FRONTIER LEGACIES

LOG OF A COWBOY

ANDY ADAMS

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Log of a Cowboy

by

Andy Adams

THE STAMPEDE

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Publisher's Note on Historical Language

The Log of a Cowboy (1903) is a novel closely based on Andy Adams's real experiences during a five-month cattle drive from the Rio Grande to Fort Benton. As a product of its time, it reflects historical language, attitudes, and social norms that many readers today will find offensive. The text includes racial slurs and stereotypes, occasional profanity, and depictions of frontier hazards (frequent river crossings, a drowning, and limited gunplay).

We have preserved the original wording to present the historical record faithfully. Understanding what earlier generations treated as ordinary helps us reckon honestly with the past and see how far we still have to go. Readers—especially families and classrooms—may wish to use these passages as starting points for thoughtful discussion.

TO THE
COWMEN AND BOYS OF
THE OLD WESTERN TRAIL
THESE PAGES ARE
GRATEFULLY
DEDICATED

CHAPTER I

Up the Trail

Just why my father moved, at the close of the Civil War, from Georgia to Texas, is to this good hour a mystery to me. While we did not exactly belong to the poor whites, we classed with them in poverty, being renters; but I am inclined to think my parents were intellectually superior to that common type of the South. Both were foreign born, my mother being Scotch and my father a north of Ireland man,—as I remember him, now, impulsive, hasty in action, and slow to confess a fault. It was his impulsiveness that led him to volunteer and serve four years in the Confederate army,—trying years to my mother, with a brood of seven children to feed, garb, and house. The war brought me my initiation as a cowboy, of which I have now, after the long lapse of years, the greater portion of which were spent with cattle, a distinct recollection. Sherman's army, in its march to the sea, passed through our county, devastating that section for miles in its passing.

Foraging parties scoured the country on either side of its path. My mother had warning in time and set her house in order. Our work stock consisted of two yoke of oxen, while our cattle numbered three cows, and for saving them from the foragers credit must be given to my mother's generalship. There was a wild canebrake, in which the cattle fed, several hundred acres in extent, about a mile from our little farm, and it was necessary to bell them in order to locate them when wanted. But the cows were in the habit of coming up to be milked, and a soldier can hear a bell as well as any one. I was a lad of eight at the time, and while my two older brothers worked our few fields, I was sent into the canebrake to herd the cattle. We had removed the bells

from the oxen and cows, but one ox was belled after darkness each evening, to be unbelled again at daybreak. I always carried the bell with me, stuffed with grass, in order to have it at hand when wanted.

During the first few days of the raid, a number of mounted foraging parties passed our house, but its poverty was all too apparent, and nothing was molested. Several of these parties were driving herds of cattle and work stock of every description, while by day and by night gins and plantation houses were being given to the flames. Our one-roomed log cabin was spared, due to the ingenious tale told by my mother as to the whereabouts of my father; and yet she taught her children to fear God and tell the truth. My vigil was trying to one of my years, for the days seemed like weeks, but the importance of hiding our cattle was thoroughly impressed upon my mind. Food was secretly brought to me, and under cover of darkness, my mother and eldest brother would come and milk the cows, when we would all return home together. Then, before daybreak, we would be in the cane listening for the first tinkle, to find the cattle and remove the bell. And my day's work commenced anew.

Only once did I come near betraying my trust. About the middle of the third day I grew very hungry, and as the cattle were lying down, I crept to the edge of the canebrake to see if my dinner was not forthcoming. Soldiers were in sight, which explained everything. Concealed in the rank cane I stood and watched them. Suddenly a squad of five or six turned a point of the brake and rode within fifty feet of me. I stood like a stone statue, my concealment being perfect. After they had passed, I took a step forward, the better to watch them as they rode away, when the grass dropped out of the bell and it clattered. A red-whiskered soldier heard the tinkle, and wheeling his horse, rode back. I grasped the clapper and lay flat on the ground, my heart beating like a trip-hammer. He rode within twenty feet of me, peering into the thicket of cane, and not seeing anything unusual, turned and galloped away after his companions. Then the lesson, taught me by my mother, of being "faithful over a few things," flashed through my mind, and though our cattle were spared to us, I felt very guilty.

Another vivid recollection of those boyhood days in Georgia was

the return of my father from the army. The news of Lee's surrender had reached us, and all of us watched for his coming. Though he was long delayed, when at last he did come riding home on a swallow-marked brown mule, he was a conquering hero to us children. We had never owned a horse, and he assured us that the animal was his own, and by turns set us on the tired mule's back. He explained to mother and us children how, though he was an infantryman, he came into possession of the animal. Now, however, with my mature years and knowledge of brands, I regret to state that the mule had not been condemned and was in the "U.S." brand. A story which Priest, "The Rebel," once told me throws some light on the matter; he asserted that all good soldiers would steal. "Can you take the city of St. Louis?" was asked of General Price. "I don't know as I can take it," replied the general to his consulting superiors, "but if you will give me Louisiana troops, I'll agree to steal it."

Though my father had lost nothing by the war, he was impatient to go to a new country. Many of his former comrades were going to Texas, and, as our worldly possessions were movable, to Texas we started. Our four oxen were yoked to the wagon, in which our few household effects were loaded and in which mother and the smaller children rode, and with the cows, dogs, and elder boys bringing up the rear, our caravan started, my father riding the mule and driving the oxen. It was an entire summer's trip, full of incident, privation, and hardship. The stock fared well, but several times we were compelled to halt and secure work in order to supply our limited larder. Through certain sections, however, fish and game were abundant. I remember the enthusiasm we all felt when we reached the Sabine River, and for the first time viewed the promised land. It was at a ferry, and the sluggish river was deep. When my father informed the ferryman that he had no money with which to pay the ferriage, the latter turned on him remarking, sarcastically: "What, no money? My dear sir, it certainly can't make much difference to a man which side of the river he's on, when he has no money."

Nothing daunted by this rebuff, my father argued the point at some length, when the ferryman relented so far as to inform him that

ten miles higher up, the river was fordable. We arrived at the ford the next day. My father rode across and back, testing the stage of the water and the river's bottom before driving the wagon in. Then taking one of the older boys behind him on the mule in order to lighten the wagon, he drove the oxen into the river. Near the middle the water was deep enough to reach the wagon box, but with shoutings and a free application of the gad, we hurried through in safety. One of the wheel oxen, a black steer which we called "Pop-eye," could be ridden, and I straddled him in fording, laving my sunburned feet in the cool water. The cows were driven over next, the dogs swimming, and at last, bag and baggage, we were in Texas.

We reached the Colorado River early in the fall, where we stopped and picked cotton for several months, making quite a bit of money, and near Christmas reached our final destination on the San Antonio River, where we took up land and built a house. That was a happy home; the country was new and supplied our simple wants; we had milk and honey, and, though the fig tree was absent, along the river grew endless quantities of mustang grapes. At that time the San Antonio valley was principally a cattle country, and as the boys of our family grew old enough the fascination of a horse and saddle was too strong to be resisted. My two older brothers went first, but my father and mother made strenuous efforts to keep me at home, and did so until I was sixteen. I suppose it is natural for every country boy to be fascinated with some other occupation than the one to which he is bred. In my early teens, I always thought I should like either to drive six horses to a stage or clerk in a store, and if I could have attained either of those lofty heights, at that age, I would have asked no more. So my father, rather than see me follow in the footsteps of my older brothers, secured me a situation in a village store some twenty miles distant. The storekeeper was a fellow countryman of my father—from the same county in Ireland, in fact—and I was duly elated on getting away from home to the life of the village.

But my elation was short-lived. I was to receive no wages for the first six months. My father counseled the merchant to work me hard, and, if possible, cure me of the "foolish notion," as he termed it. The

storekeeper cured me. The first week I was with him he kept me in a back warehouse shelling corn. The second week started out no better. I was given a shovel and put on the street to work out the poll-tax, not only of the merchant but of two other clerks in the store. Here was two weeks' work in sight, but the third morning I took breakfast at home. My mercantile career had ended, and forthwith I took to the range as a preacher's son takes to vice. By the time I was twenty there was no better cow-hand in the entire country. I could, besides, speak Spanish and play the fiddle, and thought nothing of riding thirty miles to a dance. The vagabond temperament of the range I easily assimilated.

Christmas in the South is always a season of festivity, and the magnet of mother and home yearly drew us to the family hearthstone. There we brothers met and exchanged stories of our experiences. But one year both my brothers brought home a new experience. They had been up the trail, and the wondrous stories they told about the northern country set my blood on fire. Until then I thought I had had adventures, but mine paled into insignificance beside theirs. The following summer, my eldest brother, Robert, himself was to boss a herd up the trail, and I pleaded with him to give me a berth, but he refused me, saying: "No, Tommy; the trail is one place where a foreman can have no favorites. Hardship and privation must be met, and the men must throw themselves equally into the collar. I don't doubt but you're a good hand; still the fact that you're my brother might cause other boys to think I would favor you. A trail outfit has to work as a unit, and dissensions would be ruinous." I had seen favoritism shown on ranches, and understood his position to be right. Still I felt that I must make that trip if it were possible. Finally Robert, seeing that I was overanxious to go, came to me and said: "I've been thinking that if I recommended you to Jim Flood, my old foreman, he might take you with him next year. He is to have a herd that will take five months from start to delivery, and that will be the chance of your life. I'll see him next week and make a strong talk for you."

True to his word, he bespoke me a job with Flood the next time he met him, and a week later a letter from Flood reached me, terse and pointed, engaging my services as a trail hand for the coming summer.

The outfit would pass near our home on its way to receive the cattle which were to make up the trail herd. Time and place were appointed where I was to meet them in the middle of March, and I felt as if I were made. I remember my mother and sisters twitted me about the swagger that came into my walk, after the receipt of Flood's letter, and even asserted that I sat my horse as straight as a poker. Possibly! but wasn't I going up the trail with Jim Flood, the boss foreman of Don Lovell, the cowman and drover?

Our little ranch was near Cibollo Ford on the river, and as the outfit passed down the country, they crossed at that ford and picked me up. Flood was not with them, which was a disappointment to me, "Quince" Forrest acting as *segundo* at the time. They had four mules to the "chuck" wagon under Barney McCann as cook, while the *remuda*, under Billy Honeyman as horse wrangler, numbered a hundred and forty-two, ten horses to the man, with two extra for the foreman. Then, for the first time, I learned that we were going down to the mouth of the Rio Grande to receive the herd from across the river in Old Mexico; and that they were contracted for delivery on the Blackfoot Indian Reservation in the northwest corner of Montana. Lovell had several contracts with the Indian Department of the government that year, and had been granted the privilege of bringing in, free of duty, any cattle to be used in filling Indian contracts.

My worst trouble was getting away from home on the morning of starting. Mother and my sisters, of course, shed a few tears; but my father, stern and unbending in his manner, gave me his benediction in these words: "Thomas Moore, you're the third son to leave our roof, but your father's blessing goes with you. I left my own home beyond the sea before I was your age." And as they all stood at the gate, I climbed into my saddle and rode away, with a lump in my throat which left me speechless to reply.

CHAPTER II

Receiving

It was a nice ten days' trip from the San Antonio to the Rio Grande River. We made twenty-five to thirty miles a day, giving the saddle horses all the advantage of grazing on the way. Rather than hobble, Forrest night-herded them, using five guards, two men to the watch of two hours each. "As I have little hope of ever rising to the dignity of foreman," said our *segundo*, while arranging the guards, "I'll take this occasion to show you varmints what an iron will I possess. With the amount of help I have, I don't propose to even catch a night horse; and I'll give the cook orders to bring me a cup of coffee and a cigarette before I arise in the morning. I've been up the trail before and realize that this authority is short-lived, so I propose to make the most of it while it lasts. Now you all know your places, and see you don't incur your foreman's displeasure."

The outfit reached Brownsville on March 25th, where we picked up Flood and Lovell, and dropping down the river about six miles below Fort Brown, went into camp at a cattle ford known as Paso Ganado. The Rio Grande was two hundred yards wide at this point, and at its then stage was almost swimming from bank to bank. It had very little current, and when winds were favorable the tide from the Gulf ran in above the ford. Flood had spent the past two weeks across the river, receiving and road-branding the herd, so when the cattle should reach the river on the Mexican side we were in honor bound to accept everything bearing the "circle dot" on the left hip. The contract called for a thousand she cattle, three and four years of age, and two thousand four and five year old beeves, estimated as sufficient to

fill a million-pound beef contract. For fear of losses on the trail, our foreman had accepted fifty extra head of each class, and our herd at starting would number thirty-one hundred head. They were coming up from ranches in the interior, and we expected to cross them the first favorable day after their arrival. A number of different rancheros had turned in cattle in making up the herd, and Flood reported them in good, strong condition.

Lovell and Flood were a good team of cowmen. The former, as a youth, had carried a musket in the ranks of the Union army, and at the end of that struggle, cast his fortune with Texas. Where others had seen nothing but the desolation of war, Lovell saw opportunities of business, and had yearly forged ahead as a drover and beef contractor. He was well calculated to manage the cattle business, but was irritable and inclined to borrow trouble, therefore unqualified personally to oversee the actual management of a cow herd. In repose, Don Lovell was slow, almost dull, but in an emergency was astonishingly quick-witted and alert. He never insisted on temperance among his men, and though usually of a placid temperament, when out of tobacco—Lord!

Jim Flood, on the other hand, was in a hundred respects the antithesis of his employer. Born to the soil of Texas, he knew nothing but cattle, but he knew them thoroughly. Yet in their calling, the pair were a harmonious unit. He never crossed a bridge till he reached it, was indulgent with his men, and would overlook any fault, so long as they rendered faithful service. Priest told me this incident: Flood had hired a man at Red River the year before, when a self-appointed guardian present called Flood to one side and said,—"Don't you know that that man you've just hired is the worst drunkard in this country?"

"No, I didn't know it," replied Flood, "but I'm glad to hear he is. I don't want to ruin an innocent man, and a trail outfit is not supposed to have any morals. Just so the herd don't count out shy on the day of delivery, I don't mind how many drinks the outfit takes."

The next morning after going into camp, the first thing was the allotment of our mounts for the trip. Flood had the first pick, and cut twelve bays and browns. His preference for solid colors, though they were not the largest in the *remuda*, showed his practical sense of horses.

When it came the boys' turn to cut, we were only allowed to cut one at a time by turns, even casting lots for first choice. We had ridden the horses enough to have a fair idea as to their merits, and every lad was his own judge. There were, as it happened, only three pinto horses in the entire saddle stock, and these three were the last left of the entire bunch. Now a little boy or girl, and many an older person, thinks that a spotted horse is the real thing, but practical cattle men know that this freak of color in range-bred horses is the result of in-and-in breeding, with consequent physical and mental deterioration. It was my good fortune that morning to get a good mount of horses,—three sorrels, two grays, two coyotes, a black, a brown, and a *grulla*. The black was my second pick, and though the color is not a hardy one, his "bread-basket" indicated that he could carry food for a long ride, and ought to be a good swimmer. My judgment of him was confirmed throughout the trip, as I used him for my night horse and when we had swimming rivers to ford. I gave this black the name of "Nigger Boy."

For the trip each man was expected to furnish his own accoutrements. In saddles, we had the ordinary Texas make, the housings of which covered our mounts from withers to hips, and would weigh from thirty to forty pounds, bedecked with the latest in the way of trimmings and trappings.

Our bridles were in keeping with the saddles, the reins as long as plough lines, while the bit was frequently ornamental and costly. The indispensable slicker, a greatcoat of oiled canvas, was ever at hand, securely tied to our cantle strings. Spurs were a matter of taste. If a rider carried a quirt, he usually dispensed with spurs, though, when used, those with large, dull rowels were the make commonly chosen. In the matter of leggings, not over half our outfit had any, as a trail herd always kept in the open, and except for night herding they were too warm in summer. Our craft never used a cattle whip, but if emergency required, the loose end of a rope served instead, and was more humane.

Either Flood or Lovell went into town every afternoon with some of the boys, expecting to hear from the cattle. On one trip they took along the wagon, laying in a month's supplies. The rest of us amused ourselves in various ways. One afternoon when the tide was in, we

tried our swimming horses in the river, stripping to our underclothing, and, with nothing but a bridle on our horses, plunged into tidewater. My Nigger Boy swam from bank to bank like a duck. On the return I slid off behind, and taking his tail, let him tow me to our own side, where he arrived snorting like a tugboat.

One evening, on their return from Brownsville, Flood brought word that the herd would camp that night within fifteen miles of the river. At daybreak Lovell and the foreman, with "Fox" Quarternight and myself, started to meet the herd. The nearest ferry was at Brownsville, and it was eleven o'clock when we reached the cattle. Flood had dispensed with an interpreter and had taken Quarternight and me along to do the interpreting. The cattle were well shed and in good flesh for such an early season of the year, and in receiving, our foreman had been careful and had accepted only such as had strength for a long voyage. They were the long-legged, long-horned Southern cattle, pale-colored as a rule, possessed the running powers of a deer, and in an ordinary walk could travel with a horse. They had about thirty vaqueros under a corporal driving the herd, and the cattle were strung out in regular trailing manner. We rode with them until the noon hour, when, with the understanding that they were to bring the herd to Paso Ganado by ten o'clock the following day, we rode for Matamoros. Lovell had other herds to start on the trail that year, and was very anxious to cross the cattle the following day, so as to get the weekly steamer—the only mode of travel—which left Point Isabel for Galveston on the first of April.

The next morning was bright and clear, with an east wind, which insured a flood tide in the river. On first sighting the herd that morning, we made ready to cross them as soon as they reached the river. The wagon was moved up within a hundred yards of the ford, and a substantial corral of ropes was stretched. Then the entire saddle stock was driven in, so as to be at hand in case a hasty change of mounts was required. By this time Honeyman knew the horses of each man's mount, so all we had to do was to sing out our horse, and Billy would have a rope on one and have him at hand before you could unsaddle a tired one. On account of our linguistic accomplishments, Quarternight

and I were to be sent across the river to put the cattle in and otherwise assume control. On the Mexican side there was a single string of high brush fence on the lower side of the ford, commencing well out in the water and running back about two hundred yards, thus giving us a half chute in forcing the cattle to take swimming water. This ford had been in use for years in crossing cattle, but I believe this was the first herd ever crossed that was intended for the trail, or for beyond the bounds of Texas.

When the herd was within a mile of the river, Fox and I shed our saddles, boots, and surplus clothing and started to meet it. The water was chilly, but we struck it with a shout, and with the cheers of our outfit behind us, swam like smugglers. A swimming horse needs freedom, and we scarcely touched the reins, but with one hand buried in a mane hold, and giving gentle slaps on the neck with the other, we guided our horses for the other shore. I was proving out my black, Fox had a gray of equal barrel displacement,—both good swimmers; and on reaching the Mexican shore, we dismounted and allowed them to roll in the warm sand.

Flood had given us general instructions, and we halted the herd about half a mile from the river. The Mexican corporal was only too glad to have us assume charge, and assured us that he and his outfit were ours to command. I at once proclaimed Fox Quarternight, whose years and experience outranked mine, the *gringo* corporal for the day, at which the vaqueros smiled, but I noticed they never used the word. On Fox's suggestion the Mexican corporal brought up his wagon and corralled his horses as we had done, when his cook, to our delight, invited all to have coffee before starting. That cook won our everlasting regards, for his coffee was delicious. We praised it highly, whereupon the corporal ordered the cook to have it at hand for the men in the intervals between crossing the different bunches of cattle. A March day on the Rio Grande with wet clothing is not summer, and the vaqueros hesitated a bit before following the example of Quarternight and myself and dispensing with saddles and boots. Five men were then detailed to hold the herd as compact as possible, and the remainder, twenty-seven all told, cut off about three hundred head and

started for the river. I took the lead, for though cattle are less gregarious by nature than other animals, under pressure of excitement they will follow a leader. It was about noon and the herd were thirsty, so when we reached the brush chute, all hands started them on a run for the water. When the cattle were once inside the wing we went rapidly, four vaqueros riding outside the fence to keep the cattle from turning the chute on reaching swimming water. The leaders were crowding me close when Nigger breasted the water, and closely followed by several lead cattle, I struck straight for the American shore. The vaqueros forced every hoof into the river, following and shouting as far as the midstream, when they were swimming so nicely, Quarternight called off the men and all turned their horses back to the Mexican side. On landing opposite the exit from the ford, our men held the cattle as they came out, in order to bait the next bunch.

I rested my horse only a few minutes before taking the water again, but Lovell urged me to take an extra horse across, so as to have a change in case my black became fagged in swimming. Quarternight was a harsh *segundo*, for no sooner had I reached the other bank than he cut off the second bunch of about four hundred and started them. Turning Nigger Boy loose behind the brush fence, so as to be out of the way, I galloped out on my second horse, and meeting the cattle, turned and again took the lead for the river. My substitute did not swim with the freedom and ease of the black, and several times cattle swam so near me that I could lay my hand on their backs. When about halfway over, I heard shoutings behind me in English, and on looking back saw Nigger Boy swimming after us. A number of vaqueros attempted to catch him, but he outswam them and came out with the cattle; the excitement was too much for him to miss.

Each trip was a repetition of the former, with varying incident. Every hoof was over in less than two hours. On the last trip, in which there were about seven hundred head, the horse of one of the Mexican vaqueros took cramps, it was supposed, at about the middle of the river, and sank without a moment's warning. A number of us heard the man's terrified cry, only in time to see horse and rider sink. Every man within reach turned to the rescue, and a moment later the man

rose to the surface. Fox caught him by the shirt, and, shaking the water out of him, turned him over to one of the other vaqueros, who towed him back to their own side. Strange as it may appear, the horse never came to the surface again, which supported the supposition of cramps.

After a change of clothes for Quarternight and myself, and rather late dinner for all hands, there yet remained the counting of the herd. The Mexican corporal and two of his men had come over for the purpose, and though Lovell and several wealthy rancheros, the sellers of the cattle, were present, it remained for Flood and the corporal to make the final count, as between buyer and seller. There was also present a river guard,—sent out by the United States Custom House, as a matter of form in the entry papers,—who also insisted on counting. In order to have a second count on the herd, Lovell ordered The Rebel to count opposite the government's man. We strung the cattle out, now logy with water, and after making quite a circle, brought the herd around where there was quite a bluff bank of the river. The herd handled well, and for a quarter of an hour we lined them between our four mounted counters. The only difference in the manner of counting between Flood and the Mexican corporal was that the American used a tally string tied to the pommel of his saddle, on which were ten knots, keeping count by slipping a knot on each even hundred, while the Mexican used ten small pebbles, shifting a pebble from one hand to the other on hundreds. "Just a mere difference in nationality," Lovell had me interpret to the selling dons.

When the count ended only two of the men agreed on numbers, The Rebel and the corporal making the same thirty-one hundred and five,—Flood being one under and the Custom House man one over. Lovell at once accepted the count of Priest and the corporal; and the delivery, which, as I learned during the interpreting that followed, was to be sealed with a supper that night in Brownsville, was consummated. Lovell was compelled to leave us, to make the final payment for the herd, and we would not see him again for some time. They were all seated in the vehicle ready to start for town, when the cowman said to his foreman,—

"Now, Jim, I can't give you any pointers on handling a herd,

but you have until the 10th day of September to reach the Blackfoot Agency. An average of fifteen miles a day will put you there on time, so don't hurry. I'll try and see you at Dodge and Ogalalla on the way. Now, live well, for I like your outfit of men. Your credit letter is good anywhere you need supplies, and if you want more horses on the trail, buy them and draft on me through your letter of credit. If any of your men meet with accident or get sick, look out for them the same as you would for yourself, and I'll honor all bills. And don't be stingy over your expense account, for if that herd don't make money, you and I had better quit cows."

I had been detained to do any interpreting needful, and at parting Lovell beckoned to me. When I rode alongside the carriage, he gave me his hand and said,—

"Flood tells me to-day that you're a brother of Bob Quirk. Bob is to be foreman of my herd that I'm putting up in Nueces County. I'm glad you're here with Jim, though, for it's a longer trip. Yes, you'll get all the circus there is, and stay for the concert besides. They say God is good to the poor and the Irish; and if that's so, you'll pull through all right. Good-by, son." And as he gave me a hearty, ringing grip of the hand, I couldn't help feeling friendly toward him, Yankee that he was.

After Lovell and the dons had gone, Flood ordered McCann to move his wagon back from the river about a mile. It was now too late in the day to start the herd, and we wanted to graze them well, as it was our first night with them. About half our outfit grazed them around on a large circle, preparatory to bringing them up to the bed ground as it grew dusk. In the untrammeled freedom of the native range, a cow or steer will pick old dry grass on which to lie down, and if it is summer, will prefer an elevation sufficient to catch any passing breeze. Flood was familiar with the habits of cattle, and selected a nice elevation on which the old dry grass of the previous summer's growth lay matted like a carpet.

Our saddle horses by this time were fairly well broken to camp life, and, with the cattle on hand, night herding them had to be abandoned. Billy Honeyman, however, had noticed several horses that were inclined to stray on day herd, and these few leaders were so well marked in his

memory that, as a matter of precaution, he insisted on putting a rope hobble on them. At every noon and night camp we strung a rope from the hind wheel of our wagon and another from the end of the wagon tongue back to stakes driven in the ground or held by a man, forming a triangular corral. Thus in a few minutes, under any conditions, we could construct a temporary corral for catching a change of mounts, or for the wrangler to hobble untrustworthy horses. On the trail all horses are free at night, except the regular night ones, which are used constantly during the entire trip, and under ordinary conditions keep strong and improve in flesh.

Before the herd was brought in for the night, and during the supper hour, Flood announced the guards for the trip. As the men usually bunked in pairs, the foreman chose them as they slept, but was under the necessity of splitting two berths of bedfellows. "Rod" Wheat, Joe Stallings, and Ash Borrowstone were assigned to the first guard, from eight to ten thirty P.M. Bob Blades, "Bull" Durham, and Fox Quarternight were given second guard, from ten thirty to one. Paul Priest, John Officer, and myself made up the third watch, from one to three thirty. The Rebel and I were bunkies, and this choice of guards, while not ideal, was much better than splitting bedfellows and having them annoy each other by going out and returning from guard separately. The only fault I ever found with Priest was that he could use the poorest judgment in selecting a bed ground for our blankets, and always talked and told stories to me until I fell asleep. He was a light sleeper himself, while I, being much younger, was the reverse. The fourth and last guard, from three thirty until relieved after daybreak, fell to Wyatt Roundtree, Quince Forrest, and "Moss" Strayhorn. Thus the only men in the outfit not on night duty were Honeyman, our horse wrangler, Barney McCann, our cook, and Flood, the foreman. The latter, however, made up by riding almost double as much as any man in his outfit. He never left the herd until it was bedded down for the night, and we could always hear him quietly arousing the cook and horse wrangler an hour before daybreak. He always kept a horse on picket for the night, and often took the herd as it left the bed ground at clear dawn.

A half hour before dark, Flood and all the herd men turned out to bed down the cattle for our first night. They had been well grazed after counting, and as they came up to the bed ground there was not a hungry or thirsty animal in the lot. All seemed anxious to lie down, and by circling around slowly, while gradually closing in, in the course of half an hour all were bedded nicely on possibly five or six acres. I remember there were a number of muleys among the cattle, and these would not venture into the compact herd until the others had lain down. Being hornless, instinct taught them to be on the defensive, and it was noticeable that they were the first to arise in the morning, in advance of their horned kin. When all had lain down, Flood and the first guard remained, the others returning to the wagon.

The guards ride in a circle about four rods outside the sleeping cattle, and by riding in opposite directions make it impossible for any animal to make its escape without being noticed by the riders. The guards usually sing or whistle continuously, so that the sleeping herd may know that a friend and not an enemy is keeping vigil over their dreams. A sleeping herd of cattle make a pretty picture on a clear moonlight night, chewing their cuds and grunting and blowing over contented stomachs. The night horses soon learn their duty, and a rider may fall asleep or doze along in the saddle, but the horses will maintain their distance in their leisurely, sentinel rounds.

On returning to the wagon, Priest and I picketed our horses, saddled, where we could easily find them in the darkness, and unrolled our bed. We had two pairs of blankets each, which, with an ordinary wagon sheet doubled for a tarpaulin, and coats and boots for pillows, completed our couch. We slept otherwise in our clothing worn during the day, and if smooth, sandy ground was available on which to spread our bed, we had no trouble in sleeping the sleep that long hours in the saddle were certain to bring. With all his pardonable faults, The Rebel was a good bunkie and a hail companion, this being his sixth trip over the trail. He had been with Lovell over a year before the two made the discovery that they had been on opposite sides during the "late unpleasantness." On making this discovery, Lovell at once rechristened Priest "The Rebel," and that name he always bore. He

was fifteen years my senior at this time, a wonderfully complex nature, hardened by unusual experiences into a character the gamut of whose moods ran from that of a good-natured fellow to a man of unrelenting severity in anger.

We were sleeping a nine knot gale when Fox Quarternight of the second guard called us on our watch. It was a clear, starry night, and our guard soon passed, the cattle sleeping like tired soldiers. When the last relief came on guard and we had returned to our blankets, I remember Priest telling me this little incident as I fell asleep.

"I was at a dance once in Live Oak County, and there was a stuttering fellow there by the name of Lem Todhunter. The girls, it seems, didn't care to dance with him, and pretended they couldn't understand him. He had asked every girl at the party, and received the same answer from each—they couldn't understand him. 'W-w-w-ell, g-g-g-go to hell, then. C-c-c-can y-y-you understand that?' he said to the last girl, and her brother threatened to mangle him horribly if he didn't apologize, to which he finally agreed. He went back into the house and said to the girl, 'Y-y-you n-n-n-needn't g-g-g-go to hell; y-y-your b-b-b-brother and I have m-m-made other 'r-r-r-rangements.'"