

MONUMENT FOR INDIAN WAR HEROES *

In the presence of approximately 200 persons, largely earlier settlers of the community, the impressive ceremony of unveiling the monument recently erected by the State Historical Society in memory of Lieutenant Slaughter and Corporals Barry and Clarendon, early Indian War victims, was conducted Saturday afternoon [May 31, 1919] at the place a mile north of Auburn, near where the men lost their lives sixty-four years ago.

W. B. Blackwell, president of the State Historical Society, presided. Invocation by Rev. C. I. Andrews was followed with a most interesting paper on "Lieut. William A. Slaughter and Company," by W. P. Bonney, secretary of the Washington State Historical Society, which is printed herewith.

In presenting the monument Frank B. Cole of Tacoma traced the history of monument building from the day of the Egyptians, through Bible times and up to the present era. Acting-Governor Louis F. Hart accepted the monument on behalf of the state, and paid an earnest tribute to the pioneers of White River Valley, whose labors and sacrifices gave us the splendid heritage we have today in this beautiful and productive valley. L. C. Smith, county commissioner, in accepting the monument on behalf of King County, pledged careful and continuous care of the memorial, and told many interesting incidents of the early history of the valley.

The flag which draped the monument was then lifted by Boy Scouts Hugh Leslie and Charles Gerard, the former reading the dedicatory inscriptions which concluded the program proper.

The venerable Ezra Meeker, who occupied a seat of honor upon the platform, was invited by the chairman to make a few remarks. He gave reminiscences of the early days, and told of his personal acquaintance with Lieutenant Slaughter and with William Brannan and others who were killed in the Indian uprising of 1854-1856.

Other pioneers of the early days who were present included W. P. Wood of Sumner, who as a young civil engineer assisted Dr. Ballard in laying out the town of Slaughter; Robert Shinn of Kent, Mr. and

* W. P. Bonney, secretary of the Washington State Historical Society, has kindly furnished a copy of the *Auburn Globe-Republican* for June 6, 1919, containing an account of the unveiling ceremonies at the monument to Indian War heroes who fell near the present site of Auburn on December 4, 1855. Mr. Bonney's interesting address is included. The whole is reproduced here to save the historic values. The name of the pioneer town was changed from "Slaughter" to Auburn by an act of the Washington State Legislature, approved on February 21, 1893.—EDITOR.

Mrs. Sam Lafromboise of Enumclaw, T. J. Bell and Mr. Hubbell of Tacoma.

Mr. Bonney's address follows:

Mr. President, Men, Women and Children:

Just over there, in silent repose, is a carved granite, erected in memory of men who did their duty as they saw it. This stone harks back to the turbulent days of Indian warfare, the days of 1855 and 1856, when the blood-curdling whoop of the savage vied in horror with the blood-dripping scalping-knife.

On the 28th of October, 1855, unmentionable atrocities were committed here on these grounds where these fields are now waving in their productive splendor. Early settlers of the White River Valley were murdered and mutilated in an effort of the redmen to free the land of the trespassing white man.

Lieut. William A. Slaughter and Corporal Barry of Company C, 4th Infantry, U. S. A., and Corporal Clarendon of Company D, Washington Territory Volunteers, with their associates, came here on Tuesday, December 4, 1855. They had come from their camp on the Morrison place, near where the town of Sumner now stands. All day long they tramped through the thick timber, dripping brush and the cold rain, reaching this little clearing at sundown, soaked to the skin and chilled to the marrow.

Lieutenant Slaughter was in charge of the party, which consisted of sixty regulars of Company C, U. S. A., and five men from Company D, W. T. V., whose captain was William H. Wallace.

They had come to this site for the purpose of holding a conference with Capt. C. C. Hewitt of Company H, W. T. V., of Seattle.

Several piles of logs were in the clearing, and the men were instructed to fire them in order to dry their clothing and warm their persons. This they were busily engaged in doing, when at about 7 o'clock a volley of shots rang out from the surrounding timber, where all had been quiet. Lieutenant Slaughter, who was in front of one of the fires, talking with Captain Hewitt, fell forward and died without a groan; he had been pierced through the heart with a bullet from Kanasket's rifle. Seven other white men fell, two of them, Barry and Clarendon, dead, the other five more or less severely wounded. One of these five afterward died from the effects of his wounds. Eight white men were down and not an Indian had been seen.

The firing ceased. In the morning no Indians could be found. Barry and Clarendon were buried near where they fell. The rest of the company went to Seilacoom by way of Seattle, taking Lieutenant

Slaughter's body with them. On the 9th of December the remains were buried at Fort Stilacoom with appropriate Masonic and military honors. The territorial legislature, then in session, adjourned for the day out of respect for the lieutenant.

In 1896 Lieutenant Slaughter's remains were taken up, sent to San Francisco and placed in lot 5, officers plot No. 60, Federal Cemetery, and are still there.

News traveled slow in those primitive days, as is illustrated by the following letter. There were no postal facilities other than special messenger, and that is how this letter was sent:

"CAMP MORRISON, Dec. 10, 1855.

"Adjutant-General James Tilton,

"Washington Territory Volunteers, Olympia:

"SIR: In compliance with orders of November 2, 1855, I have the honor to report the arrival of Lieutenant Slaughter's command and train on the 1st December, at my camp.

"Lieutenant Slaughter after resting his men for two days, started with 60 of his men and five of my men, with two days' provisions for White River, to communicate with Captain Hewitt's command, telling me at the same time that he would be back in four days.

"It is now eight days since he left this camp and as I have not heard from him to this date, I consider it my duty to inform you of this, so in case the lieutenant should have met with difficulties, the government should be prepared for it.

"I have the honor to be,

"Very respectfully, etc.,

"R. S. MORE,

"1st Lt. Com'g, Company D, 1st Reg't W. T. V."

William Alloway Slaughter was born in Kentucky in 1826. He moved with his parents into Indiana, and from there was appointed to the military academy at West Point in 1844. He graduated on June 30, 1848, and was made brevet 2nd lieutenant July 1, 1848, in the Second Infantry, and appointed 1st lieutenant in the Fourth Infantry November 6, 1848. This regiment was sent to the forts in Michigan. U. S. Grant commanding.

In May, 1851, Lieutenant Slaughter met and married Mary Wells, of Port Huron, only daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John Wells.

In April, 1852, the whole regiment was ordered to the Pacific Coast. They came by the way of the Isthmus of Panama. Mrs.

Slaughter, a bride of less than a year, was the only woman to accompany the troops from the fort where her husband was stationed.

The story of that voyage, their hardships, as told by General Grant in his personal memoirs, is too long to repeat here. However, there is one item found on page 198, Vol. I, that will bear repeating today. It reads:

"One amusing circumstance occurred while we were lying at anchor in Panama Bay. In the regiment there was a Lieutenant Slaughter, who was very liable to sea sickness. It almost made him sick to see the wave of a tablecloth when the servants were spreading it. Soon after his graduation, Slaughter was ordered to California and took passage by sailing vessel around Cape Horn. The vessel was seven months making the voyage, and Slaughter was sick every moment of the time, never more so than while lying at anchor after reaching his place of destination. On landing in California he found orders which had come by the Isthmus, notifying him of a mistake in his assignment; he should have been ordered to the northern lakes.

"He started back by the Isthmus route and was sick all the way. But when he arrived in the East he was again ordered to California, this time definitely, and at this date was making his third trip. He was as sick as ever, and had been so for more than a month while at anchor in the bay.

"I remember him well, seated with his elbows on the table in front of him, his chin between his hands, and looking the picture of despair. At last he broke out: 'I wish I had taken my father's advice; he wanted me to go into the navy. If I had done so I would not have to go to sea so much.'"

We read in Elwood Evan's writings a description of Lieutenant Slaughter's personal appearance. It says: "He was stationed at Fort Vancouver a short time, and in 1853 was ordered to Fort Steilacoom.

"As an officer he was brave to a fault.

"As an Indian campaigner, he was remarkably successful.

"No man had more endeared himself to his command. None had a more happy faculty of inspiring men with enthusiasm. Small in frame and delicate in person, his powers of endurance were wonderful. He had led almost all the expeditions to check the Indians during his stay in the country, and had been actively in the field from the commencement of hostilities until he met his untimely death. Brilliant he was as a soldier, and as a citizen, he had rendered himself equally dear to the people of the territory in which he had been assigned to duty. In the

walks of social life, who that enjoyed his friendship can ever forget him?"

Lieutenant Slaughter was a likable character. Those who knew him best loved and respected him most. His wife was a leader in this class. She never regained her cheerful composure after her husband's death. In 1856 she went back to her old home, accompanied by Territorial Secretary Charles Mason.

She died in 1861 and was buried in the family plot at Port Huron, Michigan. On one side of her tombstone is a tribute to her husband, William Alloway Slaughter. *The Auburn Globe-Republican.*