their posts by day and night, the coming and going of couriers and small parties, advertised alike the vigor of the commander and the importance he felt his small post to have. Since a purser never led an exciting existence on board ship and had less freedom of action, Fauntleroy's feelings in the matter are easy to understand. He now held an independent command in a dangerous position. Therefore he felt hampered by the lack of men and his constant plaint to headquarters was for reenforcements. He began these requests in his first report of July 25, and continued them through his letter of August 28, a few days before he was ordered to return to the *Savannah*.<sup>23</sup> He believed that the dignity of his position commanded several perquisites; and asked if he might have a surgeon to administer to his men, not that he apprehended sickness "but accident might occur which would render their aid necessary."<sup>24</sup> Refusal from headquarters to grant this favor on the excuse that there was no medical officer available did not daunt him, because three days later he made another request. This time he desired, in addition to the doctor, a clerk. "I have a great deal of writing to do, and in fact neglect much I would wish to do. I have not copied a letter I have written since I have been in command."<sup>25</sup>

A courier returned with a prompt reply:

Sir; Your communication of this date is recieved [sic], and in reply to the several requests therein contained, I have to state, that, by the army regulations, you are not entitled to a Clerk,—that, I have no more force to spare you, . . . I have no medical officer to spare you; but you can have as much medicine as Dr. Semple—who I believe is with you—thinks proper to administer, by making a Requisition on the Fleet Surgeon.<sup>26</sup>

Dr. Semple was a dentist.

Yet Fauntleroy should not be judged too harshly for his slightly pompous attitude, because his small command was holding a strategic position. It was important for several reasons: it was on the main road leading from the north to the south, where any hostile force would pass going in either direction; it was an outpost to the defenses of Monterey; it guarded the line of communication between the capital and the settlements to the north; it was in reality the southern outpost for the northern settlements; it was a guard post in the center of a territory which would serve as a point of departure for an enemy opening a campaign in the north and as a rallying point for a defeated enemy from the south; it was a central position for activities against marauders and Indians. Necessity demanded that an officer enthusiastic and vigorous in his duty should hold the post.

However pleasant it might have been to belong to an independent command, there were, in everyday life, many drawbacks which tried the men and

officers. Whether these were compensated for by the excitement of action and the beauties of the countryside, depended upon each man's nature. But the commander did his best to keep the men from thinking about such trivial details, by providing plenty of hard work; nor did he spare himself, for he declares that he did not take off his clothes for five days after leaving Monterey.<sup>27</sup> Small necessities which would satisfy the physical man's creature comforts, and which are an indispensable part in maintaining morale at a high level, were almost wholly wanting during the first days at San Juan. Rations were short. Beds were lacking. There were no mess boys, cooks, or servants. Utensils were limited to a few tin pans.<sup>28</sup> Evidently these needs were satisfied, but only one list of supplies has been found and it seems somewhat peculiar. On July 29, Mervine sent to the garrison: one pickaxe, two shovels, one crowbar, and one saw.<sup>29</sup>

Among the many worries which plagued the conscientious commander were the conduct and morale of his men. The enlisted personnel from the ships was the most troublesome. Whether the sailors tried to take advantage of land duty, hoping that discipline would be relaxed, or whether they could not stand the temptations of shore life, is not known, but on the 1st of August six men reported to headquarters in Monterey under charges of drunkenness, mutinous conduct, and insolence, which were preferred against them by Fauntleroy. Two were given summary punishment: Anderson, quarter gunner, received twelve lashes with the cat-o-nine-tails, and James Williamson, twelve with the colt.<sup>30</sup> Fauntleroy was annoyed with these men on two counts: he feared that their conduct would so disgust the civilians enrolled in the troop, that the latter would resign; and at the time Anderson became "beastly drunk," a large quantity of liquor was missed from the officers' mess.

The Dragoons had no sooner taken up their duties at San Juan than a new task which they had not contemplated was given them. They were informed that they were to herd the spare horses of the American forces at Monterey, which included the animals of Frémont's battalion.<sup>31</sup> The herd was driven to San Juan on July 27, by the detachment of Dragoons which had been left at Monterey.<sup>32</sup> There was one compensation for the additional labor, couriers with the latest news now stopped at the little town for fresh mounts.

Fear is a factor which must not be forgotten when the actions and correspondence of the American troops during the conquest are considered. If the Californians had enlisted under efficient leadership in an energetic defense of their country, they could have made the occupation by the United States forces a long drawn out and bloody affair. The American leaders were constantly beset by the specter of such concerted action and were, in the light of later events, constantly overestimating their opponents. This dread was the reason for many stringent orders being issued similar to the one given Fauntleroy on July 26. If arms were carried by anyone who was not an adherent of the American cause, such weapons were to be confiscated, and on the second



offense the person was to be imprisoned.<sup>33</sup> In part, apprehension was the cause of Fauntleroy's constant appeals for reinforcements and the reason why he received as many as he did. The largest group to join him was one of ten marines under Lieutenant Henry W. Queen. Indicative of Fauntleroy's importunities in the matter of man power, he declared in the same letter in which he acknowledged receipt of the order concerning the marines, that he would need a further reinforcement within a short time. He hoped Mervine would accommodate him and he desired to have included as many "countrymen . . . good riflemen" as possible.<sup>34</sup> He felt more than justified a few days later when Lieutenant McLane returned from a visit to Santa Cruz. The Lieutenant brought back news of a meeting which had been held by the Californians and in which they had expressed their desire to rally to Castro in either defeat or success. Fauntleroy felt he could not leave his position with its valuable matériel to make a demonstration in Santa Cruz without leaving an adequate guard. This he could not do lacking reinforcements. When Mervine told him that he was not expected to fight a major battle with Castro, should the latter appear, but to retreat upon the main force, Fauntleroy thought up new excuses.<sup>35</sup>

Parades and playing at soldiers had been the lot of the troop in the first few weeks of their service, but with the beginning of August there arrived an opportunity to test their mettle. Word was received by the small garrison that the wild Indians from the mountains near San José were raiding in force, and were making life miserable for the quiet folk of the valley. Livestock had been driven off, two women had been stolen from their firesides, while a man who had attempted to defend them had been nearly killed. On the morning of the 4th, the Dragoons saddled their mounts and marched for the Pueblo. Fauntleroy that night talked to the men who had lost property. Enlisting their aid, he was able to form a plan of procedure. He, with his troop, was to march the next morning to the main pass of the mountains near Santa Clara, while the civilian auxiliaries were to watch other possible exits from the highlands. The following day everything occurred as planned. It took the Dragoons until noon to reach their destination some twenty miles distant from the Pueblo of San José. Once there they had to wait some hours before any word of the Indians' movements reached them. Finally a man who had followed the trail into the mountains brought word that the Indians would soon appear. Fauntleroy thereupon chose a favorable spot for the coming skirmish and placed his men in battle array. About twenty minutes after sundown, the marauders appeared, driving a large herd of horses. The Dragoons waited until the enemy came within striking distance, then made their attack. The Indians proved wily opponents, for only a few shots had rung out before they had slipped from their mounts and disappeared into the brush. So quickly did they melt into the bushes and darkness that the Americans could be sure of only one dusky form falling under their rifle balls. The return fire

was wild, causing no injury except one slight wound to a horse. Nightfall prevented the Dragoons from following up their initial movements. Fauntleroy was fearful that in the poor light his men might shoot one another, so he sounded the recall. Gathering in the captured horses, the command returned to the Pueblo.

Next morning, Fauntleroy went for the alcalde and turned the recovered horses over to him. With a feeling of pride undoubtedly, the Dragoon commander told him to restore the recovered property to the proper owners. Having finished this business, Fauntleroy led his troop out of the Pueblo about eleven o'clock and arrived back at the post in San Juan late that night.<sup>36</sup>

Once again the routine life of the garrison was taken up by the troop, with horse herding a prominent part of the day's task. It was sometime during these first days of August, whether before or after the fight is not known, that Dr. Robert Semple asked for his discharge from the troop to edit a newspaper in conjunction with Walter Colton, in Monterey.<sup>37</sup> The first issue is dated August 15 and appeared on that date, according to Colton's later statement, but a copy was sent to Fauntleroy by Mervine on August 13. Evidently Mervine was given special consideration in this first publication of the first newspaper in California.<sup>38</sup>

The pieces of ordnance which Fauntleroy had mounted also enter the stage again. The fort which the American forces were building in Monterey was taking shape and it was desired to have the San Juan guns among those which were to frown upon incoming naval visitors. Fauntleroy thought that some at least were worthy of this distinction, because he wrote to Mervine that as soon as ox carts were provided he would send to headquarters "two beautiful long Brass 18 pounders."<sup>39</sup> These finally arrived safely in Monterey on August 16 and 17, although Fauntleroy was somewhat dubious because he could obtain no lashing and the carts were "weak." It was for this reason that he declined to send the powder which had also been requested.<sup>40</sup>

Hardly had the guns been sent off when Fauntleroy received word from headquarters that the Indians were once more raiding, this time across the mountains in the Santa Cruz area.<sup>41</sup> The next night, which was Friday, August 14, twenty-three Dragoons filed through the darkness on their way to the town of Santa Cruz. When they reached their destination the following day, the commander called together all the citizens. First he read aloud the proclamation of Commodore Stockton, the act of Congress and the proclamation of the United States in relation to the war with Mexico. Then he made a speech exhorting all true Americans to rally to their flag and to support its cause with undying fervor. The little program was well received, and especially so by the native Californians, somewhat to Fauntleroy's surprise, it appears. Their kindness and attention was shown when the priest of the Mission offered two large guns to be used in a salute to the flag. Fauntleroy

declined the proffered ordnance, saying that it was not necessary and that he did not have time to use them. He proved his words by marching for the pass to Santa Clara and making camp that night about eight miles distant from Santa Cruz. Next day he went on through the mountains "to the Pass." There he met Captain Watmough from Yerba Buena. The latter was the leader of a troop of horse organized similarly to the Dragoons and for the same purpose. The company from the north numbered seventeen and had been sent to help Fauntleroy trap the marauders. The whole group returned to the mountains, where for two days they searched in vain for fresh signs of the Indians. Even the enlisting of the Californian guide who had given such important aid in the previous expedition, did not produce a more favorable result. Finally they were forced to conclude that the Indians had retreated into the rugged highland districts to the north toward Yerba Buena and the sea. Food for the men had given out almost as soon as they had entered the mountains, and deer which they shot as they went along furnished the only nourishment for several meals. At last, with men and mounts much fatigued, the search was given up, and the weary Dragoons plodded into San Juan early on the morning of August 19.<sup>42</sup> Yet Fauntleroy did not feel that the excursion had been a failure because the people with whom he had come in contact appreciated the efforts which were being made to protect their lives and property.

The night before Fauntleroy and the main portion of the Dragoons returned to San Juan, a Mr. Benjamin Washburn arrived at the town. He had been taken prisoner by Castro and carried south. He brought news of Castro's flight to Mexico and the breakup of organized resistance in the southern area. Queen, who had been left in command of the small garrison, immediately ordered four men out in pursuit of the party which had accompanied Washburn north. The darkness hid the Californians, however, so no captures were made. Next day Washburn journeyed in to headquarters.<sup>43</sup> Orders were at once sent out that the men returning from Castro's camp were not to be taken prisoner if they would give their parole. Mervine, as an afterthought, warned Fauntleroy to be careful of the reckless expenditure of percussion caps; there were few on hand and no supply depot near.<sup>44</sup>

Again the Dragoons settled into the dull routine of a sedentary life. They may have anticipated excitement when an order was received from headquarters warning them to be on the watch for horse thieves, but this anticipation seems not to have been realized.<sup>45</sup> Fauntleroy relieved the monotony by making a short visit to the city of Monterey. Later Lieutenant Queen did the same thing, having business to do for the troop. The enlisted personnel of the detachment did not have such advantages, because members of the command had been expressly forbidden to visit Monterey except by special permission of headquarters. It is interesting to speculate as to why Monterey was "off bounds."<sup>46</sup>

Lieutenant Queen had not returned before a courier from Montgomery in the north gave promise of more stirring times. He bore news of fresh outrages by Indians to the north in the neighborhood of San José. They had retreated towards the San Joaquin Valley, and Montgomery wanted Fauntleroy to join Watmough in the chase. Fauntleroy added a note to the despatches, saying that he would be ready to leave the next day; that he awaited formal orders. Would Mervine kindly send Lieutenant Queen back immediately, and would he send a reenforcement; could Dr. Wilson accompany the expedition?<sup>47</sup> All requests were granted; Fauntleroy was to proceed without delay to cooperate with Watmough; Surgeon Joseph Wilson was to be taken if he could be of any assistance "without instruments"; Lieutenant Queen was ordered to return and would have with him the Monterey police guard for reenforcement, Sergeant James Thompson and Private T. M. Cecil.<sup>48</sup> Little is known about the details of the expedition. Fauntleroy seems to have left no report, or if he did, it has not yet come to light. The Dragoons departed August 29 or 30 and were gone fifteen days. They had at least one brush with the Indians, killing three or four, and recovering an undetermined number of horses. Job Francis Dye, the guide for Fauntleroy's troop, relates one short anecdote about the trip. On the return:

we saw what we thought were 3 elk coming thro' the tule—I told Fauntleroy to stop a moment & I would kill one—I went to the spot where I thought they would come out within gun shot & waited, & out came three large grizzly bears within 20 steps of me, and I afoot. I shot the largest one & killed it—it ran abt 20 or 30 steps & fell dead. The Company then came—they were abt 60 strong—everyman fired his musket at the other two bears, and not one hit. Many of those soldiers in fact were sailors from a man of war that were not skillful with the use of the musket.<sup>49</sup>

Meanwhile, events were moving forward at San Juan, where the main interest was in transferring the serviceable powder and shot to Monterey. By September 7, this had been accomplished.<sup>50</sup> Also Mervine received word to make ready the *Savannah* for sea. Whereupon he ordered Queen and Fauntleroy, when the latter should return, to report on board ship. Captain Granville P. Swift of Frémont's battalion relieved Queen at San Juan.<sup>51</sup> Then San Juan became the center of an avalanche of orders; Fauntleroy was told to turn over all property and men not belonging to the *Savannah* to McLane; Swift was to be relieved by McLane, when the Dragoons returned, and he was to join Captain Henry L. Ford to return south—the two had come north in pursuit of Alvarado and De la Torre; Queen was ordered back on September 12, to relieve Swift in command of San Juan; Swift was ordered to deliver the property to Queen and join Ford; Queen was ordered to join Ford; Ford was ordered to Sutter's Fort to aid in the defense of the Sacramento area against an invasion of the Walla Walla Indians.<sup>52</sup> The last orders were issued when a note sent post-haste by Montgomery arrived at Monterey.<sup>53</sup>

Fauntleroy returned to San Juan on the 14th just in time to take part in the stirring drama. The men of Ford's and Swift's companies had not moved, and seemed unlikely to in the future. They considered that their obligations to Frémont had been fulfilled and wanted an understanding about their new—to them—status in the forces of the United States. Fauntleroy felt that his men were too worn by the expedition to start immediately and was not sure whether he should move if Ford did not. Thereupon both Fauntleroy and Ford wrote letters to Mervine explaining matters. Mervine was "astonished and grieved" when he received these missives from men he thought were traveling by forced marches to the north. Although he replied that the men who went would receive the usual army pay and told Fauntleroy to lead any who were willing to defend their firesides, nobody seems to have left San Juan.<sup>54</sup> It was soon known that the Indian invasion was not an armed one.

The last days of the Dragoon troop were numbered now. Although Fauntleroy appealed to Stockton to be allowed to remain on shore duty, the Commodore informed Mervine that he would have to assume the responsibility if his purser were left behind. On September 18, the following communication was sent to Fauntleroy: "Sir: You will repair on board the U. S. Frigate Savannah, and resume your duties this evening."<sup>55</sup>

#### NOTES

1. The phrase "Horse Marines" has a real meaning, although to most people it conjures up the old tune "I'm Captain Jenks of the Horse Marines" with the central figure the mythical character who swung "the ladies in their 'teens." There have been many organizations of true horse marines in the history of that service, and the last mounted outfit of United States Marines was disbanded but a few months ago after serving in China since 1909. *Time*, XXXI, 10, New York, March 7, 1938. The usual connotation of any seafarer who goes forth to conquer on a horse is the one used here.

2. Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of California*, San Francisco, 1884-1890, V, 230-35. The footnotes supply citations to the principal authorities. Sloat to Castro, July 7, 1846, U. S. Navy Department Archives, Pacific Squadron Letters, Sloat's Cruise, 1844-1846, MSS.

3. Sloat to Montgomery, July 6, 1846, *ibid*.

4. California Pioneer Society, Archives, copied for Bancroft Library, 1874, MSS, p. 231. Sloat's report to Bancroft, July 31, 1846, Pacific Squadron Letters, Sloat's Cruise, brings out more forcefully the thesis of the introduction: "Deeming Purser D. Fauntleroy well qualified for such service, I directed him on the 8th to organize a company of 35 Dragoons from the volunteers from the Ships citizens on shore, to reconnoiter the Country—Keep open the communication between Monterey and San Francisco and to prevent the people of the Country from being robbed etc. etc. . . ."

5. Sloat to Bancroft, *ibid*.

6. Muster-roll Fauntleroy's Dragoons, California Pioneer Archives, pp. 239-40.

7. Only four of the men seemed to have been in California before 1846: Albert G. Toomes, 2nd Lt., arrived 1841; Job F. Dye, Guide, arrived 1832; Juan P. Gulnac, private, son of William Gulnac, who settled at San José in 1833; Lewis Wignam, private, arrived 1845. The Pioneer index of Bancroft has been used to determine the status and history of separate men. All of the men in the troops are mentioned, although the majority, evidently sailors from the fleet, have no data after their names except that they served with Fauntleroy.



8. California Pioneer Archives, pp. 229-30. There is no date on the English copy, but *Julio 13 de 1846* is given at the foot of the Spanish one.

9. There is a question as to the exact date of Semple's enlistment. The muster-roll has it July 15; but there is some reason to doubt that Semple was in Monterey on that date because he was one of the Bears, leading the party which captured Robert Ridley in Yerba Buena on July 2, Bancroft, *California*, V, 177-78. From E. M. Kern's letter to his brother on July 27, 1846, reproduced in Oscar Lewis, *California in 1846*, San Francisco, 1934, it would seem that Semple went to New Helvetia with Frémont on July 6, 1846. Frederick Walpole in his book, *Four Years in the Pacific in Her Majesty's Ship "Collingwood," from 1844 to 1848*, London, 1849, mentions Semple specifically as arriving in Monterey on July 19 with Frémont's men.

10. Entry for July 14 in both logs of the U.S.S. *Levant*, 1845-1846, and U.S.S. *Savannah*, 1845-1847, National Archives, Washington, D. C., MSS.

11. Captain William Mervine had been designated as commander of the United States land forces in California by Sloat as soon as possession had been consummated and the formal organization was set up.

12. Sloat to Bancroft, July 31, 1846, Pacific Squadron Letters, Sloat's Cruise.

13. John Charles Frémont, *Memoirs of My Life . . .*, Chicago and New York, 1897, pp. 531-32; Sloat to Bancroft, July 31, 1846, Pacific Squadron Letters, Sloat's Cruise; Franklin Tuthill, *History of California*, San Francisco, 1866, pp. 181-82.

14. Henry Jubilee Bee, *Recollections of History of California*, Bancroft Library, MS, p. 32.

15. Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo, *Historia de California*, Bancroft Library, MSS, V, 171.

16. José de los Santos and Luis C. German, *Sucesos en California*, Bancroft Library, MS, pp. 28-29.

17. William Mervine, Personal Log, 1845-1847, Navy Department Archives, MS, entry for July 19, 1846.

18. Walpole, *Four Years*, II, 215. Fauntleroy must have had an engaging personality. In a letter written in 1844, a merchant in Callao described him to Larkin as "a perfect gentleman." Broloskey to Larkin, July 19, 1844, in Thomas O. Larkin, Documents for the History of California, 1839-1856, MSS, Bancroft Library.

19. See proclamations of the two men, Sloat, "Proclamation to the Inhabitants of California," July 7, 1846; Stockton, "Address to the People of California," July 28, 1846, California Historical Society, *Quarterly*, III, 188-90. Also the reports of the two: Sloat to Bancroft, July 31, 1846, Pacific Squadron Letters, Sloat's Cruise; Stockton to Mason, Feb. 18, 1847, U. S. Navy Department Archives, Pacific Squadron Letters, Stockton's Cruise, 1846-1847, MSS.

20. Stockton to Fauntleroy, July 23, 1846, California Pioneer Archives.

21. Fauntleroy to Mervine, July 25, 1846, U. S. Navy Department Archives, William Mervine, Letters Received Book, 1846, MS. Carronades are short iron guns having no trunnions, and are used principally on ships. They throw a heavy ball a short distance and hence were used especially in broadsides.

22. Vallejo, *Hist. Calif.*, V, 170; Juan Bautista Alvarado, *Historia de California*, Bancroft Library, MSS, V, 232.

23. Fauntleroy to Mervine, July 25, and August 28, 1846, Mervine, Letters Received Book.

24. Fauntleroy to Mervine, July 28, 1846, Mervine, *ibid*.

25. Fauntleroy to Mervine, August 1, 1846, *ibid*.

26. Mervine to Fauntleroy, August 1, 1846, U. S. Navy Department Archives, William Mervine, Letters Sent Book, 1846, MS.

27. Fauntleroy to Mervine, July 28, 1846, Mervine, Letters Received Book.

28. Fauntleroy to Mervine, August 1, 1846, *ibid*.

29. Mervine to Fauntleroy, July 29, 1846, Mervine, Letters Sent Book.

30. Fauntleroy to Mervine, Private Letter, August 1, 1846, Mervine, Letters Received Book; Mervine, Personal Log entries for August 3 and 4, 1846. The colt is a knotted rope's end.

31. Mervine to Fauntleroy, July 25, 1846, Mervine, Letters Sent Book.

32. Mervine to Fauntleroy, July 26, 1846, *ibid.* Fauntleroy to Mervine, July 28, 1846, Mervine, Letters Received Book.

33. Stockton to Fauntleroy, July 26, 1846, California Pioneer Archives, pp. 213-14.

34. There is a complete section of correspondence covering this matter of sending the marines to Fauntleroy, consisting of seven letters between Mervine and Fauntleroy, Mervine and Queen, Stockton and Mervine, and Stockton and Fauntleroy; they are in the Mervine Letters Books and the California Pioneer Archives.

35. Fauntleroy to Mervine, August 1, 1846, Mervine, Letters Received Book; Mervine to Fauntleroy, August 1, 1846, Mervine, Letters Sent Book.

36. Fauntleroy to Mervine, August 7, 1846, Mervine, Letters Received Book. The only direct indication as to what was meant by "main pass" is in a letter from Mervine to John B. Montgomery, saying that the action occurred in "a Mountain pass between Sta. Clara and Yerba Buena." Mervine to Montgomery, August 9, 1846, Mervine, Letters Sent Book. A letter of August 19, cited later, in which Fauntleroy describes another expedition between Santa Cruz and Santa Clara, would lead one to believe that he means the pass from Los Gatos to Santa Cruz. The distances are much exaggerated in Walter Colton, *Three Years in California*, Cincinnati, 1850, p. 32.

37. Semple to Fauntleroy, August, 1846, California Pioneer Archives, pp. 225-27.

38. Mervine to Fauntleroy, August 13, 1846. Mervine, Letters Sent Book. It is an interesting question just when general distribution did take place. Mervine also notes in his personal log that the "first paper" appeared on the 13th.

39. Fauntleroy to Mervine, August 7, 1846, Mervine, Letters Received Book.

40. Fauntleroy to Mervine, August 13, 1846, *ibid.*; Personal Log, entries for August 12 and 17.

41. Mervine to Fauntleroy, August 12, 1846, Mervine, Letters Sent Book.

42. Fauntleroy to Mervine, August 19, 1846, Mervine, Letters Received Book.

43. Queen to Mervine, August 19, 1846, *ibid.*

44. Mervine to Fauntleroy, August 19, 1846, Mervine, Letters Sent Book.

45. Mervine to Fauntleroy, August 22, 1846, *ibid.*

46. Mervine to Fauntleroy, August 13, 1846, *ibid.*

47. Fauntleroy to Mervine, August 28, 1846, Mervine, Letters Received Book.

48. Mervine to Fauntleroy, August 29, 1846, Mervine, Letters Sent Book.

49. Job Francis Dye, *Recollections of California*, Bancroft Library, MS, p. 19; Bancroft, *California*, V, 294, mentions only Watmough on this expedition.

50. Mervine, Personal Log, entry for September 7, 1846.

51. Mervine to Fauntleroy, September 4 and 5, 1846, Mervine, Letters Sent Book; Mervine to Queen, September 4 and 5, 1846, *ibid.*; Mervine to Swift, September 5, 1846, *ibid.*

52. See Mervine, Letters Sent Book, September 11 and 12, 1846.

53. Mervine to Stockton, September 12, 1846, Mervine, Letters Sent Book; Mervine to Montgomery, September 12, 1846, *ibid.*

54. Mervine to Fauntleroy, September 14, 1846, Mervine, Letters Sent Book; Mervine to Ford, September 14, 1846, *ibid.*

55. Stockton to Mervine, September 17, 1846, Mervine, Letters Received Book; Mervine to Fauntleroy, September 18, 1846, Mervine, Letters Sent Book.