

Kit Carson One of Most Inspiring Figures in History of The Nation

By Fred Thomson

(Movie actor, former clergyman, former Boy Scout commissioner) History at intervals reveals about men who have no desire for dominant leadership. Strangely, shy men have found themselves thrust to the forefront, and have had tremendous influence on their times.

Two Americans are remarkable in this respect—Lindbergh and Kit Carson. When Lindbergh landed in Paris with a letter of introduction he had no thought aviation would take on a new world interest or that his boyish shyness would affect the relations of nations. Similarly, when Kit Carson joined Fremont on a Missouri river boat in 1842, he had no idea he would soon epitomize the daring of all American trappers. He could not foresee the mixture of fact and legend which would sweep the country would crystallize the movement for the definite annexation of the northwest and also make him the central figure of the acquisition of California, New Mexico, Arizona and the rest of the Spanish area.

Carson disputed trapping territory with the Hudson Bay company from 1829 onward. He penetrated to Vancouver with Fremont. His travels covered most of the west—New Mexico, Arizona, Colorado, Utah, Nevada, California, Oregon and Washington.

Mild-Mannered Type

His exploits were the talk of congress, stories of his daring filled eastern publications. Yet he was a mild-mannered, blue-eyed little man who craved solitude or the companionship of a few friends. Carson was apprenticed to a saddler in St. Louis in 1826 when he decided to run away and join a wagon train headed for Santa Fe over the Santa Fe Trail. His trapping trips began the following year from Taos, New Mexico.

Carson first entered California on a trapping expedition in 1829. He is generally credited with having been a member of the fourth party to make the trip overland and the second to succeed in making the return trip. It was the success of the return trip that began the advertising of the states west of the Rockies.

Thrown in Prison

California's Mexican officials were hostile to visitations from Americans. In 1824 the little party of Missourians which succeeded in crossing the Rockies by way of Great Salt Lake ended in prison in Lower California. In 1824 Richard Campbell and a party succeeded in crossing the salt territory between Santa Fe and San Diego. The following year Jedediah Smith and a party of trappers and traders penetrated to Los Angeles from Salt Lake, were arrested, thrown into jail and later expelled from the territory.

Stories of their exploits filtered around among the wandering trappers from Montana to Santa Fe. They were always in search of new territory. In the spring of 1828 Capt. Ewing Young gathered a few adventurous spirits about him at Taos, New Mexico, with the intention of acquiring beaver pelts in California. The prospect of a hostile reception from the California government meant nothing to them, as they were in constant danger of losing their scalps in an Indian attack.

They left Taos in April, 1829, reached San Gabriel Mission several weeks later, but didn't stay long, as they wanted to keep well ahead of any pursuit from Governor Jose Maria Echeandia.

To avoid contact with the Mexican officials in the coast communities Young and Carson and the remaining 15 men in the group went northward from San Gabriel to the San Joaquin Valley and to the Tulare Valley, where they encountered trappers from the Hudson Bay company who had worked southward from Vancouver. Through the winter of 1829-30 they trapped jointly and succeeded in selling their skins to the San Jose Mission. Overcome by a desire to celebrate the success of this transaction, the trappers visited Los Angeles, Carson showed his usual common sense by remaining sober and listening to the Spanish conversations of those who were planning to rob the trappers. As a result, he succeeded in getting the group together. In nine days they reached the Colorado river.

Told of California Twelve years later Carson met Lieutenant John C. Fremont on a boat near St. Louis and told him about the California climate and

soil. Fremont engaged him as scout on an exploring expedition to South Pass during several months of 1842.

What Kit Carson told Fremont apparently stirred his curiosity and enthusiasm. His writings made Carson famous. His father-in-law United States Senator Menton, renewed his pressure for western expansion. Fremont returned to the west in 1843, again made Carson his scout and played a dramatic role in a kaleidoscopic series of events culminating with the absorption by the United States of all the territory west of the Rocky Mountains and huge slices on the eastern slopes.

Between May 29, 1843, and July 31, 1844, Carson led Fremont to Westport Landing, Mo., to Vancouver, southward to Shutter Fort, near the present Sacramento, down the San Joaquin Valley to the Mojave Desert, back across Utah, and to Missouri. Carson returned to his home in Taos "Inspired by California," he related.

On Road Again

In 1845 he was on the road again with Fremont, crossing the mountains to Great Salt Lake, pausing there for a trip in a rubber boat. Winter overtook them in the mountains, but with a vision of the warm valleys on the Pacific Slope they pushed over the crests of the Sierra Nevada mountains and reached Shutter's Fort again on December 2.

Most men would have been content to rest indefinitely after that trip, but Carson and Fremont seemed to have been kindred souls. Early in 1846 they pushed down to San Jose and were ordered out by the Mexican authorities. Fremont defied them, and then he decided about leaving, going northward up the Feather River to Klamath Lake. The diplomatic intrigues preliminary to the Mexican War were in full swing then. A navy lieutenant, Boate by name, who had left Vera Cruz the previous October, crossed Mexico to Mazatlan, and journeyed northward to Klamath Lake with secret messages for Fremont.

What followed immediately thereafter is the history of California's entrance into the United States. By May 24 Fremont had returned to Marysville on the Sacramento River. In a short time he took possession of Sutter's Fort, stole General Castro's horses, captured Sonora, started a revolution and made a trip down to Monterey to report his activities to Commodore Sloat.

Being a conservative old soul, the commodore gasped a few times, decided to reason, and put Commodore Stockton in charge of the American visiting fleet. There was nothing conservative about the new commodore. He decided to join Fremont's and Carson's private war and organized the strangest light-bulb in history—the navy battalion of mounted riflemen with Fremont as a major and Carson a lieutenant. Then they set sail to conquer San Diego. The entire battalion was seasick, but recovered quickly after landing and took possession of the town.

It was now August 17, California was formally annexed. Having had a busy spring and summer, Commodore Stockton and Major Fremont decided to report to Washington. Kit Carson promised to make the round trip in 120 days. He set out with a small group of aides to help fight Indians on September 15. This was the first of three round trips across the continent. In 25 days he met General Kearny 800 miles from San Diego at Socorro, New Mexico. The general ordered him to show him the way back to San Diego. Carson did, but did not reach San Diego until December, because they were held up by a series of fights in the mountains about 60 miles from that town.

Trouble Begins Insurrections had broken out in several parts of California. Carson was ordered to guide the army to Los Angeles. He was present at the battle when General Andres Pico and Jose Antonio Carrillo tried to bar the way.

On February 25, 1847, Carson started for Washington once more with the latest news about the pacification of California. In May he reached St. Louis. By taking a boat down the Mississippi and up the Ohio to Pittsburgh, a stage-coach over the mountains into Maryland and Baltimore and Ohio Railroad from there into Washington he finished the trip in another ten days.

Mrs. Fremont met him at the

BILLY SUNDAY JR. REMARRIES



NEA Los Angeles Bureau Here are Billy Sunday Jr., and his wife, Mrs. Maud Sunday, just after they were remarried the other day at Yuma, Ariz. They sailed for a second honeymoon on the liner City of Honolulu. It was widely reported the Sundays had been estranged some time after the first marriage at Tijuana, Mexico, a year and a half ago.

station. Carson discovered he was a national hero, President Polk received him and commissioned him a lieutenant in the army. In June he returned to California through southwestern Colorado and Utah. That winter he was in charge of troops at Tejon Pass. In April, 1848, he started back to Washington with more messages, reaching there May 2. He rode from 15 to 50 miles a day, depending on the distances between water supplies.

The following October he was back at his home in Taos, New Mexico. Fremont wrote that Carson wanted to take his family to California, but had been unable to break away from old friends.

Gold Rush Passes Him The excitement of the gold rush in 1849 passed him by. From 1848 to 1852 he remained as a farmer at Taos. He was also purchasing agent for the government in supplying food and supplies with food and clothing.

In 1853 he decided upon a bold stroke that would net him more money than most of the gold-seekers had been able to dig out of streams in the four years since the discovery of the metal. Stories of the high prices paid for all kinds of supplies in the gold territory of California had filtered back to New Mexico.

With his usual instinct for dramatic action, Carson induced his old friend Lucien Maxwell to help him buy 12,000 sheep.

They divided these into two herds and drove them across the Rockies by way of the Salt Lake Trail and sold them for \$5 per head at Sacramento. It was a daring thing to do in hostile Indian country, and it was almost as daring for them to start back alone with \$66,000 in gold on their pack animals.

This was Carson's last trip to the coast. Until the outbreak of the Civil War he was an Indian agent. During the war he became a colonel and a brevet brigadier general. He made a final trip to Washington in 1868, but died shortly after his return at Fort Lyon near Las Animas, Colorado.

SHOE AND HANDLE SUPPLY TOKYO (AP)—Japanese make good use of the two varieties of beech trees, employing wood of the heavy beech of the Northwest Japan for clog shoes or "geta," and the light beech of Northeast Japan for umbrella handles. Until recently the material was used only for firewood, charcoal and railroad ties.

BOY, 4, SMOKES



NEA Seattle Bureau Doctors have been amazed by Freddie Rings, four-year-old Seattle, Wash., boy, who has been smoking cigars since he was a year old and is healthy, mentally and physically. Freddie's mother has tried to make him quit tobacco, but when his cigars are taken away he refuses to eat. Judging from the above picture, it's a little tough when the smoke gets into a fellow's eye.

Austrians Tear Down Italy's Flag

LONDON, May 24 (AP)—An exchange telegraph dispatch from Vienna says that students at the University of Innsbruck tore the Italian flag down from the Italian consulate at that place today being exasperated that it was flown on the occasion of the anniversary of the Italian declaration of war against Austria. The dispatch says that the people of the Tyrolean city were angered at the display of the flag.

A dispatch received in Paris on the same incident said the flag was again hoisted with military honors and that the governor of the city, which is in the Austrian Tyrol, made apologies.

Operator, 82, Dies Of Mar. 18 Accident

BUTTE, Mont., May 24 (AP)—Levi S. Wild, 82, of Butte, one of the oldest telegraph operators in the United States, died here last night from injuries received when he was struck by a hit-and-run driver March 18. He was credited with sending out the first wire news on the Custer massacre and he was operator in Coriath, Utah, in 1877, and also with having been on the receiving end of the first dispatch about the assassination of President Lincoln.

PREMIUM INCAPACITATED, under a new social insurance law. The workers will pay half the premium, which is 10 per cent of the salary, and employers the other half, all such moneys going to the state.

PARIS (AP)—Every French man or woman working for less than \$700 yearly will be insured against sickness, old age and death, as well

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NORTH POWDER PERSONALS

NORTH POWDER (Special)—Lois Hudson left Friday night to attend the lodge convention at Roseburg. She is a delegate from the Rebecca lodge here. At Roseburg is also a delegate for the L. O. O. F.

Mrs. Oscar Jacobson is seriously ill at the Hot Lake sanatorium. Ruth Gikison, who has been teaching school at Medical Springs, finished her term and returned to her home on Tuesday.

Mr. Hick and son, Francis, who have the contract for painting the Texaco oil stations, have begun work in Baker.

Mrs. Ayers, of Baker, was transacting business here Tuesday. The North Powder Women Woodcraft lodge, entertained the Union lodge Tuesday evening. An enjoyable evening was spent in playing cards and later a delicious luncheon was served.

Bill Southern, of the Baker garage, was a visitor Tuesday. China and Japan are at war. The Chinese probably will be favorites in the betting; they certainly have had enough practice.

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