

## AN INDIAN SCARE

By MRS. A. M. DYER, Douglas, Arizona

In August, 1885, my husband, Mr. F. H. Dyer, my step-daughter, Minnie Dyer, and myself went up in the Catalina Mountains, beyond Tucson, to escape from the heat. We were on the lower slope of the north side of Mount Lemmon at an abandoned mining camp, known as the Copper Camp, where there was a small smelter and several houses. The mine had not paid and everything had been shut down for some years; we made our home in a house built of logs.

The location was a beautiful one. We were surrounded by mountains dotted over by open woods of fine trees—oak, juniper, sycamore, wild locust and pine, on the higher slopes. A clear stream of cold water ran at the foot of the hill on which our house stood. There were beautiful flowers and vines. The yellow columbine twinkled up and down the brook like stars. One day, while wandering through the woods, I came upon a large, perfect white cross; it was the remains of a dead tree covered with a profuse growth of white clematis. It was quite startling to come upon it standing all by itself in that lonely place.

The Mammoth Mine, of which Mr. Dyer was part owner, was about sixty miles away, being connected with the Copper Camp by a good wagon road. At the camp were about twenty Mexicans engaged in cutting pine trees to be used in timbering the Mammoth Mine.

There being no store nearer than the Mammoth, we kept provisions of various kinds to sell to the Mexicans; that brought them to the house and in that way we became well acquainted with them and with the one woman amongst them, the Senora Castro, who used to entertain us by singing to the accompaniment of her guitar. I remember, especially, one song that she called the Mexican "Home Sweet Home," with its pathetic refrain of "Nunca Jamas—quien sabe sin la vida; quien sabe sin la vida."

Tecló was also an entertaining personality. He told me one day that the mules ought not to be allowed to drink out of the brook, because if any hairs fell in the water they turned to rattlesnakes.

The pine logs were hauled to the mine by a wagon drawn by eight splendid big mules. The round trip was made once a week, bringing supplies and mail. It was always a joyous

occasion when the wagon arrived, since it was our only connecting link with the outside world, though we had occasional visitors.

We were so happy there; so interested in our life and surroundings, and in the life of the Mexicans so that when cool weather came we did not leave but stayed until the following May when we were driven out by the Apaches.

In October, a number of men under Charles Gooding opened the mine and smelter and operated them for a time, but found they could not make them pay; all the men left except Charles Gooding and Charles Quitty, who remained in charge of the property. Naturally, we became warm friends, the more especially as my daughter and Charles Gooding became much interested in each other and there was the watching of a love affair to add to the general gaiety of life. Though "Far from the Maddening Crowd," our life was by no means dull.

The winter brought snow and great numbers of beautiful birds, most brilliantly colored but songless.

About eight miles down the mountain was a small group of miners working a prospect; the combined agglomeration being known as "The Gold Camp." One of these miners was a Mr. Ramsdell, who came to our house frequently, the principal attraction being my daughter, though Mr. Ramsdell often went hunting with Mr. Dyer. Deer were plentiful. We had so much venison that we felt as my grandfather did about rabbits. He used to say:

"Rabbits young and rabbits old,  
Rabbits hot and rabbits cold,  
Rabbits tender and rabbits tough,  
Thank the Lord, I've had enough!"

Time flowed gently and happily by until the spring of 1886, the time of Geronimo's last raid.

The Apaches had not been in the Catalina Mountains for so many years that we felt not the slightest uneasiness, though we knew of Geronimo's raids and atrocities. A band of Apaches lived on the San Pedro River, about sixty miles from us, but they had long been peaceful. The United States Government had given them such inducements to remain that no one had any fear of them. At the head of this band was an old rascal named Es-kim-in-zeen. In early times he and his braves were very friendly with the cattlemen along the San Pedro, often being fed at the ranch houses. One morning Es-kim-in-zeen and some of his Apaches went to one of these ranch houses. After the cattlemen had eaten breakfast they had the Indians sit down and eat, after which the Indians rose from the table and killed

every man there. Es-kim-in-zeen said: "My heart burst within me and I had to do it; any coward can kill his enemy but it takes a brave man to kill his friend." As a mark of appreciation of this noble sentiment, the United States Government gave this brave man and his followers a tract of land and a band of cattle on condition that he would keep his heart in order and would not allow it to "burst within him" again. To finish with Ex-kim-in-zeen. While the Apaches were in the Catalina Mountains, he, or some of his braves were often seen driving wagon loads of beef to the renegades in the mountains. He did not dare let his heart burst again but he did his little bit as well as he could.

Life passed uneventfully by until May of 1886. The mine and mill at Mammoth had been shut down for repairs; no timber being needed for the mine the Mexicans at the Copper Camp had been discharged. Our little family of three, together with Charles Gooding and Charles Quitty, constituted the population of the Copper Camp.

One night about eleven o'clock Minnie came into our room and said: "Oh, father, Mr. Ramsdell is outside and he says the Indians are here." Mr. Dyer got up, went to the door and found that Mr. Ramsdell had become confused and could not find the crossing of the brook, so he stood on the bank and yelled "Indians!" When he came in he was shaking with fright—not for himself but for us. There had been a fight between some ranchers and a band of Apaches on the San Pedro. After dark that evening two men came on horseback to the Gold Camp to warn the miners. Mr. Ramsdell wanted them to go up the mountain and warn us but they said they would not for fear of running into the Indians; that we were probably all killed by that time, anyway. Mr. Ramsdell then seized his gun and ran the eight miles up the mountain. Mr. Dyer went down and roused the two young men. They arose, dressed and came up to our house with their guns; there was nowhere to go and nothing to do. Our house being made of logs was the best place for defense. We sat and waited, expecting an attack at daylight. We afterwards found that eight Apaches, four wounded in charge of four well ones, had passed our house in the night on their way to some deserted cabins several miles farther up the mountain. They knew about us and intended to kill us on their way out, after the wounded had recovered. We had no way of leaving. Minnie had been ill and could not walk far. Mr. Ramsdell and the two young men made a sleeping place on a small hill, overlooking our house and spent the nights there

until we went away. Two days after we were first warned, Mr. Weedin and Joe Phy came from Florence to warn us but could think of no way to get us out on account of Minnie's ill health, so after staying a night and day they went down to Mammoth. Mr. Johnson, the superintendent at Mammoth, had not known we were in danger. He looked about the camp to find a man and conveyance to send for us. He found that a man named Ezekiel had a good two-seated spring wagon and a pair of fast horses. When the matter was explained to him he said at once he would go. He started the next morning and drove the sixty miles with his gun on his knees, keeping one eye on the road and the other on every clump of rocks and bushes. After his arrival we made our preparations and left for Mammoth early the next morning, driving rapidly and expecting at any moment to run into the Indians. Nothing happened, however, and we arrived safely at Mammoth.

We had taken with us only a few things, as the wagon could not be heavily loaded. Mr. Dyer and Minnie, being from the east, could never understand the danger from the Indians and would not have left the Copper Camp if it had not been for my fears. I was in terror. I had lived in the West nearly all my life, and besides had had an uncle killed by the Apaches.

The next morning after we arrived at Mammoth, Mr. Dyer hired a heavy wagon and driver and went back to the Copper Camp to bring away the stuff that had been left there. When they left Mammoth the driver was so drunk he could hardly sit on the seat. That evening we could see the Indians' signal fires on the peaks of the mountains. A flame would dart up and down several times and would then be answered in the same way from another peak.

Just after Mr. Dyer had gone, Mr. Wallace, the superintendent of the mill, came in and told us that the body of Dr. Davis had been found in the road over which Mr. Dyer would pass. Dr. Davis and his family lived on a cattle ranch on the San Pedro. He had taken his family into Tucson for safety and was returning to the ranch when the Indians waylaid and killed him. My feelings during the days Mr. Dyer was gone may be imagined; however, he returned safely without seeing anything of the Indians.

We remained at Mammoth about two weeks, hoping the Apache raid would be ended and we might return in safety to the Copper Camp, but it became apparent that the end was not near, so we went to Tucson on the stage, which was considered safer than a private conveyance. Until we were out of the

danger zone the men in the stage rode with their guns in their hands, but we saw no Indians.

A year or so after this terrifying Indian experience, in which we saw no Indians, Charles Gooding met and talked with an Apache scout who told him that the Indians knew all about us; that the eight Indians who passed our house in the mountains intended to kill us on their way out, when the wounded ones had sufficiently recovered to travel. The eight lay all of one day concealed in some bushes on a little hill not far from the house. They described us to the scout. They saw we had been warned and that there were four armed men on guard. They stole away in the night intending to return with a larger party, but before they did so we were gone.

So ended the Indian scare, in which we saw no Indians, but which was terrifying just the same.