

atmosphere was sulphurous and remarks dangerous as the tramp rider appeared juggling the express into the station and perhaps it was these occasions that gave him the reputation in the articles referred to.

There was no such thing as relays ready, saddled, awaiting the rider, for there was no saddle at the station except it might be an old herd saddle, until the pony came in, and the pony rider would not trust a hostler or station keeper to saddle his mount or if he did he would have had to readjust it before his horse made a dozen jumps, besides the cinch had to be adjusted according to the way one was going, uphill or down. And light-weight was not a distinctive qualification in a rider. It was the manner in which he handled and set his horse that determined his qualities as a rider. He had to know how to ride and be capable of endurance under a continued strain, and to have the sand to go through at all hazards. "Tom" Doherty, though in another occupation, frequently made the trip on the pony and he then gave abundant promise of the generous proportions he has since attained.

Except in the winter the animals that were first to run over the route were caught out of the herd morning and evening and tied up in the corral ready for the express when it came along. It was seldom that a rider bothered the hostler unless on important occasions when the hostler would have the relay outside the corral and the rider at the home station would have his mount saddled and when the pony arrived he would have but to tighten the cinch, throw the express over his saddle, jump on and go.

[LETTER NO. 5.]

Some of the animals were treacherous and exceedingly trying on the men that rode them, especially the mustangs and ponies. They would fight when being saddled and fall over backward when being mounted. Others you would have to mount while they were bucking, perhaps light behind the saddle and not get into it in a half mile.

I remember one, a flathead stallion, that would manifest his playful disposition by taking your legs in his teeth if you were not sharp, and try to pull you off. He would "buck" down hill. He would bang you in the head with the poll of his head if you were not careful. He would fall over backwards and lay down and roll, when of course one had to get off. But a sound beating with a club usually educated him for the trip. The express matter was carried in a couple of pockets, sewed or riveted to the lower back corners of the "machetes" or cover of the saddle, which consists of two oblong pieces of stamped sole leather and with a crescent shaped slot and oval opening for the cantel and pommel to project through. It will fit any ordinary saddle tree. The pockets were some ten inches long, four inches wide and three thick, and were fitted with staples, eyelets, chain, padlock and flap over the top, and no one but the local agents, route agents and superintendents had access to them. The express matter consisted of press dispatches, written on tissue

paper, important letters, drafts and bills of exchange. The valuable letters, drafts and bills of exchange were in inclosures, and the package for each pocket was wrapped in oiled silk, and at no time did the through matter exceed ten pounds, usually not half of it. The dispatches were carried at so much a word, the letters and valuables at so much an ounce or fraction thereof.

The life of the pony expressman was one of hardship, exposure and peril. He was often deprived of sleep for days at a time. Sometimes, the express being delayed by deep snows, on one or more sections of the line, the riders from off one, two or more routes would be all bunched up at one end, and the rider at that point would have to ride his route and theirs until they could get out by mail, "Ichabod," Herman Hunt on one of these occasions rode some two hundred and fifty miles at one stretch and in February, 1861, the writer was three days from this city to Echo, the new snow on the trail over the mountains being half way up the horse's sides and in drifts over his back, and the rider from Camp Floyd with this express got fast in the drifting, blinding snow, and after triangulating Utah valley found his bearings and reached the city. In the winter of 1860-61 at times when the express from the east was delayed it was no uncommon experience for the rider first out of this city to start out at midnight and ride up and down the canyon and over the Wasatch range for eighty miles, meet the delayed express, turn and ride back without a stop except to change relays, and in this trip he would ride twelve horses.

It sometimes happened that a rider would get lost, with the trail obliterated, the loose snow to his chin and the winter winds driving the blustering, swirling snow in clouds through the atmosphere he would get bewildered and wander and wallow through the snow for hours before regaining his course. Dense fogs were also common on some parts of the road. A rider started out from Bear river one night with the thermometer at 20 degrees and on reaching Needle rocks bottom he was in the midst of genuine pogonip and both sides of the small valley having a similar appearance and the trail being obliterated with new snow he lost his bearings and wandered around for three hours when horse and rider went cascade into one of those large springs east of Needle Rocks and after floundering in the slush and water the rider succeeded in getting out and with a strap attached to the bridle which the rider carried coiled in his hand he pulled and coaxed the horse out. The opportune discovery of the spring gave the rider a hint as to where the trail might be found, and finally finding it, he fell down through the snow for tracks of animals that had last passed over it, and finding which way they pointed got his course and struck out, and had to ride only about thirty miles to his home station before he could change his clothes.

The pony ride was exposed to more danger from the Indians than was the driver with the coach, for there were always

two or more with that, while the pony man was alone and did not confine himself to the road but took a trail or cut-off wherever he could make time. On the first division east the riders were seldom molested, but on the next division and on the Platte they sometimes caused the pony to beat his own record.

In the fall of 1860 a thieving band of hostile Bannocks raided Myers's station on Bear river, killed the herder and run off the stock and I led a couple of express animals over from Echo the next morning after it occurred and—well there was a "shaky" pony rider about the time he reached the scene of the raid.

On the line west from Camp Floyd the Indians committed many depredations. In May, 1860, at Dry Creek, fifty miles east of Jacobsville or Reese river the station keeper, Ralph Lozier, was shot dead and the pony rider, John Applegate, was so badly wounded that to escape falling into the hands of the Indians and being tortured he killed himself. Two other men—McCandless and Ball, traders, were camped near by at the time which was in the afternoon soon after Applegate had got in with the pony from the east. The Indians spring upon them from the secret cedars above the corral. The other men, McCandless, being a "squaw man," were not molested until they attempted to get away, when the Indians chased them, shooting at them with bows and arrows only, and they succeeded in reaching Roberts creek some three miles east that night and giving the alarm. At least this is the version the writer had of the affair from "Hank" Butterfield, a rider in that section at the time, and also scout and interpreter for General's forces while they were on the road quelling the Indians and also from Mike Holten, the mail packer, who was at Roberts creek at the time the affair occurred. A few months after this a pony rider was shot near Roberts creek, and I remember riding the express he was carrying; the machetes were spattered with his blood. In Echo canyon also the pony boys were frequently fired upon and the Indians captured the station at that point and were having a feast, making the boys cook for them preparatory to the sacrifice when Lieutenant Weed with a detachment of soldiers from Butte station swooped down on them and interfered with their festivities. But after the troops began to patrol the road with the exception of an occasional shot at a rider or packer, the Indians quit their depredations to again break out in 1863, with more violence than ever, which has been referred to in the article on the overland mail.

The earnings of the pony express were nowhere in proportion to the expense of running it and it was understood subrosa that during the latter part of its existence it was largely maintained out of the secret service fund of the government. It was of vital importance that California should be preserved to the Union. Gwin, Edgerton and others of secession proclivities were only waiting an opportunity to throw her into the Confederacy. The immense expense of