GENERAL PHILIP ST. GEORGE COOKE

By Carolyn Thomas Foreman

Major General Wesley Merritt shortly after the death of General Philip St. George Cooke wrote that the General's career was remarkable alike for its length and its variety. His service exceeded that covered by the average life. "When it is remembered that for a quarter of a century or more after General Cooke entered the army the school geographies eliminated much speculation by classing the Western Plains as 'The Great American Desert,' some idea of his frontier service may be formed."[1]

On June 10, 1809 Cooke was born at Leesburg, Virginia. He was a son of Dr. Stephen and Catherine Eaton Cooke.[2] He entered the Military Academy July 1, 1823 and was graduated twenty-third in his class July 1, 1827; assigned to the Sixth infantry, he was in garrison at Jefferson Barracks, Missouri in 1828. When Cooke "joined his regiment in 1827, he commenced his career in a brigade of three regiments and had the benefit of this unusual experience for ten months, when he was detached to Fort Snelling, Minnesota in charge of detachment of recruits in open boats."[3]

Cooke served with two other officers at Fort Gibson in 1828 and they made history while on a military escort for traders under Major Bennet Riley.[4]

On Cooke's return to Jefferson Barracks in 1829 he became engaged in an expedition to the Upper Arkansas where he took part in skirmishes with the Comanche Indians on August 3 and 11, 1829. During the march to protect the traders about five hundred Comanches suddenly charged the army camp on August 3. Cooke, as officer of the guard, met the charge with his thirty-six men and broke its force while the command was preparing to fight. On August 11th when the camp was threatened and a party of hunters attacked,

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[1] Wesley Merritt, "Life and Service of General Philip St. George Cooke, U. S. Army," *Journal of the United States Cavalry Association*, (Leavenworth, Kansas), Vol. 8, No. 29, pp. 79-92.

[2] He received the name of "St. George in deference to his mother's nationality, but he was appointed a cadet to West Point under the name of Philip St. George, through a mistake somewhat similar to that of Grant." His two famous brothers were John Eaton Cooke (1788-1853) and John Rogers Cooke (1788-1854)—*Dictionary of American Biography*, Vol. 4, p. 3891.

[3] Merritt, *op. cit.*, p. 81. On August 19, 1828 a general order was issued for a redistribution of troops. "Forty 'scoundrels' recruited at Natchez were taken to Fort Snelling by Lieutenant . . . . Cooke."—Henry Putney Beers, *The Western Military Frontier* 1815-1846, (Philadelphia, 1935) p. 78.

[4] Carolyn Thomas Foreman, "General Bennet Riley," *Chronicles of Oklahoma*, Vol. 19, No. 3 (September, 1941), pp. 225-44; Grant Foreman, *Pioneer Days in the Early Southwest*, (Cleveland, 1926) p. 300.

Lieutenant Cooke was sent to their support. While wading the Arkansas River in front of his men and the enemy appeared on the bank and fired, he stooped down and caused his men to beat them off by firing over his head.[5]

Lieutenant Cooke's headquarters were at Fort Leavenworth from 1830 to 1832. He participated in the Black Hawk War against the Sac Indians in 1832 and fought in the Battle of Bad Axe River August 2, 1832. During the Battle of Bad Axe, while the regular brigade was in the dense bottom land of the Mississippi, Cooke discovered where the enemy was located in the greatest force on an island. He informed the commander and was ordered to lead the reserve of three companies into action, which he did. At the close of the war, General Atkinson appointed him Adjutant of his regiment.[6]

Cooke was again at Jefferson Barracks until he entered the First Dragoon Regiment as a first lieutenant on March 4, 1833. His service in that famous regiment brings him into the history of Fort Gibson and the Indian Territory. In 1834, he was with the Dragoon Expedition when it left Fort Gibson on the noted march to the Tow-e-ash Village (Wichita Village) on North Fork of Red River, but illness forced him to leave the Expedition near the Canadian River late in June and return to Fort Gibson on the surgeon's certificate of ill health.[7]

Lieutenant Cooke's recruiting service carried him in the early summer of 1833 to Western Tennessee. He visited "the villages of Columbia, Dover, Clarksville, and the squalid hamlet of Reynoldsburgh." In Perryville, Kentucky, he got "some hardy recruits, whose imagination inflamed them with the thought of scouring the far prairies on fine horses, amid buffalo and strange Indians." Cooke was present in Jackson when Davy Crockett was elected to Congress. He left Nashville with Company C of the Dragoons and floated down the Cumberland River in a keel boat. The force was transferred at Paducah, Kentucky to a steamboat and the young men from Tennessee soon arrived at Jefferson Barracks.[8]

Cooke's command encamped on June 13, 1833, at the mouth of Walnut Creek (present Kansas). His force of three companies of Dragoons formed an advance guard for a caravan of about fifty wagons en route to Santa Fe. "As the traders had gotten within 12 miles," thought Captain Nathan Boone, "and there was no guessing when the water would allow them to come on, and as they

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[5] Merritt, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

[6] Merritt, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

[7] See Lieut. Wheelock's Journal in "Peace on the Plains" by George H. Shirk, *The Chronicles of Oklahoma* Vol. XXVIII, No. 1 (Spring, 1950), p. 11. See Cooke's account of the Dragoon Expedition (1834), *Appendix A.*

[8] Louis Pelzer, *Marches of the Dragoons in the Mississippi Valley* (Iowa City, 1917), pp. 10, 15.

appeared by the intelligence furnished by Captain Cooke, to be in no sort of apprehension of an attack, we prepared for a move tomorrow."

Captain Cooke wrote on September 9:

"All day it has rained again. We have been lying still, trying to keep warm and dry, on the bank of the Little Arkansas. There are a few green trees and bushes, but little fuel. Worst of all is the case of the poor horses—they are starving and freezing before our eyes, for the grass is very coarse and poor; they have shrunk very sensibly in twenty-four hours."

There Cooke awaited the arrival of the traders who had been left in the rear. Finally, his forces moved forward for about twenty-two miles on the trail along the north bank of the Arkansas before an express from the tardy traders informed the Captain that they were still water-bound at Cow Creek.[8] On October 5, Cooke saw a Mexican escort at the Cimarron Crossing of the Arkansas. This stream formed the international boundary at that date and President Santa Anna had sent about two hundred Mexicans to protect the traders from there to Santa Fe. Cooke waited to see the traders cross the Arkansas. "Mounting his command in order of battle, Cooke directed a salute in honor of the Mexicans to be fired from the howitzer battery," before he and his dragoons turned towards home.

By steady marching the return journey was made in two weeks, by way of Elk, Pawnee Fork, Ash Creek and Council Grove. The troops abandoned the Santa Fe trace at that point, but the groves of 110-Mile Creek induced Cooke to linger for several days before going to Leavenworth.[9]

In 1835, Cooke received his captaincy and he was on recruiting duty until 1836 when he returned to Fort Gibson where he remained until 1838 with the exception of a trip to Nacodoches, Texas in 1836.

A squadron of the First Dragoons, consisting of three companies, under the command of Captain Eustace Trenor, arrived at Fort Coffee, Indian Territory, on January 1, 1837, having marched from Nacodoches, Texas in fourteen days. The officers and men were in fine health, and their horses in good condition for service. The detachment was detained one day in crossing the Arkansas River, before proceeding to Fort Gibson. Officers on duty with the squadron were Captain Cooke, Captain David Perkins, Lieutenant James Monroe Bowman, and Lieutenant William Nicholson Grier.[11]

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[8] *Ibid.*, pp. 97, 99, 104-06.

[9] *Ibid.*, p. 106; Harry E. Mitchell (Captain-retired), "History of Jefferson Barracks, August 16, 1921" Jefferson Barracks, Missouri. Typed copy; George W. Cullum, *Biographical Register of the Officers and Graduates of the Military Academy, at West Point, N. Y.* (New York, 1868), Vol. I, pp. 317-18. Among the resignations in 1834 was that of Philip St. George Cooke who resigned from the second Artillery April 1, 1834 (*The Military and Naval Magazine*, 1834, Vol. III, p. 317).

[11] *Army and Navy Chronicle*, February 23, 1837, p. 126, col. 1.

The Army and Navy Chronicle of March 10, 1836, noted the arrival of Captain Cooke in Washington on March 8 and stated that he was lodged at Mrs. McPherson's. Captain Cooke arrived with his family aboard the *Tecumseh* at Little Rock on May 10, and the party left there for Fort Gibson shortly thereafter.[12]

At a meeting of the officers of the squadron of dragoons on Red River, June 18, 1836, resolutions were passed on the death of First Lieutenant James Farley Izzard, leader of the advance, who fell in battle on March 5, 1836, from wounds received in a fight with the Seminoles at Camp Izard, Florida on February 28, 1836. The resolutions were signed by Captain Cooke as a tribute to a former officer of the dragoons.[13]

After Cooke's march to Nacodoches in 1836 he returned to Fort Gibson the following year and settled down to steady frontier work on the plains, that took him as far north as Council Bluffs and to the Rocky Mountains.

Cooke arrived in Washington May 8, 1838, and registered at Fuller's Hotel. He informed Rodney Gibson at Carlisle Barracks that he would find "on the Arkansas River only a set of gamblers and cut throats."[14] Cooke remained at the Barracks throughout the year and was stationed at Fort Wayne, Indian Territory in 1840. He returned to Fort Leavenworth for part of 1840-41-42, and the following year he spent in escorting Santa Fe traders.[15]

In the summer of 1843 General Edward Pendleton Gaines was ordered to send a military escort for traders leaving Missouri for Santa Fe and he assigned Captain Cooke to the duty. He issued orders for the officer to keep a journal, and make maps of the country. Major Jacob Snively's interference with the Santa Fe trade led to a determination to discover if the incident took place in the United States or Texas.[16]

Captain Nathan Boone left Fort Gibson on May 14, 1843, with sixty men and pursued a route up the Arkansas and the Cimarron rivers. He traveled north along the latter until he reached the Santa Fe Trail; after a few days march with some traders, he

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[12] *Ibid.*, June 2, 1836, p. 348, col. 2.

[13] *Ibid.*, July 28, 1836, p. 59, col. 1.

[14] Rodney Gibson, *Journal of Army Life* (San Francisco, 1874), p. 29.

[15] Otis E. Young, "Dragoons on the Santa Fe Trail in the Autumn of 1843," *The Chronicles of Oklahoma*, Vol. XXXII, No. 1 (Spring, 1954), pp. 42-51.

[16] James W. Silver, *Edmund Pendleton Gaines* (Louisiana State University Press, 1949), p. 165. Jacob Snively, learning of the rich caravan of Mexicans who were setting out on their return to Santa Fe in the spring of 1843, applied to the Texas government for authority to raise men and capture the caravan. The troops were to equip and provision themselves and operate between the Rio del Norte and the United States boundary, "but were to be careful not to infringe upon the territory of that government." These orders were issued to Snively by G. W. Hill, Secretary of War February 16, 1843 (H. Yoakum, *History of Texas*, (New York, 1856), Vol. 2, pp. 399, 400.

crossed to the south side of the Arkansas and on June 13, camped opposite the mouth of Walnut Creek, near the big bend of the Arkansas in Kansas. Here he was joined by Captain Cooke who made his camp on the north side of the creek with three companies of Dragoons to await for the traders in his charge.[17]

Snively claiming to be acting under a regular commission had been operating on both sides of the international border; he captured and confiscated property. Cooke, acting under orders, captured Snively and one hundred of his men and took them to Leavenworth. The prisoners were released there and Cooke appeared before a Court of Inquiry; his action in the affair was upheld and his capture of Snively approved.[18] "The 175 men who had gone with Colonel Snively to capture the rich Santa Fe caravan at last were heard from. They had organized at the end of April, unanimously declined to share the booty with the government (Texas). For their sins, instead of capturing the wagon train, they themselves were captured and disarmed by Captain Cooke and 300 United States dragoons on what the Texans claimed was the soil of their Republic."[19]

The court of inquiry convened at Fort Leavenworth, April 2, pursuant to "General Orders" No. 6 of February 28, 1844, "to examine into and report the facts and its opinions relative to the manner in which Captain P. St. G. Cooke, discharged the duties—for the protection—of Santa Fe traders over the territory of the United States to the Texan frontier in May and June. *Opinion*, 1843, &c." This court reported the following:[20]

"In view of the . . . facts, the court is of the opinion that Captain . . . Cooke . . . on the 30th of June, 1843, disarmed a Texan force under Colonel Snively, within the territory of the United States, by causing them to lay down their arms . . . and that there was nothing in the conduct of Captain Cooke that was 'harsh and unbending.'

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[17] Grant Foreman, *Pioneer Days in the Early Southwest*, (Cleveland, 1926), p. 301. Cooke had in his party 190 men.

[18] Elvid Hunt, *History of Fort Leavenworth*, (Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, 1925), p. 70. *The United States, Complainant vs. The State of Texas*, (Washington, 1894), Vol. 1, pp. 109-10, 138, 139. On June 4, 1886, Hugh F. Young testified before the United States Joint Boundary Commission that in the spring of 1843 he was mustered into the command of Colonel Jacob Snively which was organized for the purpose of intercepting Mexican trains carrying on commerce between Santa Fe and Saint Louis. The rendezvous for Snively's command was fixed at "Old Georgetown," six miles south of Red River, in the north-western part of what is now Grayson County. The expedition advanced to the point where the Santa Fe Trail crossed the Arkansas River, ... crossing the false Washita, south and North Canadian, and Cimarron rivers (*Ibid.*, Vol. 2, pp. 935-36).

[19] Herbert Gambrell, *Anson Jones, the Last President of Texas* (Garden City, 1948), pp. 296-7. "Snively Inspector General Houston's staff, was authorized to intercept a caravan loaded with $150,000 worth of goods . . . . and give the Texas Treasury half the spoils. This privateering expedition by land was the Houstonian version of a Santa Fe expedition . . . . ." (*Ibid.*, p. 275).

[20] Grant Foreman, *Pioneer Days in the Early Southwest*, (Cleveland, 1926), p. 300. James Izard was the other lieutenant and he lost his life in the Florida War.

"The court is further of opinion that Captain Cooke did not exceed the authority for the protection of the lawful trade of the Santa Fe caravan . . . and that the confidence reposed in him by his Government was not 'in any degree misplaced.' "

Captain Cooke's action brought forth much diplomatic correspondence between the Hon. Anson Jones,[21] Secretary of State of Texas and Isaac Van Zandt, Charge d'Affaires of the Republic of Texas. On August 15, 1843, Van Zandt wrote:[22]

"In a personal interview today with Mr. [James Madison] Porter Secretary of War, that gentleman did me the kindness to suffer me to peruse the principal portion of the report, of that RENOWNED Capt. Cook, (sic) who lately *captured* one hundred of our citizens under Colonel Snively. I entertain but little doubt that this affair occurred within the limits of Texas, and cannot be considered in any other light, than an enormous outrage. I deem it unnecessary to send you a synopsis of Capt. Cook's report . . . . . is evidently designed to be magnificently eloquent, and a full commentary upon International law, and the right of War . . . . ."

In accordance with evidence offered by Texas concerning Snively's expedition, it was charged the Texans were on Texas territory. They were arrested near the site of the present Fort Dodge, Kansas. The military inquiry determined that the arrest took place east of the 100th meridian and therefore in the United States.[23]

From the Department of State, Washington (Texas), September 29, 1843, the following letter was addressed to Charge d'Affaires Isaac Van Zandt:

"Enclosed herewith . . . . copy of the official report to the Department of War and Marine, of Col. Jacob Snively, lately in command of an expedition on our northwestern frontier—and also a copy of the instructions under which that officer was acting. By this report you will perceive, that a most extraordinary outrage has been committed, upon this officer and his men by Capt. Cooke . . . . who in contempt of all laws human and divine recklessly invaded our territory, captured the command under Col. Snively, disarmed and abused the officers and men, and turned them

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[21] Anson Jones, an American Physician, was born in Berkshire County, Massachusetts, in 1798. He settled in Brazoria, Texas, in 1833, and took a prominent part in the political and military movements which resulted in the independence of that republic; was minister to the United States in 1838, and later he was secretary of state for three years under President Samuel Houston. In 1844 he succeeded Houston as president. Died by his own hand in 1858 (Joseph Thomas, *Universal Pronouncing Dictionary of Biography*, ... [Philadelphia, 1888], p. 1398).

[22] *Annual Report of the American Historical Association for the year 1908*, Diplomatic Correspondence of the Republic of Texas, (Washington, 1911), Part 2, pp. 200, 201. For an interesting history of *The Snively Expedition* see the brochure by Capt. R. P. Crump which was issued as a separate from Porter's *Spirit of the Times* for the friends of Edward Eberstadt & Sons (New York), Christmas, 1926.

[23] Grant Foreman, "Red River and the Spanish Boundary in the United States Supreme Court," *Chronicles of Oklahoma*, Vol. 2, No. 3 (September 1924). The *Niles' Register* reported October 12, 1843, that when Cooke disarmed a part of the expedition under Snively it had a good effect on the Mexicans in Santa Fe who treated the Americans with hospitality and kindness.

adrift in a wilderness several hundred miles from any settlement with only five guns to protect them from the hordes of ruthless savages by whom they were surrounded and to procure by hunting the necessary means to save them from starvation and death.

"The President therefore directs that you make a prompt and energetic appeal to the Government of the United States in relation to the conduct of this officer, as well as that of Gen. Gaines by whose authority and under whose sanction as appears from his published letter to Brig. Gen. Taylor this most outrageous outrage upon national rights has been committed. You will ask also for the dismissal of these officers . . . ."

In a letter to Hon. Anson Jones from Van Zandt, dated Washington, D. C. November 30, 1843, Jones spoke of Gaines as a crazy man and said that he was considered so in Texas.[24]

On January 16, 1844, Secretary [of State Abel Parker] Upshur[25] sent the following letter to Van Zandt:

Captain Cooke of the Dragoons was detailed for this duty and a force of about 150 men was placed under his command to carry out the orders of the Department. They rendezvoused at Council Grove, Neosho River (Kansas) on the 3rd of June, and proceeded on their route with the Caravan of traders.

On the 22nd of June, Captain Cooke states, that when at Walnut Creek, he received intelligence that Colonel Snively, having about 180 Texans under his command, had avowed his intention to attack the caravan whenever he could find it unprotected, and had also made threats against the American portion of it . . . . . He however never proceeded with the escort and caravan in the direction of a crossing, and on the 30th of June he saw three horsemen about a mile in advance, whom he supposed to be . . . . spies, and in pursuing them, came in sight of the Arkansas river, on the opposite of which he saw a large grove, a force of men and horses. They hung out a white flag, and he sent a subaltern and a trumpeter and flag to ford the river to their camp. The young officer demanded who they were and why there and Colonel Snively and his aid returned with the messenger and when Captain Cooke informed him that his people were in the United States, and desired to know who they were, and if he had a commission.

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[24] *Ibid.*, pp. 215, 228. "Gaines: when accused of complicity in the supposed outrage, was excused by the War Department on the ground that he was not responsible for his action—but could not be discarded because of his past valuable services. The truth is that the War Department acted in spineless fashion in failing to back up Gaines and Cooke, neither of whom happened to be in the wrong."—Silver, *op. cit.*, p. 165.

[25] Abel Parker Upshur was born in Northhampton County, Virginia. He was appointed secretary of the Navy by President Tyler in September, 1841, and succeeded Daniel Webster as secretary of state in May 1843. He was killed by the explosion of the cannon [Peacemaker] aboard the steamer *Princeton* in February, 1844, aged about fifty-three (Thomas, *op. cit.*, pp. 235?). Upshur negotiated the Treaty of Annexation with Texas (Wickham, *op. cit.*, p. 425). Andrew C. McLaughlin, Lewis Cass, Boston and New York, 1899, p. 211. H. Von Holst, *John C. Calhoun* (Boston and New York, 1899), p. 224. Tyler reorganized his cabinet, taking three Democrats into it, and transferring Upshur of Virginia, to the State Department. Upshur "an ardent state-rights and pro-slavery man, took up the Texas business with energy. The problem was not only to conclude a treaty, but to make annexation palatable to the country."—Carl Schurz, *Henry Clay* (Boston and New York, 1899), Vol. 2, pp. 237-40.

Snively replied that he had a Texan commission and a force of Texan volunteers—107 men. After Cooke was acquitted by the court martial, Van Zandt wrote to Jones on August 16, 1844:[26]

"If the President shall acquiesce in the acquittal of Captain Cooke, and the offer to return or make compensations for the arms, it will only be necessary to indicate at what point the arms are desired to be delivered. I have been told that Captain Cooke has a letter from Colonel Snively in which he expresses his gratitude for the kindness shown him by Cooke. If this be true, perhaps it would be unnecessary to prosecute the case further."

Cooke was acquitted as it was proved beyond a doubt that the capture of the Texans took place in the United States.[27] Only two escorts had been furnished to Santa Fe traders[28] until the large escorts under Captain Cooke in 1843, accompanied two different caravans to the Arkansas River.[29]

Another report on Captain Cooke and anticipated trouble with Snively's force of Texans was made by Kit Carson who had remained at Taos until April when he again started for the States with Bent and Colonel Ceran Vrain, serving as hunter for the train:[30]

"At Walnut Creek we found four companies of dragoons encamped, commanded by Captain . . . . Cooke. He informed us that the train of Armijo and several traders was a short distance in his rear . . . . Captain Cooke had received intelligence that a large party of Texans was at the crossing of the Arkansas, waiting to overpower the train and kill or capture the Mexicans . . . . .

"I can say for Colonel Cooke that he is an efficient an Indian fighter as I have ever accompanied; that he is brave and gallant everyone knows."

Cooke is mentioned a number of times in Kendall's narrative on the capture of the Texans.[31] When the prisoners reached Celaya, Mexico on January 22, "General Cortazar, the gentlemanly and liberal governor of the State of Guarajuato," was kind to the Americans but Colonel Cooke invariably received the best treatment. Two of Cooke's men escaped and after the soldiers left Tula they were marched towards the capital of Mexico and "the fate of all, whether good or evil, was soon to be decided. Upon the flimsy pretext that one or two of their companions had escaped, we knew that Santa Anna had chained Colonel Cooke's men, and what was worse, had sent them to work in the streets and ditches—a punish-

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[26] *Ibid.*, pp. 244-5, 300-1.

[27] Foreman, *op. cit.*, pp. 302-3. American Historical Association. *Annual Report* for 1908, Vol. 2, (1) Part II, p. 254.

[28] The first by Major Bennett Riley and one made up of about sixty dragoons commanded by Captain Clifton Wharton in 1834.

[29] Milo Milton Quaife (ed.) *The Commerce of the Prairies by Josiah Gregg* (Chicago, 1926), pp. 17, 18.

[30] Milo Milton Quaife, (ed.) *Kit Carson's Autobiography*, (Chicago, 1935), pp. 69, 70, 157.

[31] George Wilkins Kendall, *Narrative of the Texan Santa Fe Expedition . . . and Capture of the Texans* (New York, 1844), Vol. 2.

ment awarded only to criminals." Cooke's party was confined at Santiago. A Mexican girl managed to slip a note to one of the Texans which reported that the prisoners "were all with Colonel Cooke's party at Santiago, and in chains. . . ." Small-pox was rampant among the prisoners and a young man of the name of Bowen in Cooke's party was desperately ill and delirious with the disease. Kendall finally found himself "unexpectedly in Santiago, greeted by Colonel Cooke, Dr. Brenham, Captain Sutton, and all the friends whom I had not seen for seven months. The prospect of chains and servitude was as nothing. . . . I was among my old companions."[32]

Due to the influence of Senator Thomas H. Benton, James Wiley Magoffin was selected to pave the way for the entrance of General Kearny to Santa Fe and to gain possession of New Mexico; Cooke was Magoffin's escort into Santa Fe. The officer wrote that Magoffin's life was in danger, but he was saved from execution because of his popularity with Mexican officers and his generosity with money and entertainment with 3,392 bottles of champagne.[33]

In the summer of 1845 Colonel Stephen Watts Kearny, with a detachment of 250 dragoons marched from Leavenworth 2,200 miles in 99 days to the South Pass. The start was made May 18 with the Dragoons, armed with carbines, pistols, and cartridges, making a real military appearance. Officers such as Philip St. George Cooke, John Henry K. Burgwin, Henry Smith Turner, and Benjamin D. Moore were veterans of many western campaigns.

Cooke wrote an account of Fort Laramie, "with a mongrel and unkempt crowd of women and children, whose jargon of mixed French, English, Spanish, and Indian sounded strange. . . . while the male representatives of civilization . . . . aids of alcohol and gunpowder, avarice, lying, and lust." Hunting parties were sent out every day and Cooke spoke of sage grouse, young antelope, hares, rabbits, and magpies; some of the soldiers fished in the clear waters of the Sweetwater. . . . . During June the days were intensely hot, but during the nights ice was formed and the dragoons shivered under their blankets. On the last day of June the troops reached

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[32] *Ibid.*, pp. 181, 192, 196, 227, 230, 242, 270, 277-78.

[33] Stella M. Drumm, *Down the Santa Fe Trail and into Mexico, The Diary of Susan Shelby Magoffin 1846-1847*, (New Haven, 1926), pp. 14, 16. From Philadelphia, February 21, 1849, Major Cooke of the Second Dragoons, wrote to Magoffin of his important services during the invasion of New Mexico:

"I shall not easily forget the pleasure which your company gave me when I preceded the army with a flag, from Bent's Fort to Santa Fe, nor the advantages of your knowledge of the country and its language.

"I am strongly impressed with the skill you exhibited not to compromise your old influence over the Mexican general (Manuel Armijo), by an appearance of too real connection with myself . . . . I had personal knowledge of the high opinion which the General [Kearny] entertained of your discretion and services. . . ." (*Ibid.*, pp. 264-65. Bent's Fort was in Bent County, Colorado, on the Arkansas River).

the gap called South Pass, with an altitude of 7,000 feet, which divided the waters of the Atlantic from the Pacific. This is in the southern part of what is now Fremont County, Wyoming.

On August 3, 1845, the outfit reached Chouteau's Island where Cooke had helped defeat an attack of about four hundred Indians sixteen years before.[34]

The St. Louis Reporter, July 1, 1846, noted that "Last evening the Cecilia arrived here from the Upper Mississippi, bringing down Companies B and K, U. S. Dragoons, from Fort Atkinson (Wisconsin) and Fort Crawford (Wisconsin). The officers commanding are Capts. E. V. Sumner, and P. St. George Cooke. The two companies number 115 men. . . . have 119 horses and 15 mules." The *Reporter* could not learn the destination of the corps.

Shortly after his arrival in St. Louis, Captain Cooke received directions through the War Department to join Colonel Stephen H. Kearny at Fort Leavenworth; he was then organizing an expedition, to occupy New Mexico and California, the War with Mexico having been declared late in the spring of 1846. Colonel Kearny had ordered Captain James Allen, First Dragoons, on June 19 to organize several companies of Mormons who were encamped in Iowa Territory for service in the War. The five new companies, known as the Mormon Battalion, reached Fort Leavenworth on August 1 where Captain Allen took sick and died three weeks later. A temporary commander was assigned and the Mormon Battalion marched west all the companies arriving in Santa Fe by October 12.[35] In the meantime, General Kearny had left there on September 25 with 300 of the First Dragoons on a line of march down the valley of Rio del Norte (Rio Grande) for California. On October 2 word having reached him about Captain Allen's death, he appointed Cooke to take over the command of the Mormon Battalion as Lieutenant Colonel to California, and gave him the additional assignment of cutting a wagon road to the Pacific Ocean in that region.[36]

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[34] Pelzer, *op. cit.*, pp. 120, 127, 131-33, 139. When the dragoons arrived on August 24, 1845 and marched through the gates of Fort Leavenworth their colonel greeted them with a few words. Later he reported, "Great credit is due to the officers and enlisted men who composed this command. They have all proved themselves what their ambition is to be—good soldiers." *Dictionary of American Biography*, Vol. 4, p. 339.

[35] Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of California*, (San Francisco, 1886), Vol. V, 1846-48, pp. 472-82.

[36] *Ibid.*, pp. 386, 483. *The Daily Oklahoman* (Oklahoma City), June 21, 1959, p. 17, col. 1 carries a feature story on the march of the Mormon Battalion. "It was thought that the Battalion was enlisted too much by families; some were too old, some feeble, some were too young; and it was impeded by many women. There was no discipline and the men were sadly worn by traveling on foot."

On November 11, 1846 the *Columbian Fountain*, Washington (p. 1, col. 5), copied from the *Charleston Mercury*, that General Kearny started on the twenty-fifth instant for California. His troops consisted of Dragoons with Co. K. commanded by Captain Cooke: "It is a long and arduous march—long stretches, one of 90 miles without water, and little or no grass. . . . ."

Cooke arrived at Santa Fe on October 7 with two companies of the First Dragoons, Major Edwin Vose Sumner in command, the two officers and their men having arrived at Fort Leavenworth from St. Louis three days after Kearny had left this post for the West. Cooke took over the command of the Mormon Battalion at Santa Fe on October 13, and six days later moved with his men, following General Kearny's route down the Rio del Norte to a point twenty-five miles below the Jornada Mountain, where they struck off westerly over the southern spurs of the Sierra de los Mimbres.[37] Cooke seeing that these spurs ended abruptly, and that a plain spread out south of them, concluded that there might be discovered a pass from the Del Norte to the Gila, thus avoiding the mountains.

Before leaving the Del Norte valley, Cooke sent all of the sick Mormons and part of his baggage train back to Fort Pueblo, on the Arkansas, above Fort Bent, where numerous Mormon families were congregating, preparing to start for California early in the spring of 1847. Cooke followed the high plain through a gap in the Cordilleras, finding water and pasturage, and meeting no opposition. "He passed the deserted village, San Bernadino, which had once been very rich in cattle and other herds, but was now entirely abandoned on account of . . . . incursions of the Apaches. Thence he passed over the San Pedro river, down which he continued. . . . for sixty miles. Thence striking off, he passed through Teuson (*sic*), and arrived at the Gila. . . . ."[38]

When Cooke and his troops were encamped within about six miles of Tucson, in the state of Sonora, where 150 dragoons and two pieces of artillery were stationed, the Commandante had received express orders not to permit passage of the Americans. Three commissioners were sent into camp to learn Colonel Cooke's business and ask what terms he would exact in passing through the village. The men begged Cooke to bypass the place, but he in-

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[37] *Ibid.*, p. 484; and "Report of Lieut. Col. P. St. George Cooke of His March from Santa Fe, New Mexico to San Diego, Upper California." *House Ex. Doc.*, No. 41, pp. 551-4.

[38] Richard Smith Elliot, *Notes Taken in Sixty Years* (St. Louis, 1883), p. 279: "On arrival in Santa Fe the adjutant informed Elliot that he was officer of the guard for the night, while Major Cooke was officer of the day." . . . . the guard to consist of fifty ravenous men who were to preserve order in the captured city. . . . a foreign capital seized without a struggle after a daring march of nearly a thousand miles. . . . ."

"Cooke took command at Santa Fe with orders from Gen. Kearny to open a wagon route to the Pacific by the Gila Route. This march—undertaken by infantry with wagons, for which a road must be found or built—was much more difficult than that of any that had previously crossed the continent in these latitudes."—Edward Eberstadt & Sons, 688 Madison Avenue, New York 21, N. Y., Catalogue 131, p. 40.

"When Cooke set out from Santa Fe for California, he came down the Rio Grande to the present ford at San Diego, and thence to Ojo de Vaca." —John Russell Bartlett, *Personal Narrative of Explorations, and Incidents in Texas, New Mexico, California, Sonora, and Chihuahua* (London, 1854), Vol. 2, p. 332.

formed them he would require one piece of artillery and some small arms, the munitions to be returned upon his departure. The following morning when his troops were drawn up in order of battle, Cooke marched towards the town. He was met by a messenger who said: "Sir, your terms are hard, and such as the commandante never can and never will accede to." Cooke passed the order down the lines to load, but before this was done a great dust was seen to arise beyond the town where a body of horsemen fled across the plain in the greatest haste. They left behind only the old and helpless. The troops entered the town where they found an abundance of wheat for their horses, and some fruit and provisions for themselves. Then they resumed their march.

When Cooke arrived at the Pima Villages the chief delivered a letter and a bale of goods which General Kearny had abandoned at different places. The Pimas had collected them knowing that Cooke was to pass that way. "Cooke commended him for his strict honesty and integrity, and told him that in acting thus he would always enjoy the friendship and good opinion of the Americans. . . ."[38]

The map made by Colonel Cooke on his route from the Rio Grand to the Gila River in command of the Mormon Battalion, afterward published in his Report to General Kearny, is cited by Elliott Coues in his volume on Pike's expeditions with the following comment:[39]

"The Cooke trail mentioned is that made by Lieut. Col. Philip St. George Cooke, commanding Mormon battalion of the Army of the West on the march from Santa Fe, N. M. to San Diego, Cal. under the guidance of Antoine Leroux[40] in the autumn of 1846. It will be found very clearly traced from the point of departure from the Rio Grande to the Pima villages on the Gila, on the sketch map accompanying that officer's report to General [Stephen Watts] Kearny.

"I have failed to notice in the proper order that Lieutenant Colonel Phillip St. George Cooke, commanding the Mormon battalion (Capt. of the 1st Dragns), had the honor of making the first wagon road from the streams of the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean. This was a great undertaking at that time, which was in the autumn and winter of 1846-47, and entitles him to much credit. In his report to General Kearny he recounts the hardships endured by himself and his men, and says that the general's letters to him made it almost a point of honor to take the wagons through to the Pacific and he was much retarded in making and finding the road. The breaking of the track,often through thickets of mesquit and other thorny bushes, although worked on by pioneers, was so laborious that it was necessary to relieve them every hour.

Cooke reached San Diego with the Mormon Battalion on January 29, 1847, where he issued a congratulatory order the next day, in

[38] John T. Hughes, *Doniphan's Expedition; . . . . Conquest of New Mexico* (Cincinnati, 1848), pp. 244-48.

[39] *House Ex. Doc.*, No. 41, *op. cit.*, p. 564; see, also, Elliott Coues, *Zebulon Montgomery Pike's Expeditions* (New York, 1895) Vol. 2, pp. 637 fn. 24, 639 fn. 29.

[40] Grant Foreman, "Antoine Leroux, New Mexican Guide," *New Mexico Historical Review*, Vol. 16 (October 1, 1941), pp. 367-77.

which he stated in part: "The Lieut. Colonel commanding congratulates the battalion on their safe arrival on the shore of the Pacific Ocean, and the conclusion of their march over 2,000 miles. History may be searched in vain for an equal march of infantry." This order describes some of the details of this difficult march through the "trackless" wilderness, and specially praises Lieutenants A. J. Smith and George Stoneman (later Governor of California) of the First Dragoons for having "shared and given valuable aid in these labors."[41]

When Cooke received his appointment as Major of the Second Dragoons (issued on February 15, 1847), he resigned his volunteer commission which was accepted by Kearny in May, and set out for Fort Leavenworth but was recalled to California as a witness on Fremont's trial. He finally joined his new regiment in Mexico City, and when the army retired to Vera Cruz from Jalapa, he commanded the rear guard.

Cooke commanded the Second Dragoons in Texas during 1852-53, and led an expedition during the winter against the Lipan Indians and other tribes when he drove them across the Rio Grande into Mexico.[42] He received his commission as Lieutenant Colonel, July 15, 1853. While in command at Fort Union,[43] New Mexico, in 1854, Colonel Cooke commenced operations against the Jicarilla Apaches who engaged in a spirited affair about six miles of Fort Union on March 5. Later in the month, a combined force of Jicarilla Apaches and Utahs (Ute) defeated a company of First Dragoons, under the command of Lieutenant John W. Davidson, near Fort Burgwin.[44] Colonel Cooke received this word the last day of March, and within an hour marched with all the force at hand pursuing the "Indians through deep snow, over broken mountains, for about one hundred and fifty miles."[45] Nine days later he overtook them at Aguas Calientes,[46] and defeated them, killing White Wolf (captor of Mrs. White and party) and twenty other Apaches. Cooke's energetic action against the Indians reflected the highest credit upon him, and prevented the Utahs from waging a general war as allies of the Jicarilla Apaches against the white people in that region. Cooke

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[41] Bancroft, *op. cit.*, pp. 666-7.

[42] Albert G. Brackett, *History of the United States Cavalry* (New York, 1865), pp. 152-56, 181, 225.

[43] Fort Union, New Mexico, near base of Gallinas (or Turkey) Mountains.

[44] Fort (or Cantonment) Burgwin was about nine miles north of Taos, New Mexico.

[45] Merritt, *op. cit.*, p. 82.

[46] The fight occurred at Grande Canyon of the Ojo Caliente, New Mexico, on April 8, 1854. Troops participating were H and detachment G, First Dragoons; H, Second Dragoons, and detachment D, Second Artillery. —Francis B. Heitman, *Historical Register . . .*, Vol. 2, p. 401.

described his pursuit of the Apaches as "one of the most severe marches" that he had ever undertaken.[47]

In 1855, Cooke was engaged in the Sioux War. He was commanding the Second Dragoons and two companies of mounted artillery and infantry. The First Regiment Dragoons was organized during the summer of 1855, at Fort Leavenworth; and the Second Regiment Dragoons; at Jefferson Barracks.

The various branches of the army were assembled at Fort Leavenworth in 1855 to cope with the increasing boldness of the Indians. General William S. Harney was in command of the expedition. Probably more steamboats were employed to carry those troops than ever were employed before in transporting United States forces on the Missouri River. The cavalry was under the command of Colonel Cooke who began the patrol of the Platte River. He met the Indians at Blue Water or Ash Hollow, in Nebraska, where he refused to parley with them. In a fight on September 3, eighty-six Indians were killed, many were wounded and made prisoners. The Indians were completely demoralized but the troops were not ordered home until July, 1856.[48]

General Harney wrote to the Adjutant General from his camp on Blue Water Creek, Nebraska Territory, after the battle with the Sioux on September 3, in which he says:

> I have the honor to report . . . . on my arrival at Ash Hollow, on the evening of the 2nd instant, I ascertained that a large portion of the Brule band of the Sioux nation, under *'Little Thunder'* was encamped on Blue Water Creek . . . . about six miles northwest of Ash Hollow, and four from the left bank of the North Platte.
>
> Having no doubt . . . . of the real character and hostile intentions of the party in question, I at once commenced preparations for attacking it. I ordered Lt. Col. P. St. George Cooke, 2d Dragn, with companies 'E' and 'K' of the same regt. light co. 'G' 4th Artillery, and co 'K' 10th Inf. all mounted, to move at three o'clock A. M. on the 3d instant, and secure a position which would cut off the retreat of the Inds to the Sand Hills, the reputed strong-hold of the Brules.
>
> This movement was executed in a most faultless and successful manner, not having apparently attracted the notice or excited the suspicion of the enemy up to the very moment of the encounter.
>
> With regard to the officers and troops of my command, I have never seen a finer military spirit displayed generally; . . . . Lieutenant Col. Cooke and Major Cady, the commanders of the mounted and foot forces . . . . carried out my instructions to them with equal alacrity, zeal and intelligence.

In the Territory of Kansas in 1855 slavery agitation finally compelled Governor [John W.] Geary to call for federal troops to

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[47] Edwin L. Sabin, *Kit Carson Days*, 1809-1868 (Chicago, 1914) p. 380. This fight probably took place at Cieneguilla, New Mexico. Hattman, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2 p. 407.

[48] Hunt, *op. cit.*, pp. 110-11; Cullum, *op. cit.*, p. 317. Cooke was stationed at Fort Riley, Kansas, during parts of 1855-56.

restore some sort of order. "Accordingly Colonel Cooke led the Fourth Artillery, acting as cavalry, from Leavenworth. This show of force caused the warring militias to disperse without bloodshed and Kansas was quickly brought to a state of quiescence, many lives being saved by the army's move,ent."[49]

During the turbulent days in 1856 in Kansas, Dr. Charles Robinson was commander of the free-state forces during the Wakarusa war which was brought on by the arrest and abuse of Jacob Branson, an old man from Indiana. "For his rescue a body of twelve free-state men was quickly organized and when they met a body of men of the same number, his release was demanded, and secured without bloodshed. This brought on the Wakarusa war. . . . the erection of riflepits and all necessary means of defense. . . . against an invasion of 1200 men from Missouri."[50]

"The three forts or bastions, located near Vermont, Massachusetts and Rhode Island streets, respectively, . . . These *quasi* forts we had thrown up rudely and constructed in the previous December, at the time of the 'Wakarusa War,' Colonel Cooke, the commander of the United States troops, had officially reported that he could ride his horse right across any of them."[51]

General Merritt paid high tribute to Cooke for his conduct in Kansas. He quoted General Smith's[52] report: ". . . . The sound judgment he [Cooke] displayed and his promptness, energy and good management have had a large share in producing the happy state of affairs at present existing; for there were moments when the want of either of these qualities might have led to the most fatal and extended disasters. . . . ."

The Secretary of War referred to Cooke's service in his report for 1856 as follows:

> "Energy, tempered with forbearance and firmness, directed with more than ordinary judgment, has enabled them to check civil strife and to restore order and tranquility without shedding a drop of blood . . . . I concur in the high commendation which the Commanding General of the Department of the West bestows on Lieutenant-Colonel Cooke, commanding in the field . . . . ."

In September, 1857, Cooke marched in command of his regiment on the Utah expedition and arrived at Fort Bridger[53] on November

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[49] William Addleman Ganoe, *History of the United States Army* (New York, London, 1924), p. 238.

[50] John Speer, "Accuracy in History," *Transactions of the Kansas State Historical Society*, 1897-1900 (Topeka, 1900), p. 61; F. W. Blackmar, "Charles Robinson," *Ibid.*, pp. 187-202. Dr. Robinson was the first governor of Kansas, 1861-62.

[51] *Ibid.*; and Brinton W. Woodward, "Reminiscences of September 14, 1856; Invasion of the 2700," *Ibid.*, p. 79.

[52] General Persifer F. Smith was in command of the Department of the West in 1856 with headquarters at Fort Leavenworth (Hunt, *op. cit.*, p. 113).

[53] Fort Bridger, Wyoming, near Carter's Station, Union Pacific Railroad, Uinta County; now town of that name.

19. "He was detached all winter and spring with his regiment, guarding and herding the horses, mules and cattle, which numbered nearly 7,000 head. These were taken to the distant Mountain valleys . . . . ." The Mormons having temporarily abandoned the area, Colonel Cooke returned to Fort Bridger and from there through Salt Lake City to Camp Floyd, forty miles from the town.[54]

Brigadier General Persifer F. Smith died at Fort Leavenworth in the month of May, 1858. On the 14th of June, Colonel Harney, who was a Brevet Brigadier General, was appointed to fill the vacancy. Philip St. George Cooke then became Colonel of the Second Dragoons.

Cooke was granted a long leave of absence in 1858 and during that year he prepared a new system of cavalry tactics which were adopted in 1861. On June 14, 1858, Cooke received his full colonelcy and he visited Europe during 1859-60 where he was an observer in the war in Italy. He rejoined in the spring of 1860 and assumed command of the Department of Utah, where he was stationed until the approach of the Civil War when orders were sent for the abandonment of Utah. He proceeded to Washington, arriving there October 19th.

Although his family followed their native State of Virginia in 1861, Cooke remained loyal "and when a letter from a Confederate general was secretly delivered to him in Washington he promptly handed it over to the War Department."[55]

Cooke was made a Brigadier General in the regular army November 12, 1861.[56] He commanded the Cavalry Brigade at Washington until the army of the Potomac entered upon the Peninsular campaign in which he commanded the so-called "Cavalry Reserve," a division of two brigades. He took part in the siege of Yorktown April 5 to May 4, 1862; the skirmish near Williamsburg, Battle of Williamsburg on May 5; Battle of Gaines' Mill on June 27 and the Battle of Glendale June 30. He served on Courts Martial duty July, 1862 to August 1863.

He commanded the district of Baton Rouge for a time, Department of the Gulf, October 13, 1863, to May, 1864, and as General Superintendent of Recruiting Service of the Army, May 24, 1864, to March 19, 1866. His rank was brevet major general from "March 13, 1865, for gallant and meritorious services during the Rebellion." From December 30, 1865, to August 30, 1866, he was a member of the Board for Retiring Disabled Officers. On April 1, 1865, he took command of the Department of the Platte where he remained until

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[54] The name was later changed to Fort Crittenden. It was in Cedar Valley.

[55] Cooke's son, John R. Cooke, and his son-in-law J. E. B. Stuart, became general officers in the Confederate Army. —*Dictionary of American Biography*, Vol. 2, p. 389.

[56] Brackett, *op. cit.*, pp. 152-6, 181, 225.



MAJOR GENERAL PHILIP ST. GEORGE COOKE, U.S.A.

January 9, 1867; later he commanded the departments of the Cumberland and the Lakes.[57] He was commissioned Major General, United States Army, March 13, 1865, for gallant service in the Civil War.[58]

Philip St. George Cooke was not only a distinguished soldier but he became well known as the author of three volumes of history and adventure. His *Cavalry Tactics* in two volumes was published in 1861, of which there were many later editions. His *Scenes and Adventures in the Army*, which appeared in 1857, was autobiographical. His book, *The Conquest of Mexico and California*, published in 1878, is an outstanding history on the subject based on his own notes and journals kept in the field.[59] General Cooke's journal and report of the Mormon Battalion appear in other publications, and he himself is mentioned in many volumes by writers on the history of the period that saw his service in the Army.[60]

General Cooke died March 20, 1895, in Detroit at the age of eighty-six years. He had retired October 29, 1873, having served in the Army continuously for forty-six years. He was a stern disciplinarian, described as a "character of renown in western army annals; a very peppery man with language," who "talked through his nose."[61] He had a high sense of honor and sincere religious feelings yet he did not lack a sense of humor, and was notably fond of young people. His wife was Rachel Hertzog of Philadelphia.

A biographer made this tribute to this great American soldier:[62]

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[57] Cullum, *op. cit.*, p. 317. "The Department of the Platte embraced the State of Iowa, territories of Nebraska, and Utah—Dakota west of the 104th meridian and so much of Montana as lies contiguous to the new road from Fort Laramie to Virginia City, Montana—Headquarters at Omaha." (Connor, *op. cit.*, p. 312).

[58] Dryman, *op. cit.*, pp. 159-9, note 67.

[59] Dictionary of American Biography, Vol. 4. A Santa Fe expedition made by Philip St. George Cooke in 1843 was published for the first time in June and September, 1925, in issues of the *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* (Quaife, *op. cit.*, p. 18, note 15).

The Army and Navy Chronicles, Vol. X contains a series of articles entitled Thoughts on the Army, and Suggestions for its Improvement; An Appeal for the Indian. Vol. XI contains eleven articles which are entitled Notes and Reminiscences of an Officer of the Army. This material was later incorporated in Scenes and Adventures or Romance in the Army: Of Military Life (Philadelphia, 1857) and all are signed F.R.D. which may have been a pen name used by Cooke.

Extended mention of P. St. George Cooke and quotations from his writings are in Otis E. Young's *The First Military Escort on the Santa Fe Trail*, 1829 (Glendale, 1952). Also, *Exploring Southwestern Trails*, 1846-54, edited by Ralph P. Bieber (Glendale, 1938), presents "Cooke's Journal of the Mormon Battalion, 1846-1847" from the manuscript copy in the Adjutant General's office at Washington.

[60] Several interesting statements concerning Cooke and his valuable service in directing the Cavalry during the Civil War are found in *The Photographic History of the Civil War*, edited by Robert S. Lanier, New York, Vol. 4, pp. 47, 62, 221, 225.

[61] Edwin L. Sabin, *Kit Carson Days* (Chicago, 1914) p. 379.

[62] Merriett, *op. cit.*, p. 92.

"Throughout his varied career General Philip St. George Cooke gave us an example of loyalty, professional pride and devotion to duty in its highest sense. He was the incarnation of a cavalry soldier. . . . . He was a splendid horseman and always looked every inch the soldier while mounted on his spirited, showy horse. He was a chivalrous soldier, a consistent Christian, a model gentleman."

APPENDIX A

In his delightful *Scenes and Adventures in the Army or Romance of Military Life* (1857), pp. 219-20, 224-27, Colonel Philip St. George Cooke gives a vivid account of the march of the Dragoons from Jefferson Barracks on the noted Expedition via Fort Gibson (1834) to the Wichita Village in Southwestern Oklahoma, in which he says that the regiment was composed of men between the ages of twenty and thirty-five:

. . . . native citizens who, from previous habits, were well qualified for mounted service. The officers were authorized to inform candidates for enlistment that they would be well clothed, and kept in comfortable quarters in winter . . . . . The recruits had generally disposed of nearly all of their clothing, in anticipation of their uniforms, but in November, before the proper clothing or arms had been received . . . . just at that season when all civilized, and, I believe, barbarous nations, even in a state of war, suspend hostilities and go into winter quarters, these five companies received an order to march out of theirs,—to take to the field!

By great exertions, and numerous expedients, a quantity of clothing nearly sufficient to cover them, but of all qualities, colors, and patterns, was obtained. The march to Fort Gibson was commenced on the 20th of November. On the third day we encountered a severe snow-storm. On the 14th of December, they reached their destination, having marched five hundred miles. Here they found no comfortable quarters, but passed a severe winter for any climate in tents; the thermometer standing more than one day at 8° below zero. There were of course no stables, and but very little corn, and the horses were of necessity turned loose to sustain a miserable existence on cane in an Arkansas bottom. . . .

The Regiment of Dragoons has had, so to speak, bad luck . . . . . The winter at Fort Gibson has been one of unexampled severity; the corn crop of last season had been swept away by an unparalleled rise of the Arkansas River . . . . . Some of the clothing arrived in *February*; after having been, with the sabres and pistols, sunk in a steam-boat. The guns made for the dragoons, and some of the clothing, have not yet arrived. Their sabres and pistols are not those intended for the regiment; but of a very rough, inferior quality.

The other five companies of Dragoons joined the regiment at Fort Gibson in June:

. . . . and were hurried off like the others, on the 18th of the month, quite unprepared for the expedition. Nevertheless the regiment marched full six weeks too late, when it is considered that we were to traverse the burning plains of the South: and the thermometer having previously risen to 105 in the shade, there was every prospect of a summer of unexampled heat . . . . .

. . . . On, on they marched, over the parched plains whence all moisture had shrunk, as from the touch of fire; their martial pomp and show dwindled to a dusty speck in the midst of a boundless plain: disease and death struck them as they moved: . . . they marched on, leaving three-fourths of their number stretched by disease in many sick camps . . . . It was the death of hope . . . . In one sick camp, they were in great danger of massacre by a horde of Comanche Indians, who had established themselves near by; and were in all probability only saved by the judgment and determination of the officer in command, the lamented Izard . . . . In the face of overwhelming numbers, he kept every man who could possibly bear arms on constant guard; . . . .

There, perhaps within the boundary of Mexico, was made this first though feeble demonstration of the power and ubiquity of the white man . . . . .

The shattered and half famished remnants of the regiment were gathered together at Fort Gibson, in August. The thermometer had risen in the shade to 114°. There, in tents and neglected, many more suffered and died. . . . .