

HIS LIFE A DEEP MYSTERY

Queer Story of Military Student "Bison" McLean.

West Point Cadet Who Disappears From School and Becomes Chief of the Navajos.

[From Monday's Daily.]

"Bison" McLean was sent to the military academy at West Point from southwest Missouri. The class he joined has become famous for the names of several of its members. The name "Bison" was given him by George B. McLellan because of McLean's long black hair and immense size. The Missourian was a poor student in his classes, and that he managed to stay at the academy for three years at all was on account of his superiority in riding and drill work. His life in the southwest had trained him in firearms, and no cadet at the Point could equal his records on the target range. He was not a popular man, for, in addition to being dull, he had a sullen temperament and moments of ungovernable passion. One cold, bitter winter night he disappeared. With one exception, this was the last time any of his classmates saw "Bison" McLean. His skates were missing, and so a search was made for him in the river. His family saw that search was made for him in New York. The books of the academy recorded him missing, and he was forgotten soon in the preparations for the war with Mexico.

The war was fought and ended. The tide of emigration to the west following the opening of the new territory and the discovery of gold in California made new duties for the army. It was necessary for emigrants to travel in great open wagon trains for their mutual protection, and the hussars were busy lending them their aid or avenging their wrongs. Garrisons were placed at Santa Fe and at several points in the southwest to keep the Indians off the trails passing through Magon Mount gap. Gen. W. S. Harney was in command of these forces and had such men as Kit Carson in his employ as scouts. Maj. Sumner, afterward a major general, was Gen. Harney's right hand man. Early in the '50s he was sent on a scout with three troops of dragoons through the Datil and Tularosa ranges. While he was mounting a rise in the Datils the dragoons came suddenly on a band of 800 Navajo Indians. The American troops prepared to fight, but the Indians halted and raised their hands with the open palm of peace. They explained that they were after Apaches, with whom they were then enjoying one of their predatory wars. Then a remarkable thing happened. The chief rode out from the band and, facing them, gave a sharp command: The braves formed in troops of about 100 each and marched past as it at parade. The amazement of Maj. Sumner seemed to please the chief, for he gave another command. The Indians turned sharply, changed from line into column and then back into line. Another sharp order, and they advanced in line by the entire command.

"Where in thunder did you get all this?" cried Maj. Sumner. "We've four times this many drilled braves," the chief replied, and, dropping a little venom, "we'll use them, too, perhaps when it comes to fighting the whites. We have a great war chief who has taught us these things." He raised his hand as a signal, and the Indians moved over the hill and disappeared.

Maj. Sumner made an official report of the incident. He did not forget to tell, in addition to the foregoing, that the Navajos he had seen were armed with American rifles and lances of Mexican manufacture. Jefferson Davis was then secretary of war. He had seen enough of the southwest in his experiences in the Mexican war to know how extraordinary it was that Indians should adopt a civilized mode of warfare. He ordered a report in detail and called for as complete an investigation as possible under the circumstances. There was little more learned further than this—that the drill resembled that of the American dragoons and was not at all like the Mexican tactics. No white man had seen the war chief, though one of Kit Carson's scouts declared he had. The chief was not a Mexican, he said, and was a Navajo most certainly. He was a tall, handsome Indian of remarkable physique and rode like a dragoon and not like an Indian. Nothing more than these few facts could Secretary Davis gather.

It was nearly ten years later that Joseph C. Ives was sent at the head of an expedition to survey the Colorado

river. A troop of dragoons was detailed as the guard for his party. Ives had been at West Point and had been transferred to the topographical survey. While up in the mountains to the east of where now the town of Green River is the Indian guides became uneasy and reported that they were spied upon by some redskin scouts, to whom they could not approach close enough to learn their tribe. Guards were more carefully placed. One morning the relief of one of the outer pickets found the man shot through the heart by an arrow.

"There's an Indian chief on the guard line, and he's asked to see you." "You should go to your commanding officer, corporal," Ives replied. "I'm not in charge of the escort."

"No; but the Indian asked for you, sir, and by name."

"Well, that's strange. How does he know me? Bring him up. But if he has any others with him keep them out of camp."

A few minutes later the corporal returned with the chief, who was a marvelous figure for even a Navajo. He was very tall and straight and muscled like an athlete. A guide was called to act as interpreter.

"I guess we don't need that fellow," the chief remarked as the guide came up.

The officers had gathered at Ives' tent, and their mouths fell open in amazement as they heard him speak, for his English was pure and without a flaw of accent. The Navajo sat down on a camp stool in a self possessed way and looked the group of men over quietly.

"Have you any spare tobacco, Ives?" he asked.

The tobacco was found for him, and an orderly was dispatched to an officer's tent for the bottle that, because of the inaccessibility to civilization, had been nursed lovingly and held for extraordinary occasion.

"How does it come, Ives, you're not wearing the uniform? You didn't fall down at the Point, did you?"

"Great Scott, what do you know about the Point?" cried the astonished Ives.

But the chief only smiled and went on talking about the Point and the men who were there 15 years before. His familiarity with the army ended there, for he asked hungrily about these few men and how they had done in the Mexican war. He was surprised to learn how well their fortunes had prospered. For two hours the officers stared at this great brown Indian and searched their memories in vain efforts to place him.

"You may be pleased to learn that it had been arranged to kill your party off, Ives, but I recognized you yesterday while you were prowling around the hills, and we'll declare the killing off for old times' sake. I've enough braves within a mile of you to ride you all down in an hour," the Navajo said as he rose to go.

"But who in thunder are you?" Ives cried. "You seem to know me, but I can't for the life of me recall you."

"Don't you remember McLean, who was in your class at West Point?" the chief asked.

"What, 'Bison' McLean—who was drowned?"

"Yes, I'm 'Bison.'"

There is no record of any other instance of magnanimity on the part of "Bison" McLean. Only an occasional trapper, with the exception of Indians, saw him after that. His history thenceforth is as mysterious as that which had connected itself with him when he was only the great Navajo war chief. How he left the Point and joined the Indians and why no one knows to this day. The retreat of Chief Joseph and his Nez Percés from New Mexico to the lava fields in the war of 1877, one of the most remarkable in all military history for its strategy, is credited by army officers to the generalship of "Bison" McLean. It is not doubted that he is now dead, but when and where did he die? No one knows and probably never will.—Kansas City Star.

Out of Politics.

It has been suggested by two or three American citizens that the members of the two old political parties, Democrats and Republicans, each hold a regular, old-fashioned political meeting here in Dawson just to revive recollections of the past, for the sake of Auld Lang Syne, so to speak.

The parties who suggested the above probably did not stop to consider that it was past political enthusiasm that caused a large number of Americans to come here. Political enthusiasm "broke" many men who came here partly to recoup their lost fortunes, but largely to get away from the allurement incident to party affiliation. Besides it is doubtful if there is sufficient old Bourbon in Dawson on which to hold a typical Democratic meeting.

PERSONALITIES.

Congressman William A. Jones, of Virginia, served during the civil war in the defense of Richmond, and earned a nickname which still clings to him. He was born in Warsaw, Va., and his fighting qualities earned for him the title of "Thaddeus of Warsaw."

Col. E. F. Fleming, the clock master of the treasury department in Washington, has over 500 clocks in his care. His friends call him "Father Time." He starts winding his little army of eight-day clocks on Monday and gets around to the last one on Saturday night.

Ex-Gov. Roger Wolcott, of Massachusetts is spoken of as a candidate for the presidency of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. It is rumored that the board of trustees of that institution has already offered him the place, but this rumor he refuses to either affirm or deny.

Prof. Todd, of Amherst college, and Percival Lowell, of Boston, are making preparations for a trip to Africa to observe the eclipse of the sun in May next. Mr. Lowell's interest in astronomy began in an amateur way six or seven years ago. He founded the Lowell Observatory, at Flagstaff, Ariz., in 1894, and since then has made some important observations.

It is said that Gov. Crane, of Massachusetts, is very popular among the employes of his paper mill in Dalton, owing to his liberal treatment of them. There are several aged men in the town whose sole duty is to walk to the office of the mills and draw their pay—a sort of pension for services loyally rendered in the past. A strike in the establishment has not been known in the three generations of family management.

Lieut. Ward Cheney, of Connecticut, who has just died of wounds received in a skirmish in the Philippines, was a graduate of Yale college in the class of 1896, and was on the staff of the Hartford Courant when he enlisted, in 1898. When he left he remarked laughingly to his associates in the office that he supposed he ought to write his own obituary before he should go away. The suggestion was taken seriously, and at the request of one of the editors he wrote a paragraph covering his life, which has just been published. It fills but 26 lines of the Courant, and is very modestly written.

Quiet Up the River.

From all persons who arrive in Dawson from the outside comes the statement that all the towns in the upper country, including Skagway, are very dull. Old Skagwayans report that many are going out of business there owing to the exceedingly dull and quiet times. Bennett is said to be going the same route Dyea traveled two years ago, while Caribou, which never did attain to either name or fame, is holding her own. Whitehorse is reported as quiet but steadily growing on a solid, substantial basis, and is bound to be the best point between Dawson and the coast.

Concerning the copper mines near Whitehorse a late Skagway paper says: Bernard Whalen, who has just returned from a visit to Whitehorse, made a round of the various copper properties while there and declares that if the properties can be proven to have depth, the future of the district as a mining camp is assured. He says further: "Many shafts and tunnels have been made throughout the district on properties owned by poor men as well as those controlled by big companies. Poor men are putting in much of their time patiently working all their small incomes will permit.

"The Anaconda promises to be the greatest property in the camp. Six shafts have been sunk on it, each now from 16 to 25 feet deep, and a tunnel of 160 feet in length has been opened. In every one of the shafts and in the tunnel nothing has been encountered but ore. There are no walls. It is simply one huge body of quartz. The depth is alone to be ascertained. The tunnel so far penetrates a soft free milling gold rock which would pay to work in most countries.

"In the Rabbit's Foot much work has been done and it is showing up well. The Anaconda and the Rabbit's Foot now have ore that would pay to ship."

"Hundreds of tons of ore could be shipped from the Carlisle right now."

"The Pueblo, while low grade, has 100,000 tons of ore in sight."

"Capt. Stretch of the road has been in the camp endeavoring to arrange for the shipment of ore to Skagway and down the coast in some way satisfactory to mine owners and all."

They Saw the Library.

The couple looked as if their names might be, respectively, Hezekiah and Cynthia. They were in Washington and were sightseeing. The real funny-picture-paper type of country folks is not often seen, but this couple distinctly belonged to that type. They were middle-aged, and they walked hesitatingly up the steps of the library of congress. The man was reluctant to surrender his bulgy umbrellas to the young man behind the checking desk.

"When do I get it back?" he inquired, suspiciously.

"When you're coming out," was the reply.

So he surrendered the parachute, and his spouse—who wore, by the way, a

dark green satin skirt, a Paisley shawl and a black bonnet littered with cherries absolutely ripe—clutched his arm tightly, and they turned to gaze at the grandeur about them.

"Gosh all gooseberries!" exclaimed the man, looking around him admiringly, "but this must 'a' cost 'a' heap."

"Muss't it, though?" said his wife, rapturously.

Just then a tall, thin elderly man, with a gray, straggly beard, passed by the couple. As he was hatless, the man who looked as if his name ought to be Hezekiah naturally concluded that he was employed about the library.

"Mister," said he, addressing the thin, dark man, "how much do you reckon this buildin' cost th' gov'ment?"

"Oh, many millions of dollars," replied the man with the straggly gray beard. "Don't you think the appearance of it justifies the great expenditure of money?"

Then he got into conversation with the countryman and his wife.

"Perhaps you'd like to be shown around the building?" he asked them.

"Wall, we would take it kindly," said the countryman. "You work around here?"

"Oh, yes, I am employed here," said the dark man, with great gravity. "I have been attached to the library for some years. Come with me, and I will point out the decorations that seem to appeal with most force to visitors."

"We'll jes' go you, said the countryman, and the dark, elderly man led the way and took them through the many beautiful chambers of the library, discoursing charmingly and with evident perfect knowledge of the many interesting features of the decorations. He explained the meaning of all the allegorical pictures, carefully avoided comment on any of the undraped mythical ladies, so as not to shock the countryman's wife—she looked shyly in the other direction when they came to those pictures—and proved himself in general an admirable guide. In fact, a number of well-groomed people made it a point to remain within sound of the straggly-bearded man's voice, in order to catch his remarks, which were more luminous by a great many points than the catalogue. After spending nearly three-quarters of an hour and showing them over the entire building, the thin, elderly man looked at his watch, and started to take his leave. Just as he did so the countryman and his wife held a whispered consultation. The countryman reached into his trousers pocket, pulled out a small, white bag, dived into the bunch of silver it contained, extracted a dime with his thumb and forefinger, and approached the man who had been so courteous and attentive as a guide.

"Much obliged fer showin' us around, mister, said the countryman, holding out the dime.

"You are entirely welcome, replied Assistant Librarian—formerly librarian—of Congress Spofford, smilingly ignoring the 10-cent piece and walked away.

"Darned obligin' feller, wa'ant he?" said the countryman to his wife, carefully replacing the dime in the soiled white bag.

Flour Trade Suspended.

San Francisco, July 17.—"The troubles in China will cause a suspension of our trade in flour and other commodities," said William Wiley, Hongkong representative of a big California milling company, who arrived from the Orient. "When I left Hongkong," he added, "business was dead there and at Shanghai. At least 2,000,000 sacks of flour were at Hongkong that could not be delivered in the interior. A great quantity of flour had gone forward since, and that is also held up. Most of this is from Oregon. It was a great loss. The Chinese, who purchased that to sell again, will be the losers. But, of course, while the troubles last, the Pacific coast trade in flour with all parts of China affected, must come to a stop. The entire flour trade with China is carried on with the Pacific coast states, and there will be loss to this coast by the suspension. Outside of flour, the principal imports of China from the United States are cotton, oil and machinery. The loss will be distributed all over the country. The flour now in China that cannot be sold in the interior is worth about \$1,500,000. The supplies for the allies that may be sent out will not compensate us for the loss of Chinese trade.

"Japan will also be a large loser in the flour trade, as the supply for Northern China goes in via Japan. The Chinese will not suffer for food. They will live on fish and rice, as they did before they had flour."

En Route to Eagle.

W. R. Edwards and wife, of Fargo, N. D., are registered at the Regina. Mr. Edwards is the receiver of the U. S. land office at Eagle, and is en route for the scene of his duties. He seems to have earned his appointment to this office as he was one of the first volunteers to land on Philippine soil during the recent unpleasantness with Spain. Mr. and Mrs. Edwards will be passengers on the first boat going down the river.

STEWART RIVER EXCURSION

On the Steamer Flora Starts This Evening.

Lightning Arrives With Her House Battered—Steamer Movements—Water Rapidly Rising.

The steamer Flora arrived early this morning from Whitehorse with a large passenger list and a scow load of cattle consigned to Robert Lerac. She will sail tonight at 7 o'clock for the Stewart river. Cepts. Martineau and Campbell will guide her destiny on the journey. Both men are thoroughly competent river navigators and congenial companions as well, consequently passengers who take the trip can be assured of a successful journey and a first rate time. This will be the first time in the history of the country that a steamboat has gone up the Stewart to the head of navigation, and should the venture prove successful the company operating the Flora will dispatch a boat up that river at regular intervals next season. A number of canoes will be taken aboard which will allow the tourists to float down stream at any point from which they may desire to embark. Splendid fishing and shooting will be found all along the river and a chance will be given those who desire to prospect or stake mineral land. It is estimated that one week will be consumed on the trip.

The following passengers came in on the Flora: Al Caron, E. Wall, Ed Chadwick, C. Ingram, D. L. Marbeth, F. Tankin, K. Hayska, C. M. Matef, W. S. Chestnut, Chas. Armstrong, J. A. Gerow, H. O. Nickerson, W. E. Rinehardt, C. V. Anthony, Mrs. Te Roller and two children, R. Tevas, C. Bennet, D. Wyman, H. G. Torrence, S. P. Reynolds, E. McKay, H. Jordan, M. Mannering, E. Demacuome, Silas Kelsey, W. C. Sprogal, Joel Westerlund, Thos. Drohin, John Clark, J. D. Demert, J. Lasegin, D. M. Lockridge, Ed Bowne, J. Kajem.

The Sybil sails today for Whitehorse. The Lightning came in yesterday after a flirtation of many hours duration with a sand bar near Selwyn and with her upper-deck badly shattered from a protruding shelf rock. She will not leave for her up river run before Tuesday. The Tyrrell sails tonight for Whitehorse.

The John P. Light, one of the D. & W. H. N. Co., has not been launched as yet. Manager Davies hopes to have her in the water tomorrow.

The steamer Zealandian was reported going up at 4 this morning from Selkirk.

The Yukoner is coming down. She was at Hootalinqua at 5 this morning.

The Canadian and Ora arrived at Whitehorse this morning at 5 o'clock.

The Bailey left Whitehorse at 2 o'clock this morning.

The water has raised two feet in the Yukon in the past 36 hours and is now almost covering the bar upon which the scows from up river are beached.

The average temperature at up-river points is 65 degrees. Slight rains and cloudy weather is reported.

Candidates Glare.

Every rising sun greets from one to half a dozen aspirants for political preferment who are ready to sacrifice personal interests for the sake of the dear people; and every sun rises on several ex-candidates, men who were in the field yesterday and who were weighed in the balance, found wanting and laid away as not quite the thing. "States are being made and smashed with amazing rapidity and utter disregard for the feelings of the aspirants. It looks now as though the contest will narrow down to a fight between the ins and outs, the former being desirous of having men elected to the council who will coincide with the present members, while the outs will move heaven and earth to bring about the election of men who will dare to do right regardless of internal discord.

Rapid Rise of the Yukon.

Between Friday evening and yesterday evening, a period of 48 hours, the Yukon river, which had formerly been steadily falling, rose upwards of a foot and has been continuing to rise today. Within the past three days there have been heavy rains all over the Yukon basin and to this fact is due the sudden and material rise in the river. It was the increased depth of water that enabled the steamer Lightning to move off the bar near Selwyn on which she had been hung up for several days. During the remainder of the season it is not feared but that there will be abundance of water.