

CHAPTER II

THE UTE CAMPAIGN OF 1879

AFFAIRS AT THE WHITE RIVER AGENCY, 1879—MEEKER'S CALL FOR TROOPS—GENERAL SHERMAN'S REPORT—FIGHT AT MILK CREEK—THE MEEKER MASSACRE—COLONEL MERRITT'S COMMAND AT THE WHITE RIVER—RETURN OF THE CAPTIVES—ON "ACTIVE SERVICE" WITH COMPANY C—THE "PITKIN GUARDS".

The year 1879 was an eventful one in the history of Colorado, and during its course there occurred an uprising among the Ute Indians of the White River Agency, near the present town of Meeker, Colorado, which has since become known as the "Meeker Massacre". It is not within the province of this history to enter into a detailed discussion of the events that led up to the outbreak, and I shall, therefore, merely outline those happenings that have a direct bearing on the uprising and the subsequent military operations.

Early in 1878, Mr. N. C. Meeker, a venerable philanthropist and one of the founders of the Union colony at Greeley, Colorado, was, at his own urgent request, appointed agent for the White River Utes. Meeker was a sincere and honest man, and was thoroughly imbued with the idea of educating, christianizing, and making the Indians self-supporting instead of idle wards of the government. However, the Utes did not take kindly to his theories. They preferred hunting to farming, a tepee to a house, and as for education, they would have none of it. Though kind and just, Meeker was very methodical in all his ways, and when seriously opposed in any undertaking he became obstinate and unyielding. The Indians refused to accept the new order of things, and every effort of Meeker to bring them under the yoke caused trouble and dissension. His obstinacy had much to do with the ill-will of the savages, and by the summer of 1879 the situation had become ominous. The Indians were sullen and offensive, and at one time Meeker was actually assaulted by Chief Johnson. He was rescued just in time by some white employees of the agency, and at last he began to realize the magnitude of the task that he had undertaken and the seriousness of the situation. On the 15th of September Meeker made a report to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs of the assault on himself by Chief Johnson, and stated that his life and the lives of his family were not safe and that he wanted protection immediately. Orders were forthwith sent to Lieutenant-General Sheridan at Chicago, Ill., to cause assistance to be dispatched without delay to Mr. Meeker at the White River Agency. The nearest army post was Fort Steele on the Union Pacific Railroad near Rawlins, Wyoming, and Major T. T. Thornburgh, the commanding officer, was directed "to move with a sufficient number of troops to the White River Ute Agency, Colorado, under special instructions."

The subsequent course of events in the campaign have been very completely covered in General Sherman's report to the Secretary of War, Volume No. 1, 1879, and from which I quote the following:

"Major Thornburgh moved from Fort Steele, September 21, 1879, with the effective strength of three companies of cavalry and one of infantry, about two

hundred men, with rations for thirty days and forage for fifteen days; a force which was considered by everybody as sufficient for the purpose. Mr. Meeker had only asked for one hundred men. Major Thornburgh reported back from a camp on Bear (Yampa) River, under date of September 26, that he had met some Ute chiefs who seemed friendly and promised to go with him to the agency. 'They say they did not understand why we had come,' and he did not anticipate trouble. With a knowledge now of the result, and to throw as much light on the immediate cause of this war as possible, I give the last letters which passed between Major Thornburgh and Mr. Meeker; and I will here record my judgment, and no man could have done better in life or met death with more heroism."

The letters referred to by General Sherman are as follows:

Headquarters White River Expedition,
Camp on Fortification Creek, September 25, 1879.

Sir: In obedience to instructions from the General of the Army, I am en route to your agency, and expect to arrive there on the 29th instant, for the purpose of affording you any assistance in my power in regulating your affairs, and to make arrests at your suggestion, and to hold as prisoners such of your Indians as you desire, until investigations are made by your department.

I have heard nothing definite from your agency for ten days, and do not know what state of affairs exists, whether the Indians will leave at my approach or show hostilities. I send this letter by Mr. Lowry, one of my guides, and desire you communicate with me as soon as possible, giving me all the information in your power, in order that I may know what course I am to pursue.

If practicable, meet me on the road at the earliest moment.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

T. T. Thornburgh,
Major, Fourth Infantry,
Commanding Expedition.

Mr. Meeker, Indian Agent, White River Agency, Colo.

White River Agency, Colo., September 27, 1879.

Sir: Understanding that you are on the way hither with United States troops, I send a messenger, Mr. Eskridge, and two Indians, Henry (interpreter) and John Ayersly, to inform you that the Indians are greatly excited, and wish you to stop at some convenient camping place, and then that you and five soldiers of your command come into the agency, when a talk and a better understanding can be had.

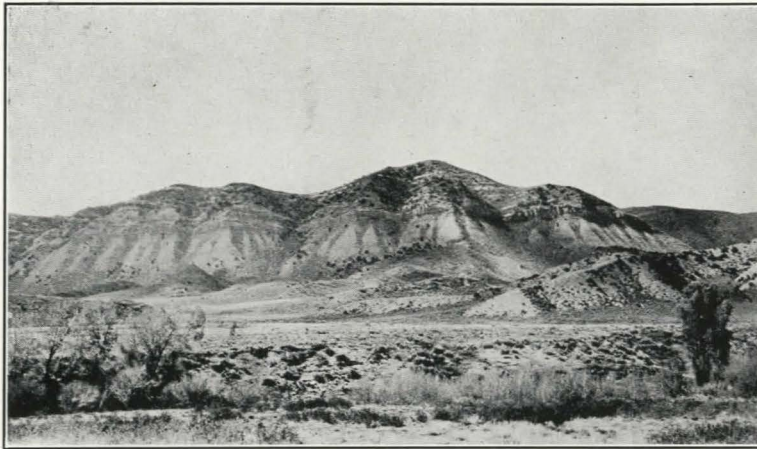
This I agree to, but I do not propose to order your movements, but it seems for the best.

The Indians seem to consider the advance of the troops as a declaration of real war. In this I am laboring to undeceive them, and at the same time to convince them they cannot do whatever they please. The first object now is to allay apprehension.

Respectfully,

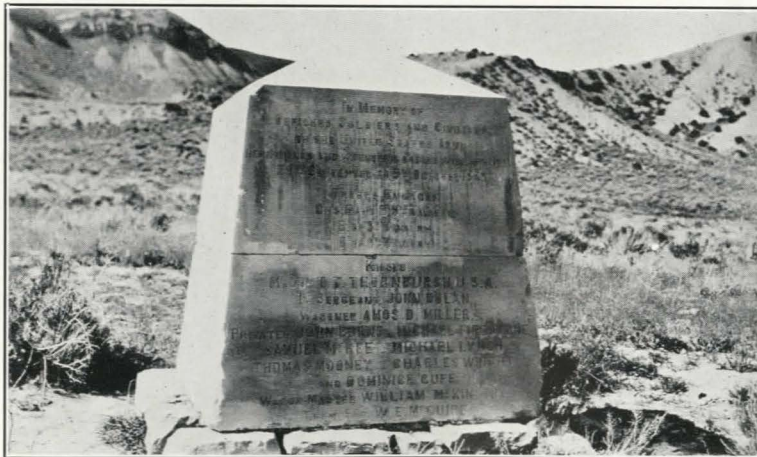
N. C. Meeker
Indian Agent.

To Major Thornburgh, or Commander United States Troops between Bear and White Rivers, Colo.



A GENERAL VIEW OF THE THORNBURGH BATTLEFIELD

Trees in foreground are on the banks of Milk Creek. Monument in middle foreground marks center of rifle pits. Indians were in ambush on hills below the high bluffs. Battlefield is about 25 miles south of Craig, Colorado.



MONUMENT TO THE KILLED AND WOUNDED ON
THORNBURGH BATTLEFIELD

The inscription on the face reads: "In memory of Officers, Soldiers and Civilians of the United States Army here killed and wounded in battle with the Utes, 29th September to 5th October, 1879. Troops engaged, Co's. F and D, 5th Cavalry; E of 3rd Cavalry; D of 9th Cavalry. Killed: Major T. T. Thornburgh, U. S. A., 1st Sergeant John Dolan, Wagoner Amos D. Miller, Privates John Burns, Michael Firestone, Samuel McKee, Thomas Mooney, Charles Wright and Dominick Cuff, Wagonmaster William McKinstry, Teamster W. E. McGuire."

Headquarters White River Expedition,
Camp on Williams Fork, September 27, 1879.

Sir: Your letter of this date just received. I will move tomorrow with part of my command to Milk River, or some good location and will come in as desired with five men and a guide. Mr. Eskridge will remain to guide me to the agency.

I will reach your agency some time on the 29th instant.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

T. T. Thornburgh,
Major, Fourth Infantry
Commanding Expedition.

Mr. Meeker, United States Indian Agent, White River Agency.

Headquarters White River Expedition
Camp on Deer Creek, September 28, 1879.

Sir: I have, after due deliberation, decided to modify my plans as communicated in my letter of the 27th instant in the following particulars:

I shall move with my entire command to some convenient camp near, and within striking distance of, your agency, reaching such point during the 29th. I shall then halt and encamp the troops and proceed to the agency with my guide and five soldiers, as communicated in my letter of the 27th instant.

Then and there I will be ready to have a conference with you and the Indians, so that an understanding may be arrived at and my course of action determined. I have carefully considered whether or not it would be advisable to have my command at a point as distant as that desired by the Indians who were in my camp last night, and have reached the conclusion that under my orders, which require me to march this command to the agency, I am not at liberty to leave it at a point where it would not be available in case of trouble. You are authorized to say for me to the Indians that my course of conduct is entirely dependent on them. Our desire is to avoid trouble, and we have not come for war.

I requested you in my letter of the 26th to meet me on the road before I reached the agency. I renew my request that you do so, and further desire that you bring such chiefs as may wish to accompany you.

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

T. T. Thornburgh,
Major, Fourth Infantry,
Commanding Expedition.

Mr. Meeker, United States Indian Agent, White River Agency, Colo.

United States Indian Service,
White River Agency, September 29, 1879—1 P. M.

Dear Sir: I expect to leave in the morning with Douglass and Serrick to meet you. Things are peaceable, and Douglass flies the United States flag. If you have trouble in getting through the canon today let me know *in (what) force*. We

have been on guard three nights and shall be to-night, not because we know there is danger, but because there may be. I like your last programme. It is based on true military principles.

Most truly, Yours,
N. C. Meeker,
Indian Agent.

Continuing General Sherman's report:

"I give these letters entire because I believed that Major Thornburgh acted from beginning to end exactly right. So did Mr. Meeker, and the crimes afterwards committed rest wholly on the Indians.

"On the 29th of September Major Thornburgh's command was attacked by about 300 well-armed warriors at a most difficult part of the road, about twenty miles north of the Agency. Major Thornburgh and ten of his men were killed; three officers and twenty men were wounded, when the command under Captain Payne fell back to the wagons, and made preparations to defend themselves. Captain Payne succeeded in sending a messenger back to the railroad, with a report of the fight—its general results, and a call for assistance. General Crook instantly ordered Colonel Wesley Merritt, of the Fifth Cavalry, then at Fort D. A. Russell,¹ with 530 men, by rail to Rawlins, and thence to the relief of this command. By most extraordinary exertions and a hard march, Colonel Merritt reached the beleaguered command on the morning of October 5, and found that Captain Dodge's company of the Ninth Cavalry had most opportunely arrived the day before from the Middle Park. Other troops were hurried forward by Generals Sheridan and Crook, re-enforcing Merritt to about a thousand effectives, when he, after providing for the wounded and dead, pushed on to the agency, which he reached on the 11th, finding it burned down, and the murdered bodies of Mr. Meeker and six employees, having buried three others on the road. The Indians had all gone south toward Grand River, carrying with them Mrs. Meeker, Miss Meeker, Mrs. Price, and her two children.

"As soon as the re-enforcements en route overtook him, Colonel Merritt began his pursuit south, over mountains impassable to anything but men, horses, and pack animals; but before he had reached the crest of the first mountain, he was overtaken by a dispatch of which the following is a copy:

Headquarters Army of the United States,
Washington, D. C., October 13, 1879.

General P. H. Sheridan,
Commanding Division, Chicago, Ill.:

The honorable Secretary of the Interior has, this 10:30 a. m., called with a dispatch, given at length below, which is communicated for your information, and which should go for what it is worth to Generals Crook and Merritt. The latter, on the spot, can tell if the hostiles have ceased fighting. If so, General Merritt should go in every event to the agency to ascertain the actual condition of facts. All Indians who oppose must be cleared out of the way if they resist. If they surrender their arms and ponies, they should be held as prisoners, to be disposed of by superior orders.

The Secretary of the Interior will send a special agent at once to Ouray, who is believed to be honest and our friend. He may prevent the Southern Utes from being involved, and the Interior Department can befriend him afterward by showing favor to some of his special friends.

¹ Now Fort Francis E. Warren, Wyo.

But the murders of the agent and servants must be punished, as also those who fought and killed Major Thornburgh and men.

Please acknowledge receipt.

W. T. Sherman,
General.
(Inclosure by telegraph.)

Los Pinos Indian Agency, Colorado.
October 12, 1879—1:50 P. M.

Employee Brady and escort of Indians, just arrived from White River, reports Utes recognized and obeyed Ouray's order; withdrew, and will fight no more unless forced to do so. If soldiers are now stopped, trouble can be settled by peace commission to investigate facts and let blame rest where it may. This will save life, expense, and distress, if it can be accomplished.

Later: 1:30 P. M. (?)—Runner just from Southern Ute Agency, with letter from agent. Council held; Utes will abide Ouray's request; want peace; will stay at home, and take no part in White River trouble; and request Ouray to inform them of their decision.

Stanley,
Agent.

I concur in and indorse the above.

Ouray
Head Chief of Utes.

Headquarters Military Division of the Missouri,
Chicago, Ill., October 13, 1879.

General W. T. Sherman,
Washington, D. C.

Your dispatch of this date this moment received, and will be forwarded immediately to General Crook, with orders to carry out your instructions therein set forth. A copy will also be sent to General Pope.

P. H. Sheridan
Lieutenant-General.

“Colonel Merritt construed these dispatches as limiting his action to White River, and accordingly returned to the neighborhood of the burned agency, established his camp, and there awaited the result of the negotiations begun by order of the honorable Secretary of the Interior.

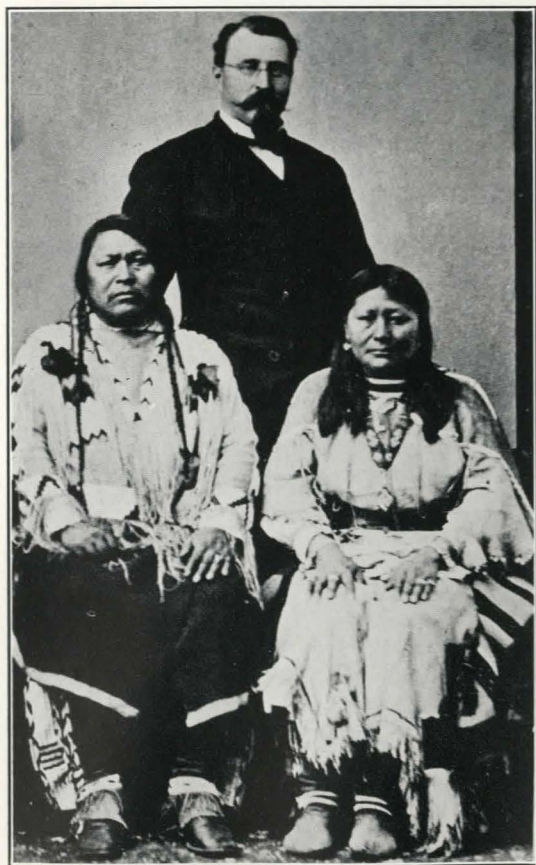
“Whilst so awaiting, Colonel Merritt, on the 20th of October, sent forward two companies of cavalry, under Captain Wessells, and Lieutenant Hall, with a party of scouts to reconnoiter roads toward the summit between White and Grand Rivers. Lieutenant Weir, of the Ordnance, a fine young officer, asked and obtained leave to accompany Lieutenant Hall. When about twenty miles out, Lieutenant Weir and William Humme, chief of scouts, rode to one side to hunt deer, encountered a picket party of Indians. Shots were exchanged, and both Lieutenant Weir and Humme were killed. Their bodies were afterwards recovered. This party of Indians have since been met by Mr. Adams, the special agent, and insist they had no purpose to fight; that they were simply watching the movements of Merritt's troops; that Mr. Humme fired first, killing one of their party, when they

in turn killed both Humme and Lieutenant Weir. The sad fate of this young officer is specially deplored by a very large circle of friends.

"Meantime great alarm pervaded all parts of Colorado, and was spreading to New Mexico and Wyoming. Reports of the wildest character came pouring in from places a thousand miles away from any real danger, but Generals Sheridan, Crook and Pope, knowing the proclivity of Indians to war, and the intimate relations of the four bands of Utes, numbering 4,164 souls, of whom about 800 are skillful, brave warriors, made immediate preparations for every contingency. Colonel Merritt's force at White River was strengthened to about 1,500 men. Colonel Mackenzie with six companies of the Fourth Cavalry was brought rapidly from Fort Clark, Texas, to Fort Garland, Colorado, and reenforced by other troops belonging to the Department of the Missouri to about 1,500 men, and Colonel Hatch, of the Ninth Cavalry, with about 450 men from New Mexico, was ordered to Fort Lewis, Pagosa, Colo. The following dispatch will show the objects aimed at, and are the 'orders' existing at this moment of time:

Headquarters of the Army,
Washington, D. C., October 24, 1879.

General P. H. Sheridan,
Commanding Division, Chicago, Ill.:



GENERAL CHARLES ADAMS,
CHIEF OURAY AND HIS WIFE, CHIPETA

I have received your three dispatches of yesterday, giving account of the killing of Lieutenant Weir and of the strength of your forces at White River, Forts Garland and Lewis. All these seem strong enough and are well commanded. Let all preparations, proceed, and be ready the moment I give the word to pitch in. Should Agent Adams fail in his mission I understand that the civil authorities will stand aside and the military will take absolute control of this whole Ute question and settle it for good and all. Meantime, humanity to the captive women and the friendly Utes, even of the White River Agency, justifies this seeming waste of time.

W. T. Sherman,
General.

"All the world now knows that the special agent, General Charles Adams, of Colorado, appointed by the Secretary of the Interior to conduct these negotiations with the hostile Utes, has partially succeeded in his mission; has obtained the surrender of Mrs. and Miss Meeker, Mrs. Price and her two

children who are already safe with their friends. He is now supposed to be again with the hostiles on Grand River, endeavoring to effect the other conditions required of the Utes by the honorable Secretary of the Interior, who is primarily responsible for the entire management of the whole case. I certainly applaud the courage and energy thus far displayed by General Adams, and hope he will fully and completely succeed in his praiseworthy mission, and yet believe that prudence demands that military preparations and precautions shall not slacken. Thus far we have lost eleven citizens, two officers, and twelve soldiers killed, and 41 wounded. The Indians admit a loss of 39 warriors killed, so that they have not much reason to boast."

General Adam's efforts to secure the release of the white women captured by the Utes at the agency were greatly aided by the whole-hearted and generous assistance given by Chief Ouray and his noble wife Chipeta. Says Frank Hall in his *History of Colorado*, "The captives were surrendered, and under the protection of Captains Cline and Sherman, were taken to Ouray's camp, where they arrived three days later. The sturdy old chief and his noble sympathetic wife, Chipeta, received them with open arms and did everything in their power for their comfort."

On orders from Washington Generals Adams and Hatch and Chief Ouray were constituted a commission to investigate the out-break. The investigation was long and tedious, and in the end proved to be a fruitless effort. None of the guilty Indians were punished and at the insistent demand of public opinion in Colorado the Utes were finally moved to a reservation in Utah. Meanwhile Merritt's troops remained in camp at the Agency awaiting the outcome of the inquiry.

The news of the Meeker massacre and Thornburgh's reverse created considerable consternation throughout the country, and it was apprehended that these startling events would be immediately followed by a general uprising of the Ute tribes and a long, desolating war waged upon the western and southwestern borders of the state. Under this alarm, petitions for arms and ammunition poured in to the Governor's office from all the settlements. Such stores as the state armory contained were immediately sent to the exposed settlements, and requisition made upon the Federal government for more. Two companies of the Colorado National Guard nearest the scene of the outbreak, C Company (Pitkin Guard) of Lake City and F Company (Downer Guard) of Saguache, were called into active service and employed on scouting duties in the Uncompahgre Valley and patrolling the exposed settlements. To quote from the Adjutant General's report of 1880: "The emergency being great, and the necessity for a more complete organization of the citizens for self protection urgent, Major General D. J. Cook was ordered to the field for that purpose. During his entire stay on the border he was effectively aided by Captain Richard's command (Company C, of Lake City). The whole country was thoroughly scouted, and all facts of importance obtained and reported to headquarters."²

The late Judge John C. Bell, formerly a resident of Montrose, Colorado, was, at the time of the Meeker Massacre, a member of C Company of Lake City, and in his book "The Pilgrim and the Pioneer" we get a very graphic picture of the activities of C Company during its period of active service and of service in general in the National Guard of those days. With his permission, granted shortly before his death, I am extracting the following paragraphs:

² Company "F" of Saguache meantime was, through a misapprehension of orders marched to a position on the upper Saguache, about thirty miles from its home station, and was held there until ordered to return home.

"As stated in our last issue, the Saguache company of militia, under command of Capt. R. H. Jones, started for Lake City, Friday of last week. The same evening, an order was received from Gen. Dave Cook, commanding militia at Lake City, telling Capt. Jones not to come to Lake City until further orders, so the company camped on the Saguache Creek, and proceeded up to the Upper Crossing and camped, throwing out pickets to watch any movements that might be made by Indians."—(Saguache Chronicle, October—1879).

"This (the Meeker Massacre) stirred the martial spirit of the people of Colorado to fighting heat. Lake City was a little mining-camp with not more than one or two thousand people, three hundred and fifty miles from the capital of the state, without railroad transportation or telegraph communication, and yet the people here organized the Pitkin Guards and announced to the governor, whose name they had taken, that they were ready for any military duty he might assign to them.

"The recruiting officer solicited the enrollment of Mr. Campbell. (Judge Bell's pseudonym). He was averse to the militia and to the law of physical force in any form. He replied: 'you have plenty who desire this work. I abhor it. You will please ex . . .', then he threw up his hands and answered: 'I will enlist, of course; every one should in times of dire distress,' and he hurriedly signed the roll. * * * The Company now began to meet nightly for drill, Mr. Campbell was always at his post. He was among the first upon the ground, and never departed until everything was in its proper place. His dutiful conduct soon attracted the favorable notice of all the officers. A corporal dropped out and every officer made it his pleasure to see that Mr. Campbell was elevated to the place, a favor which excited the envy of many in the ranks.

"The Governor called them into service, and war-order No. 1 was, 'Bring in, dead or alive, all hostile Indians found off the reservation.' A copy of this order was posted in the armory. Mr. Campbell was detailed to visit the Guard at the armory at ten P. M. before retiring, and see that everything was in order. He performed this duty and went to bed. The Guard became green-eyed with envy. Think of this tenderfoot being elevated over the heads of the old residents! It was intolerable. They devised ways and means to destroy him. They took down order No. 1 and wrote, 'How can one tell a hostile from a docile Indian?' and sent two men down at three o'clock in the morning to make this inquiry. When their mission was made known, Mr. Campbell did not lose his temper or apparently discover the motive. He gathered a pen and wrote: 'Consider all Indians off the reservation hostile, and bring them in, dead or alive, and we will determine their docility afterward.' The men took their query and answer back and posted them. The next morning when the captain and lieutenant arrived, the men derisively pointed to the query and answer, expecting a harsh reprimand to Mr. Campbell. The captain carefully read them and replied: 'This is the kind of material that makes the great soldier. This young man is the bright rising star in this company.' His traducers turned black in the face and about-faced. Soon the first sergeant dropped out of the rank and Mr. Campbell was elevated to his place.

"Before the Indian war ceased, Bates & Benton, proprietors of a dance house, attempted to rob a furnished residence. The sheriff and marshal learned of their intention and concealed themselves in a dark hall, and as the older one entered the sheriff ordered him to throw up his hands. Mr. Bates fired into the dark hall and ran away. The sheriff dropped dead in the hall. The marshal immediately gave the alarm and in a few moments the dance house proprietors were in the custody of the officers.

"The sheriff was a miner, and when the news was noised around among the hills five hundred miners gathered about the jail, with a number of guards to protect the prisoner. At twilight the first lieutenant called Mr. Campbell aside and said, 'Sergeant, these miners intend to hang the murderer tonight. He deserves hanging. You make an appearance of resisting, but don't resist or hurt any of them. The leaders have been informed that you will make much pretense of resisting without real resistance. The murderer is not worth defending.' Mr. Campbell replied, 'Never! never! As long as I am in charge of this prisoner I shall protect him.' The lieutenant answered, 'Very well, sir; you are relieved

until nine o'clock tomorrow, at which time you will report at the armory.' He laid down his gun and went to the office. He looked at his mottoes and said, 'No, no; I can't stay here. Justice must be done.' He went out in search of the captain, the deputy sheriff, the marshal and the justice, but could find none of them. He said, 'They are a part of the mob.' He walked into the crowd and began criticizing mob violence as beneath the aspirations of a really civilized being. As he went from man to man in his opposition he learned that he was lecturing his captain yet he never winced, but poured the hot shot right into him. The Captain suggested, 'we will go and get our company and protect the prisoner; you are quite right,' but when they endeavored to leave, the mob would not permit it, and the captain and the sergeant were placed under arrest.

"Soon the mob moved to the jail. The guards ordered, 'Halt,' but no one halted. They knocked the door down, threw a rope around the murderer's neck and pulled him out. A few weeks before, the smaller man had grossly offended a certain politician of the town. The politician had quite a coterie of friends and had conspired with them to take advantage of the occasion and hang Mr. Benton, the petty thief, not because he had done anything to the sheriff, but to glut the politician's vengeance. The conspirators threw a rope around the petty thief's neck and dragged him out. Mr. Campbell cut the rope three times, trying to save the man, but they overpowered him and held him fast. The mob took the two to the Ocean Wave bridge, threw the ropes over the beams of the bridge, and pulling them up six feet from the floor, tied them there and left them till morning. The murderer did not seem to move a muscle and appeared to expire from mere will-power, but the thief had small hands and fat wrists, and he slipped one hand out of the handcuffs and pulled himself up by grasping the ropes. He felt innocent and died with his tongue between his teeth at the end of a great struggle. The conspirators grasped him, tied his hands behind him and taking him by the legs, pulled the rope tighter around his neck. The next day the mob saw the murderer buried before the sheriff and then dispersed.

"Mr. Campbell reported to the armory to receive a knowledge of his fate for refusing to merely play soldier. The lieutenant reported the sergeant for disobeying orders. The captain asked him, fortunately in the presence of the company, if he had any explanation of his conduct.

" 'Yes,' answered Mr. Campbell, 'I felt that there was greater credit in disobeying than in obeying such an order. I was asked to play the part of a tin-soldier. As I enlisted as a real soldier, I declined to disgrace myself and the company, even at the command of a superior officer. Why are militia called tin-soldiers? It is because of their poor mettle, their proverbially unsoldier-like conduct. Ignoble, indeed, is he who conspires in these uniforms against the laws he is sworn to uphold. The crimson blood of that petty thief is indelibly impressed on these uniforms. What a causeless and inhuman disgrace! Tin-soldiers, indeed, unless there is some lower level! Why does not the state furnish us with alder guns and leaden bayonets? They would be commensurate with our conduct last night. That order was mothered by hypocrisy, fathered by false pretense, and written in innocent blood. The only honorable, open way was to disobey it. I am ready to receive my punishment! From every part of the armory came the cry, 'No! no! no! He is not the guilty one. He deserves promotion.' The captain said he felt that the punishment should be visited upon his own head; that he was the culprit; that while disobedience to orders, especially at this time, could not be countenanced, there was such credit in disobeying one so disgraceful that he would not, he could not, lose the opportunity of praising this sterling conduct. He humbly apologized for having permitted the promulgation of this unsoldierly order,

and assured the company that the laudable conduct of the sergeant should be the future rallying cry of the Pitkin Guards.

"In a few short weeks Dan Early assaulted a scarlet woman, an inmate of a dance hall, who was quite popular with the frequenters of these resorts. The sheriff learned that the dance house and saloon customers had organized a mob to take Early from the jail that evening, and asked the captain of the Pitkin Guards for a detail of troops. Mr. Campbell was assigned to take twelve picked men to protect the prisoner at all hazards. At two o'clock in the morning a mob of two hundred motley men approached the jail with a sledge hammer and a rope. When they got within ten paces of the jail the guard stood with fixed bayonets. Mr. Campbell commanded a halt. The mob stopped and the leader said: 'Sergeant, we are friends of yours and of the people. You give us the keys and retire and we will do our work orderly and quickly, and you will have done your full duty, as it would be folly for you to try to keep back these two hundred men.'

"Mr. Campbell replied, 'No man can be a friend of mine who attempts to interfere with my duties, and if you enter this jail it will be over the dead bodies of every soldier here, and I now warn you that no leader will be left alive to tell the story if you even attempt it.'

"The spokesman answered, 'O, yes, we know you have to do your duty, but you can't stand off this mob, and we will now move on the jail and break down the doors if you deny us the keys.'

"Mr. Campbell gave the orders, 'Ready, aim' and the twelve soldiers had their cocked guns at their shoulders. The mob back-stepped a few feet, astounded at the audacity and determination of the young sergeant. Mr. Campbell then addressed the soldiers as follows: 'If anyone advances a step, fire and then charge, and keep firing and charging as long as a man has his face toward this jail!' This dauntless courage and determination paralyzed the leaders and they began to weaken and in a few moments went sullenly away, saying, 'It is folly to give twenty-five good men for this worthless one.' The newspapers were full of praise for the conduct of this troop.

"On Saturday night when the company met at the armory the sergeant made a simple written report of what had occurred. The guard was covered with praise by the officers and heartily applauded by the men. In a couple of weeks clippings were gathered from Eastern and Western papers holding up this conduct as a model for the militia and officers of the country. Governor Pitkin detailed a scouting party from this company to reconnoiter the Uncompahgre Valley, where the Southern Utes were located. This caused envy among many other companies. Later the Denver companies offered prizes for the best drilled men in the state. The Pitkin Guards sent up two contestants. Officers of the U. S. army were appointed as judges. Mr. Crowley of the Pitkin Guards was awarded first prize, and Mr. Hammond of the same company tied for the second. This so stirred the feeling of envy in the capital companies that they failed to deliver the prizes for months, if they ever did. Subsequently two adjutants general and two inspectors general were, by different governors, appointed from this company, giving it the greatest distinction of any like organization in the state."