

THE KNIGHT OF THE DIXIE WILDS

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BY

WALTER E. TAYLOR

A TEXAS RECONSTRUCTION
STORY



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To my friend

who as a boy, defied adversity, struggled through college and reached the meridian of his chosen profession; the son of a Confederate soldier, with unshakable patriotism for his country and reverence for Christianity; my congenial and invaluable comrade on many camp hunts in the wild woods; he, whose assistance and encouragement made it possible for me to write and publish this story; to him, Doctor R. J. Hall, and the other children of Dixie, I dedicate this book.

INTRODUCTION

Keen observation during the War between the States, and long service with the Home Defenders, while struggling against Free-Negro-domination and military oppression in the Southern States, gave me a storehouse of facts that never found light in the pages of history.

In response to repeated requests by old Confederate veterans, Daughters of the Southern Confederacy, and many friends, to write a book on reconstruction days and early times in Texas, I have decided to make the effort.

As truth must be naked, I will steer clear of flights in fiction, and reveal facts that I saw, felt, and heard; indulging in slight embellishment of the climaxes. If I succeed in wielding the pen as successfully as I did the rifle and lariat, sixty years ago, this story will find favor.

No period in the history of the United States of America forms a field so rich with chivalry, romance and drama as the years between 1865 and 1870, the so-called days of the reconstruction of the South, during which period the Nation was born again and started on its climb to the top rung of power among the nations of the world.

The heroism of the overpowered South during that time was strangely slighted by historians, and for more than sixty years has remained practically unknown, except to a few survivors of that day who saw and remember. Having struggled for life and existence through those bloody years, I have only to close my eyes and open my memory, to vision again the thrilling and gripping scenes that occurred all over Dixie, and are recorded only in lost leaves of history.

When the sons and daughters of Dixie, and all others who believe in truth and justice, have read this book, and learned from it the true history of the reconstruction of the South, and

the matchless heroism of our forefathers and mothers, the KNIGHT OF THE DIXIE WILDS, yet living, and nearing his four score years, will feel that his work is finished.

THE AUTHOR.