

# Camp Meyers Spring, Texas (1873 – 1884)

A Cavalry & Black Seminole Indian Scout Sub-post to Fort Clark

Historical Archeology Project of sites 41TE724 and 41TE9

*West Texas Archeological Society*



# WEST TEXAS ARCHEOLOGICAL SOCIETY



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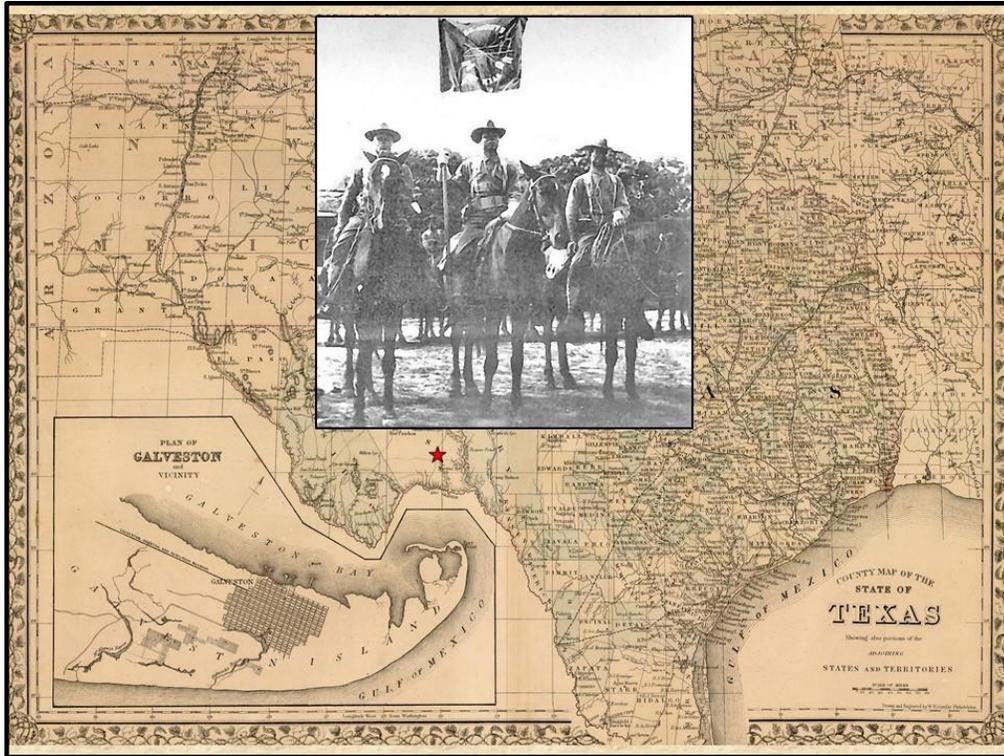
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May 2025

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## Introduction

This report goes far beyond previous archaeological studies of this historic site, attempting not only to report on artifacts left behind in this area but also to forensically determine the entire layout and purpose of the various areas of Camp Meyers Spring over the many years of its occupation. When we started, we had no idea of the enormity of this project. It is now a three-year project. We use a technique known in military terms as fusion analysis. We combine all sources to tell the most detailed story possible for this camp and its many occupants.

The primary key to the project's success was the analysis of satellite and drone imagery. By analyzing this imagery, along with extensive military records, the diary of Lieutenant French, artifact GPS mapping, and ground reconnaissance, we uncovered a multi-layered story encompassing multiple military units with diverse missions and occupying various locations. To our surprise, we also discovered that a cattle company had been intertwined with the military for a period, leasing the land while the military occupied it, making the analysis even more complex and layered.

Metal detection and GPS mapping has been a crucial factor in the project's success. It enabled us to discover artifacts previously overlooked by other studies and helped validate the identification of the occupying units and their objectives. We used our skills and understanding of this particular period in history, built up from 17 years of field experience, as well as our military knowledge of tactics and strategies, to tell not only what we found but what we believe it meant in the story of the units and men making this camp their temporary home for their deployments from the 1870s to 1884. Because the landowner requested this study to aid in understanding the camp, we used standard units of measurement throughout the report rather than metric units.

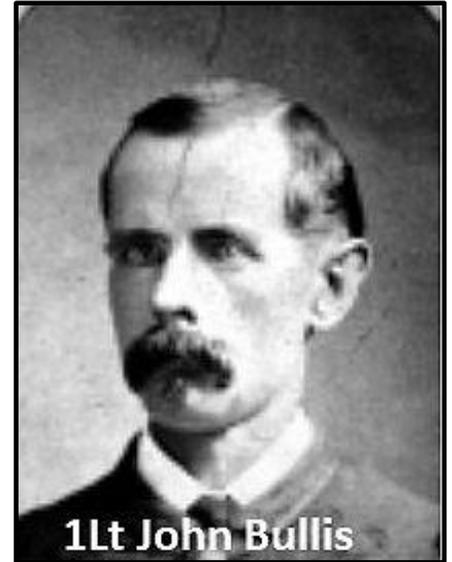
## Acknowledgments

This project began in February 2022 with C.A. Maedgen, Tom Ashmore, and landowner Thad Steele. However, it grew over the years as a core group of West Texas Archeological Society members continued expanding field reconnaissance trips and finding the extent of this camp to be much more than anyone imagined. This project has now been going on for three years. The primary military camps cover around 40 acres, but the total surrounding area of support activity encompasses around 200 acres. We want to thank this group of historical archaeologists who put so much time and effort into the many field trips and hours of research to help us bring out the entire story of this military camp and its many layers of occupation. We also want to thank the Fort Clark Historical Society for their assistance in this project.

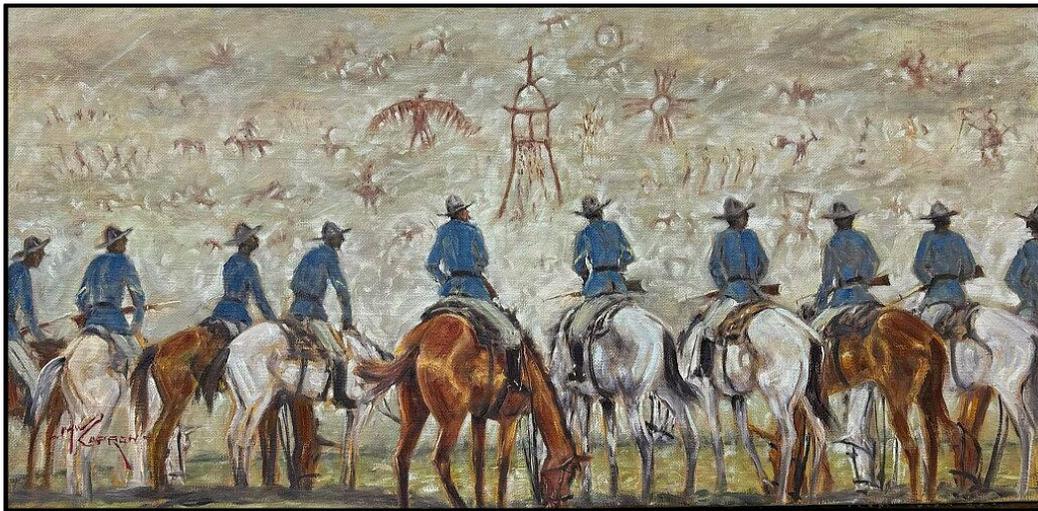


## A Brief History

Camp Meyers Spring was a military sub-post of Fort Clark, officially in operation from 1881 to 1884. The earliest official Fort Clark post report that can be loosely tied to Camp Meyers Spring as a base camp is from December 1877. At that time four companies and the Black Seminole Scout Detachment were based prior to and after an expedition into Mexico to hunt for Indians that Lieutenant Bullis and his Indian scouts had trailed and been ambushed weeks prior. In July 1880, Fort Clark post reports state that Lieutenant Bullis and 34 Seminole Indian Scouts left Fort Clark and were listed on “detached service west of the Pecos River.” This reporting repeated each month until mid-January 1881, when Bullis and his Scouts returned to the post. At that point, Lieutenant Bullis prepared for a military duty transfer and was relieved of his duties as commander of the Scouts.



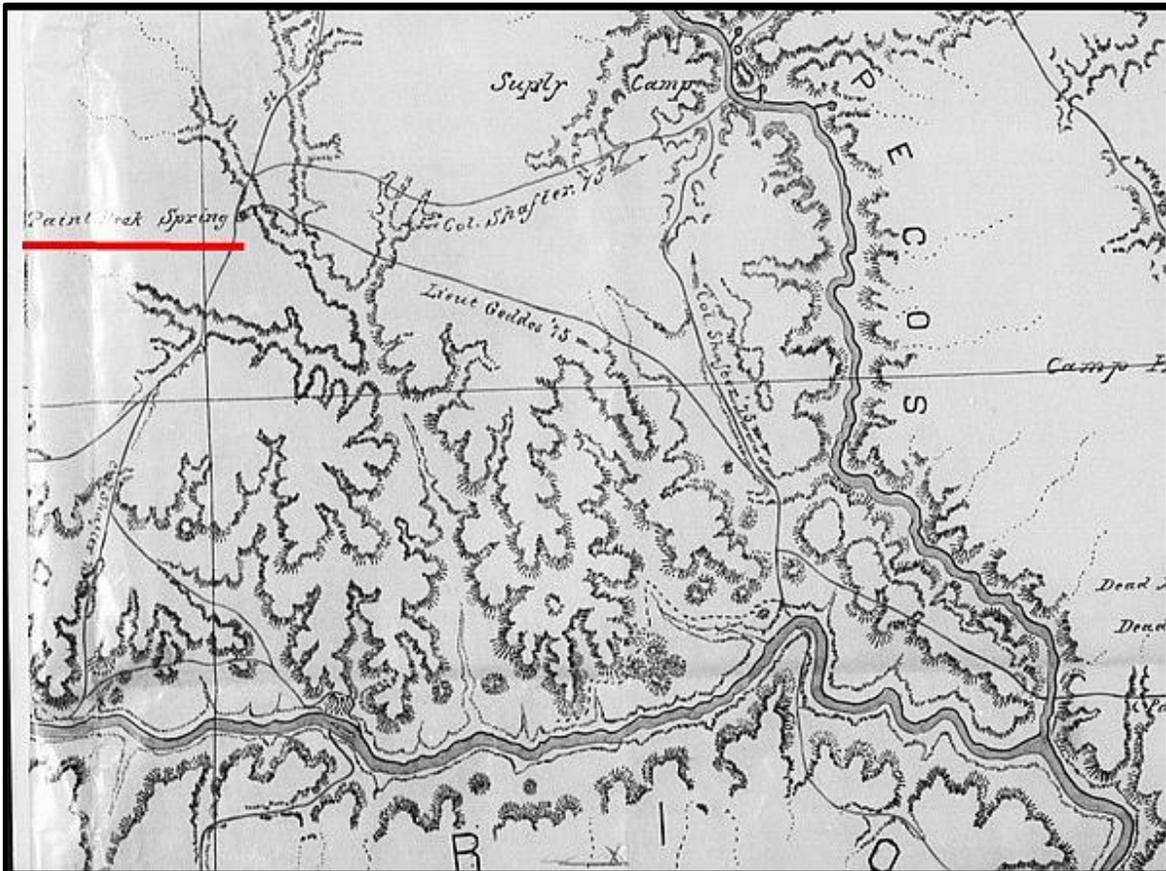
Lieutenant Bullis and the Seminole Negro Indian Scout Detachment (official name) was probably occupying Camp Meyers Spring with as a forward camp of operations for scouting patrols from around 1875 when the scouts began their patrols as an independent mounted detachment.



**First look at Meyers Spring** (painting by Mike Capron)

We know that the cavalry units were aware of and had been using this area long before it was officially designated as a military sub-post. As we will show, at least one unit conducted reconnaissance at this location as early as 1873. We also obtained an official military map from the National Archives, indicating that the military was familiar with this site as far back as 1876, at that time called Painted Rock Spring. Finally, graffiti at the pictograph site indicates that cavalry and infantry units camped

there from Fort McKavett and Fort Clark as far back as 1877. Bullis purchased the land from the railroad in May 1877 (see Appendix D).



1876 military map indicated Painted Rock Spring, later renamed Mayer(s) Spring, currently Meyers Spring

### Location

Camp Meyers Spring is 18 miles west of the Pecos River and 18 miles north of the Rio Grande River. It is the best clean-water camping location in the Lower Pecos River area.



Meyers Spring Basin

Although the detachment was listed as a scouting detachment belonging to an infantry company, first under the 24th, later under the 22nd and 19th Infantry Regiments, Lieutenant Bullis commanded the scouts as a fighting cavalry unit. They were credited with over 27 field deployments and 12 engagements against hostile raiders, with hundreds of horses and cattle returned to their owners in Texas. Their interdiction of raiding parties had devastating consequences for the raiders they encountered.

The period of Lieutenant John L. Bullis and his 27 deployments, some of which took him into Mexico, effectively halted the raiding from Mexico. As a result, Camp Meyers Spring became a strategic stronghold of military presence, with continued patrolling to detect any Indians with thoughts of either raiding into Mexico or from Mexico into Texas. Scouting patrols continued on a significantly reduced schedule as reports of raiding parties became increasingly scarce.

The first confirmed deployment by the Scout detachment to Camp Meyers Spring was after Lieutenant Bullis was transferred in July 1881. This marked the beginning of a series of second lieutenants serving as temporary commanders. The first to take over was Second Lieutenant Frank B. Jones, who ordered the unit to be detached to "Camp Meyers Spring." This deployment began on August 20, 1881, and lasted three and a half months. From that point, a series of rotating deployments began between the Seminole Scout detachment and regular cavalry units.

The records indicate that Company A of the 1st Infantry Regiment assumed command of the camp in September 1880, retaining control until April 1881. From September through January 16, 1881, Lieutenant Bullis and his Scouts were listed as being on "detached service west of the Pecos." Therefore, it is possible that they were at this location at the same time. The 1st Infantry Regiment was transferred on special orders from Fort Randall, South Dakota, to the Department of Texas in June 1880. Three of the six companies were tasked with building a road through the Lower Pecos region to Fort Davis, Texas. These companies were initially set up at the mouth of the Pecos River. (Wright) Two others were sent to Fort Sam Houston and Fort Ringgold. Company A's primary mission was to build a wagon-accessible road from the camp down to the main springs. This was needed for future deployments to bring water up from the springs. Company A's personnel rosters indicated they were severely undermanned during this time. They usually had only 25 to 30 men for duty at any one time. However, they did list five to six teamsters and a blacksmith contracted in September and October. In November, they added a stonemason.

After completing their road construction, 1st Regiment companies were folded into the 22nd Infantry Regiment and distributed to Forts Davis, Clark, Stockton, Ringgold, and Sam Houston. Upon departure, Company A was transferred first to Fort McKavett and subsequently to Fort Davis. (Fort Clark Post

Returns) There are no records of any infantry companies to replace them or occupy the camp from then on. Only the 8th Cavalry companies or the Black Seminole Scout detachment were listed as occupying the camp during their rotations through the area. This was their base camp for patrolling.

Records indicate Company H, 8th Cavalry, took over the camp in May 1881 after Company A, 1st Infantry Regiment, departed. A rotation of cavalry companies continued for six months. During the first three months, the scouts were not in camp.

In early 1882, the camp was only occupied for a few short trips by small units of scouts. In May, a rotation of cavalry Troops began, lasting six months. The scouts were not in camp with the cavalry Troops, and from that point on, the camp was only occupied by the 8th Cavalry or Seminole Scout detachments separately. This supports that the Seminole Scout detachment was being used as its own cavalry patrol unit instead of acting as scouts for the deployed cavalry troops. **A complete listing of units occupying the camp can be found in Appendix C.**

The Black Seminole Indian Scout Detachment was deployed to the Mouth of the Pecos from May through August 1882 while railroad construction made its way slowly from the east. During this time, Camp Meyers Spring was occupied by companies of the 8th Cavalry. Their rotations lasted through October 1883. In November, the Scouts took over the camp again for a six-month deployment. The railroad was completed near the mouth of the Pecos River in January 1883. The camp began to wind down with shorter rotations for both Cavalry and Scouts in late 1883 and 1884, but continued until July 16, 1884, when it was officially closed.

## **Camp Layout**

Camp Meyers Spring was essentially seven separate camp areas. These are an early infantry camp, two Black Seminole Indian Scout camps, and four cavalry camp areas. Three of the cavalry areas were overflow camps for when multiple companies might be there at the same time. These camps were all occupied at different times. Cavalry area #1 was the main cavalry area for deployed troops. Cavalry areas 2, 3, and 4 were occupied at various times by other cavalry units, usually from Fort Clark, but also from Fort Concho (San Angelo), or Fort Mckavett (near Menard), Fort Stockton, or even Fort Davis.

This was a substantial camp. Although portions were not often occupied, the total camp area covers around 35 acres, 45 acres if we include all outlying guard posts. The infantry camp covered around four acres. The cavalry area #1, with the flanking guard posts, covered around 5 acres. The remaining three overflow camps covered around 20 acres. When Seminole Scouts were in camp, they occupied only about one and a half acres, including the corral. The early Seminole Scout's camp covered



freshly running out of the springs. It consisted of a detachment of men dedicated solely to collecting water and transporting it by wagon to the main camp. Both water collection camps were about a mile from the main camp area. One was just above the main spring basin. The second up the canyon 500 yards north of the main spring basin.

### **A Question Of The Name**

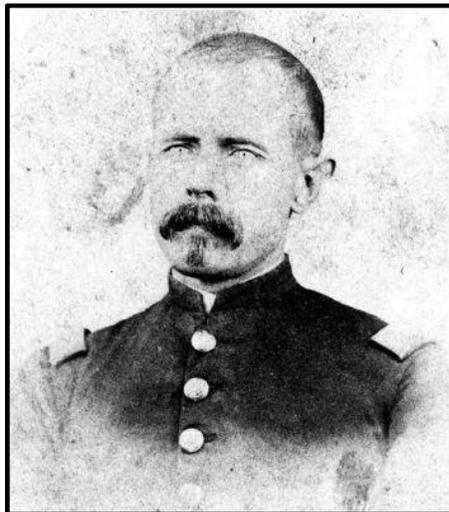
The name of this camp and spring has long been a mystery. Initially, it was called Paint Rock Spring, documented in an 1877 scouting report by Captain S.B.M. Young, 8th Cavalry (Young), an 1879 Fort Concho scouting report, and an 1879 scouting report by Lieutenant Maxon, 10th Cavalry. We know this was the correct location identified because Captain Frederick E. Phelps was on the same campaign as Captain Young, and in his 1950 memoirs, he gave the location name as Myers Spring. (Phelps, Appendix G) There are many theories as to how it became Meyers Spring, and we explored each of them. Lieutenant Bullis was both the property owner and the one who convinced the military to use the property as a sub-post for the patrols required in the Lower Pecos region. Thus, the name likely originated from his reporting of it to the military. The military consistently reported it as Mayer(s) Spring(s) from that point on. We checked every ranching family, explorer, Black Seminole Indian Scout, pictograph wall graffiti, and military name that was ever in this area during the 1870s period or earlier. None match up to a name, first or last, of Mayer, Meyer, or Myer. In particular, we reviewed Mayer Halff, a large rancher in West Texas, with a focus on the Big Bend region. However, there is no indication that he ever had any interest in the land east of the current town of Marathon or in the water source that became known as Pena Colorado Spring, located just south of town. Given that this research yielded negative results, a new theory emerged. And that is, it may not be a name at all.

The Black Seminole Indian Scouts came out of Mexico, and all spoke Spanish. Many did not speak English at all, especially in the early days. Even in Lieutenant French's 1883 diary, he mentioned that most could not read or write. The closest word we can find to Mayer in Spanish is 'mayor,' translated as 'biggest,' 'largest,' or 'main.' This may have been the name chosen by the scouts - 'tinaja mayor' meaning largest or main spring - and the one Bullis took back with him in his report to the military. When transliterated by military clerks, it may have been written in reports as Mayer(s) Spring. We assume that over the years, it somehow evolved into the alternative spelling of Meyers Spring. Since Bullis never reported his choice of name, this theory will probably never be proven, but we think it is the best theory at this point.



**Meyers Spring Basin**

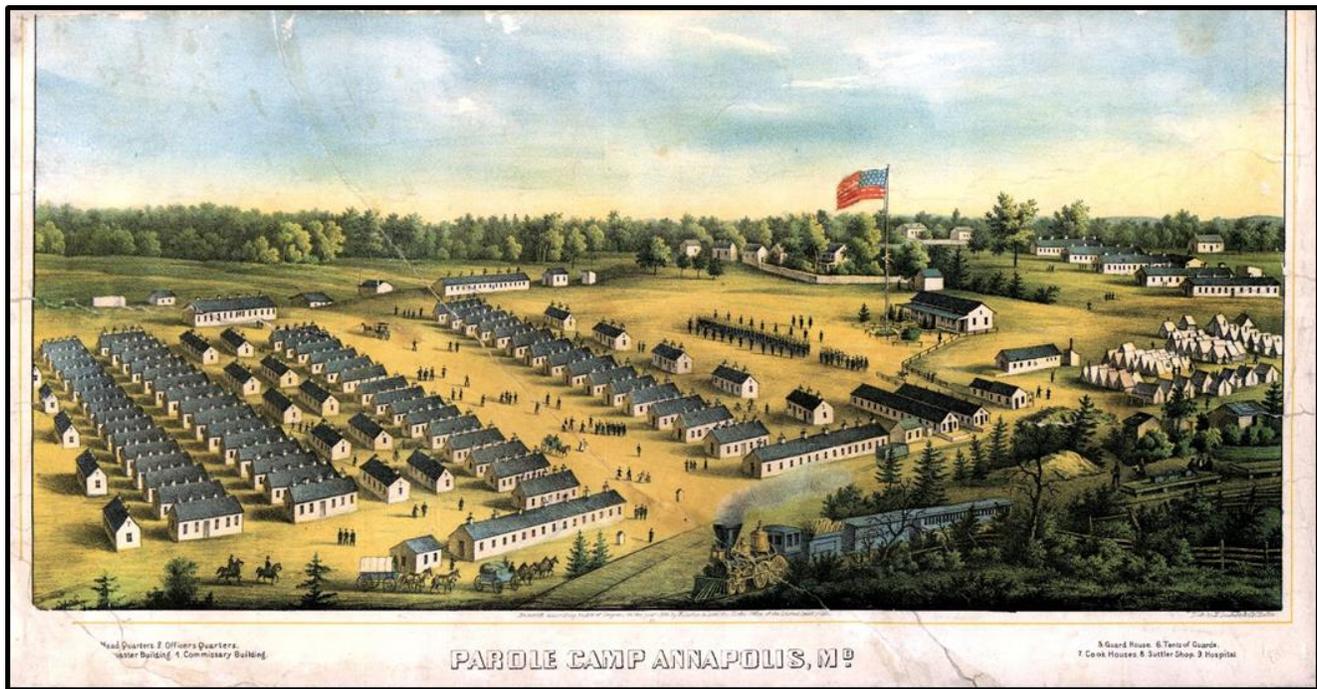
**John Lapham Bullis**



Although raised as a Quaker, John Bullis was drawn to a military career. His opportunity came one year into the Civil War. He enlisted in August 1862, on his 21st birthday, and was mustered into service as a corporal with Company H of the 126th New York Volunteer Infantry Regiment. The unit was quickly sent into the fight in Virginia. He saw some of the worst fighting of the Civil War. On September 15th, 1862, at Harpers Ferry, he was wounded and captured, along with 12,700 other Union soldiers.

Probably due to the extraordinary number of prisoners, they were sent to a parole camp in Annapolis, Maryland, the day after their surrender. (126th New York Infantry Regiment)

A parole camp was a place where Union or Confederate soldiers on parole were kept by their side in a non-combat role. They could be restored to a combat role only if prisoners of war were traded to the other side, enabling them to return to combat in exchange for the newly freed prisoners of war. (Parole Camp)



Bullis soon rejoined his unit after a prisoner swap. However, not long after rejoining, he ended up in the bloody Battle of Gettysburg. He was again wounded and captured by Confederate forces, this time spending three grueling months in the infamous Libby Prison before again being sent to the parole camp in Annapolis. Bullis passed an officer commissioning examination during his second tenure at the Annapolis Parole Camp. On August 17, 1864, he was commissioned as a captain in the 118th Regiment of the United States Colored Infantry. The 118th was transferred to the Dutch Gap Canal building project. (Wallace) The canal project aimed to allow ships to bypass the loop of the James River around Farrar's Island, Virginia, which was controlled by Confederate batteries. (Dutch Gap Canal)



**118th Colored Infantry Regt**

Bullis was discharged at the war's end but reenlisted in the regular army a few years later as a second lieutenant. On September 3, 1867, he returned to Texas, where he had been discharged and where his Civil War regiment had been stationed for Reconstruction duty following the war's end. (Tate) They were now the 41st Infantry Regiment.

In 1869, the 41st and 38th Infantry Regiments were combined into the 24th Infantry Regiment and reassigned to Fort McKavett as their headquarters. Bullis went with them into the Texas frontier. Bullis distinguished himself in several skirmishes near Fort McKavett, but the 24th Infantry was primarily used to escort and protect stagecoach stations or work on construction projects. When the opportunity arose to take command of the newly formed Black Seminole Indian Scouts at Fort Duncan on the Rio Grande, Bullis volunteered, knowing he would be back in the saddle, doing what he did best – leading horse soldiers against Indian raiders. Those horse soldiers were now going to be the Indian scouts.



**24th Infantry Regt**

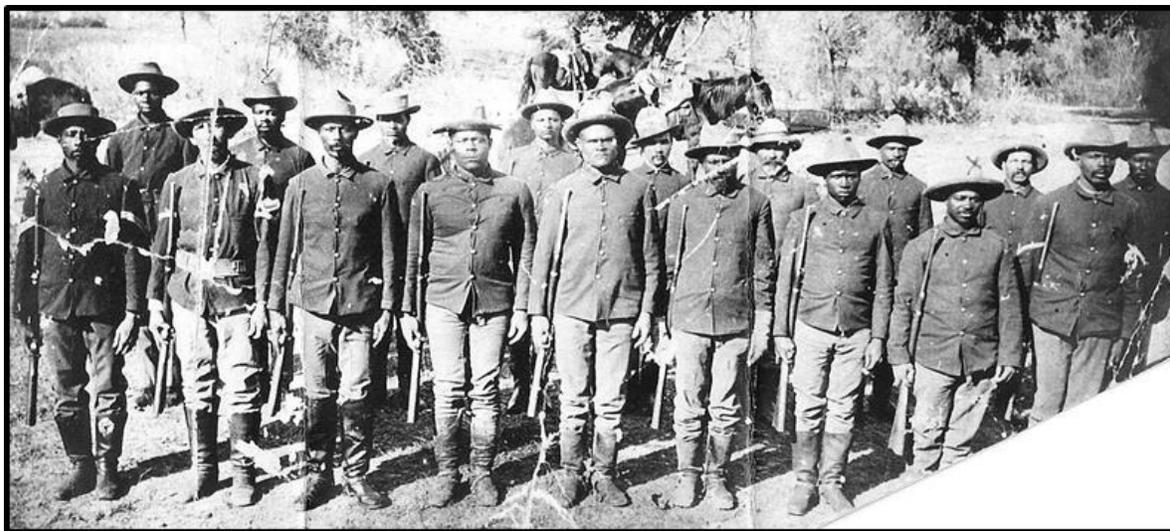
As Bullis took command of half the Black Seminole Indian Scout Detachment in 1873, the clash between western expansion and Native American Indians was exploding all across the Texas-Mexico border. The Mescalero Apache were jumping their New Mexico reservation and raiding throughout West Texas and down to the border. The Lipan Apache and Kickapoo were raiding up from Mexico into South Texas. Livestock were stolen from ranches and cattle drives, stagecoaches were attacked, and any emigrant wagon trains heading west were easy targets of opportunity. The pressure in Washington, D.C., to take action was intense.

Colonel Ranald S. Mackenzie was one of the few on the North Texas frontier who had successfully taken the fight to the Comanche in 1871 and 1872. Due to his success, he was transferred, along with

the 4th Cavalry Regiment, to Fort Clark in 1873, with orders to halt the raids originating from Mexico, using whatever means necessary. Those orders came directly from the President of the United States, Ulysses S. Grant. The orders were considered so important and sensitive that they were delivered in person to Colonel Mackenzie at Fort Clark by the Secretary of War, William Belknap, and General Philip Sheridan.

Colonel Mackenzie knew Lieutenant Bullis from their time together in the 41st, later the 24th Infantry Regiment, also known as the "Buffalo Soldiers." He ordered Bullis to get the Black Seminole Indian Scouts ready to lead a secret large-force movement into Mexico to deal a blow to the Lipan and Kickapoo on their home ground. This became the now infamous Remolino Raid, 40 miles inside Mexico. (Hamilton, Sobota) Bullis and his Scouts were credited with successfully leading this large force through uncharted mountainous territory to the objective and returning safely.

Bullis and his Scouts continued patrolling out of Fort Duncan for the next few years, leading larger forces under Colonel Mackenzie. Mackenzie transferred him and the Fort Duncan Scouts to Fort Clark in 1874. He promoted Bullis to first lieutenant, gave him complete command of the consolidated Black Seminole Indian Scout Detachment, and authorized him to conduct patrols independently with the full detachment.



**Black Seminole Indian Scouts**

## **The Earliest Cavalry And Scouts To Meyers Spring**

We found a rock redoubt 240 yards west of the main spring basin, situated on a rock shelf overlooking the main spring basin and pictograph area. A redoubt is a semi-circular stack of rocks, typically built for guard positions. This is a highly unusual place to find one. All other redoubts were found either protecting the infantry or cavalry camps on the flat terrain. This one looks right down on the spring

basin by the pictograph wall. It is situated at the base of a rocky slope that leads up to the top of the plateau. This appears to have been a reconnaissance overwatch position of the spring basin area. An overwatch position is a position to spy on an area being used by enemy forces, in this case, potential Indian raiding parties. Military reconnaissance units are typically small and operate under orders to remain undetected. They report back to the main headquarters on the results of their reconnaissance. Over an area of about half an acre, we found a scattering of Sharps carbine 50-45 and 50-55 cartridges. The Sharps carbine was one of the two early cavalry rifles used from 1866 until the transition to the Springfield Trapdoor carbine in late 1873. The later Springfield Trapdoor carbine used the 45-55 ammunition.

The 50-70 is the more well-known Sharps cartridge, but it had its own shorter carbine version of 50-55, similar to the later Springfield Trapdoor 45-55. It was identified as 50/55/430. It had the same casing, but 55 vs 70 grains of powder and a 430 vs 450 grain bullet (Cartridge Collector's Exchange). Similar to the later 45-55 cartridges, we found, they were not stamped. Most were Benet internally primed, but we also have one that is an external Remington primed but still unstamped. There is no external way to distinguish between the higher grain 50-70 cartridges.

The shorter 50-45 Carbine 'Cadet' was tested by the military in the early 1870s for cavalry carbines. These cartridges were found in a relatively small bounded area, along with a single dropped 56-50 Spencer cartridge.

In addition, we found one dropped Spencer 56-50 cartridge, two 44 caliber lead balls directly across the canyon from where these other cartridges were found. One hundred thirty yards further to the west, we found four Smith & Wesson .44 cartridges. This was at the end of a draw and likely a grazing area for their horses.

Halfway between the redoubt and the spot where the 44 S&W cartridges were found, we discovered a military coat button. Analysis from the Fort Concho curator, an expert in military buttons, provided the following assessment: "The presence of two stars indicates a Civil War backmark, which could mean that it was used into the early to mid-1870s as surplus." This area features a natural rock shelf around the base of the hill, providing an easy walking path between the two areas

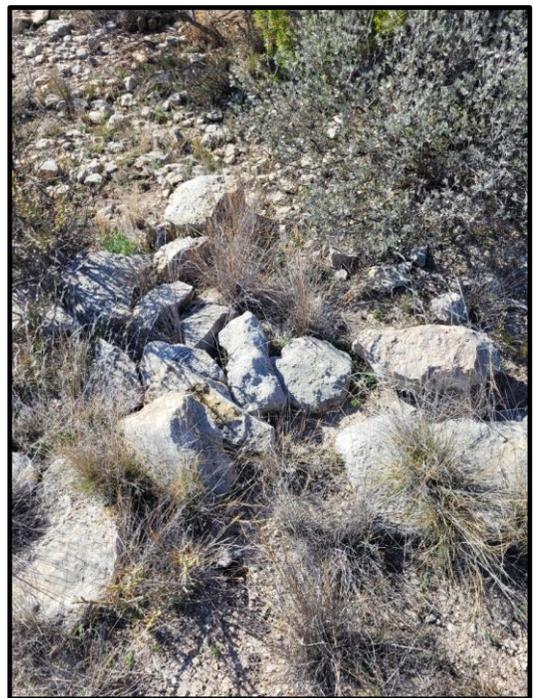


**Button found between redoubt and 44 S&W cartridges**

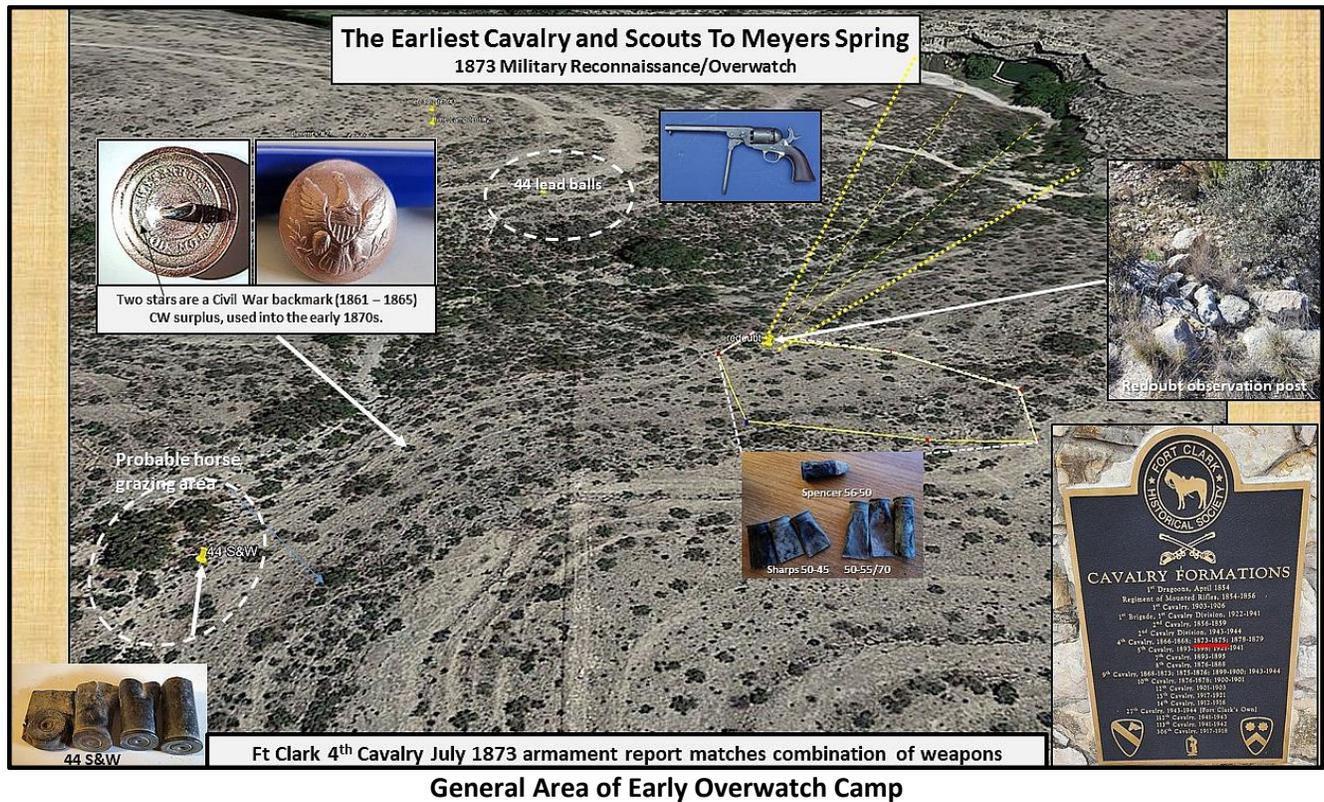
**Two stars are a Civil War (1861 – 1865) backmark, which means it was used into the early-to-mid 1870s as CW surplus.**



**56-50 (top) 50-45 Carbine (left) 50/55/430 Carbine (right)**



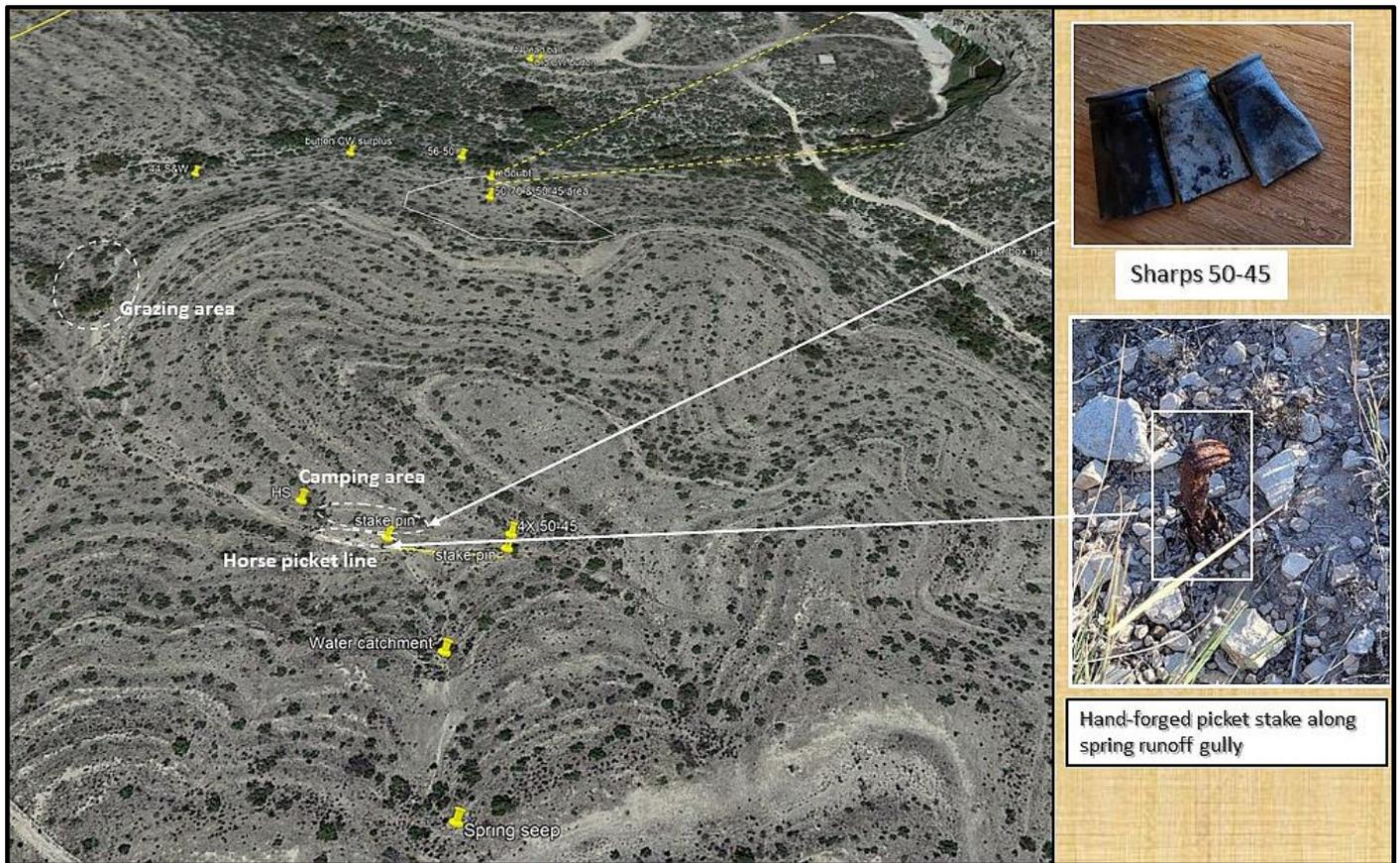
**Military Redoubt Guard Post**



The sloped area where the 50-caliber cartridges were found had no tent or camp platforms. We discovered their camping area 450 yards away, around the mesa, and in a draw. We identified the camp through more 50-45 cartridges and a heavy stake placed along a small creek bed and just below a spring drainage. We believe this was for a picket line. The limited space available for a camp in this draw suggests that this patrol was probably a detachment rather than an entire company. The 50-45 cartridges were found behind what would have been the picket line and on the limited level ground.



**Probable In-Ground Picket Line Stake**



**Cavalry Camping Area**

This was a well-chosen location for a stealthy reconnaissance of the spring basin. Likely, some of the earliest Fort Clark Black Seminole Indian Scouts from Fort Clark led this unit.

Based on the Sharps 50-55/50-45 cartridges, the Smith & Wesson .44 cartridges, the Colt .44 cartridges, and two .44 revolver balls, we assess that this patrol was probably a Fort Clark cavalry detachment on patrol. The dropped Spencer cartridge could have come from the Black Seminole Scouts, who were initially issued Spencer carbines. (Guinn)

The 4th Cavalry Regiment arrived at Fort Clark in early 1873. The quarterly armament report from August shows one company matches the combination of weapon artifacts found at this location. (4th Cavalry) During this time, all arms were undergoing a transition process to test the best options for future use. This presents a strong probability that a detachment from one of the 4th Cavalry companies was the reconnaissance unit at this site. During this period, half of the Black Seminole Indian Scouts were assigned to Fort Clark and likely served as scouts for patrols in the region. This would have been before Lieutenant Bullis moved to Fort Clark and took command of the Fort Clark Scouts in 1874.

This marks the earliest known period of military activity at Meyers Spring. The 4th Cavalry began changing to the Springfield Trapdoor carbines with 45-55 ammunition in the third quarter of 1873 and were fully transitioned by the first quarter of 1874.

## Lieutenant Bullis and the Early Black Seminole Indian Scout Camp

The first weapon artifact found in the area and pointing directly to the Black Seminole Indian Scouts was a dropped 44 Colt cartridge. This precedes all the other cartridges contemporaneous with the official camp period. Colt's Patent Firearms developed the 44 Colt cartridge for use in cartridge revolvers based on the 1860 Army percussion revolver. The cartridge was briefly adopted by the United States Army around 1871. The Army used it until 1873, when it was replaced by the better-known and more powerful 45 Colt cartridge used in the Colt Single Action Army revolver. According to the weapons issuing document for the second quarter of 1873 (Appendix F), the Fort Clark cavalry were still carrying the 44 Colt. Some were even carrying the cap-and-ball version. However, they transitioned to the 45 Schofield soon thereafter. The Black Seminole Indian Scouts were provided with used uniforms and older weaponry when they began their enlistment contracts in 1872. Lieutenant Bullis took over the Fort Clark Scouts in 1876. They were likely issued the older 44 Colt revolvers, and this cartridge was probably accidentally dropped during one of those early periods patrolling out of Meyers Spring.

Three lead bullets were found within what we believe was the early scout camp, and these point directly to Lieutenant Bullis and the scouts' early period at Meyers Spring. These are revolver bullets of 44 caliber. The only military that would have been carrying 44-caliber revolvers before the official creation of the camp was Lieutenant Bullis and the Scouts. They would have been the last ones to convert to the 45-caliber Scofield found in all the other cavalry camp areas. Additionally, we found from the guard posts that the 1st Infantry Regiment's Company A was carrying the 45 Colt, based on cartridges found in their camping area. Two of the 44 caliber bullets at the early Bullis camp received minor rounded, blunt trauma, indicating an accidental discharge into the ground. Early Colt revolvers were well known for this accidental discharge problem.



**Black Seminole Indian Scout with Cartridge Belt Holster**

Both bullets measure out in size and weight to be 44 Colt. Thus, we believe the scouts all carried 44 Colt revolvers before the later official camp period. The minor blunt trauma indicates a discharge directly into the ground, which helps define this site as the location of the discharge rather than some other location as the originating firing point.



**Dug Up Colt 44 Cartridge and example**

Meyers Spring was likely one of the early discoveries by the Black Seminole Indian Scouts. Lieutenant Bullis made it his primary forward base of operation long before the area became an official military camp. This early Scout camp is located slightly separate from the later official camp.

As we determined from the later official camp, the Black Seminole Indian Scout camp is laid out in a semi-circular fashion, upholding the Seminole Indian tradition. This camp was first revealed in the same manner as the other camps. The ground splotching in the 2015 imagery is visible in front of tent locations. This camp must have been used repeatedly, with the tents set up at the same places over many patrols to this site. They were using it as a forward-operating base camp long before the official main camp was created.

The tent placements are like the semi-circle found at the later period Black Seminole scout camp. Additionally, the inner and outer rings, unique to that camp, are also in the layout for this camp. The inner ring was likely the sergeant's tents, with lower-ranking soldiers in the outer rings. The commander was placed in the middle of the circle. There are 20 tent sites, plus one central tent. At two men per tent, this matches Bullis' reported detachment manning of 37 - 40 scouts.

Our metal detecting had limited positive findings in this area, but enough to support the camp analysis. Much of the metal can trash was being dumped in a nearby ravine. Findings in one particular area just outside the circle of tent sites indicated it was probably a wagon unloading area. This is based on in-ground supply box nails, tin can pieces, and horseshoe nails.

Additionally, the wagon trace can be seen in the imagery leading up to this area and stopping, which means they did it precisely the same way every time they brought the wagon in to establish the camp. This would be the reason the trace is still visible.

Although surface trash could not be used to be definitive to this site, we found several tent sites with in-ground, unused horseshoe nails next to tent sites. Cavalry soldiers were required to carry spare horseshoes and could reshod their mounts while on patrol. In between the two sites, we found a buried

fire striker, which was a site-specific artifact. Until the invention of the friction match, flint and steel were used as common methods of fire ignition.

The camp sits at the flat's eastern edge, in front of the only easy draw that leads down into the canyon that then leads down to the main spring. This is a logical place to set up a patrol camp where, at the time, wagons could not make it all the way to the spring. This is why Company A, 1st Infantry, was brought in from February to April 1881 to create a wagon-capable road to the spring.

Near the wagon parking area of this camp is an unusual three-sided ground scaring in the imagery that forms a rectangle. This looks very much like a possible kitchen/dining area. The area is 15 X 30 feet, which would be correct for two square dining fly tent covers. This would explain the man-made rectangular disturbance in that area.

Finally, all three 44 caliber bullets we believe were from accidental discharge were found within the camp area. As stated earlier, the 44 Colt was known for accidental discharge if the hammer was over a loaded chamber. The bullets were blunted as if fired directly into the soft ground.

Four pieces of Ironstone dishware were the most significant artifacts in this area. Two of the pieces had the maker's mark on them, and we could identify the manufacturer and probable year. It was made by a well-known potter's family in England, which produced many items for shipment to America. That was J&G Meakin and Co. An identical dish and marker's mark we found in our research is stamped 1868. The maker's mark changed from year to year, giving us confidence that the year of 1868 is representative of this dish. The pieces were found just 30 feet away from what appears to have been the kitchen/dining area and next to the stopping point of a wagon track, making that a loading/unloading area.

Wagons were used by cavalry units coming into this area for this forward operating camp. With these dish pieces next to the camp and a probable wagon unloading spot, we can safely speculate that the only person who might have such a set of personal dishes would be Lieutenant Bullis. Although only a lieutenant, Bullis married into a family of wealth, which was how he could purchase this and many other sections of land in the Lower Pecos region.

With a wagon unloading area within feet of these dish pieces, it is reasonable that this type of item could be a personal luxury being carried to this location. We have seen other cases where unit commanders brought these personal luxury items on long patrols.

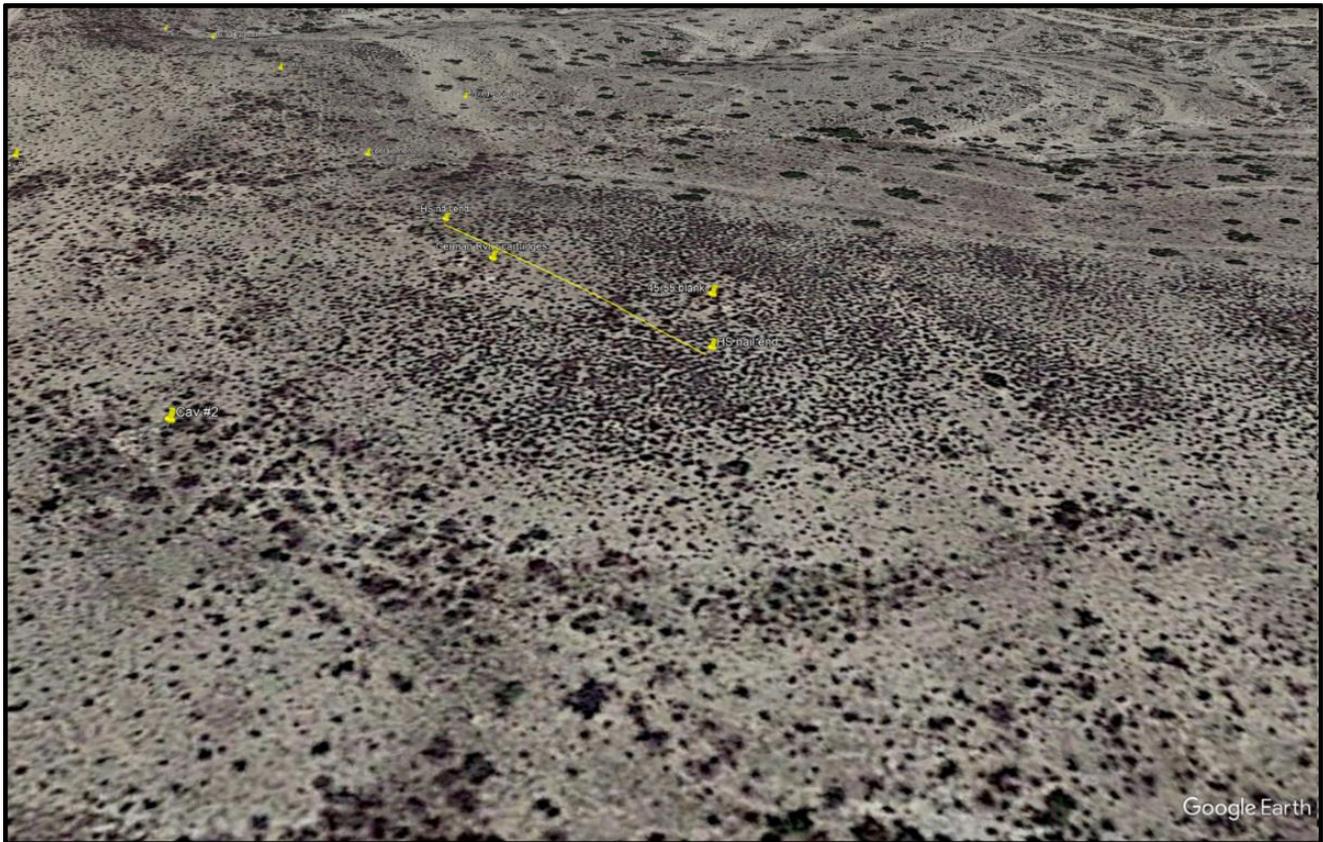


**Ironstone Dish Pieces**



**J&G Meakin Ironstone Dish with 1868 stamp (example)**

A nearby knoll 135 yards north of the Bullis camp is covered with Chino Grama grass and is very likely where the Black Seminole Indian Scout detachment picketed their horses while at this camp. It is still the heaviest concentration of Chino Grama grass in the area. From the USDA: "Cattle, horses, sheep, and goats graze Chino Grama. Sometimes limited amounts are harvested for hay. It is an important conservation grass because it is adapted to sites on which few other species will grow."



**Knoll covered with Chino Grama and a long line of horseshoe nails in the center**

We found a straight line of used and unused horseshoe nails in the center of the knoll that measured 150 feet. Picket ropes (lariats) were measured out to 30-foot sections. Tied together, that is five ropes. For 40 horses, plus eight mules, there would be 24 animals on each side of the picket line, giving them just under 7 feet of picket line each. This would work for a night picket. They could turn them loose in the day or possibly hobble them in the one-acre knoll. The knoll makes a natural corral, with rocky slopes around 90 percent of the area.

The book ‘History of the Ninth New York Cavalry’ by Newell Cheney gives a good picture of the standard way to feed horses. “No sooner had the picket ropes been stretched and the horses been unsaddled and hitched, when the men hurried to an adjacent field of wheat, ready cut and bound, and brought enough to feed the horses liberally...” (Cheney)

This quote describes the standard way that cavalry fed their horses when not on the march. They would “Stretch the ropes” and then manually cut enough hay for their mount. Other similar accounts of this being the case can be found throughout other first-hand sources of federal cavalry of the period. It also makes sense that all shoeing would be done while on the picket rope line. In addition to the horseshoe nails, we found two saddle horse shoes – one near the picket area and one within the grazing area.



**Saddle horseshoe found in grazing knoll**

We found five expended revolver cartridges on this hill. Three were 10.4mm Italian Revolver, and two were 44 Smith & Wesson Russian. The 10.4mm Italian was developed for the 1874 Service Revolver. It is similar to the 44 S&W Russian. (Barnes) This indicates that testing was being done with these two types of ammunition for the 44 Schofield revolver. Two of the 10.4mm were severely split. One 44 S&W was partially split in the test fire. The .44 S&W was the most popular cartridge of its day. A theory is that Lieutenant Bullis was testing the 44 Schofield revolver, while the scouts were all issued the 44 Colt Revolver.



An additional find in a nearby gully supports this being an active forward-operating camp. We found a dump of blacksmithing items approximately 80 yards from this grouping of tents. There were no wagon roads to this location, meaning the trash was walked out to this location and dumped. As with the later Black Seminole Indian Scout camp, there would have been a blacksmithing operation for this forward-operating camp. A unique item among these left-over pieces was a piece of forge slag. A blacksmith would have required a portable forge.



**Blacksmithing dump items**



**Portable period-correct forge (example)**



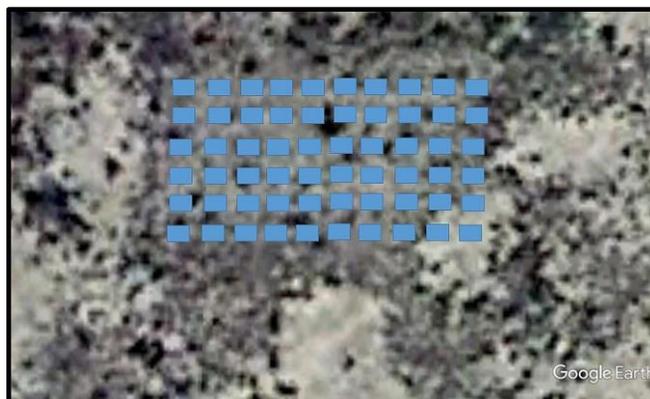
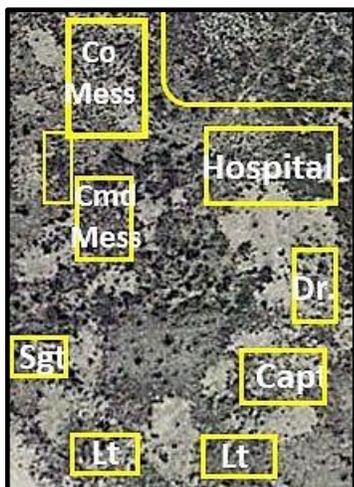
**Slag from mobile forge**

### **The First Official Unit: The Infantry Camp**

Company A, 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Regiment, was brought in to cut a wagon road down to the main spring. The camp was broken down into four main areas: command compound, corral, infantry tent area, and perimeter guard posts.

**Command Compound:** The command compound sits right next to the modern ranch road, off the northeast corner of the stone ranch house. The key to understanding the compound is the first light-colored ground splotches in the 2015 satellite imagery. These splotches are heavily traveled areas into and out of tents. With this understanding, we can determine the tent layouts around the central rectangular open area of the command section, which was essentially an assembly pad. The original infantry command compound consisted of the captain's tent, a doctor's tent, a hospital tent, two lieutenant's tents, a first sergeant's tent, and a command dining tent. These tents were set up around the 30 X 50 foot rectangular assembly/formation pad. This open area would have been an assembly area

when the commander needed to address the troops in a formation. This is a common design to this day for military field command compounds. The pad could hold a formation of about 60 men, the size of a company at that time.



**Probable Command Compound with Assembly/Formation Pad (Google Earth)**

Most command officers would have a Type 1 Officer's Wall Tent (10'6"w x 11'2"l x 7'h w/45" wall). However, the hospital tent would be larger (14'w x 14'l x 11'h w/45" wall). Lieutenants would have a Type 2 Officers Wall Tent (8'9"w x 8'6"l x 8'6"h w/45" wall). Sergeants would have a Shelter Half Tent (67"w X 66"h). The command dining tent would probably be a Type 1 Wall Tent. (19<sup>th</sup> Century)



**Officer's Wall Tent**

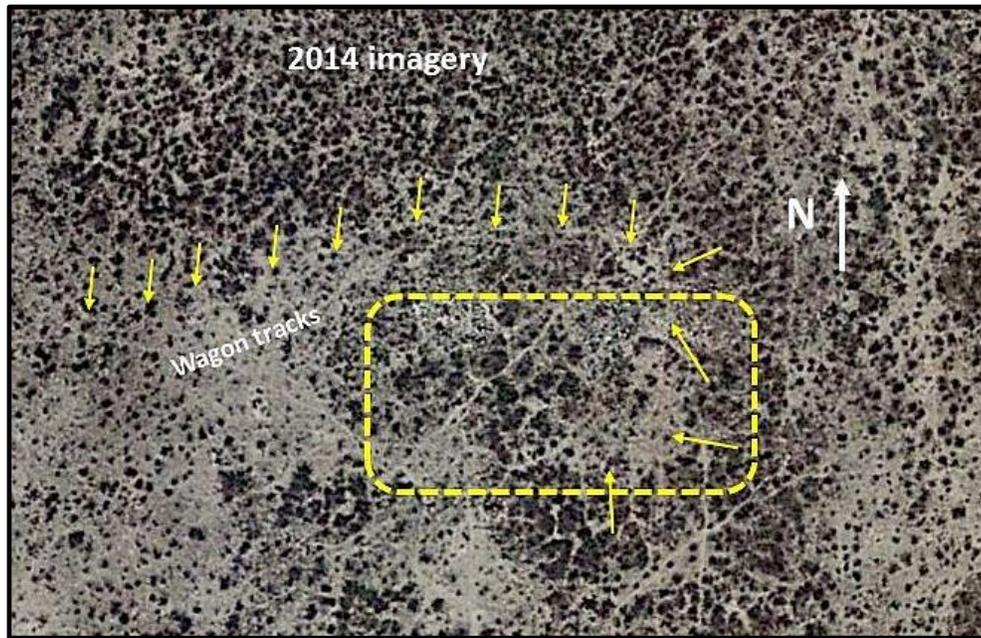
**(Examples)**

**Hospital Tent**

Behind the command compound and the officer's dining tent was a probable camp mess tent. This was a much larger tent (35 X 20). There is heavy scarring leading into this tent area. In between the officers' dining tent and camp mess tent was probably a common kitchen tent.

**Corral:** The infantry corral was constructed between the enlisted tent area and the command compound. The ground-scared area is approximately 130 X 60 feet. A good indicator of this area being the corral are wagon tracks leading into and out of the corral (most visible in a 2014 satellite image below). In the 2008 Texas Tech reconnaissance, several horse and mule shoe fragments were collected from the southeast corner of this area. After the infantry company departed, this area continued to be used by the

Black Seminole Indian Scout detachment, which referred to it as the “stables” in Lieutenant French’s diary.



**Infantry/Seminole Corral with Wagon Road Annotated**

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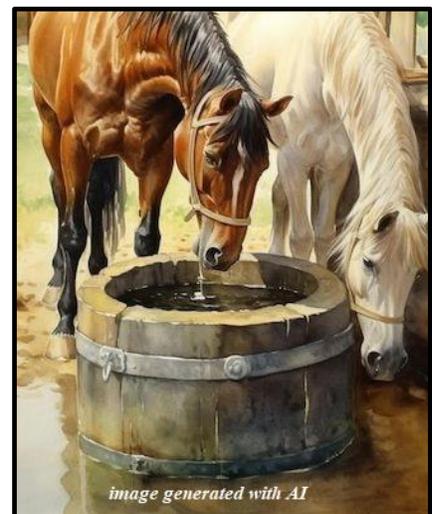
The corral area is the most confusing area to understand because it has remnants of four stone features within the confines of what would have been the corral fencing, initially constructed by Company A. Of those four features, two were probably related to the original corral, and two were from the post-military period and related to the Pecos Land And Cattle Company. The remnants of a small stone building, which is the farthest west, is very visibly constructed professionally, with double-stacked cut stones. According to Lieutenant French's diary, the first two constructions in the area were for the cattle company’s contracted stone mason and carpenter’s quarters and the Lougee family. The first stone structure was located just east of the main house, now along the ranch road. Although it was well built

of cut stones, it appears to have been put together quickly, which is what the diary said. We believe the two stone buildings within the former corral area were additional construction for the cattle company after the military departed. The other two remnants of wall features within the corral area were probably from the original military occupation. Most of the stones from the original military walls were repurposed for the more crudely constructed stone structure, probably another laborer's quarters for the cattle company. This building was within feet of the two previous infantry company wall structures.

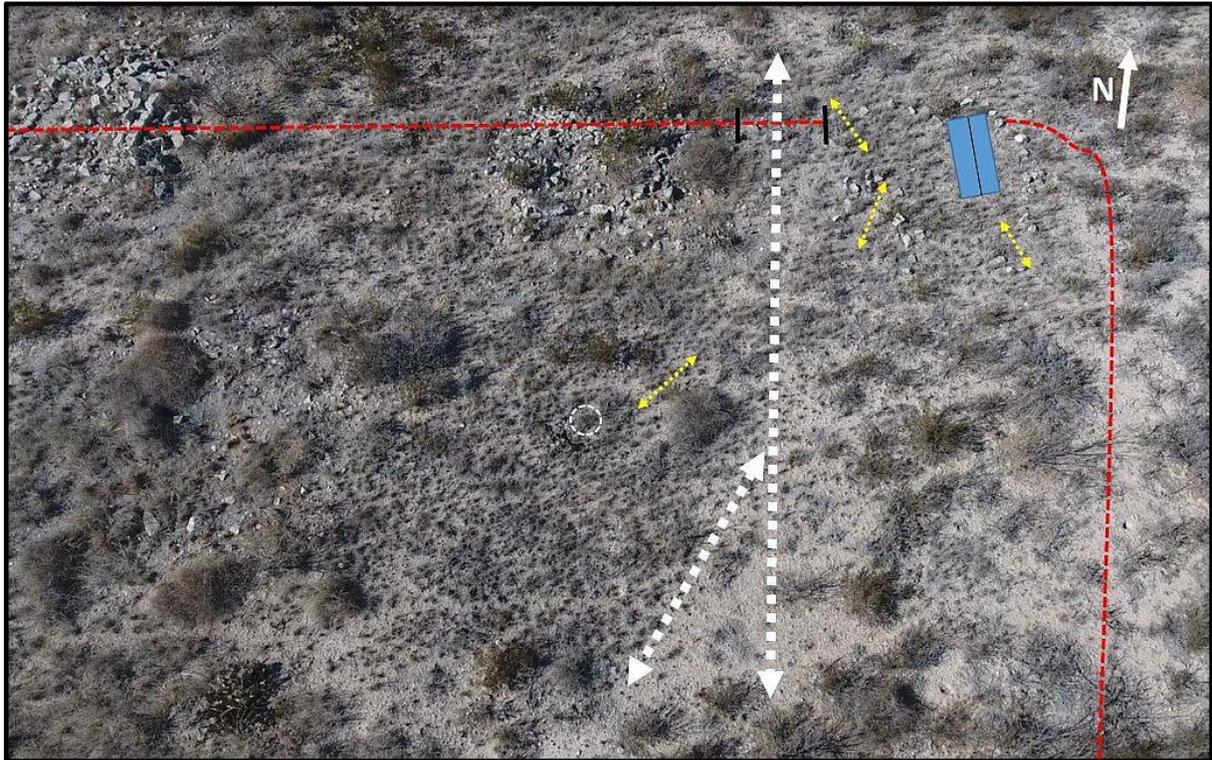
The wagon trace revealed in satellite imagery shows it drove into the corral and made a right turn to a turnaround. It could then drive right next to the circle with the depression. Or the wagon could park at that point, ensuring they could release or harness up the mules while inside the corral.

A large square boundary of large rocks on the most eastern side of the corral sits next to the entrance gate area to the corral. This feature has a large tent stake on the outside of the north side of the feature. It is currently a single ground-level row of large rocks that measures 17 feet cross. On the northwest, southeast, and southwest areas of this circle are three rock-lined entrances into the feature. The entrances are four feet wide. The northwest entrance was probably outside the corral entrance gate. By using the northwest and southwest entrances, anyone could enter the corral without having to open the gate. This matches with the fence line trace in the satellite imagery. With this identified, we can see the fence line trace runs through the post-military rock structures, further supporting that these were not built as part of the military occupation. A stacked rock wall likely encircled the tent area, but the stones from the wall were taken over to the adjacent rock structure after the military departed. This wall would have been about three to four feet high and would have been for the person in charge of constant care and maintenance of the mules and horses. The remnants of a square building of stacked rocks sit immediately adjacent to the former corral gate. It was initially 15 feet square. This was constructed after the military abandoned the camp in 1884.

A fourth circular line of large stones immediately south of the square building feature adds to the confusion of this group of features. This feature is now only a row of stones on the ground, and the walls were probably higher when constructed. Those stones were probably also removed to build the square building in the post-military period. It measures 17 feet in diameter and is depressed ground in the center. There is a depression about 14 inches deep at the center. The depression suggests this was probably a watering area for the animals. The wall would have protected the water source, probably held in a half barrel, from

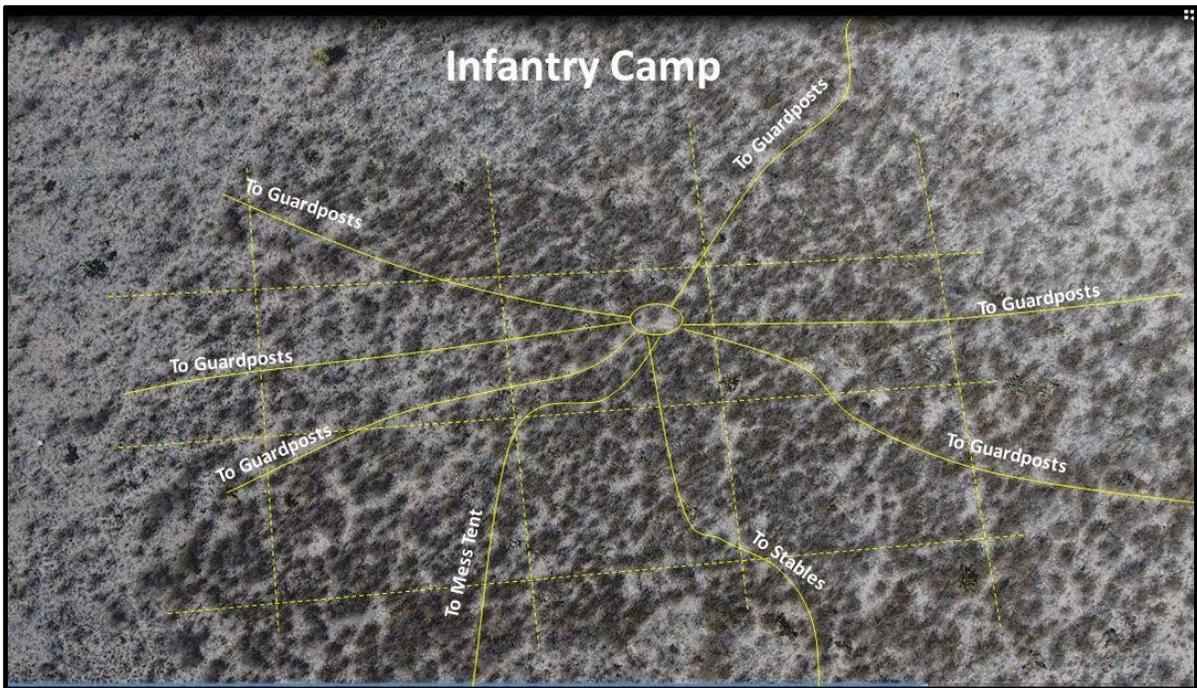


animals wandering in on their own. In addition to the depression, a large barrel strap was found very close to this feature, which helps support this theory. During the Company A occupation of this camp, the large spring in the canyon was not accessible by wagon since this company was the one working on the road to the canyon spring. Their only water source would have been a small spring in the draw 100 yards to the northwest and two more spring runoffs in a draw 450 yards to the northeast.



**Overhead of corral. Note fence line runs through stone buildings, which shows they had to have been built after the military departed. (Drone image)**

**Infantry Company Tent Area:** The area where most of the privates' tents were set up is north of the corral. This area was laid out in a surveyed block grid format, similar to an area we found at the 1859 Camp Van Camp expeditionary camp. Wagons were used to lay out the grid in a surveyed pattern. The company was then assigned grid areas for camping. Extending from a central point are walking trails. Most of those trails head in the directions of the guard posts. Two of them head in the direction of the corral and mess tent. The trails to guard posts indicate shift reliefs for the guard posts walked from camp.



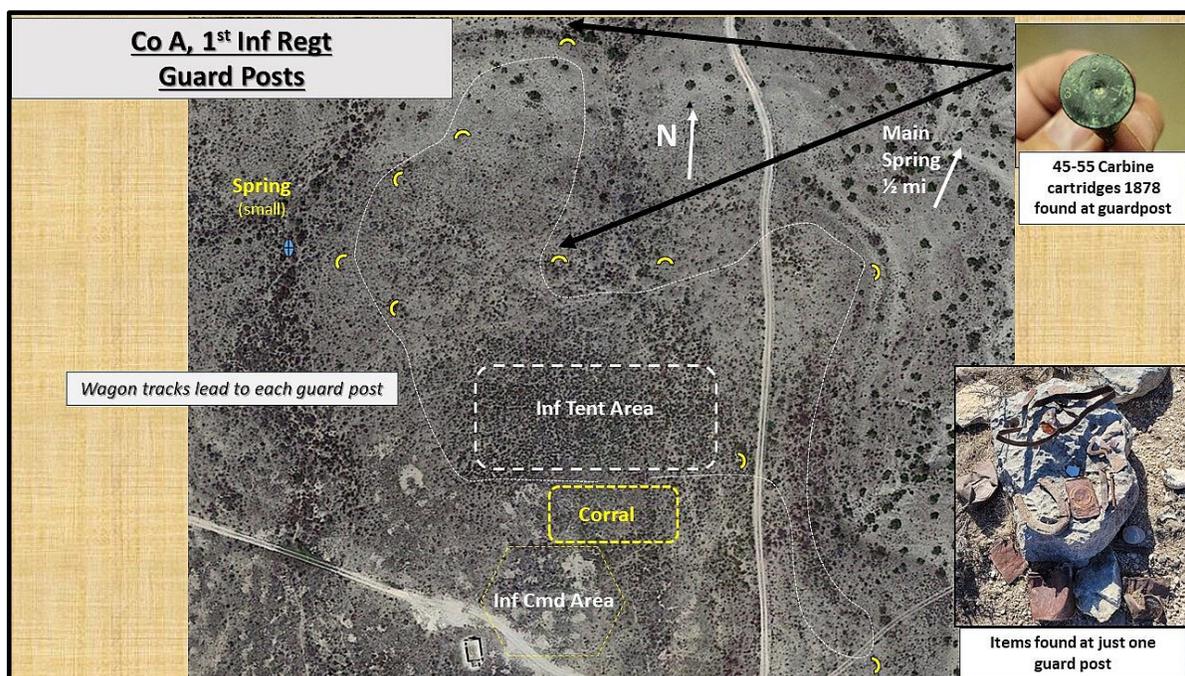
**Infantry Camp Visible Surveyed Layout with Walking Trails (Google Earth)**

Records show Company A only remained in the area for three months. No other infantry company deployed to this camp after they departed; all subsequent occupants other than the Black Seminole Indian Scout were cavalry units. An infantry company at the time consisted of approximately 60 privates, a captain, two lieutenants, a sergeant, and several corporals. As part of their encampment requirements, Company A built the guard posts and the corral, later used by the scouts. As stated earlier, their primary mission was to cut a road to the main springs, which had the most abundant water source. Large water barrels carried by wagon would be a requirement for future deployments. After an extensive satellite review of the area, today's same ranch road route is the only reasonable way from the camp to the spring in this rugged canyon terrain. Although the wagon road used the same draw, they constructed it slightly differently than the modern ranch road because they needed to use the easiest slope possible for the wagons. They essentially wound the road down the initial draw in a series of S curves to cut the angle to a reasonable decline. The rest of the current ranch road to the spring is mostly on top of the old wagon road.

**Infantry Company Guard (Picket/Sentinel) Posts:** Expeditionary infantry companies are laid out to hold and protect a territory and, in the process, protect themselves from attack. Camp Meyers Spring was added as an official sub-post to give the cavalry and Black Seminole Indian Scout patrolling units a base of operations closer to the trouble spots than they would have had from a garrisoned fort. It was the best clean source of sufficient water for a large camp in the Lower Pecos River area, making it a strategically important location.

To maintain the infantry camp and protect themselves, they were required to maintain picket/sentinel guard posts surrounding the encampment on a 24-hour basis. This was a hapless but necessary duty. Camp Meyers Spring was no different in this regard, and many guard posts surrounded the camp. Guard posts were usually manned on four-hour shifts. This was to ensure the guards kept their vigilance. Guard posts were also spaced to be within communication distance of each other. In this case, most were between 35 and 100 yards from each other and between 50 and 150 yards from the camp's boundary. This security strategy adheres very closely to the basic principles in a 1907 military primer presented for the fourth cadet class of the United States Military Academy. (Marshal and Simonds)

Wagon tracks can still be seen today in overhead imagery running between guard posts and, in some cases, are still visible on the ground. The layout shows both an outer and inner ring of guard posts. This was a well-thought-out defensive plan, probably because this company had just come from the Dakotas and had a very active and aggressive war with the Sioux Nation. After the infantry company departed, these particular guard posts were abandoned.



**Guard Posts Surrounding the Infantry Camp (Google Earth)**

As stated earlier, the trails within the infantry tent camp area indicate the shift reliefs to and from the guard posts were walking from camp. Since wagon tracks are still visible in imagery between guard posts, this means the wagons were used to deliver ration supply boxes to the guard posts. Many pieces of supply box bands and tin can trash at most of the guard posts support this. Guard posts consisted of large rocks stacked in a semi-circular shape facing the threat, called a redoubt. This kept the silhouette from being exposed, and it was a defensive wall in case of attack. Guards probably sat on a box. On slopes, the position is built up with smaller rocks and dirt to make a level platform. In every case, the

large rocks have become deflated from wind and weather over the many years. Some were swept down the hill directly below the former guard post. It is quite apparent they are not natural to the close surrounding area and were brought from nearby creek beds. Most of the remaining ones are scattered within feet of the platform, and large bushes often grow into the site due to the additional soil disturbed from the platform construction. At all the guard posts, we found various amounts of period military supply rations and personal trash scattered around the position or washed down the slope directly in front of the position. Much of this was bottle glass and tin cans, mostly 'Hole And Cap' cans. (Busch)

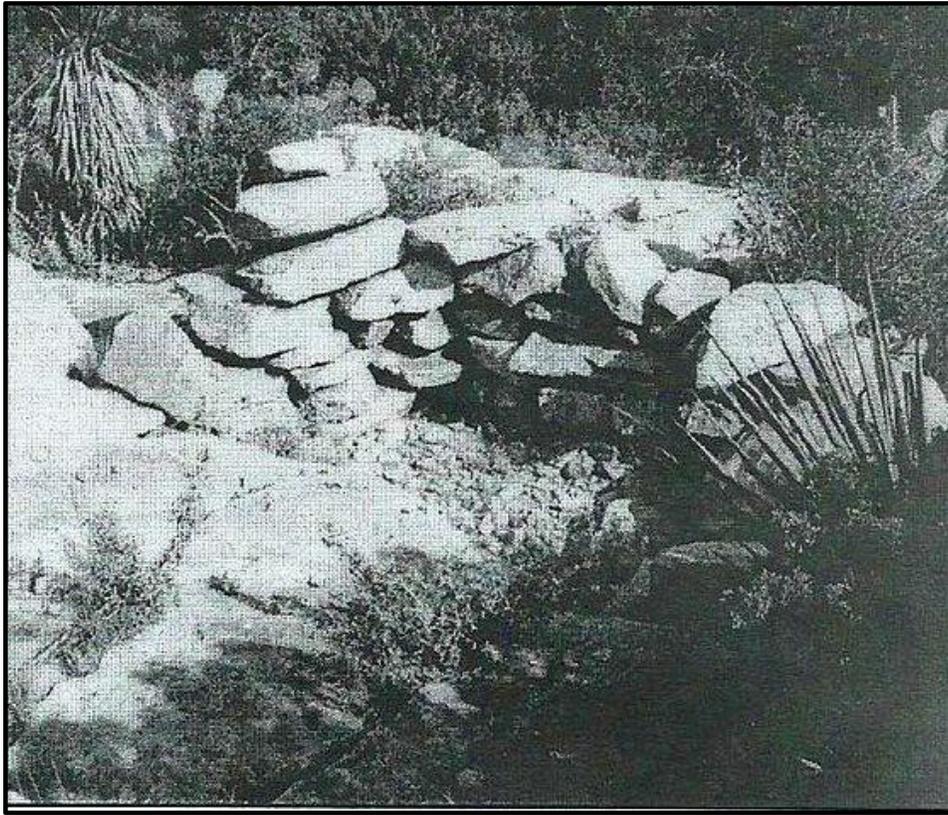


**Ration Supply Box Band at Guard Post**



**Remains Of Defensive Stone Reoubt, Guard Post #9**

These posts are mostly set up on high ground over watch points. Several guard posts were set up to oversee draws that lead up to the camp that would be considered a threat of sneak attack.



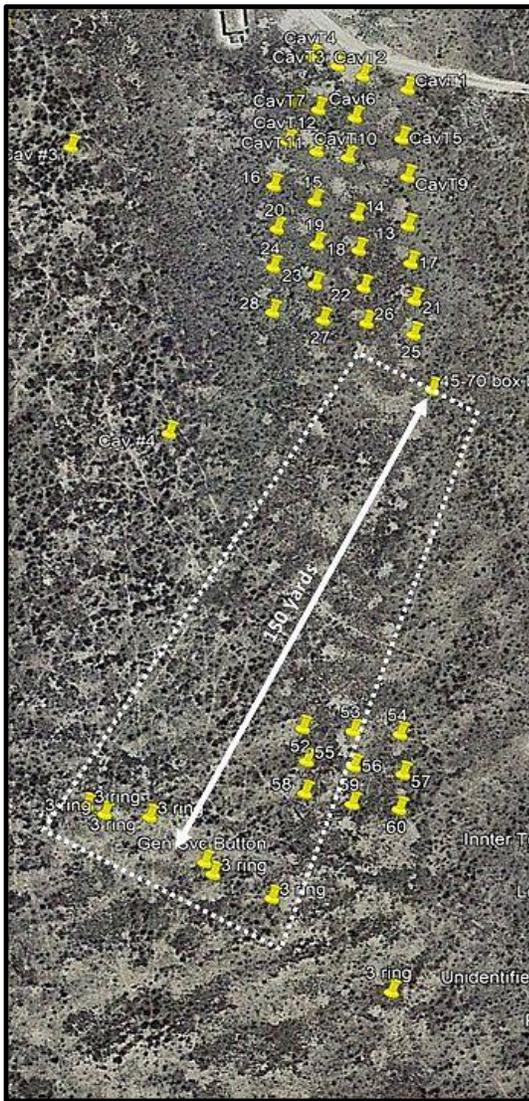
**Example of intact redoubt at Grierson Spring from the same period**



**Remnants of a wagon road between guard posts**



**Vista View from a Guard Post**



Infantry firing range across later cavalry camp

While metal detecting the main wagon road on the south end of Cavalry Camp #1, we came across what we determined to be the target practice range for Company A of the 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Regiment. This was a target practice range prior to the arrival of the cavalry. Thus, it runs through the later cavalry camp at an angle to the tent layout. A cluster of 45-55/70 lead bullets in various conditions of impact was found in an angled east-west line, with some outlier errant bullets from the main area. In all, 14 bullets were found. Working our way back from this area, we found the firing position at 150 yards. This was determined by a 45-70 brass pouch flap button that had been dropped, along with an unfired, deformed 45-55/70 bullet that had been dropped. A partial 45-55 cartridge was also found in this area. The distance for this firing range is 150 yards, considered the proper range for accuracy and minimal bullet drop for both the Springfield Trapdoor 45-55 carbine and rifle. A general service Indian Wars military button was also found in the area of the spent bullets.



45-55/70 Ammo Box (Pouch) With Brass Flap Button (example) Ammo Pouch Flap Button

The unusual findings of this firing range and the infantry guard posts is that this company was firing carbine rather than rifle cartridges, all with either no stamp or 1877 or 1880 head stamps. From the

Cartridge Collector website research: “The Benet primed cases were loaded with 70 gr. black powder load and a 405 gr. bullet. The carbine load used the same bullet, but a 55gr. charge with seven wads inserted to take up the space. The bullets for the carbine load were seated to the same depth as the rifle load, and once out of the packet, there was no way to distinguish which was which until it was fired, and the recoil was excessive when a rifle load was fired in a carbine rifle. The rifle/carbine identification problem was solved in March 1877 when the arsenal started applying headstamps to the cases. The first were head stamped R 77 3 F (Rifle / 1877 / 3rd Month / Frankford Arsenal) and C 77 3 F (Carbine).”

There is no documentation of this infantry unit as to whether they carried the 45-70 rifle or the 45-55 carbine. However, it is generally accepted that infantry units carried the rifles. The most likely explanation is that they were issued carbine cartridges for their rifles due to a shortage of rifle cartridges in the Fort Clark Quartermaster’s supply. The carbine cartridges had the same accuracy from the rifle as the carbine at the standard range of 150 – 200 yards, but they carried 55 grains of gunpowder rather than 70 grains. In our discussion with armament experts, this is considered the most likely. In support of this theory, we did find three stamped rifle 45-70 cartridges, one at the infantry camp and two at an infantry water collection camp (next topic in this report). These cartridges were stamped 1879 and 1880.



1873 Springfield "Trap Door" Rifle



1873 Springfield Carbine

**Nearby Springs and Infantry Water Collection:** Although A Company’s assignment was to cut a wagon road to the spring runoff area above the main spring basin, while they were on this task, they also needed a good water source reachable by wagon for their own needs. They found this source from two small springs near their main camp. One was just behind the camp in a small draw, and the other was 400 yards north in a similarly small gully. The closer one was more of a seep spring and easy to get to by wagon. In both locations, they built catchment pools. They must have been filling water barrels on wagons on its many round trips.

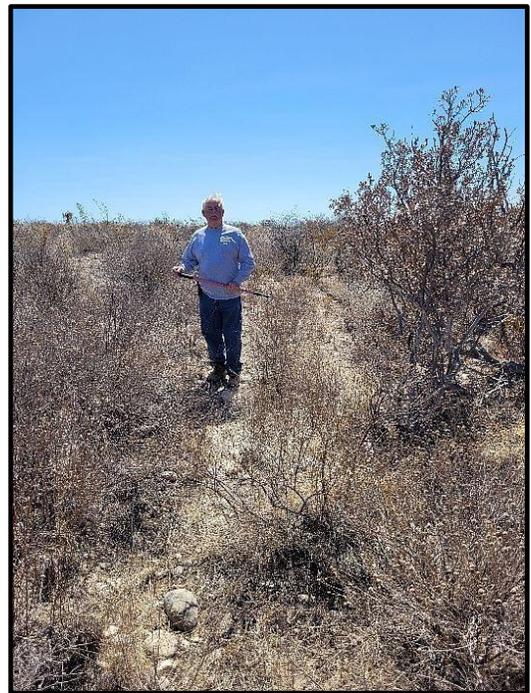
The remaining abutment stones from the catchment dam are sixty yards below the second spring. Wagon traces go directly to both these locations and then return to the corral. Many 45-70 carbine cartridges were found in the second area, but two were stamped as rifle cartridges. These were only used by infantry. The cartridges that were stamped included 1878, 1879, and 1880. As stated earlier, the period of this camp was early 1881. Additionally, we found one Civil War-era coat button with an 'I' in the shield, indicating infantry. We found various wagon parts shaken loose while crossing the rocky ground on the wagon road.

Two 38 Short rimfire cartridges were also found. Earlier, these same type cartridges were found at the edge of the main infantry camp. These were probably from a personal weapon carried by one of the soldiers. It would be for an 1871 New Model Revolver.

The closer pool would have been about 14 X 15 feet and about 14 inches at its deepest point. The Black Seminole Indian Scouts also used this pool after they created their camp, which was 100 yards above the pool.



**Dam Rocks Placed To Pool Spring Water**



**Wagon Road Leading To Gully In Front Of Spring Pool**



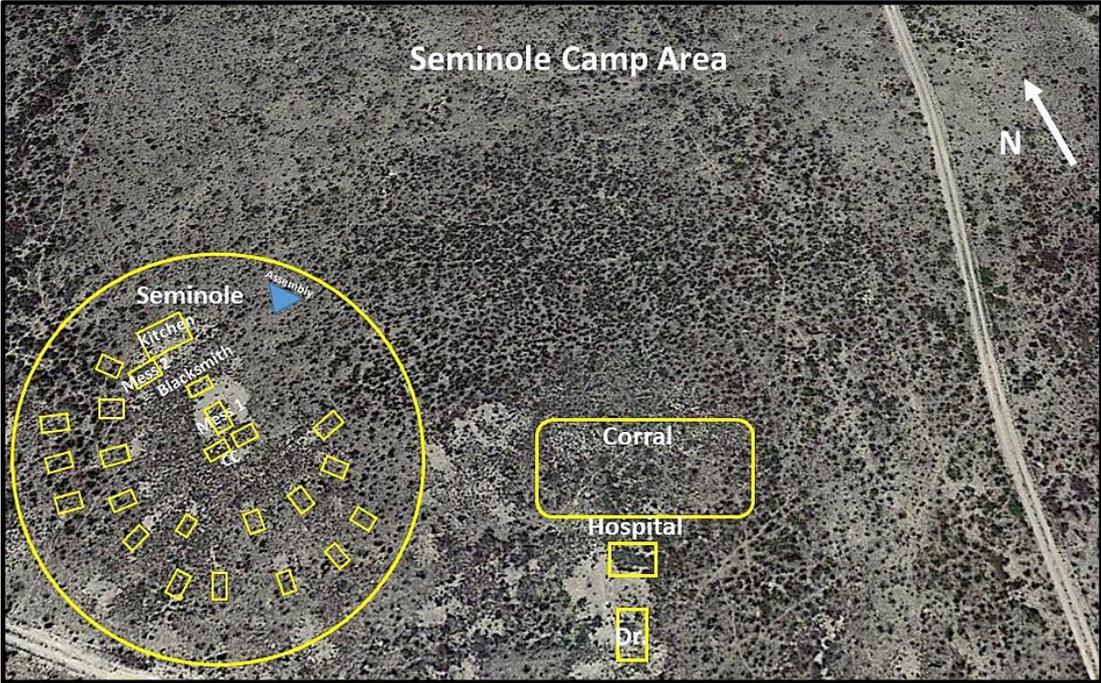
**Fracture spring source for second infantry water collection area 400 yards from infantry camp**

### **Black Seminole Indian Scout Camp**

The Black Seminole Indian Scout detachment was the first to establish itself in Camp Meyers Spring. However, their final camp location was probably the last to be established after the infantry company departed. Cavalry units were deployed there for the first three months. The scouts were then deployed, along with the cavalry, for the next three months. However, the camp probably wasn't fully established until the 22<sup>nd</sup> Infantry detachment (a probable engineering unit) assisted in the final camp laydown in April 1882. (See **Appendix C**)

The ground scarring in the satellite imagery of the camp is different than a regular military unit, maintaining a distinctive circular design. It is laid out in a series of inner and outer rings surrounding the leader. The tent locations came from analysis of the high-traffic entrances to the tents and later from on-ground reconnaissance and metal detecting for clusters of trash that exposed a tent spot. There appears to have been a total of 19 enlisted tents, two mess tents, a kitchen tent, a blacksmith work area, and the commander's sleeping and dining tent. The mess and kitchen tents match with the French diary that the men had their own cooking facilities. The commander's tents were placed in the middle of the tent rings. According to Lieutenant French's diary, he had his wall tent and a separate dining tent, where he often had guests of the doctor, cattle baron Mr. Lougee, and his general manager. He also stated that his tents were wall tents, which were enhanced with wooden walls toward the end of his assignments. He had a wood-burning stove installed in the dining tent for more comfort for him and his

guests. On November 22, 1883, French stated he moved an extra wall tent over to the kitchen area as a second mess tent (for the NCOs). There were at least five sergeants in the detachment during his 1883/84 deployment. The main mess tent was in the center of the compound, just behind the commander's tents. This is where the most foot traffic is evident. Given the number of scouts in monthly reports over the years, the most likely scenario for this setup was two men per tent, depending on the number in the detachment each month.



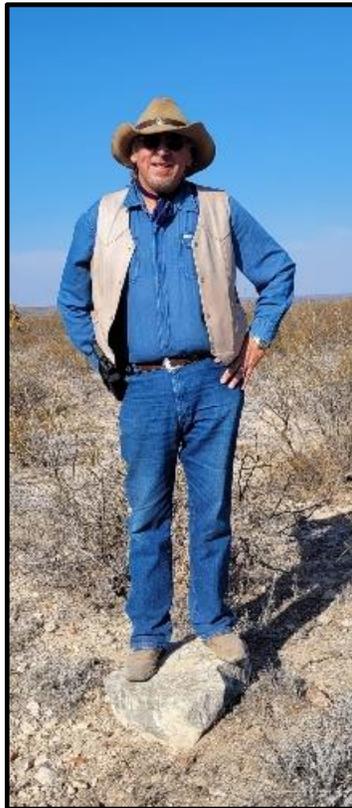
**Black Seminole Indian Scout Detachment Layout (Google Earth)**



**Black Seminole Indian Scout Detachment Layout (drone image)**

## **Black Seminole Indian Scout Assembly/Formation Area**

On the outer edge of the circular camp area sits a very large flat rock. This rock is the only one in the entire area and was obviously brought up from the canyon area. It measures 20 X 15 X 5 inches. In front of the rock is an area of disturbed earth in the shape of a perfect triangle, which can be seen in drone video imagery looking directly down. The stone sits precisely in the middle of the base of the triangle. This was likely an assembly/formation area for the troops, with the stone being used as a step-up podium for the commander to address the troops. Assembly was a common practice in military field deployments. It was usually conducted daily after breakfast. It is a way for the commander to communicate the orders for the day. He would then turn it over to the first sergeant to assign specific duties. This area can still be seen from above because it was explicitly measured out and dressed into this formation by cleaning and grooming in a military manner. The daily assembly of men within the triangular assembly would have imprinted this space in the triangular shape from then on. This stone and the assembly area in front of it adds to the imagery analysis of the circular tent layout, in that it is in the one area of the circle that is entirely devoid of any other activity or occupation. We have given the nickname for this stone the 'Podium Stone.'

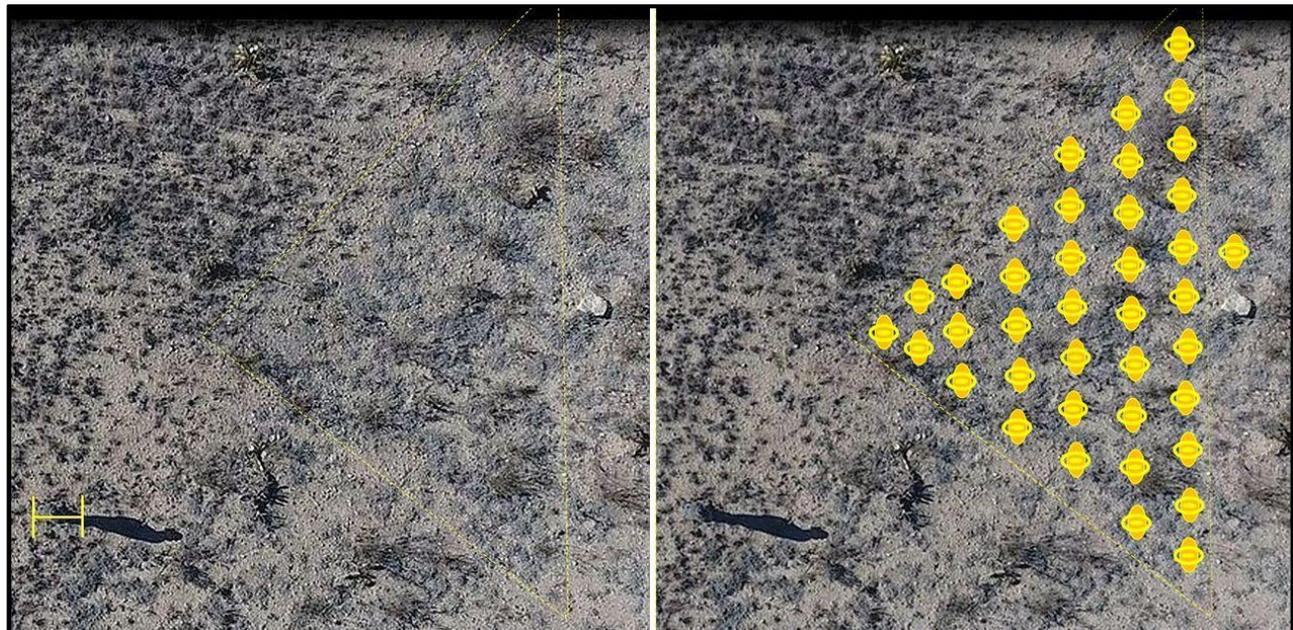


**Standing on 'Podium Stone'**



**'Podium Stone'**

A measurement of the number in assembly was conducted by placing one of our members next to this location and applying that measurement, looking from above, in rows within the triangle. The rows come out to be 11 in the first row, then 9, 7, 5, 3, 2, 1. This adds up to 38 plus the first sergeant that would be standing next to the commander, making 39. From March 1882 to May 1884, the average number of scouts in camp was 38 men.

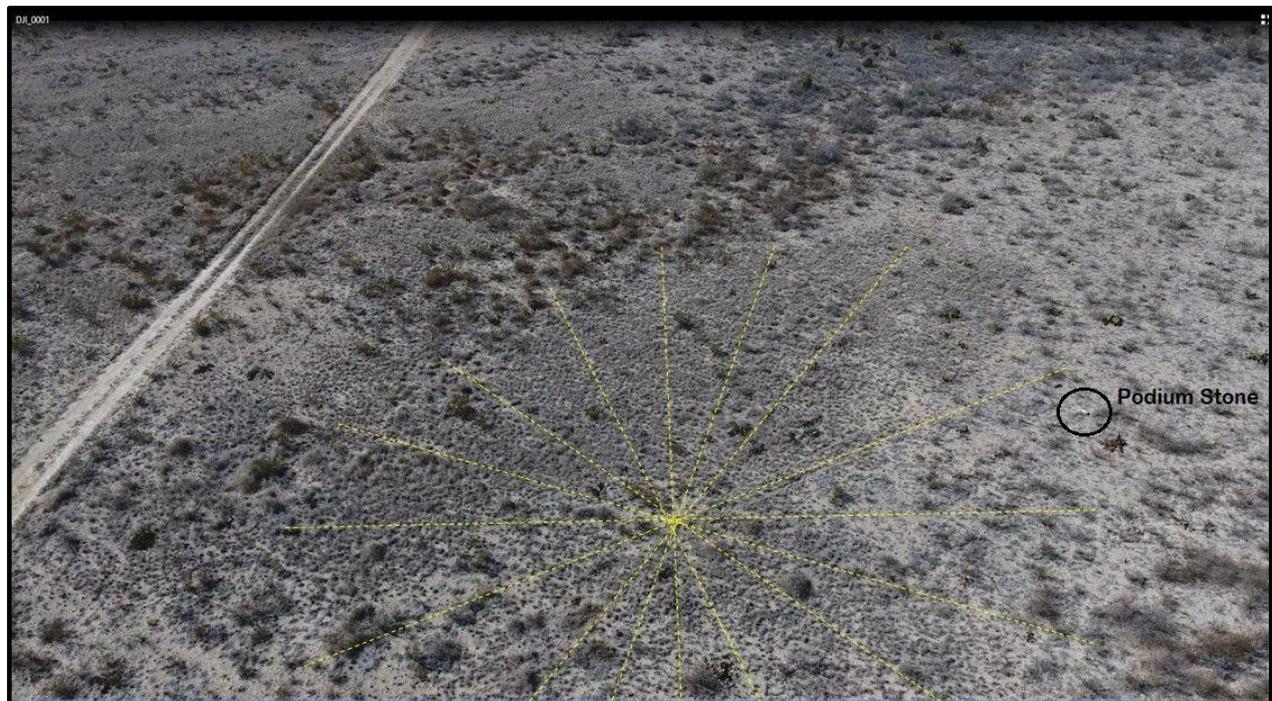


**Assembly Area Before/After Measurement (drone image)**

Although the Seminole Scout camp was designed in a non-traditional military circular fashion, it was not a haphazard layout. It was designed with engineering precision, using surveying techniques. This

was revealed with the drone overhead imagery. They used surveying markers to make perfectly straight lines, starting with perfect 90-degree cross lines, extending to the camp's perimeter. The lines can still be seen in the earth from above. They then bisected the four lines of the cross to make eight, then bisected the eight lines to make sixteen. At the center, they placed the commander's tent and used the lines extending out from the hub like spokes in a wheel to set the outer tents. Close to the center, they placed a large mess tent. And across from that tent, they put the kitchen tent. The assembly area with the 'podium stone' referenced above was placed at the outside edge of the circle in a quadrant that was otherwise unused.

This analysis raises the question of how the scouts could have accomplished this level of engineering detail in a camp design. And the answer is, they didn't. It was accomplished by a detachment of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment that accompanied Lieutenant Jones and his scouts from Fort Clark on a 19-day deployment (11 work days - March 28<sup>th</sup> to April 7<sup>th</sup>, 1882). The infantry detachment was probably an engineering crew with surveying skills to lay out the camp per the lieutenant's design. A month before this, Lieutenant Jones came up to the area with just eight scouts. This was probably his initial inspection trip to choose the specific location that was to become the formal camp, taking into account the other sections of the camp already laid out by cavalry companies that had been deploying to this location for the last six months.

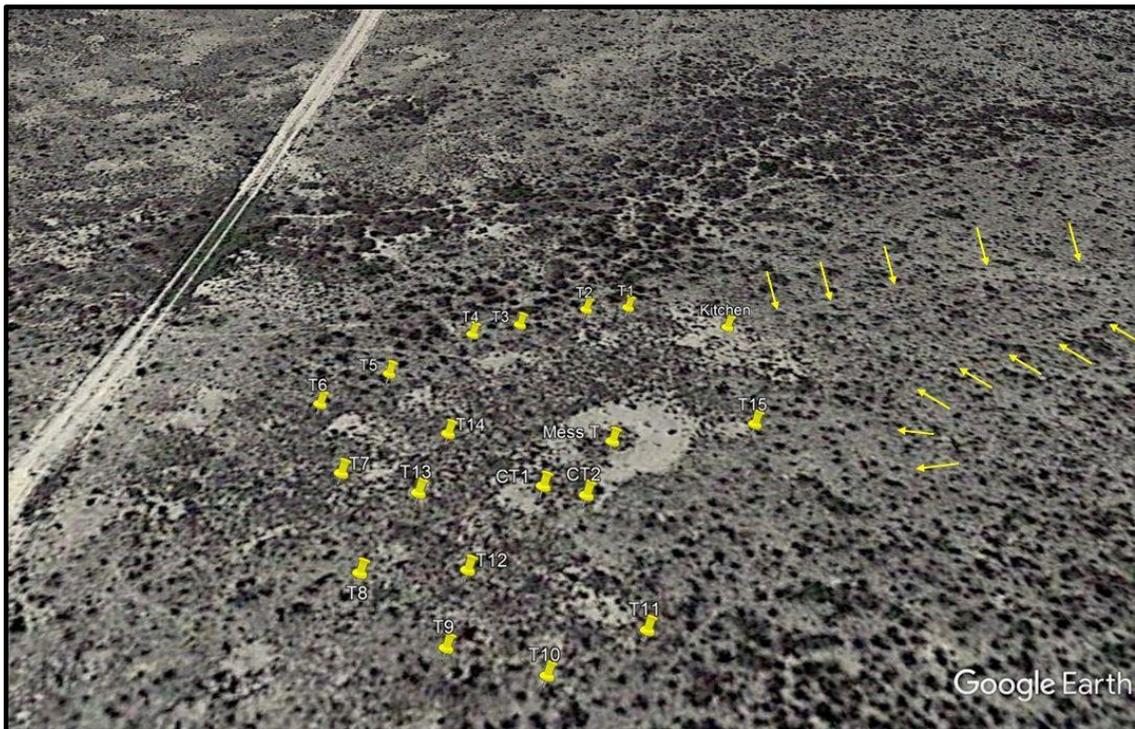


**Seminole Camp Design (laid out in still visible lines from wagon tracks) (drone image)**



**Seminole Camp Design Using Exact Same Lines Identified By Drone Overlaid and With Previously Identified Tent Locations from Disturbed Earth Markings (Google Earth)  
(Notice Commander's Tents 'CT' In Exact Center)**

The kitchen tent location is supported by not only the larger size of the foot traffic area and typical trash, but also a still visible delivery wagon road drives right up to the back of the tent area and stops.



**Delivery Wagon Road Up To Rear of Kitchen Tent**

One of the skills the Black Seminole Indian Scouts were highly proficient at was hunting. They were unmatched trackers, and that meant for animals and men. The lieutenants who pulled duty as the detachment commanders had one significant benefit for their long hours in the field. That was that they would eat much better than their counterparts in the regular infantry and cavalry.



## Camp Life - Hunting

From Lt French diary...



Feb 18 1883: The men killed **two deer and one wild turkey** today.

Feb 19 1883: The men killed **two more deer and another turkey**.

Apr 12 1883: The men killed **a deer today and caught a fish in the [Rio Grande] river**.

May 3 1883: Some of the men brought **a deer** into camp and **a great many fish were caught**.

---

Nov 26 1883: Sgt Kibbets went out about 3 miles from camp and **killed a fine buck**.

Nov 28 1883: The hunting party came in this morning **bringing ten deer**.

Dec 6 1883: The men killed **one deer today & two fishes**.

Dec 7 1883: One of the men killed a **beautiful turkey**.

Dec 8 1883: Corp'l Lougorio **brought in four fine fish** from the river today.

Dec 19 1883: One of the men who went out Monday came in today saying that he became lost from the others yesterday. **He killed 5 deer**. Made arrangements to send him out tomorrow with two pack mules for the deer and two men to help.

Dec 20 1883: Sgt. Kibbets & party came in while I was at dinner, **bringing one deer**.

Dec 30 1883: Sgt. Daniels & hunting party came in today with **two deer & two wild pigs**.

Jan 1 1884: He [Ward] **brought in a deer**...

Jan 15 1884: He [Ward] **brought in a deer** and we had venison for supper.

Jan 26 1884: Corp'l. Lougorio & party returned with **six fish, a turkey & a skunk**.

Jan 30 1884: A small hunting party that went out Monday returned this evening & now we have **deer and game**.





## Tonkawa Indian Scouts

For a very short period, the Indian Scout Detachment included Fort Clark Tonkawa Indian scouts at Camp Meyers Spring. The months were the end of March, into April 1882. At the end of March, there were five Indian scouts reported. In April it increased to six. The Tonkawa were known from their earlier period as scouts at Fort Griffin in north Texas and were also known for retaining their Plains Indian cultural ways. This included living in their traditional teepees.

At Camp Meyers Spring, on the far northern edge of the camp perimeter, are three Teepee rings and one smaller size for a day-shade shade teepee. They sit on a flat area just below what was the abandoned northern guard posts of Company A of the 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Regiment. They also sat near a small running spring-fed creek at the time. This creek was from the same spring source we found below the Black Seminole Indian Scout camp. This was undoubtedly their source of clean water. The teepee rings measure 15 feet in diameter, which is the proper diameter for the smaller, mobile Teepees. The rings are formed by large, flat rocks that would have been used to hold down the tent poles. Three teepees probably housed two men each. In the same area, we found ceramic military chow hall-type whiteware, a horseshoe nail, a boot heel nail, and a 45 Colt cartridge. This is the same type of whiteware used by

the military units in their chow halls while in garrison and by officers and non-commissioned officers in the field. It is commonly found at military expeditionary campsites. There is no reasonable alternative explanation for whiteware and these other items being in this area so far away from the main camp other than it was being used by the Tonkawa scouts.

The 45 cartridge found is particularly interesting because we never found any bullets or cartridges within the official Black Seminole Indian Scout camp. We know from the earlier Bullis scout camp that they were using the early 44 Colt revolvers during that mid-to-late 1870s period. Since the Tonkawa would have been issued the same as the Black Seminole Indian Scouts, all scouts had been upgraded to the 45 caliber revolvers by the 1882 period.

The Tonkawa Indian scouts at this camp for such a short period of time is unusual. The total time in camp was determined from military records to be only 11 days. During that time, the 22<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Detachment that accompanied the scouts was surveying the formal camp layout with the oversight of Lieutenant Jones.

This was the only deployment of the Tonkawa with the Black Seminole Indian Scouts to this camp. However, there was probably a second deployment to this camp in May and June, this time with Troop L, 8<sup>th</sup> Cavalry. During those two months, the Black Seminole Indian Scouts were sent to the mouth of the Pecos River to patrol and guard the railroad workers coming from the east. The Eighth Cavalry Troops were deployed to Camp Meyers Spring to patrol and protect railroad workers coming from the west. The Tonkawa were reported to be on detached service but not with the Black Seminole Indian Scouts. Although it does not state where they were detached, the only deployment would have been scouting for the 8<sup>th</sup> Cavalry units.

We found two more teepee rings 90 yards from the original rings and next to a spring runoff gully, separate from the original teepee camp. Two teepees would accommodate four men, similar to the original camp. After this deployment, all Tonkawa were discharged from service at Fort Clark.

The Tonkawa were originally from north Texas. They were expert trackers in the north Texas-Oklahoma plains of the Llano Estacado. However, the Lower Pecos and Big Bend area has a much different topography, requiring different tracking skills. The Tonkawas were likely brought to Camp Meyers Spring to learn the tracking skills of the Black Seminole Indian Scouts in this difficult Lower Pecos region of Texas. This short period was probably used to expose the Tonkawa scouts to their unique tracking skills. They then spent two months at the camp tracking for the cavalry units. After the two railroad crews met up near Comstock, Texas, the military at Fort Clark must have determined that the Tonkawa scouting services were no longer required.



*Ponkawa or Tonguawa, - Friendly Indians - Fort Griffin*

Note the day-shade teepee in this camp. Courtesy of [texasbeyondhistory.net](http://texasbeyondhistory.net)



Teepee Ring #1



**Teepee Ring #2**



**Teepee Ring #3**



**Day-Shade Teepee Ring**



**Whiteware and 45 Colt near Teepee Ring #3**

### **Cavalry Camps**

Cavalry camps were laid out in columns of two, three, or four. The ground scarring of tents is quite visible in the 2016 imagery. Like the infantry camp, the key to these encampments are the light-colored splotches that are man-made scars on the ground. They are easy to see and completely unnatural. These

light-colored splotches are the entrances to tents constantly being stirred up by foot traffic, exposing the lightly colored sandy soil beneath the vegetation. To this day, that soil has not been able to grow back properly.

The splotches are laid out in four, three, or two columns across each row, depending on which area. There are four separate camp areas. We know that on at least two occasions, Aug/Sep 81 and Sep/Oct 82, two Fort Clark Troops were together at the camp. We also know that in 1877, there were three cavalry companies, one infantry company, and one infantry detachment at this location for several days – before and after their campaign into Mexico. The report states, “...in all, eight officers, one hundred and sixty-two enlisted men and two guides...” This was in addition to lieutenant Bullis and 37 Seminole Scouts. (Phelps)

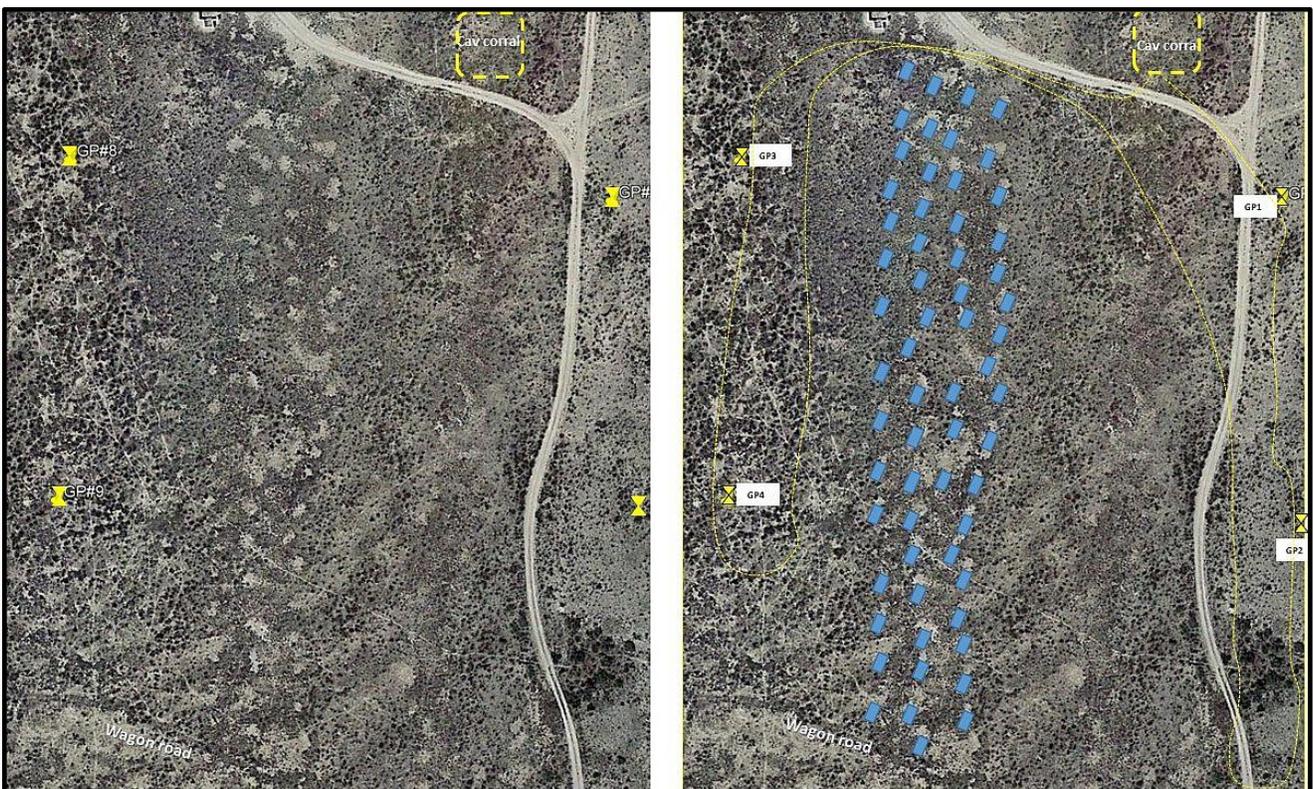
Texas cavalry units were fixed officially at 64 privates as of 1869, and it would hold this structure officially for the remainder of the Indian wars. (Ekhardt) Fort Clark's post reports support this. But as was often the case, units were hard-pressed to keep their number up to this official number. The average was 60 privates, give or take a few at any one time. For example, in May 1883 Troop H transferred into Fort Clark with 55 enlisted and three officers. Troop L listed 62, including officers. This is important to know while analyzing the cavalry camp areas.

Although there are no documented organizational units below Troops (companies) for the time, it is highly likely that due to the small numbers of that period, Troops were likely divided into two platoons. Those were again divided into two squads, making a squad of about 12 - 15 privates and a platoon of around 26 – 30 privates.

In this particular forward operating camp, the Troop command during the official sub-post period occupied four large tents in the general area that was previously the Company A, 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Regiment command compound. When the Troop was relieved by the Black Seminole Indian Scout detachment, they would turn over their command tents to the Scout detachment. These four tent sites were found during ground reconnaissance in the same area as the previous infantry command compound but set up in an unrelated layout to the previous compound. This is verified in Lieutenant French's diary of the procedure followed during the handover of the camp from cavalry troop to scout detachment.

## Cavalry Camp Area #1

Area #1 soldier tents begin south of the current east/west ranch road. Once you realize the linear splotches of disturbed earth are scars from tent entrances, you can determine the tent orientations. These were single-man dog tents used by the cavalry. The rows begin in groups of four, but south of a middle section, they change to groups of three across. The southern boundary of the area #1 camp was a heavily used wagon road that crossed from southeast to northwest. This was the main road used to and from the Pecos River Crossing and also continued to eventually reach Fort Davis. This was what was identified by Lieutenant French as the “Davis Road,” as it continued northwest to Fort Davis. It is quite visible in the satellite imagery. The entire camp area was 245 yards long and 50 yards wide.

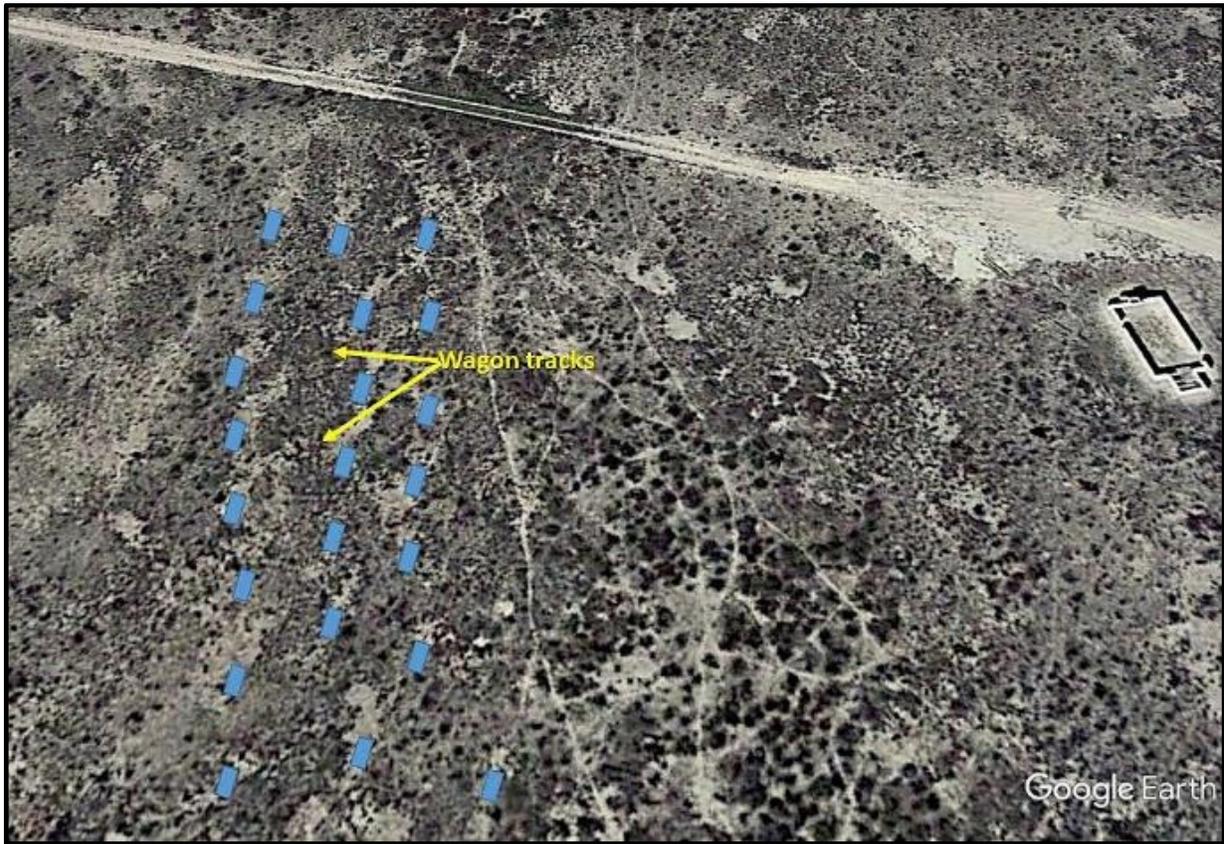


Original image (Cavalry Area #1)

Tent placements (Google Earth)

## Cavalry Camp Area #2

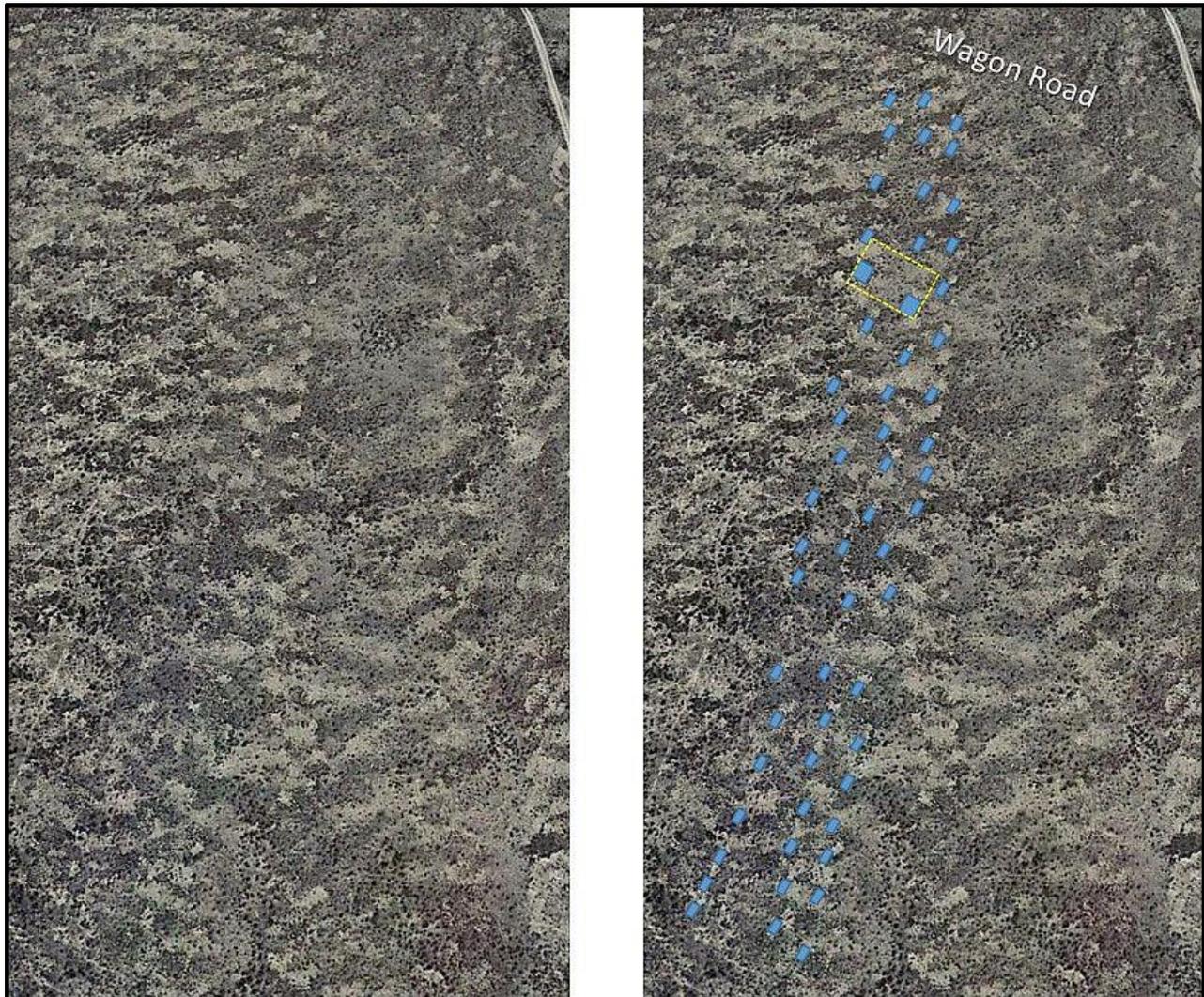
Area #3 sits to the west of Area # 1. The tent spaces are in columns of three. The following image only shows a portion of the area, but it needed to be zoomed in to properly see the scars clearly. Metal detecting of this area revealed several in-ground 45-55 carbine cartridges, dated 1877, 1878, and 1880. Additionally, a tent grommet and probable haversack rivet turned up at the tent site at the head of the far right column.



**Cavalry Area #2**

### **Cavalry Camp Area #3**

Area #2 follows the same pattern as Area #1, beginning just south of the wagon road. However, rows are in groups of three throughout, with 57 tent sites identified. Although infrequently used, we validated this camp with metal detecting finds of two fired Scofield 45-caliber cartridges (in-ground), one unfired intact Scofield 45-caliber cartridge, a metal undershirt/pants suspender button, and several supply box nails. These items were well into the camp area and at tent sites, which were identified through overhead satellite imaging.



Original image (Cavalry Area #3)

Tent placements (Google Earth)

#### Camp Area #4

Area #4 may have been occupied by a 37-man detachment of the 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment (Buffalo Soldiers) during a large-scale 23-day expedition in November 1877, reported by Captain S.B.M. Young, 8<sup>th</sup> Cavalry Regiment, Fort Clark. (Young) In his report, two 8<sup>th</sup> Cavalry Regiment companies, one 10<sup>th</sup> Regiment Cavalry (Buffalo Soldiers) company, one company of the 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment company, and a 10<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment detachment, camped with Lieutenant Bullis and his 37 Black Seminole Indian Scouts at Meyers Spring before and after an expedition chasing Apache Indian raiders that took them into Mexico. The 25th Infantry Company was brought along to be the mounted soldiers in charge of the pack mules for the expedition.

Our metal detection survey of the area found several in-ground artifacts supporting that this area was a camp. This included a grouping of six unused horseshoe nails, buried food cans, 45-55 carbine cartridges (dated 1877), four 45-caliber revolver bullets, a very large horseshoe (never before seen for cavalry horses), trouser button, and a Colt 45 revolver cartridge. These items support the satellite imagery revealing a pattern of tent spaces similar to the other camps.



**Heavy horseshoe found in Camp Area #4**



### **Camp Area #5**

According to Captain Young's 1877 report, the 10<sup>th</sup> Infantry detachment remained in camp awaiting the return of the expedition. This small detachment was specifically assigned to the wagons carrying the supplies to Camp Meyers Spring. Those supplies were then transferred to mules for the expedition. Some of the detachment went back to Fort Clark for additional supplies.

We found a small detachment-size area in the northeast corner of the four main camp areas. In this camp area we found (in-ground) 10 metal trouser buttons, metal shirt button, a lantern wick extender piece, wagon wood screws and rivet, broken pocket knife, medicine bottle tops, brass suspender buckle, whiteware dish piece, tobacco pouch tag, supply box nails, whiskey jug pieces, and an area of removed

horseshoe nails and probable fly-canopy farrier work area. These items, along with the clear imagery of six tent sites in two parallel columns and central wagon area, validated this site.



Graffiti on pictograph wall from 1877 Winter Expedition  
"Davis Co. B, 10<sup>th</sup> Inf, Willis [cook] Co. C. 10<sup>th</sup> Cav, 1877"



Camp Area #5 with annotations of probable locations based on imagery and artifacts found

## **1877 Winter Expedition**

In October 1877, Lieutenant Bullis and his Black Seminole Indian Scouts followed a trail of Indian raiders from Texas, across the border into Mexico. He found himself in a canyon ambush, forcing his retreat. On returning to Camp Meyers Spring, he requested reinforcements from Fort Clark in order to return into Mexico and continue the hunt for the raiding party that ambushed him and his men. The reinforcements were sent and he returned into Mexico with those units.

Captain S.B.M. Young led Companies A and K of the 8<sup>th</sup> Cavalry Regiment, Company C of the 10<sup>th</sup> Cavalry Regiment, a detachment of the 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, and a detachment of the 10<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment out of Fort Clark. They joined Lieutenant Bullis and his 37 Black Seminole Indian Scouts at the Devil's River, who led them to Camp Meyers Spring to prepare for the expedition into Mexico. (Bullis) **For the entire story of the 1877 Winter Expedition, see Appendix G.**

### **Cavalry Guidon**

In addition to the regimental standard, individual cavalry companies carried swallow-tailed flags called guidons. At the beginning of the Civil War, cavalry guidons featured two horizontal bars, red over white. In 1862, the military regulations changed, and cavalry guidons featured red and white stripes with a blue canton in the same design as the National colors. Although the regulations did not authorize cavalry regiments to carry the National colors, many did, carrying either a scaled-down version similar in size to their standards or a swallow-tailed guidon in the pattern of the National colors, but without company or regimental designations painted on. (Guidons)

The cavalry guidon changed from the stars and stripes to the red over white with regiment and company identification in 1884. Thus, the guidon flag during the period of Camp Meyers Spring was the swallowtail with national colors. In column formation, the guidon was directly behind the commander so the column could always guide on" the flag. The guidon continued to be placed in the same position when in camp. The unit camped in column formation – in this case, columns of four. We found the circular rocks identifying the guidon flag position, still undisturbed, at the head of the camped column, between tent site #1 (first row) and site #2 (second row), leftmost column. This is the exact position it should be in, which validates the analysis of the cavalry camp layout.



**Period-correct Cavalry Guidon Flag Placed in Former Flag Location**

### **Cavalry Guard Posts**

Cavalry Area #1 was the primary camp. We found four guard posts, two on each flank. Given the observable overhead route of the supply wagon, we designated them one through four from north to south, on the right side and then on the left side. Right flank guard posts were at very good overlooks to see east, both down and out for miles. The left side redoubts were on the flat area looking west. Trash around the redoubts supported the locations and the reason for the wagon tracks that run right by them. Guard post #3 redoubt stones, just 56 yards away, were accidentally repurposed by unknowing stone workers when reconstructing the stone house in 2013. Two of these stones were inscribed by cavalry privates standing guard duty in 1882. This is supported by the fact that the stone building was constructed between December 1883 and January 1884.



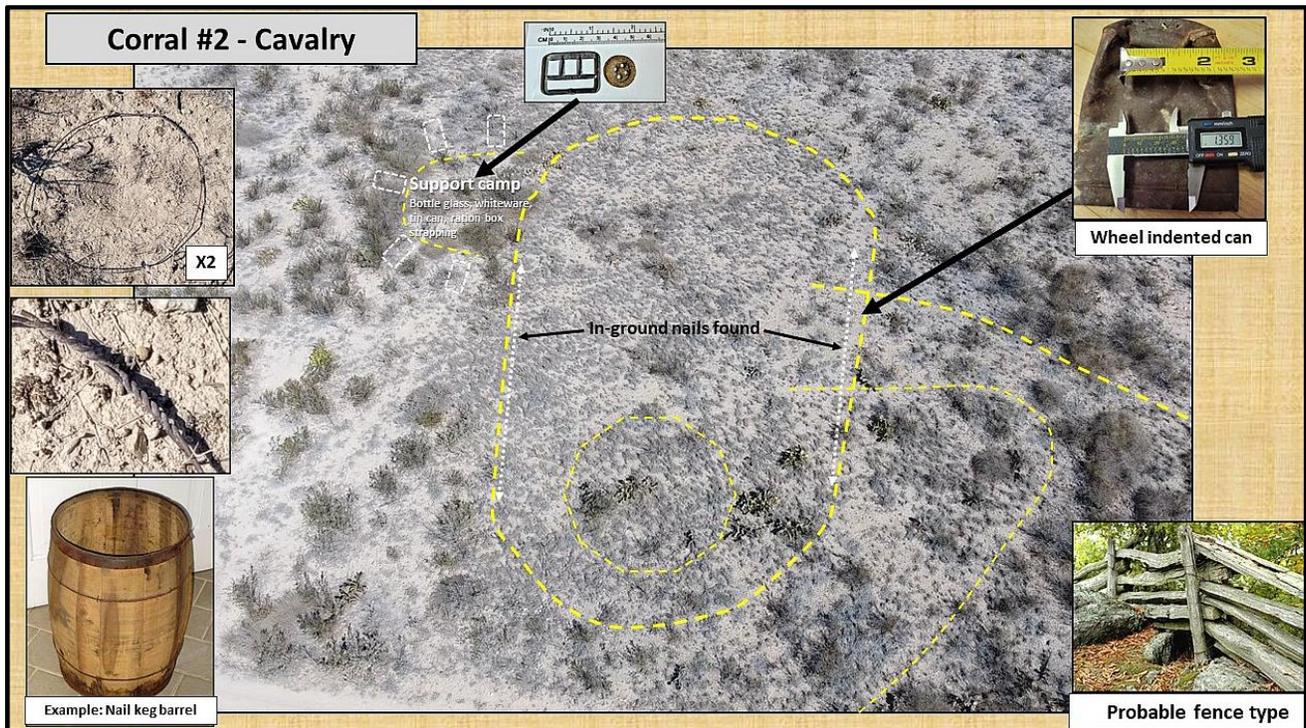
**Cavalry Guard Post Redoubt and Trash**

## **Cavalry Corral**

The cavalry units constructed a second corral. It sits to the northeast of Cavalry Area #1. A cluster of horse and mule shoe fragments was found in the southern area of the corral by the Texas Tech archeological reconnaissance team in 2008. This area also has ground scarring consistent with the size of a corral and the impression of the corral fencing, which can still be seen from above by drone, along with the wagon tracks leading into and out of the corral. The vegetation imprint also indicates a round pen was built inside the corral. The round pen is the shape of a 10-sided decagon. This makes sense as a way to separate horses and mules for maintenance. Some of the maintenance would include grooming, harnessing, saddling, farrier work, etc. Cavalry were required to maintain their own horses twice per day, as it was their most important asset. They would have to do this while separated from the rest of the remuda.

The corral is relatively large. It is a racetrack oval shape measuring approximately 100 X 50 feet. The round pen measures approximately 20 feet in diameter. The most likely fencing technique, given the primitive resources of this area, would be a two-post rail fence. Imagery revealed that on the northwest side of the corral, outside the corral fence, there was a small five-tent camp. These would have been the men dealing with all the duties of maintaining the wagons, horses, and mules. Trash around this site confirmed it was a camp.

The main wagon trail led into the corral and toward the round pen area. Another entrance can be seen leading into the main corral. Many nails were found around the perimeter, indicating the fencing was removed, dropping pulled nails during the removal. The fencing likely went down to the lower spring area where sheep pens were later built, probably around the turn of the century.



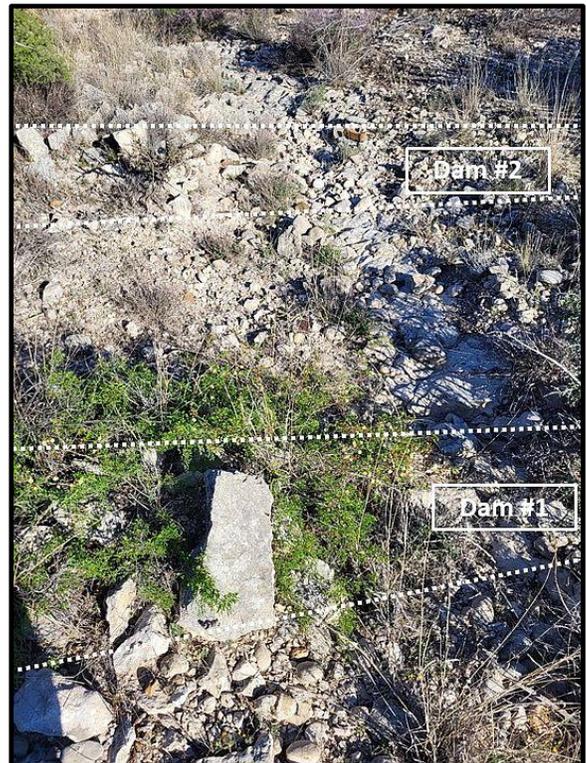
**Cavalry Corral Looking North (drone image)**

It would make sense that the cavalry units wanted to maintain their horses and mules separate from the Black Seminole Indian Scout horses and mules. It was closer to the cavalry bivouac area, and if they were in camp at the same time, it would be a recipe for confusion if they were combined. It is documented that the scouts were in the camp at the same time as Fort Clark cavalry companies during August through November 1881. Although both units considered maintaining their horses their highest responsibility, the traditional cavalry standards were very strict. They did not allow for mixing horses and mules with non-cavalry units. Scouts were designated as (mounted) infantry by the military.

### **Water – The Most Critical Camp Concern**

According to the National Park Service, a mule drinks approximately 10 gallons of water per day. A horse drinks approximately 15 gallons per day. This means that a typical cavalry company of that period needed around 980 gallons of water per day or 16.6 full barrels of water. Even a conservative number below this would still be a tremendous amount of water required on a per-day basis. A four-mule team could probably pull a maximum load of four full 59-gallon barrels of water, given that some of the roads from the spring or the dams were an uphill climb. A minimum of four full wagons of water per day were probably needed for a cavalry company carrying four barrels. This gives a very good look at the importance of water conservation and gathering for an expeditionary camp of this size.

Although rainfall records for the 1881 – 1884 period of the lower Trans-Pecos area are non-existent, a few sets of data give us a hint that the 1882 and 1884 years were probably at least leading into dry years. One is a tree-ring study of the San Antonio area, indicating a severe drought in the mid-1880s (Cleaveland) (Appendix F). Whatever San Antonio was experiencing would have been greater, and potentially earlier, in the Lower Pecos region. A second source is a rainfall data set for the El Paso area, indicating a higher than average dry year in 1882 (El Paso). Although there was spring water in many locations around Camp Meyers Spring, it appears that from 1882 through 1884, there was a concerted effort in daily water collection. By the number of sites and wagon roads to them, we estimate as much as half the cavalry Troop (company) may have been devoted to full-time water collection efforts while in camp.



**Dam remnants in the gully below the camp**

There were also multiple wagon routes to various water catchment areas being used each day by the regular cavalry active at this camp. Although the earlier infantry company created a wagon road down to the main spring, there was also a local wagon route that traversed the hills just below the camp to access three separate water catchment areas in gullies and a second wagon road to the west canyon branch above Meyers Spring basin. The catchment areas had small stone dams laid over the gullies to pool the water from fresh-water springs or rain runoff.

### **Cavalry Water Catchment Dams #1 and #2**

We found remnants of two small, loose stone dams in a steep gully below and to the east of the cavalry camp. These dams resemble a very similar construct of two small dams we found in a similar gully at the 1859 expeditionary Camp Van Camp, outside Fort Stockton. (Ashmore) Both dams have been blown out from the heavy rains over the last 140 years, but the side abutment piles of extremely large rocks remain. In the case of Camp Van Camp, it was a spring feeding into the gully. We can't be sure if this is for rain or spring runoff. It is speculative, but the purpose of the upper dam was likely for drinking water, and the lower dam was for everything else (i.e., washing, animals, etc).

Next to the dams, we found a row of 45-55 carbine cartridges, as if someone was doing some target practice. The large spring was just under a mile down the canyon. If the men could find and use something locally, it certainly would be an important site.

### **Catchment Dams #3 and #4**

Through additional scouring of the nearby draws to the east of the cavalry camp, we found two more stacked-rock containment dams in small run-off draws or gullies. Additionally, we found a faint trace of wagon road running along a natural shelf below and between them. We were able to follow it between the dams and back to the road source, which turned out to depart from and return to the cavalry corral. We found various wagon parts on the road, helping validate the wagon trace. Thus, we determined that dams #3 and 4 were created by the cavalry units and were used to contain runoff water to be picked up and brought back by wagon to the corral area. It appears to have been accomplished in addition to the long drive down to the spring. Given that they had around 60 horses and probably eight mules to water, every bit of water they could contain would be precious.

All four stacked rock dams used a similar type of limestone not from the local draws where they were being stacked. It may have been brought in by wagon down in the canyon area. The similarities point to these all being constructed by the same group.



**Wagon route to/from the corral and locations of containment dams (one through four)**

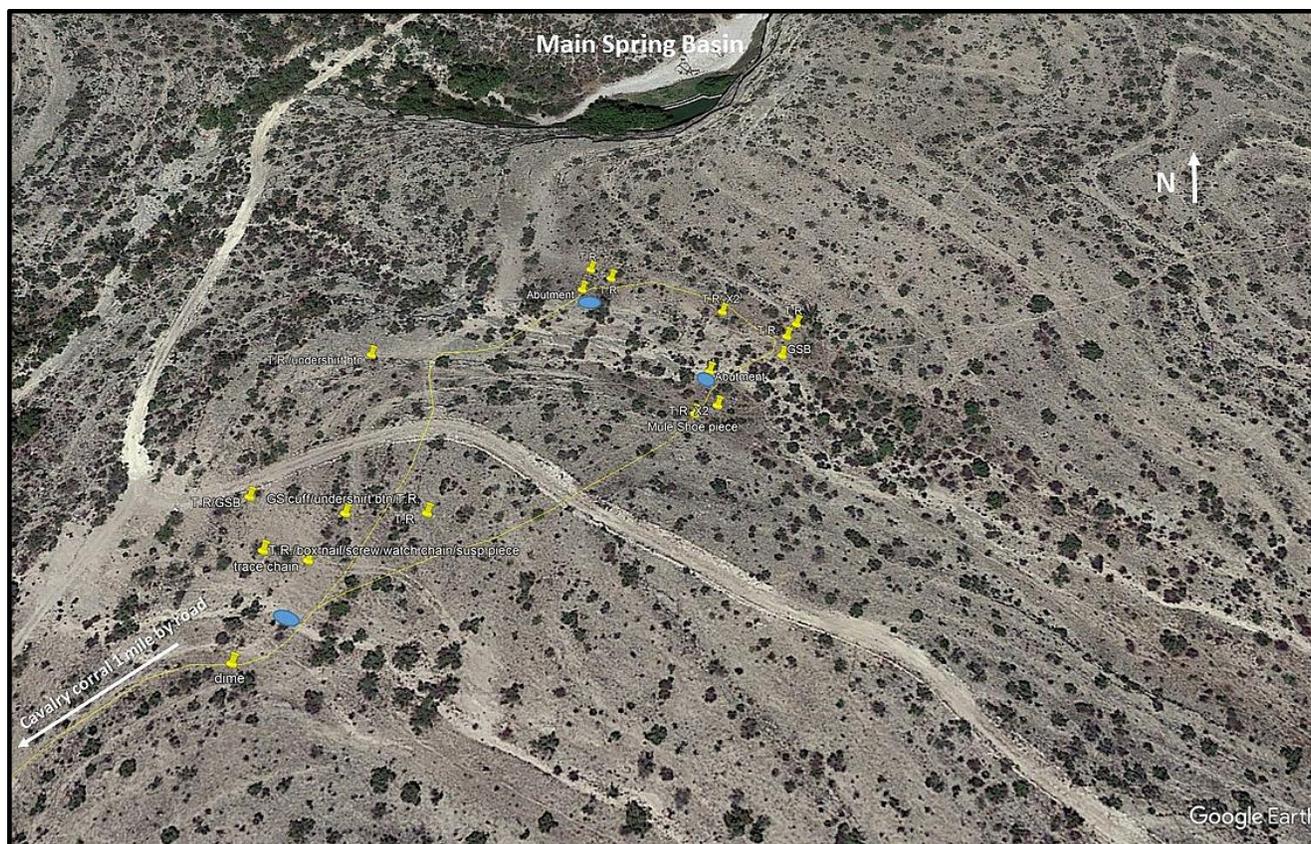
### **Main Spring Water Collection Camp**

We found a water detail camp of squad size (15 tent sites, identified by large rocks for holding down tents), covering the main spring runoff gullies above the current spring basin. This collection area

appears to be the extent of the infantry-constructed road. The goal was not to reach down into the spring basin pool but to intercept the fresh spring runoff in the gullies before it ran into the pools. The current ranch road running down into the basin area was a later ranch effort.

Note: We did find a separate way into the spring basin area 180 yards west of the current ranch road. Military buttons, mule shoe nails, and broken mule shoe pieces validated this route. This pass-through road, not being significant for water collection, was probably only constructed for wagons some years after the infantry unit departed. It was needed for the Pecos Land and Cattle Company's stone quarrying and water tank construction. (See Pecos Land & Cattle Company Water Tank)

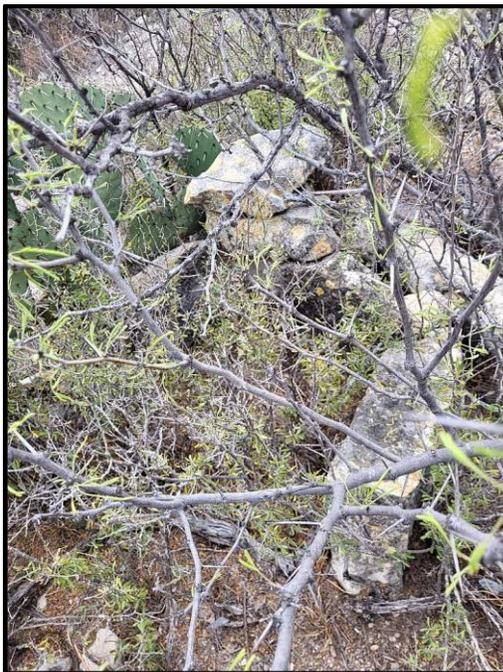
The tent locations at the water collection camp indicated the men were divided to cover two main runoff gullies, and they had created at least three catchment pools, using large rocks for partial dams and catchment pools. Throughout these sites were found general service buttons, undershirt/pants suspender buttons, 45-55 carbine cartridges, period Scofield revolver cartridges (external primer versions – 1882 and later), a probable pocket watch chain, a broken wagon trace chain, a broken mule shoe, a piece of suspender, small box nails, a small flathead screw, a tobacco tag, and an 1874 seated dime. Most of the personal items were very near the tent sites. A trace chain and mule shoe were on a visible wagon road. We found stacked large-stone abutments at the locations of probable pools on the gullies' side.



**Water Detail Camp and Wagon Road**

## **West Canyon Water Collection Camp #2**

Five hundred yards up the west canyon from the central spring basin, we found a second water collection pool and camp established by the cavalry. Camp artifacts indicate the same period as the camp above the main spring (1882 – 1884). The camping area was established 51 yards above the collection pool on a level shelf area. We counted 13 single-man tent sites, making this another squad of the cavalry troop. The overall camp area measured 70 X 50 feet. Tent sites were set randomly around a central cooking/campfire area built up of large, stacked stones. The stones were constructed in a way that allowed for a fireplace-type cooking area with stone blocking on three sides and open to the west, with another campfire area on the opposite side open to the east.



**Fireplace Cooking Area**



**Campfire Cooking Area**

The site was littered with the same type of trash as the other water collection camp, including 1882+ Schofield externally primed cartridges and 45-55 carbine cartridges. The cans indicate the same period, dating by the crimped edges but still solder-sealed.



**Typical Can Trash at Water Collection Camp**

The water collection area below the camp was a bedrock pooling area below a former spring source from the rock wall at two locations. The entire area measured 45 feet long by 11 feet wide. The soldiers had dammed up the lower end to increase the pooling and then cleaned out a natural depression area on the bedrock for their collection area. This smaller area made their dipping depth approximately 20 inches in an area of about nine by 5 feet. A wagon road came to within 35 feet of this pool.



**Spring Source and Water Collection Area**



**Bucket Collection Area**

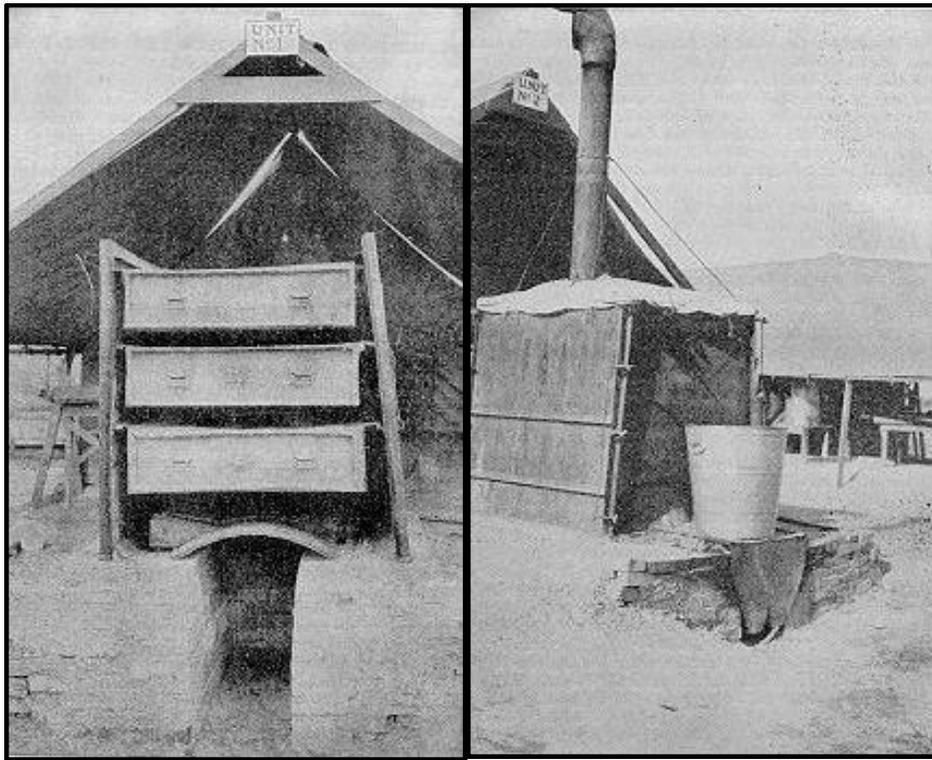
Appendix C shows that regular cavalry units were rotating through this expeditionary camp from May to November 1882, 1883, and February and May 1884. In September and October of 1882, two full Troops were deployed to Camp Meyers Spring. At some point, their daily requirement for water was so high that two squads (half a Troop) were probably taking turns doing nothing but water collection and distribution while in camp.

## U.S. Army Field Bake Oven Test Site



There is a Fort Clark post report that Troop G left the post from July 7 through 24, 1883, for field testing a new 'field bake oven.' The report did not give the location of the test site but did report the unit traveled 255 miles round trip. Another report by the Seminole detachment indicated the distance from Fort Clark to Camp Meyers Spring is 126 miles, making the round trip 252 miles. We believe this is no coincidence and that the test site for the field bake oven was Camp Meyers Spring.

The first field bake oven was documented in the 1916 edition of the Manual For Army Bakers. (Seebee) "The field oven, No. 1, is a portable, knockdown type for continuous baking. It will bake approximately 3,500 pounds of issue bread and 2,000 pounds of field bread per day if operated continuously. Each of the 12 metal parts of the oven, including the stovepipe and hood, is designated by a number. This number, cut from sheet metal, is riveted to each separate part... To set up the oven -- Level a piece of ground 6 by 8 feet. In the center of the leveled ground dig a clean-cut trench, 8 feet long, 20 inches wide on top, 16 inches wide on the bottom, and 24 inches deep. At the firing end of the trench, extend the cut sufficiently to make a convenient fire pit. "



**Partial construction (left) and completed construction (right) of field bake oven, Fort Riley, KS**

On our reconnaissance of cavalry camp #2, we encountered a shallow dug pit. This is the only place we came across such a pit. We believe this was the site of the Fort Clark field bake oven test location, with the infantry detachment occupying the former cavalry camp adjacent to this location. Given that it took approximately five and a half days to reach the camp from Fort Clark, this would have left them six days to conduct the field test. The dug pit measures 7 X 5 feet, the exact measurement as shown in the Army Field Manual. It currently is 11 inches deep, but it could have been originally deeper due to soil filling up over the years of weather. Many large tin cans were in the area, indicating a lot of cooking activity, larger than anything else in the surrounding area. Nearby is a large broken spoon handle. Finally, we found three cut, flat-sided limestone pieces in the bottom of the pit that had been heat affected on one side. This rock would have lined the heat trench described in the Army Field Manual. Since our project was not planned to do any formal excavation, we are left only to speculate what may be underneath the large amount of loose soil surrounding the pit, but there is likely much more fired rock beneath the surface.



**Heat-Affected Limestone Found In the Pit**



**Large Spoon Handle**



**Probable Oven Bake Test Site with fired limestone in the center**

Troop G in the report was likely only an escort cavalry detachment for the infantry detachment to conduct the test. That infantry detachment would have included the cooks for the test, wagon drivers, and other privates to provide labor in support of the test, such as collecting limestone and preparing the cooking trench. These personnel would have needed a campsite. We found just such a site west of the bake oven site. The site extends about an acre and a half, sitting on top of what was a cavalry camp. We know this because the cavalry camp was laid out in column formation, but this camp was in a rectangular layout, extending far beyond the cavalry columns. The tin cans found among the trash are a final item that points to the proper period. There is a mixture of older hole-in-cap and later-period solder seam cans. The solder seam cans began being produced in 1883, the same year as this field bake oven site expedition. (Historic Artifact Identification Guide, Busch)

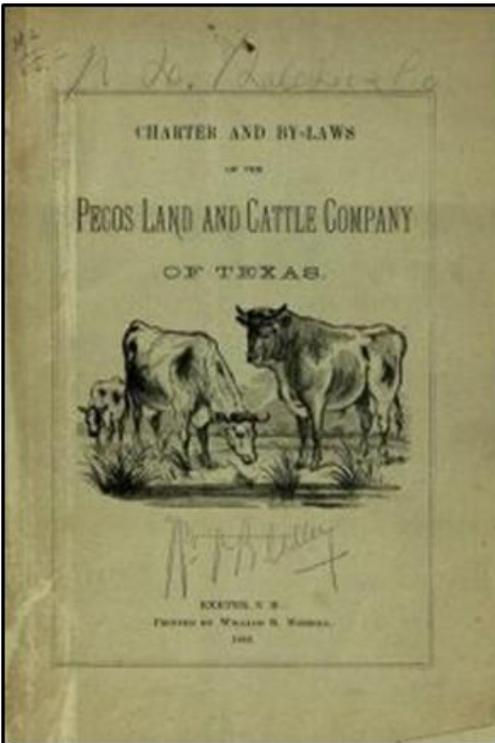


**Large Solder Seam Can**



**Kitchen Trash From Camp Site**

### **Pecos Land And Cattle Company Lease**



Lieutenant John Bullis was the property's first owner after the title was transferred from the Texas Western Narrow Gauge Railroad Company to him in August of 1879. While the military still occupied the camp, Bullis leased much of the ranch to the Pecos Land And Cattle Company, represented by the co-owner Mr. Lougee (pronounced Lou Zhay) of Attleboro, Massachusetts. The purpose of the lease was to find water sources aside from the spring for the large cattle herd being put together. Soon after arriving in November 1883, a stone mason, carpenter, other workers, and ranch manager 'Captain' W.W. Simonds arrived with supplies to begin building his stone home adjacent to the camp. Later, Mr. Lougee's stone mason and workers also built the stone water containment tank at the spring basin area.

Six things are apparent from records of the Lieutenant's French diary and Fort Clark post returns (**pertinent excerpts in Appendix A**).

1. No stone structures were occupied by the military. All military, including officers, were in tents.
2. Mr Lougee recruited and paid for all services of the stone mason, carpenter and all other assistants to build his stone home and other stone structures.
3. The Lougee stone home included a substantial fireplace.

4. The stone mason and carpenter first built a small stone building close to the main house construction for their occupation. They built this 75 yards away from the main building site (on the other side of the designated cavalry camp.)
5. Fort Clark post records show no contracted stone masons or carpenters were ever sent to Camp Meyers Spring for any construction.
6. The Lougee home was very near both the lieutenant's and military-contracted doctor's tents, as indicated in Lieutenant French's diary.

The Fort Clark post records detail precisely what work all contractors were assigned. So, it can be considered an accurate record that no stone masons or carpenters were sent to Meyers Spring. According to Lieutenant French's diary, Mr. Lougee built his ranch house on the edge of the military camp. Since the military was not leasing the land, the current leaser was legally allowed to build anywhere he wished. On December 19<sup>th</sup>, 1883, Lieutenant French writes in his diary that after dinner, he "went over to the house to see how the chimney was progressing." Again, this indicates the house and the stone fireplace was substantial.

Workers also constructed a "small house" near the military camp. This house was built in a matter of days for the workers. This was likely the 15 X 24 foot foundation that sits 75 yards east of the main ranch building, just off the current ranch road.

We know from Lt. French's diary that this building was constructed by the stonemason and carpenter (identified as Shultz), whom Lougee hired before they began building the main house. It was to be their shelter while working on the house. Lougee stayed in tents with the general manager, Mr. (former police captain) Simonds, while visiting during the main building's construction.

***Thursday, Nov 29 1883: "Mr. Lougee ate over at Thurston. They brought over their carpenter, engineer, and more workmen who came up this morning."***

***Saturday, Dec 1 1883: "They commenced to build a small house on the corner of their land nearest camp and got it partially completed by night."***

***Sunday, Dec 2 1883: "The men worked a little on the new house today and it was necessary too for their comfort to get into [it] as soon as possible."***

***Monday, Dec 31 1883: "Stopped to go over to meet Mrs. Lougee who came with her husband & maid. Found her a real pleasant lady. Their house being unfinished, the Doctor put his tent at her disposal & has moved in with me. "***

The Lougee home and the smaller stone structures were all made of worked and quarried stone, probably from the canyon and quarry area. While searching the hillside above the canyon, we found a very obvious rubble pile from stone shaping remains. We also found a wagon trace going past this pile and down into the canyon. A wagon trace was coming back up from the canyon, using a slightly easier climb out. This is very likely the route used by the stone workers to transport the stones used for the construction. This route makes sense to use rather than the previous road constructed by the military company because it makes its way up and down by crossing the hillside in gradual rises, interspersed with level areas. This would give the mule team time to rest between their pulls up the hill with the enormous weight of these quarried stones.



**Reconstructed Lougee Home**

The French diary also indicates there was a corral built behind the home.

***Sunday. January 20 1884: "After dinner Doctor & I walked over to the house and made a short call & then Lougee joined us in a walk to the tank. Coming back saw Mrs. L. & maid at the corral and walked over there. L. did not see them as they hid from him. When we went around the house they came out. Mrs. L. acted queerly as if she was rather afraid of L. & he did seem a little vexed."***

***Friday. January 25 1884: "Stopped by the house & helped Lougee fix up a manger..."***

Current overhead imagery does not give a good indication of the remnants of this corral. But there is a trick that can be used in these circumstances. Sometimes, older images with much less detail bring out old ground scarring that more detailed current imagery cannot discern because there's too much detail. The 2008 imagery clearly shows a square behind the house that would have been the corral boundary.



**Lougee Ranch House With Corral Scarring (right) (Google Earth)**

All military structures for the camp were tents. This is quite apparent from the French diary in which he describes his abode as a tent with a wooden floor. He also had a separate dining tent. He also references the military-contracted doctor's tent numerous times. Fort Clark had two civilian doctors contracted. These two would rotate deployments to the camp in the same fashion as the lieutenants who were rotating command of the scouts. These were the camp's senior personnel and never occupied a stone structure. (For more on the Pecos Land and Cattle Company, see Appendix B)

### **Pecos Land & Cattle Company Cowboy Line Camp**

One outlying loose-stone wall structure, just half a mile from the main spring, was used as a cowboy line camp. The period-can trash indicates it was the same time frame as the early cattle company operations—a full metal detecting effort brought forth no military cartridges we found at all other military camps. The stacked stones were set up as a wind break, and it sits close to a large water pool in the runoff from the main spring a half mile upstream. It was designed to accommodate two men. It sits in a natural terrain trap, with the canyon walls on one side in a horseshoe shape and rocky high ground all around. The natural trap covers 37 acres. This was probably some of the first of the Pecos Land And Cattle Company's herd in that area.



Loose Stone Wind Break Wall



Former Spring Runoff Pool



Natural Cattle Trap Area

### **Pecos Land & Cattle Company Water Tank**

In addition to building the Lougee house and the three small stone laborer's buildings nearby, Mr. Lougee contracted to have a water catchment tank built at the main basin below the springs. In addition to using his hired work force, he also hired some of the Black Seminole Scouts to help in the construction. This was documented in the Lieutenant French Diary.

*Tuesday. December 12, 1883: ...the Doctor and I walked out to the house and on to a water hole which all hands were engaged in cleaning out. it is their intention to scrape off all the dirt down to the solid rock, build a stout dam across the bottom, cement all the [sic] put a layer of earth on the bottom to retain the moisture and put in solid banks. Then when the rains have filled the hole, they hope to be able to hold the water some time. Saw them make one blast*

*Wednesday. December 12 1883: A cold steady rainy day prevented the men from working on the brush shelter they are making for the animals and prevented our neighbors from working on their tank.*

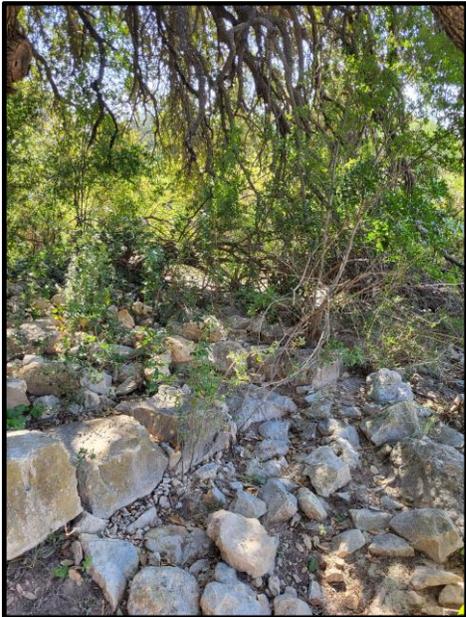
*Tuesday. December 18 1883: Went out to see the tank and found some of the Seminoles at work, which I had permitted them to do, Lougee hiring them. But they had four mules and the wagon and were working the mules without saying anything to me. Told Lougee the mules could not work anymore.*

*Wednesday. January 9 1884: Went over to the house & walked down to the new tank with Lougee this afternoon.*

The Lougee tank remnants now sit to the right of the later tank, built by Major Bullis in 1902. The stones are large cut blocks and were originally two blocks high. The tank wall can be traced to a 90 degree angle on the west side and then back to the natural wall face. The east side has been deflated by the floods and construction of the later 1902 tank.



**Lougee tank area, next to later 'Bullis' tank that was built in 1902**



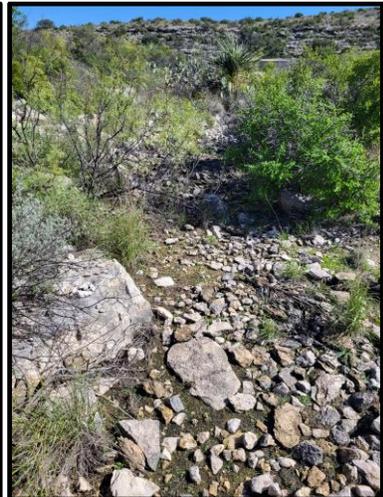
**Lougee tank remnant blocks**

### **Pecos Land and Cattle Company Quarry Sites**

The tank blocks were quarried locally and cut to shape. The quarry area is just up the hill, 150 yards northwest of the tank. It is a shelf of limestone that wraps around the hill in a horseshoe shape, covering a half acre. There are multiple wagon trails cut through it. The wagon trails are quarried sections of the approximate depth of the stone blocks. These trails made loading blocks from where they were cut and hoisted directly onto the wagon easier. The drill marks for breaking the stones were found at the quarry site and on the tank blocks. We also found a piece of broken pry bar and an angled bar, called a 'feather,' inside some of the drill holes. The feathers were used to crack the blocks apart.



**Drill hole**



**Wagon trail cut**



**Quarry Drill Holes**



**Wagon Trails Through Shelf Stone Area Show How Much Stone Has Been Removed**

We found two military buttons in the wagon road alongside a quarry section of the shelf. Both were crushed from being run over by a wagon. This supports Lieutenant French's diary. The road we found on the west side of the quarry was especially treacherous, and the lieutenant's decision to not allow the military mules to be used may have saved the mules from serious injury. The fact that one button is from the Civil War era, with the other from the late 1870s to mid-1880s, indicates that they came from two different men. The Seminole Scouts were driving the wagons for the Pecos Land and Cattle Company, and we believe these buttons were from their uniforms while working the wagons and potentially the hoisting of quarry stones.



**Indian Wars Coat Button Crushed Flat (Henry V. Allien & Co., N.Y., late 1870s to the mid-1880s)**



**Indian Wars Coat Button Crushed Flat (Horstmann Button Co., Philadelphia, 1859 – 1863 (Civil War surplus))**

### **Pecos Land & Cattle Company Lime Rick Camp**

One hundred yards up the hill from the quarry site is a former lime rick camp dedicated to creating quicklime by burning limestone into calcium oxide. This final process for creating construction mortar from quicklime is called wet lime slaking. Although common knowledge of making quicklime is in a kiln, an older method is burning is in a lime rick, or specialized limestone-layered bonfire.

#### **Tent Locations**

The nearby campsite supporting this operation consisted of two large stone rectangles of stones for tent tie-downs (for extra support from high winds). The two tent rectangles measured out to be approximately 11 X 7 feet, the size of standard wall tents. Various pieces of bottle glass, square nails, whiteware, wire, and a tent grommet were found around the tent sites.



Also, near the camp is a small natural cenote, about 20 inches in diameter at the opening. The cavity depth is about 5 feet underneath the opening. It tunnels back in a cave-like fashion about 23 feet. At the top of the cone-shaped opening are three-to-four layers of flat stones laid around the edge to create a wall. Although the stones are now flush with the surface, they probably created a kind of lip around the circular edge, keeping rain runoff soil, and debris from mixing with the clean spring water used by the laborers for their drinking and cooking.



**Cenote near Lime Rick Burn camp**

One hundred feet northwest of the tent sites are two large burn areas side-by-side and on the bedrock. Each burn area measures 12 feet in diameter. A small amount of burned limestone is scattered throughout the burned areas. However, this is not an Indian midden, many of which are throughout the area. Most of the burned rocks are entirely missing. These are areas of the former burn ricks. Two areas would have allowed them to have a continuous production schedule for the quicklime being used for the construction of the stone buildings and the water tank.



**Lime Rick Burn Areas**

Lime ricks were very common for creating quicklime in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries when they only needed the mortar for limited projects and did not need or want to construct a lime kiln.

The lime rick consists of multiple layers of wood and limestone, with everything pointing to the center. Limestone is layered in between wood layers. A very large wick of vertical branches is set running up the center to start the fire. It is lit from the top and burns down into the rick. It is extremely hot, getting

to around 1,600 degrees Fahrenheit. It burns out the carbon dioxide so that the limestone can later be crushed and made into a quicklime by adding water, called lime slaking. Lime slaking makes the slurry for mortar. Sand is added to make the final mortar.

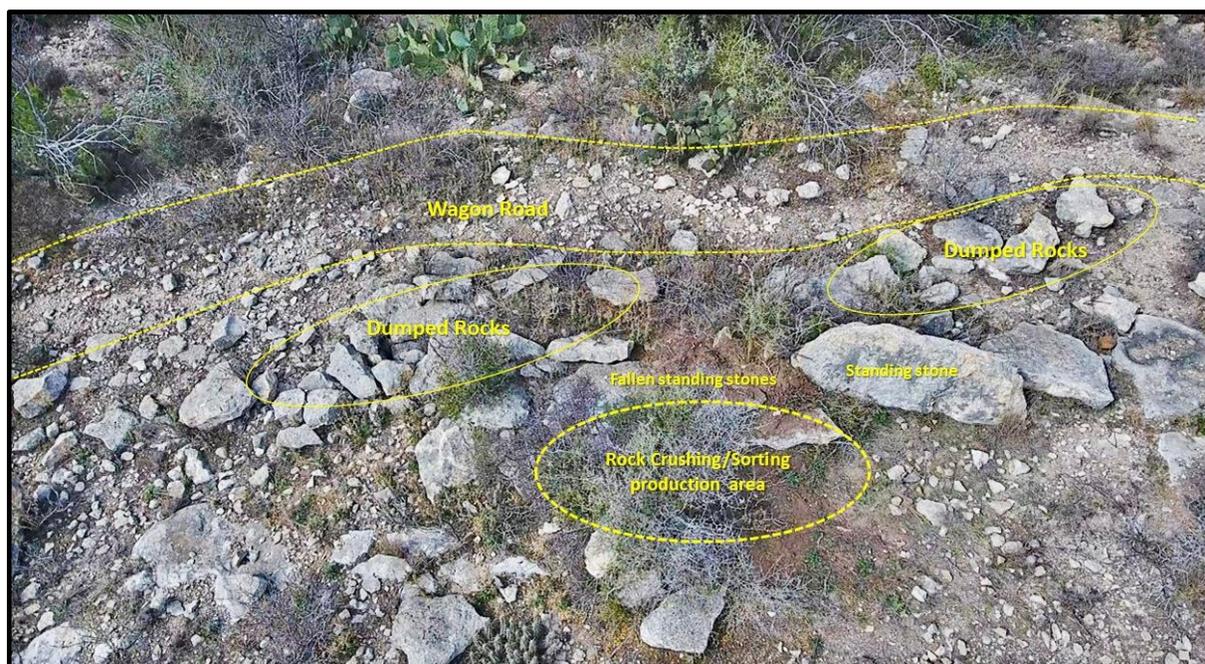


**Experimental archeology example of a lime rick with oyster shells instead of limestone, conducted at George Washington's Ferry Farm**

The lime rick burn is dangerous due to pollutants. Pollutants released are Sulphur oxides (SO<sub>x</sub>), nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>), volatile organic compounds (non-methane VOC and methane (CH<sub>4</sub>)), carbon monoxide (CO), carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O), and particulate matter. (Lime Production) During the burn, the lime is reduced to calcium oxide. Laborers needed to stay out of the smoke path. According to Lieutenant French's diary, the Lougee home and the stone tank were built in December 1883 through January 1884. The winter winds in this area are either from the south or north. The camp tents are positioned so that either way the winds blow, it will push the burn rick smoke away from the camping area.

Large, flat stones that had been propped up on their sides are probably related to the lime production process. Some appear to have been previously propped up but have since fallen. They were probably natural broken parts of the rock shelf and were propped up in place. They were probably propped to block the south wind while processing the burnt limestone into powder. Although burned limestone can become a slurry just by placing it in water, crushing it into a small gravel or powder will speed up the

process. The crushing process also identifies and removes any stones the burn has not entirely converted. This area was likely a crushing and sorting site.



**Limestone Burn Production Area**

To validate this as a crushing/sorting area, we conducted a dig into an area that has an anomalous amount of soil right next to the upright flat stones. After just a few inches of clean soil, we ran into a large amount of broken-up and burned limestone to about seven more inches depth before hitting flat bedrock. Breaking open these pieces revealed visually that the limestone had been through the burning process. The tiny particles of quartz, feldspar, chert, pyrite, siderite, and other minerals normally found internally (King) have been severely transformed. The firing process probably changed these. These may have also been rejected in the sorting process for not being fully cooked to the proper temperature. We did not have the scientific equipment to test this, but the visual differences are striking.



**Limestone Crushing Area**



**Untouched Limestone**



**imestone dug from the crushing/sorting site**

Next to the probable crushing/sorting site was also a pile of large limestone rubble stones that looked to have been dumped off the wagon. These rubble stones were brought from the quarry area to be further broken up and used in the limerick burn but were left behind when they were no longer needed.

It appears wagons were used not only to deliver the block stones to the tank construction area but also to deliver rubble to the quicklime production area. According to the diary, the Lougee house was completed around January 3rd, and the water tank was completed around January 9th. So, construction was being conducted concurrently.



**Large limestone rubble piled near the burn area**



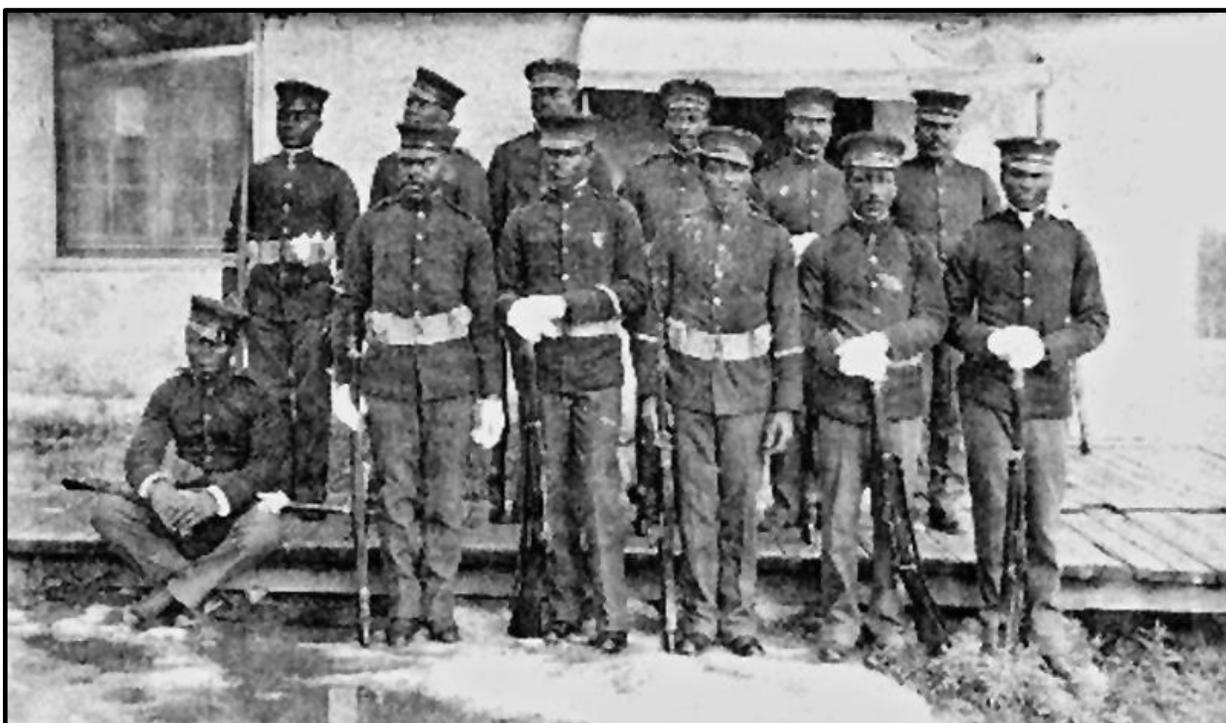
**Knife buttcap on example knife**

Lieutenant French also revealed in an earlier diary entry that one of the detachment scouts, William Wilson, was the primary wagoner. While metal detecting the lime rick tent camp area, we found a home-made knife handle buttcap with a hand-etched 'W' on each side. The buttcap was probably made

from spent cartridges. This buttcap was about 40 feet downslope from the wagon trace coming out of the quicklime production area. We believe it belonged to William Wilson. Wilson enlisted 16 times but chose to remain a private. He stayed with the scouts until they were disbanded in 1914.



Handmade Knife Buttcap



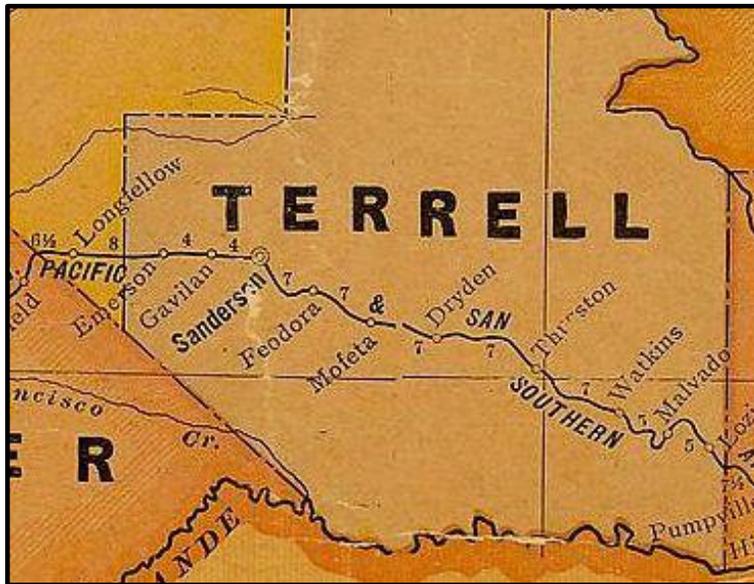
1910 photo: William Wilson is second row, second from right

### **Thurston Rail Depot For Camp Meyers Spring**

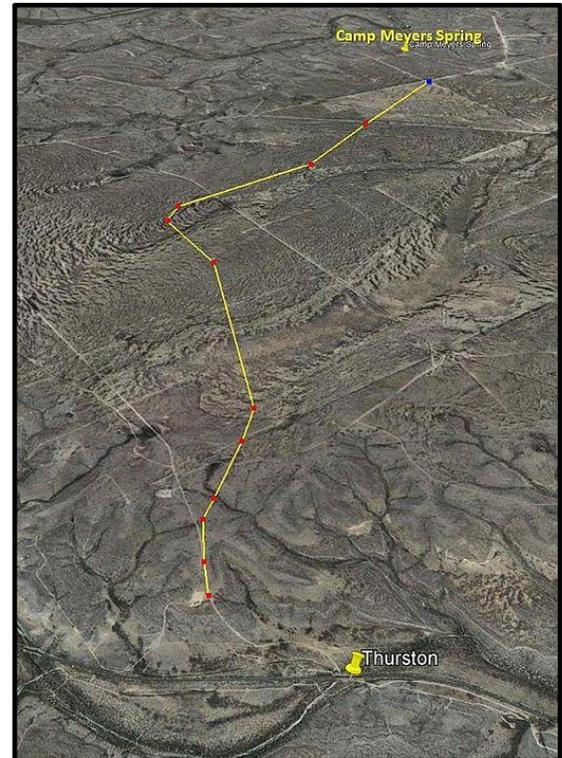
The east-west Galveston Houston San Antonio Railroad construction through the lower Pecos area took place in 1882 and early 1883. The railroad was completed by connecting the two construction projects from east and west, just west of the mouth of the Pecos River in January 1883. (Werner)

A Thurston railroad siding was created for the convenience of the military at Camp Meyers Spring and to take care of that section or track. The full name was 'Roadmaster Thurston of the Galveston, Harrisburg and San Antonio Railway.' (Thurston Canyon) The Thurston Siding was located four miles

south of Camp Meyers Spring. The Camp Meyers Springs military used it for supplies and communications back to and from Fort Clark. It was used daily until the camp was disbanded. The Pecos Land and Cattle Company also used it during their period on the ranch.



**1920 Railroad Map with Thurston Identified  
(distance matches location)**



**Wagon Road to Thurston Rail Depot (Google Earth)**

According to Lieutenant French's diary, prior to the military departure, the depot hosted a small Chinese railroad maintenance crew, a telegraph car on a siding, and a cattle pen with a loading chute.

The Thurston depot was shut down sometime after the departure of the military and the Pecos Land and Cattle Company. However, that portion of track is still the main line for the Southern Pacific transcontinental Sunset Route between New Orleans and Los Angeles.

### **Additional Artifacts**

The 2010 Texas Tech 'Inventory and Assessment of the Historic Cultural Resources at Meyers Spring' report (Walter, Johnson) covered details of period trash extensively. Our efforts focused on finding specific items or patterns of items missed that would help support the locations identified through our historical research and imagery interpretation to adequately explain the makeup and the purpose of this extensive layout. In many areas, we looked at just enough to validate our assessment as to the area's

occupation. In other areas, like the Black Seminole Indian Scout camps, we were very thorough. We highlight here a few of the items.

### General Item Artifacts

Throughout the camp areas, an inordinate number of baking powder tin can lids with baking powder were found. These were also reported in the Texas Tech reporting. These were mainly used for making biscuits, which appears to have taken place extensively throughout all the camps.



Baking Powder Tin Lids (cavalry site (left), Black Seminole Indian Scout camp (right))

**Company A, 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Regiment Artifacts:** The trash throughout the tent camp area and the guard posts was the general food and cooking implement type of trash we expected. However, at one guard post was an unfired 45-55 cartridge, and another a spent 45-55 cartridge. Both were identified as carbine cartridges. One had a date stamp of 1878. We found two 45-70 rifle cartridges at the water collection camp. One was an unusual stamp with a manufacturer W, identifying Winchester as the manufacturer. Although it is reported that Winchester began making 45-70 cartridges in 1886, this indicates a much earlier manufacturing date of 1879, and may be one of the few stamped cartridges found that early.





The second diagnostic item was a broken beer bottle bottom with the manufacturer's stamp. The stamp is CV Co. No 2 MILW. This is a quart beer bottle from the Chase Valley Glass Factory #2, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. We found that no matter where they were, guards were able to get their beer to help pass the lonely hours of guard duty.



In the same water catchment area as the 45-70 rifle cartridges, we found an infantry cuff button with the letter 'I' in the shield. The lettered uniform buttons were halted in 1873. Remaining buttons would only be found on uniforms of off sizes (extra small or large) in the 1881 period.

Another unusual find in the guard post areas was a lantern piece. Guard posts should not have had lanterns that would give away their positions at night and cause night blindness for the guards. However, the wagon probably needed to make deliveries at night and would need a lantern to see the way. We assume this came off a delivery wagon, possibly falling off, breaking, and then being discarded. This is the portion that would have held the wick.



A good example of the kind of trash found in and around the guard posts was at the one overlooking the small spring area. Not only did we find typical trash, but we also found a large mule shoe, a broken wagon rivet, and a broken wagon bed hook. This shows how hard it was on the wagons constantly going over this rocky ground.



**Artifacts near Infantry Guard Post**

Near one of the infantry guard posts we found this 1861 Seated Quarter. This would have been a half day's wages for a private.



**1861 Seated Quarter**

**Black Seminole Indian Scout Camp Artifacts:** A thorough visual and metal detection search was conducted at this camp. Surface trash of tin cans, box strapping, bottle glass, and box nails was extensive. In addition to the main camp, behind the kitchen area is a slight slope where many trash had

been washed down over the years from storms. Some of this appeared to be specifically from food preparation, such as large cans, heavy wire for picking up oven lids, large bucket pieces, long neck bottle tops, deer bone, jagged cut can tops, etc. However, some items from the blacksmith area, which sat just 25 feet in front of the kitchen, were also washed down this slope. An item we found throughout the camp was unused horseshoe nails. Each man was required to carry his own extra horseshoe and conduct his own farrier work while on patrol. We also found many large nails at most camps. We assume these were being used as tent stakes for the smaller trooper-type tents.



**Large Nail (possibly for tent staking)**



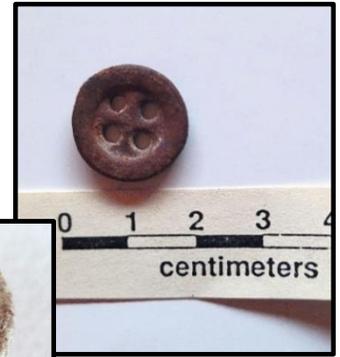
**Wagon part downslope from blacksmith area**

**Commander's Tent Area:** The unusual thing about the area known to be the commander's tent area was a high number of medium-sized nails. These are larger than box nails, but not as large as the ones thought to be for tent staking. The commander's wall tents had wooden floors and wooden walls. These nails were likely from the deconstruction of those tents when the camp was decommissioned.

**Blacksmith Area:** This was a surprise to find in the middle of the camp. We expected to find this type of trash in the corral. The only structure in the corral referenced by Lieutenant French was a brush shelter for the horses to help get them some cover. The most telling items here are the cut-off ends of horseshoes, which would have been for adjusting to hoof size. Also, all but one of the horseshoe nails in this dug hole are used. The broken rivet and heavy metal bracket piece are wagon items.



**Undershirt/Pants Button:** The metal undershirt/pants suspender button was dug at a tent site along with other miscellaneous box nails. This is a standard metal button found at other military camp sites.



**Full Baking Powder Can:** This full can was intentionally buried and forgotten. It was found at an outer ring tent site six inches down, in a vertical position.



**Salt Shaker Lid:** This was found at the same tent site as the baking powder can. The drill holes in this appear to be machine-made. The Texas Tech team also found one identical to this one, but the location was not identified.



**Candle Holder Can:** A unique item found on our surface search was a homemade candle holder can. The can is quite obviously hammered to crimp over the rock placed into the bottom of the can. The rock does not sit flat, so the holder was made to sit in the dirt.



**44 Colt Cartridges:** Two 44 Colt cartridges were found. One was picked up by the former landowner, and there is no way to be sure of its location. The other was south of the Black Seminole Camp, but given the period of probable use, it is probably unrelated to that particular camp. Colt's Patent Firearms developed the 44 Colt cartridge for use in cartridge revolvers based on the 1860 Army percussion revolver. The cartridge was briefly adopted by the United States Army around 1871. The Army used it until 1873, when it was replaced by the better-known and more powerful .45 Colt cartridge used in the recently adopted Colt Single Action Army revolver.

Lieutenant John Bullis took command of the Fort Clark Black Seminole Indian Scouts in 1876 and began his patrols with them as a fighting unit. Likely, this cartridge was accidentally dropped during one of those early patrols at Meyers Spring. The Black Seminole Indian Scouts were provided with used uniforms and older weaponry in the early period of their enlistment contracts.



**44 Colt Cartridge**



**Antique 44 Colt Revolver (example)**



**Pipe Stem**



**1871 – 1880 Dress Helmet Emblem**

Found just west of the Scout camp, the helmet for this emblem should never be found at a field expeditionary site. These helmets were only worn with the dress uniform for in-garrison parades and ceremonies. Our theory is that one of the scouts or lieutenants kept it as a keepsake. The design was changed in 1881. The camp was established in 1882 and disbanded in mid-1884.

## Infantry Command Compound Artifacts

**Military Coat Buttons:** An Indian Wars General Service coat button and an Officer's Staff Coat Cuff Button were found very close and in the area believed to have housed the contracted doctor's hospital tent in the command compound. Although the original hospital tent location was determined to be for the infantry company, a military-contracted doctor remained at the camp throughout the occupation by Fort Clark units. The Lieutenant French's diary states that the doctor had two tents. One of these tents was very probably a



hospital tent. The diary also states that the Fort Clark paymaster - a major - and his nephew would attend the camp each month to conduct a payout for the troops. He did not have his own tent. If there were no patients, he would have used the doctor's extra tent to conduct his business and as his sleeping quarters. They would share the doctor's and lieutenant's or a cavalry captain's tent if there were patients. The location of the buttons matches the imagery interpretation of the hospital tent location, which would be close to the doctor's tent. (See Appendix A, Jan 10 1884 entry)



**Civilian Buttons and Crockery:** A civilian suspender's button, a woman's Mother Of Pearl blouse button, and a piece of brown crockery was found across from the Lougee house. Brown, glazed crockery is not something found in a military camp. Mr. Lougee, his wife, and some of his workers were often visiting back and forth with the doctor and this was probably where these came from.



**Infantry Water Collection Camp:** We found two 45-70 rifle cartridges and one infantry cuff button near the water collection area.



## Cavalry Camps Artifacts

**Cavalry Camp #1:** This would have been the primary cavalry camp. In most cases, there was only one Troop at a time in camp. This camp is also closest to the cavalry corral and camp doctor.

**45 Caliber Cartridges:** Five 45 caliber Scofield cartridges, four fired and one unfired, were in the middle of the camp area near tent sites. None have head stamps. The early Scofield cartridge was known for its Benet internal primer and shorter cartridge. The Army Scofield revolvers were the standard for cavalry. It was developed by Smith & Wesson for their S&W Model 3 Schofield top-break revolver. While the 45 Colt had more power, the speed at which a cavalryman could reload a Schofield (while on horseback) was less than 30 seconds, which is half of the time for a Colt 45.



**1882 Indian Head Penny:** Found 75 feet from cavalry guard post #3. This was very likely part of a private's pay. Most dropped coins during field expeditions were dropped when men needed to relieve themselves.



**Cavalry Camp #2:** In addition to this camp being a cavalry camp, it was probably the field bake oven test camp, with infantry camping there for that specific test period. However, the infantry camp extended out farther west of the cavalry boundary. As with other infantry areas, the area was littered with bottle glass trash, along with the typical tin can trash. We found one 45 Colt, indicating infantry. For the cavalry, we found several 45-55 carbine cartridges. One cartridge is a UMC contract-load cartridge, different from most other Benet primed cartridges, but still unstamped.

**Cavalry Camp #3:** A preliminary search revealed typical tin can trash on the surface. Two fired and one dropped Scofield 45 cartridges were found, along with a metal undershirt/pants suspender button, supply box nails, and miscellaneous tin can trash.

**Cavalry Camp #4:** This camp was probably the least used. We believe it may have been used by the 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry (Buffalo Soldiers) before and after the 1877 Winter Expedition into Mexico. These soldiers were tasked with bringing the pack mules for the rest of the expedition. Thus, they were essentially mounted infantry. We found multiple Scofield cartridges and fired bullets, but also found one Colt 45 cartridge. This unit may have had a mix of revolvers. A clothes button, tin can ration lids (dug), and a location where six unused horseshoe nails were left behind validated that this was a camping location. The most important item that helped to validate our theory is a very large horseshoe. It is not like any we've found at any of the other cavalry camps or corrals. It is the size slightly less than a draft horse, and had a thickened toe area.



**Extra large horseshoe with toe grip**

## Cavalry Water Detail Camp #1 (above main spring basin)

**1874 Seated Dime:** In addition to general service buttons, Scofield 45 cartridges (issued 1882+), 45-55 carbine cartridges (one 1877 issue), spent bullets, wagon parts, a pocket watch chain, metal undershirt/pants suspender buttons, and a partial mule shoe, we found this seated dime. It was discovered away from the tent sites and water catchment work area. Most dropped coins during field expeditions were dropped when men needed to relieve themselves. This appears to have been the case for this coin, as it was in a separate area from tent or work sites. A private's pay was about 50 cents per day.



## Cavalry Water Detail Camp #2 (west canyon)

This camp had the same period Schofield 45 cartridges (1882+) and 45-55 carbine cartridges throughout, as found in Water Collection Camp #1. Standard can trash was strewn about, along with a wagon-crushed coffee pot.

**Boyd's Battery Necklace Piece (patent date Jan. 17, 1878):** A popular medical medallion called a Boyd's Battery. The battery was a disc, about 1¼ inch in diameter, meant to hang from one's neck on a cord and that used the "soft and gentle" galvanic action of electricity to purportedly cure a host of diseases. For more information, see the link story.



Central piece to Boyd's Battery Necklace Completed Necklace found at Washington's Ferry Farm  
(example) <https://livesandlegaciesblog.org/2018/04/19/boyds-battery-an-electrifying-ferry-farm-story/>



**Pocket watch pieces**



**Unidentified kit ring**



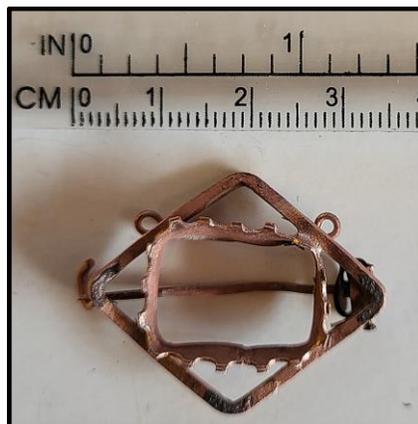
**Sardine can be made into soap**

**dish**



**Brass Rivets (cleaned)** (used on various types of military gear)

Mourning brooches were common in the 1800s, carried on their deceased loved ones. They often would have a lock of hair in an ornamental casing. This would never be allowed on a uniform but allowed and respected as a personal carry item.



**Mourning Brooch**

## Infantry/Seminole Scout Corral Artifacts

**Water Barrel Band:** This barrel band was found next to the circular stone feature with a depression in the middle. We believe this was for a half-water barrel that sat in the middle of the feature for watering the mules and horses.



**Gate Area:** In the middle of the circular feature we believe was both a gated area walk through and a tent site for a soldier assigned to care and maintenance of the animals we found through metal detecting a great number of small nails used for ration food boxes. On the surface, we found box strapping and tin cans. This, along with the heavy stake still in the ground, helped to validate that the tent in this circle was a soldier's tent and very likely Company A, 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Regiment.



**Tent Stake at Corral**

## Cavalry Corral Artifacts

**Nail Keg Barrel Wire Strapping:** Two two-foot diameter, heavy gauge wire loops were found near the cavalry corral. These two loops match a nail keg barrel, based on an antique example we found in research. We believe it was related to the construction of the corral fencing



**Nail Keg Barrel Bands**

**keg barrel (example)**

**Wheel-Indented Tobacco Can:** On the eastern side of the corral, we found a tobacco can that had been run over by a wagon. The wheel indentation is a narrow 1.36 inches wide. This is the width of the all-metal wheel wagon that was found at the canyon spring area and now sits near the stone building. This is a later, turn of the century wagon. It was likely it was used to carry the disassembled fencing down to the spring area for reuse. There is extensive cedar post fencing in that area, reported by Texas Tech in their 2008 study.



**Corral Support Camp:** Next to the cavalry corral, just outside the fence line and on the northwest side, we found a probable corral support camp. It appeared to have five tent spaces, based on the disturbed earth. At this location, we found a 6-inch round can lid, ration box strapping, a solder-handled can, food tin cans, and bottle glass, as well as the items below.



Vest 'Solide' back buckle and undershirt/pants suspender button      Probable canteen strap pieces

**10th Infantry Detachment Wagon Camp (1877 Winter Campaign):** This camp was occupied for only a half month, during preparations, and then while they waited for the cavalry companies to return from Mexico. These are just a sampling of items that helped us determine the layout of the camp, reported on pages 50 and 51.



## Conclusion



Camp Meyers Spring was a significant camp covering over 40 acres in total capacity. The total area of all support roads, water catchments, and water camps spans approximately 200 acres. The size changed as units came and went, as well as by which sections were occupied under different deployments.

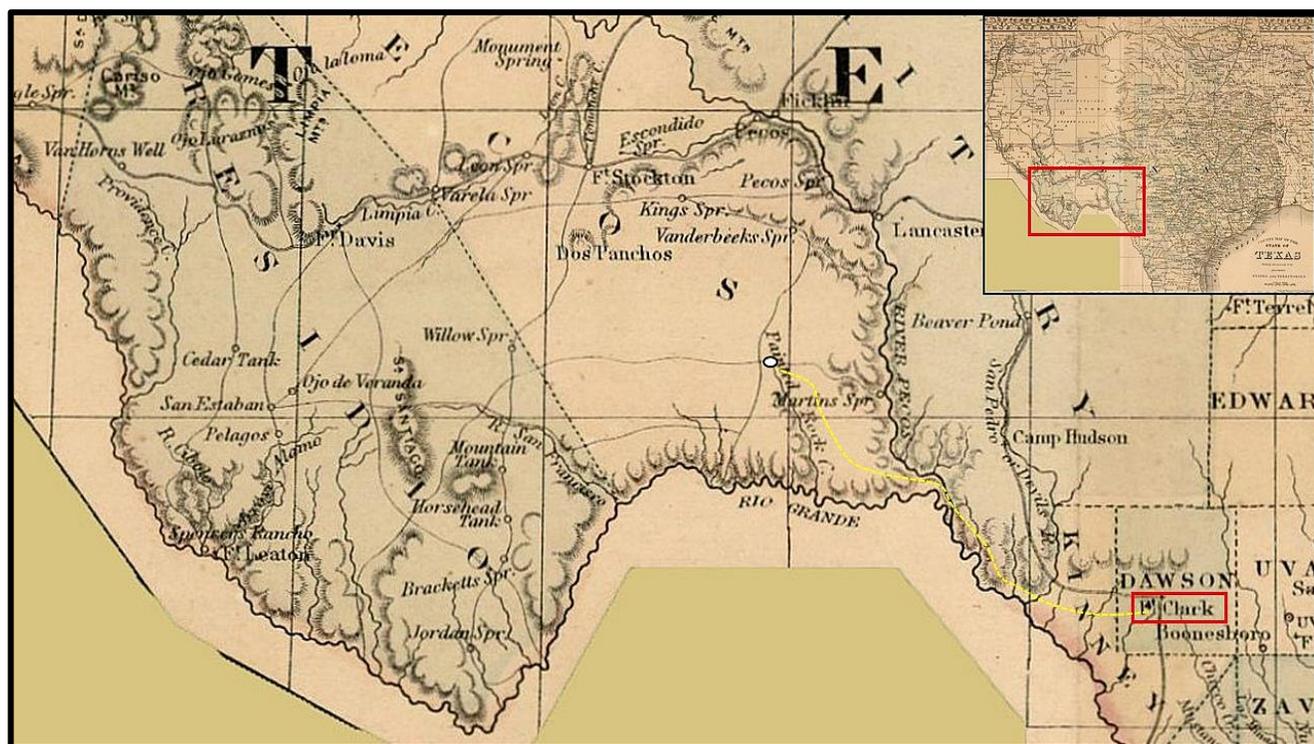
Toward the end of the military occupation, the cattle company and its support structures emerged, as both were occupying the property simultaneously. This significantly expanded the territory and various encampments.

The overall site was an ideal location for a base of operations, and it had a reliable supply of clean water. The area they chose is just under a mile by road from the spring and was located on high, flat ground with a long-distance view looking in all directions. Although not the most desirable location to camp, it is strategically and tactically the best. Lastly, it was located only six miles from the main east-west road running from Del Rio up to Fort Davis, referred to as the 'Davis' road. The east-west road later became a main highway, which the railroad also followed.

Strategically, it was a perfectly placed base of operations for the patrolling that was needed in the wild region of the Lower Pecos and Big Bend. It was halfway between Fort Clark and Fort Davis. So it filled a gap they needed to patrol out of. It was 100 miles closer to the Comanche War Trail than Fort Clark, with its stopping point at Pena Colorado Spring, located south of the current Marathon. It was about 20 miles from the Pecos River and about 50 miles from the Devils River, both of which were being used by Kickapoo and Apache raiders coming up from Mexico into Texas. A relatively short patrol could discern any raiding activity and follow raider's trails to or from Mexico. Finally, it was also

closer to the Apache strongholds such as the ones in the Sierra Del Carmen Mountains, Mexico, where Bullis and the 8th Cavalry made one of their incursions. Lieutenant Bullis and his Scouts knew this better than anyone else in the military at the time, and they took advantage of it when allowed the leeway to develop their forward base of operations. The evidence suggests that Lieutenant Bullis was using this camp as early as 1877 and probably as early as 1875. The number of successes and the total cessation of raids by 1881 proved he knew exactly what he was doing when he created this camp.

This was possibly the only location where a military camp shared the same piece of land with a commercial cattle operation, at least for a short while. This is because the military was not leasing the land. It was owned by Lieutenant Bullis, who allowed the military to use it without lease. However, he did lease to the Pecos Land and Cattle Company. By 1884, when the cattle operation was fully underway, it was time to conclude the military operations. The Lougee home and the original worker's stone building were built while the military continued their base of operations. They stayed on, working together for another six months before the military moved out. After the military departure, additional stone structures were built within the area previously occupied by the corral, partially utilizing stones from the existing walls in the corral area created by the military. The large stone Lougee house was probably abandoned in 1886 when the cattle company relocated its headquarters to Dryden. It was possibly reoccupied by John Bullis himself when he returned to the property around 1901 to upgrade the house, primarily to rebuild the water tank in 1902, which still stands today.



1876 Map, Camp Meyers Spring and Fort Clark



## End Notes on Imagery Interpretation



Much of this camp and its road structures were first found through analysis of Google Earth satellite imagery. Satellite and high-altitude aerial imagery interpretation has been a skill set taught in military intelligence since World War II. It only became available to the general public when Google Earth became available in the 1990s, and has only been used in archeological studies for the past 15 – 20 years, most of that within the last 10 years. What cannot be seen on the ground can often be seen from high-altitude, and even low altitude drone, when the ground surface has been heavily modified, but then abandoned. Essentially, the surface retains the lines of man-made features, whether they are wagon roads, buildings, or even corrals and heavily used animal trails. The vegetation either never grows back, or tends to follow the shapes that were forced on it over long periods of time. Learning to understand how to properly interpret these changes takes many years of study of overhead imagery. To assist in the interpretation, Google Earth allows for multiple years of imagery on the same location. This imagery can also be manipulated to various altitudes and angles that make some features more visible. When looking at a location with the historical imagery capability you can move through the many years of images, looking at the exact same piece of earth from the exact same altitude/angle and find the one that will show the trail trace or ground-scarring best for that piece of ground. For verification, the interpreted features must be confirmed through a ground reconnaissance with identification and mapping artifacts to be sure the features being interpreted are correct.

If the ground is hard enough, trails can be made out to the point of seeing the separate ruts of the wagon wheels. But in other areas, the vegetation grows differently due to the influx of water in the depression. Using satellite imagery, especially with multiple image periods of the same location in Google Earth's 'Historical Imagery' tool, a trained eye can find the trace of these ground scars and vegetation changes. Often the images are in different seasons, helping or hurting the visibility. Google Earth also used different satellites each year for their mapping. Some are better for interpretation purposes than others.

When working with military camps, having a good understanding of military standard operating procedures, tactics, and strategies is critical to understanding what the imagery and subsequent field reconnaissance is showing.

As it pertains to this military camp, the wagon trails tend to be for wagon supply runs from or to the guard posts or water collection areas. The wagon trails lead through the main camp to those areas. Supply runs were performed by what Lieutenant French called the 'Light Wagon' in his diary. For ground scarring, if the soil beneath the surface is a sandy soil, then heavy foot traffic will disturb the area, and the sandy soil will not let vegetation grow back, or grows back very differently because it has been so damaged. This is the case with the tent locations of Camp Meyers Spring. The heavy foot traffic areas reveal the sites of the tent entrances.

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## Appendix A

Pertinent extracts from the diary of Lieutenant Francis Henry French, 19<sup>th</sup> Infantry, commanding the Seminole Indian Scout Detachment at Camp Meyers Spring, Texas 1883-84. (This diary was transcribed by the Fort Clark Historical Society)



**Lieutenant Francis Henry French**



**A rare photo of Black Seminole Indian Scouts in front of the Fort Clark headquarters**

**Notes:**

Thurston is train station 4 miles south of camp.

Mr. Lougee is the owner of the Pecos Cattle Company leasing the Bullis property.

Captain Simonds is W.W. Simonds, Pecos Land And Cattle Company manager (former police captain)

Schultz: Probable carpenter working for Lougee

Mr. Nason is civilian accompanying Lougee, (offers investment opportunities to Simonds and French for when they depart from the military).

Maj Bash is regiment paymaster.

M. Torres is contracted by military to provide hay, grain and other food supplies from the local area.

C. (Cessario) Torres is brother and senior in business of contract out of Langtry, TX.

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**Wednesday. November 21, 1883**

*My quarters consist of two wall tents put together to make one room, framed & floored with a box stove.*

**Thursday. November 22, 1883**

*After returning to camp had some extra tents taken down & put away for further use, move a wall tent up to the kitchen for our dining tent and had some extra property stored away.*

**Monday. November 26, 1883**

*... was interrupted by the arrival of Capt. Simonds who was here last January with Mr. Nason. He comes this time with Mr. Lougee (a name somewhat like this) who are [sic] bringing lumber and supplies intending to locate here and bring their families, if they can only find water for cattle on the large tract of property they own in this vicinity... Had a stove put up in the dining tent which makes our meals more enjoyable. ...*

**Tuesday. Nov. 27 1883**

*... Capt. Simonds & Mr. Lougee came over in their wagon. After dinner went to stables & then we met in Doctor's tent and talked until bedtime. They are to sleep in my tent where beds were prepared for them. I have my cot fixed up. Ice formed last night at the spring.*

**Thursday. November 29 1883**

*... Mr. Lougee ate over at Thurston. They brought over their carpenter, engineer and more workmen who came up this morning. ...*

**Friday. November 30 1883**

*While playing with Mr. Lougee saw that he was worried about the lumber for their house as their carpenter and other men came last evening. Torres who was to furnish a team to haul the lumber did not send it. So offered them the wagon & mules, if they would pay Wilson the driver, which they were glad to accept.*

**Saturday. December 1 1883**

*They commenced to build a small house on the corner of their land nearest camp and got it partially completed by night.*

**Sunday. December 2 1883**

*The men worked a little on the new house today and it was necessary too for their comfort to get into [it] as soon as possible.*

**Monday. December 3, 1883**

*In the evening went out to the house again...*

**Sunday. December 9 1883**

*... After readjusting the loads rode for Mayer's Springs reaching camp about 2-30 o'clock & found Dr. B. & Capt. Simonds waiting in the Doctor's tent. He had a fire in my tent.*

**Tuesday. December 11 1883**

*... Then the Doctor and I walked out to the house and on to a water hole which all hands were engaged in cleaning out. it is their intention to scrape off all the dirt down to the solid rock, build a stout dam across the bottom, cement all the [sic] put a layer of earth on the bottom to retain the moisture and put in solid banks. Then when the rains have filled the hole, they hope to be able to hold the water some time. Saw them make one blast and then strolled about a mile farther from camp...*

**Wednesday. December 12 1883**

*A cold steady rainy day prevented the men from working on the brush shelter they are making for the animals and prevented our neighbors from working on their tank... The Captain slept in the Doctor's tent, & Lougee in mine.*

**Monday. December 17 1883**

*... In the afternoon Torres completed the stack. After measuring it, C. Torres came into my tent leaving his brother out. The former is much better to get along with than the latter, and I was glad that M. Torres was not in the tent. I estimated 50 tons, which was not satisfactory to Torres. So I receipted to him for a stack of the dimensions measured, and made a copy of the receipt and sent it with a letter to Vedder who is to decide the amount. ...*

**Tuesday. December 18 1883**

*... Went out to see the tank and found some of the Seminoles at work, which I had permitted them to do, Lougee hiring them. But they had four mules and the wagon and were working the mules without saying anything to me. Told Lougee the mules could not work anymore.*

**Wednesday. December 19 1883**

*... After dinner went over to the house to see how the chimney was progressing.*

**Tuesday. December 25 1883**

*... Then walked over to the house. Invited Schultz to dinner as all the other whites from the house were invited out, but he declined to come.*

**Monday. December 31 1883**

*Stopped to go over to meet Mrs. Lougee who came with her husband & maid... Their house being unfinished, the Doctor put his tent at her disposal & has moved in with me... Lougee is sleeping with his wife in Dr's tent. They will mess & stay with us until their house is completed.*

**Friday. January 4 1884**

*Lougee and wife breakfasted at their house this morning & have left our mess for good.*

**Sunday. January 6 1884**

*...After dinner Doctor & I went over to the house by invitation and had some cake and eggnog both of which were very nice. Sat and talked until nine o'clock & then returned...*

**Wednesday. January 9 1884**

*... Went over to the house & walked down to the new tank with Lougee this afternoon.*

**Thursday. January 10 1884**

*Sent wagon over to train to meet Paymaster Bash & nephew this morning. Moved into Doctor's tent and let Maj. B. & clerk have mine. In the afternoon the men were paid off, & I received the pay of the absentees. ....*

**Tuesday. January 15 1884**

*Started out with the Sergeant & Luce on ponies and found a small spring about a mile south of camp. Measured the water and located it as well as possible. The Indians put up a pile of rocks to mark it, but were shrewd enough to put them about 500 yards from the water. In the same way they put up a pile on a white mound of earth to mark the water near our camp but some little distance away.*

**Sunday. January 20 1884**

*After dinner Doctor & I walked over to the house and made a short call & then Lougee joined us in a walk to the tank. Coming back saw Mrs. L. & maid at the corral and walked over there. L. did not see them as they hid from him. When we went around the house they came out. Mrs. L. acted queerly as if she was rather afraid of L. & he did seem a little vexed. ...*

**Friday. January 25 1884**

*... Stopped by the house & helped Lougee fix up a manger...*

**Monday. January 28 1884**

*... Made out part of the receipts for turning over the property to Capt. Randlett. (Capt Randlett was Company D commander, taking over the camp.)*

**Saturday. February 2 1884**

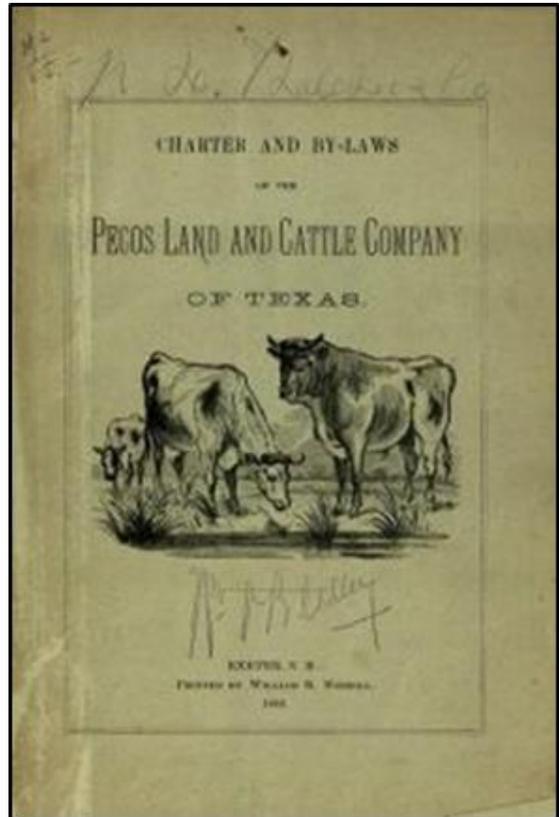
*... After dark found Mr. Lougee in the men's kitchen paying them for work done for the Pecos Land & Cattle Co. Witnessed some signatures for him & then went over to the house where he gave me a check for \$41 to pay Corp'l. Fay \$6, and Pvt. Woryner \$35, & 50 cts. for Pvt. H. Williams. ...*

**Thursday. February 7 1884**

*After breakfast prepared papers to turn over property and packed up my things. Doctor was the first to discover the new troops coming. Had all the property laid out as soon as the Troop came in sight. Soon afterward "D" Troop came with Capt. Randlett and Duff. ...*

## Appendix B Pecos Land And Cattle Company

The Pecos Land and Cattle Company was organized in 1884 by investors from Attleboro, Massachusetts, who hoped to turn a good profit. Headquarters were located near Meyers Spring. Although the owners had no experience in ranching, they bought 106 checkerboard sections, or 67,840 acres, of land from the Galveston, Harrisburg and San Antonio Railway for a dollar an acre. In 1884 the company purchased a nearby recently established ranch, the King Spring Cattle Company. Sometime later the company added the cattle of the KL brand and the O Bar brand to its holdings. The headquarters of the Pecos Land and Cattle Company were then moved to Dryden, where the management built three structures north of the railroad and opposite the depot. In 1886 W. W. Simonds, general manager of the ranch, patented the section of school land where the town site of Dryden was laid out.



One of the problems the management of the ranch faced was that of providing water for the large herds. They leased land surrounding Cedar and Meyers springs from John L. Bullis, giving access to those natural sources. Water was also taken from King Spring and from the Rio Grande.

Although the ranch showed a profit in good years, it lost money in poor ones. The owners had chosen to enter ranching on a large scale at the end of the open range. They paid top dollar for land, whereas earlier cattlemen had used free grass to build fortunes. In 1892 D. R. Baret moved from Atlantic City, New Jersey, to replace Simonds as general manager of the company, but the company was already fading by this time. In 1895 it was dissolved.

**<https://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/entries/pecos-land-and-cattle-company>**

**Appendix C: Timings Of Units At Camp Meyers Spring (sourced)**

Camp Meyers Spring Occupation	Seminole	# Seminole	Seminole Cmdr	Inf	Cav	Tonkawa
Winter 1877 (intermittent)	Yes	37	1Lt Bullis	-	-	-
Summer/Fall 1880 (intermittent)	Yes	37	1Lt Bullis	-	-	-
1880 Sep – 1881 Apr	No	30	1Lt Bullis	Co A, 1Inf Reg	-	-
1881 May	No	32	1Lt Bullis	-	Co H, 8 Cav	-
1881 Jun	No	19	1Lt Bullis	-	Co A, 8 Cav	-
1881 Jul	No	14	1Lt Bullis	-	Co A, 8 Cav	-
1881 Aug (20th+)	Yes	33	2Lt Jones	-	Co G & Co D, 8 Cav	-
1881 Sep	Yes	25	2Lt Jones	-	Co G & Co D, 8 Cav	-
1881 Oct - Nov	Yes	25/29	2Lt Jones	-	Co D, 8 Cav	-
1881 Dec	No	32	2Lt Jones	-	-	-
1882 Jan (25th+) (Poss inspection)	Yes	8	2Lt Jones	-	-	-
1882 Feb (-8th)	No	32	2Lt Jones	-	-	-
1882 Mar (28th+)	Yes	35	2Lt Jones	22 <sup>nd</sup> Inf Detach	-	5
1882 Apr (-7)	Yes	34	2Lt Jones	22 <sup>nd</sup> Inf Detach	-	6
1882 May	No	33	2Lt Jones	-	Co L, 8 Cav	3
1882 Jun	No	33	2Lt Jones	-	Co L, 8 Cav	4
1882 Jul	No	34	2Lt Jones	-	Co E, 8 Cav	-
1882 Aug	No	34	2Lt Jones	-	Co E, 8 Cav	-
1882 Sep	No	36	2Lt Jones	-	Co G & Co L, 8 Cav	-
1882 Oct	No	37	2Lt Jones	-	Co G & Co L, 8 Cav	-
1882 Nov (20th+)	Yes	39	2Lt Guest	-	-	-
1882 Dec	Yes	37	2Lt Guest	-	-	-
1883 Jan	Yes	37	2Lt Guest	-	-	-
1883 Feb	Yes	39	2Lt French	-	-	-
1883 Mar	Yes	40	2Lt French	-	-	-
1883 Apr	Yes	41	2Lt French	-	-	-
1883 May	No	40	2Lt French	-	Co E, 8 Cav	-
1883 Jun	No	40	2Lt Guard	-	Co E, 8 Cav	-
1883 Jul	No	40	2Lt Guard	-	Co F, 8 Cav	-
1883 Aug	No	40	2Lt Guard	-	Co F, 8 Cav	-
1883 Sep	No	27	2Lt French	-	Co L, 8 Cav	-
1883 Oct	No	37	2Lt French	-	Co E, 8 Cav	-
1883 Nov (18th+)	Yes	40	2Lt French	-	-	-
1883 Dec	Yes	39	2Lt French	-	-	-
1884 Jan	Yes	37	2Lt French	-	-	-
1884 Feb	No	37	2Lt French	-	Co D, 8 Cav	-

1884 Mar	No	40	2Lt French	-	Co D, 8 Cav	-
1884 Apr (17th+)	Yes	37	2Lt Cunningham	-	-	-
1884 May	Yes	38	2Lt Cunningham	-	-	-
1884 Jun	No	37	2Lt Cunningham	-	-	-
1884 Jul 16 (abandoned)						

Appendix D: Land Title Certificate of section Bullis purchase of Meyers Spring

Assignment of Land Certificate.

State of Texas,

County of Comal

For and in consideration of the sum of Twenty Five

(25.00)

Dollars, to me in hand paid, me hereby sell

and convey unto John D. Bullis, John D. Bullis, Jr. & John D. Bullis, Sr. Land

scrip No. 7512, for Six Hundred and Forty Acres, issued to the TEXAS WESTERN NARROW GAUGE RAILROAD COMPANY, on the 10th day of May, 1877, by the Commissioner of the General Land Office, warranting the title to the said Land Scrip unto the said John D. Bullis, John D. Bullis, Jr. & John D. Bullis, Sr.

heirs and assigns.

In Witness Whereof, we hereto sign, this 28th day of August.

A. D. 1877

J. H. Canlaw V. D.

Witnessed:

J. H. Canlaw

State of Texas,

County of Harris

Before me, the undersigned, this day personally appeared Thos: H. Scanlon, Vice Pres J. G. Frye, Secy to me well known, and declared that they executed the foregoing transfer for the uses, purposes and considerations therein expressed

Witness my hand and official Seal, this

28 day of August

A. D. 1877

C. L. Simmer

Notary Public Harrisland Texas

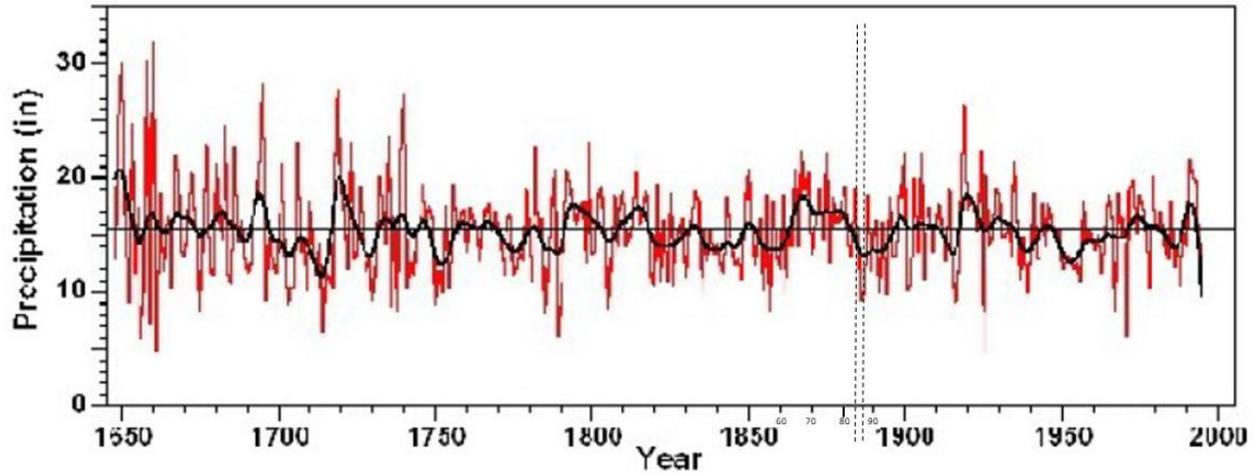
**Appendix E: Names of Black Seminole Scouts enlisted during the Camp Meyers Spring occupation**

	Martiriano	
Aguirre	Aguirre	1878 to 1882
Barra	Juan Barra	May 26, 1880 to June 6, 1882.
Barrera	Espetacion Barrera	April 25, 1878 to June 6, 1881
Bowlegs	David Bowlegs	May 1, 1873 to May 12, 1882. December 1, 1872 and ending December 26, 1885.
Bowlegs	Friday Bowlegs Harkless	
Bowlegs	Bowlegs	May 14, 1881 to August 31, 1884.
Brady	Jewel Brady James (Jim)	March 5, 1877 to August 8, 1881
Bruner	Bruner	November 9, 1871 to July 11, 1881
Bruner	Peter Bruner Luce (Louis)	August 2, 1872 to August 19, 1881
Cassas	Cassas	May 9, 1880 to February 28, 1889
Cook	Joe Cook	August 2, 1872. He died on December 16, 1886
Daniels	Charles Daniels	October 7, 1871 to October 4, 1909
Dixon	Joe Dixon	August 30, 1883 to August 31, 1884
Factor	Demdo Factor	February 8, 1878 to January 22, 1883
Factor	Dindie Factor	August 16, 1870 to June 12, 1881
Fay	Adam Fay	August 16, 1870 to August 31, 1884
Fay	Sandy Fay	September 10, 1872 to April 27, 1905
Frausto	Gregorio Frausto	March 3, 1878 to August 31, 1884
Frausto	Quirino Frausto	March 1, 1878 to August 31, 1884
Gordon	Isaac Gordon	December 5, 1873 to January 17, 1887
Grayson	Renty Grayson	October 7, 1871 to July 13, 1893
Griner	Dallas Griner	September 9, 1872 to May 25, 1888
Hall	Morell Hall	September 1, 1875 to August 31, 1884
Hoskins	Thomas Hoskins	December 27, 1883 to August 31, 1884
Jewell	Brady Jewell	March 5, 1877 to August 8, 1882
July	Ben July	September 21, 1882 to January 19, 1907
July	Billy July	May 29, 1884 to January 10, 1913
July	Carolina July	1874 - 1882
July	John July	June 5, 1875 to March 3, 1900
July	Sampson July	March 4, 1875 to May 12, 1884
Kibbetts	Robert Kibbetts	September 16, 1870 to April 26, 1905.
Longorio	Julian Longorio	May 5, 1879 to June 3, 1889.
Longorio	manuel Longorio Natividad	May 6, 1880 to January 5, 1886
Mariscal	Mariscal	September 12, 1876 to May 14, 1884.
Payne	Isaac Payne	October 7, 1871 to January 21, 1901.
Perryman	Isaac Perryman	May 1, 1873 to July 10, 1908.
Perryman	James Perryman	May 1, 1873 to December 25, 1884.

	Pompey	
Perryman	Perryman	February 8, 1878 to March 16, 1894.
Remo	Joe Remo	October 23, 1875 to July 1, 1911
	Archibald	
Shields	Shields	May 14, 1881 to November 4, 1888.
Simmons	George Simmons	August 12, 1872 to August 31, 1884.
Thompson	John Thompson	August 16, 1870 to August 7, 1883.
	Joseph	
Thompson	Thompson	August 2, 1872 to April 28, 1894
	Prymus	
Thompson	Thompson	January 24, 1877 to June 11, 1902.
Ward	John Ward	August 16, 1870 to October 4, 1894.
	Henry	
Washington	Washington	November 20, 1882 to September 25, 1895.
Williams	Bill	1881 - 1907
Wilson	Tony Wilson	October 7, 1871 to December 15, 1882.
Wilson	William Wilson	September 9, 1872 to January 8, 1887.
Woryer	Henry Woryer	December 27, 1882 to December 26, 1884.

Appendix F:

Reconstructed Precipitation (Feb - Jun)  
Texas Climatic Division 7



Central Climatic Division Feb - Jun

Extended Chronology of Drought in the San Antonio Area  
Revised Report March 30, 2006  
Malcolm K. Cleaveland, Professor of Geography  
Tree-Ring Laboratory, Geosciences Department  
University of Arkansas  
Fayetteville, AR 72701

## Appendix G: The 1877 Winter Expedition

**First Lieutenant John L. Bullis, Twenty-fourth Infantry. Committee on Military Affairs, Washington, D.C., January 8, 1878. "Testimony to the 45<sup>th</sup> Congress on the Texas Border Troubles Hearings before the United States House Committee on Military Affairs" (January 8, 1878).**

Pages 194-195. Available at [House-45-2-Miscellaneous-64-Serial-1820.pdf \(28.68Mb\)](#) (Accessed 9/3/2021).

“About the middle of October last I left Fort Clark with 34 Seminole scouts, 1 Mexican guide, 1 Lipan squaw, and acting assistant surgeon Dr. Wolf, and proceeded on a scout up the Rio Grande, acting under instructions from Colonel Shafter, commanding the post. On reaching the Pecos River, distant about 140 miles, about the 22d of October, two scouts, who had been sent out about forty days before, reported to me at that point that they had found where a party of Indians had been camped but a few days before, below San Carlos, Mex, on the Rio Grande, the Indians being camped on both sides of the Rio Grande.

They stated to me that the Indians had moved south into Mexico, in the direction of Colorado Peak, near the Sierra Carmel. I immediately left my camp on the Pecos, marched to the Rio Grande, and crossed at a point known as the lower point of the Sierra Pachona. I crossed the river on October 28, I think, and within 10 miles of the river we found where 2 Indians riding mules had passed about two weeks before, going toward the settlement in Texas. I continued on my course south, made a dry camp that night in a mountain pass, left camp the following morning before daylight, continued south, and about 12 o'clock in the day found three Indian Trails. The first was that of an Indian village moving south, about three weeks old; the second was that of an Indian village moving northwest, about 7 days old; and the third was that of 7 horses and 2 mules, made the night before.

The following day, October 30, we took the trail which had been made about 24 hours before, followed it for three days, and came on an Indian village on the Texas side of the Rio Grande about 5 o'clock in the afternoon. The Indians discovered us about 3 miles distant, and commenced funning off their herds of horses and cattle. The horses alone numbered, as we supposed, about 200. The Indians came down on our side of the river below their camp and attacked us as we were moving up to their camp a little before sundown. We checked them up at the time, and found that the country was so rough and broken that we could not get at them, the cliffs in places being about 1,000 feet high.

Not knowing the number of these Indians, I deemed it best for the safety of my command to leave the canon of the Rio Grande, and I marched back about 7 or 8 miles and went into camp in an open place about 1 o'clock at night. One packed mule with a pack fell over a bluff which was supposed to be 200 or 300 feet high. We crossed the Rio Grande 3 or 4 days afterward, and on reaching the Pecos River I sent two scouts with a letter to Colonel Shafter, or rather his acting assistant adjutant -general, at Fort Clark. On reaching the head of Devil's River, a few days later, I received instructions from Colonel Shafter directing me to camp at Pecan Springs, and to await the arrival of troops, which he had sent out under Captain Young, of the Eighth Cavalry, to whom I was ordered to report.

Captain Young left Pecan Springs about the 16<sup>th</sup> of the month, and I accompanied him. We followed the trail made by us, crossed the Rio Grande into Mexico, and reached the point where we had attacked the Indian village. We reached it on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of the month, the trail then being twenty-three days old. The second day afterwards the trail crossed into Mexico. We followed it for some five or seven days and surprised the Indians on the 29<sup>th</sup> of November (Thanksgiving day) in the Sierra Carmel. We killed two

Indians, wounded three, captured about thirty head of horses and mules and destroyed the village. This party of Indians was that of Alsate, a Mescalero Apache, whom I have mentioned before. He is called the most cunning Indian on all the frontier of Texas and Mexico, and that was the first time that he had ever been hit. He is about sixty years of age, and is as cunning as a fox. He always camps on the highest peaks, even if they are a mile or more in height. The reason he was so careless at that time was that the weather was extremely cold, so much so that the water in our canteens was frozen, and the canteens burst asunder. We re-crossed the river a few days later, and arrived at Fort Clark on the 16<sup>th</sup> of December.”

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**The following is the official expedition report from Captain S. B. M. Young, Capt 8th Cav.**

Fork Clark, Texas  
December 18, 1877  
To the Acting Assistant Adjutant General District of the Texas  
Fort Clark, Texas

Sir - In obedience to written and verbal instructions, dated and received from the district Commander, on the 4th day of November, [indecipherable], I started from the camp of the 8th Cavalry Battalion on the Pinto, near Fort Clark, Texas, at 10 o'clock a.m. on the 10th of November, with Companies A. and K. 8th Calvary, supplied with rations for thirty days, and forage to last the crossing of the Pecos, and proceeding via the route indicated, arrived at Pecan Springs, near headwaters of Devil's river, on the Clark and Stockton road on the 13th. Lieut. Beck, with Company C, 10th Calvary; Lieut. Bullis, with his Seminole negro scouts; Lieut. Clay, with a detachment of the 10th Infantry, reported to me and joined my command at this point.

On the 14th, after distributing the rations and forage, the march was continued, and crossing the Pecos River at Col Shafter's [indecipherable]. Paint Rock Springs on the 17th, Bullis and Clay having done considerable hard work with their men between Pecan Springs and this point to get the wagons over. On the 18th the animals were rested, cargoes for packed mules assorted, sick men, unserviceable horses, and six days rations for the Entire command were turn over to Lieut. Clay, who was, with his detachment, to remain at this point. On the 19th the wagons were started back to Clark for supplies, and I moved toward the Rio Grande with a command, made up as follows: Company A, 8th Calvary, Capt. Wells, commanding, Lieut. Phelps and forty-seven enlisted men; fifty-two horses and twelve pack mules. Company K., 8th Calvary, Lieut. Geddes, 25th Infantry, commanding, Lieut. Guest and thirty-seven enlisted men; forty-six horses and thirteen pack mules. Company C, 10th Calvary, Lieut. Beck commanding, forty-eight enlisted men; forty-nine horses and eleven pack mules; and Lieut. Bullis with thirty-seven Seminole negro scouts, and one Lipan squaw, and one Mexican (guides), and thirty-three horses and eleven pack mules – in all, eight officers, including assistant Surgeon Comegys, United States Army, one hundred and sixty two enlisted men and (2) two guides with (15) fifteen days rations ,to find, if possible, the Indians that had attacked Bullis on the 1st of the month.

These Indians had stolen some animals belonging to a man, by the name of Briscoe, in San Felipe, crossed into Mexico, and re-crossed to Texas, where, on the north bank of the Rio Grande, they had apparently established their winter quarters in an almost inaccessible net-work of bluffs, peaks, cliffs, boulders and cañons, about (100) one hundred miles distant from San Carlos and a little East of North from that point. From the last best information obtainable, and from the fact of Captain Lebo's command having exhausted the water, but a short time previously on the trail to the north of the Rio Grande, I decided to cross the river and march across that point of Mexican territory, extending North, in what is known as the “Big Bend”, and then re-cross to our outside and accordingly did so.

On the 23rd., having marched (78) seventy-eight miles, making two camps without fire or water, crossed the Rio Grande twice, passed over some good country and some indescribably rough and dangerous, I

reached the abandoned camp, which evidently had been a large one. On this day, my command worked hard, but could only make a distance of (6 1/2) six and one half miles, having to use lariat-ropes to prevent pack mules from falling off the narrow trail and recover horses and mules, that had fallen and roll down among the boulders – Eleven (11) in all rolled, slid and tumbled from the Extremely difficult and hazardous path, and were all, more or less injured, but were all recovered. In some instances, the lash-ropes on the packs snapped in pieces and the cargo of rations scattered down over the cliffs, some rations were damaged in crossing the river and nearly all the medicines were destroyed. Here we found innumerable stock-signs and Evidences of bands from different tribes of Indians in one general Encampment. From this point three definite and distinct trails departed, each showing an Equal number of stock-sign, besides much scattering sign. On account of a shod horse and a mule sign, of later date than any other sign being discovered on the center trail, I followed it, expecting the other trails might work into it in a few days, which they did not.”

In a march of (5) five miles, the Lebo’s trail was struck and, my animals having been without water since 11 o’clock A.M. of the previous day, I changed direction, following his trail south to the Rio Grande, leaving the Indian trail running in a westerly direction. After following up the river (16) sixteen miles, I left it and marched up on Easy and wide cañon, almost due West, cutting the Indian trail about (7) seven miles from the river and followed it South, then Southeast and East, crossing the Rio Grande at dark, at a point about (30) thirty miles Northwest from the main peak of Sierra Carmel.

The Indians has Evidently zig-zagged around her for many days, to hide their trail, but, by keeping well ahead with the guide and (5) five Seminole-trailers, the march of the column was not delayed and we made almost direct from point to point, as signaled or indicated by one or more of my party, - although the trail could not be considered a very “hot” one, I felt perfectly justified in following it into this uninhabited Mexican region, for two reasons: one was, the squaw assured me it was trail of Alsate’s band, who is a Mescalero-Apache, a renegade from his tribe in New Mexico, and for two years a refugee from Mexican justice, and the other, that the animals stolen from San Felipe, had been trailed to his camp.

On the 26th the trail led in the direction of Mount Carmel, but shortly after midday turned in the direction of San Carlos, which, the squaw said, was two days distant and no water enroute. She also assured me that she knew of a “truaja”, about two hours march to the East, containing plenty of water for all the animals for many days. We followed the squaw till dark at a rapid pace, without a halt and at dark leaving Capt. Wells, who had come up with me, to bivouac the command which was some distance back, with two orderlies and four scouts, I followed her for two hours, found out she was deceiving me, but found no water. On rejoining the command the water and food was taken away from her, her guard was doubled and she was informed through the interpreter that, if her deceptions should result in any material suffering by the command, she would be shot to death.”

The march was continued at daylight, the next morning, dismounted and in (9) nine miles of a seeping spring was found in Mount Carmel, nearly in a direction opposite to that taken by the squaw the night previous.

Lieut. Bullis and his men made a reservoir and had sufficient water for the men, when the command arrived and afterword a detail from each Calvary Company, under the supervision and personal direction of the Lieut. Geddes, made a large reservoir, tapping and draining Every Every springlet and seep into it and, at 3.30 o’clock P.M. we commenced watering the animals, which was a tedious performance, lasting until 11.45 o’clock P.M. Each animal having received ten gallons of water, measured out in camp-kettles. This amount was far from enough to quench thirst, but was sufficient to allay suffering and cause the animals to commence grazing. At daylight on the 28th, watering was re- commenced, Each Company moving out rapidly on the march, as soon as through watering. The Indians had not left this point more

than three or four days in advance of our arrival. We found here pieces of leather, cut from the pack saddle lost by Bullis' men, the Evening they were attacked, which gave me assurance that we were again on the trail of the same band.

This morning was bitter cold - water in canteens frozen solid, men only summer allowance of clothing and Company "C" "10th Cav., were without great coats. For fear of losing the game, which I felt sure of, I pushed ahead with five spies and trailers and two orderlies. Bullis followed thirty minutes later and the other Companies were ordered to follow in rapid succession after watering. One trailer was left back with Each Company on account of the falling snow, which for some time gave us considerable bother, but at the same time Ensured our success.

When we first struck the trail, it was twenty-three days old, and when we left it on the 26th, running in the direction of San Carlos, it was at least sixteen days old and indicated about one hundred animals, but the squaw, in and her attempt to mislead and deceive us, had, much to her horror and disgust, brought us within Easy striking distance. At 12 M., stopping to graze and wait for a sight of the head of the column, I dispatched two spies to the summit of a little gap in the foot-hills, behind which we halted. In a short time they brought me a report of seeing three horses in the little valley beyond but the fog prevented any other discovery. As soon as Bullis arrived, I sent him with five men, on foot, to reconnoiter. After a delay of two hours we moved forward - the Indians having left the day previous and the horses had strayed back from their next camp, which to me was convincing Evidence that the Indians were only one camp in advance of us at this hour. After camping in a secure and hidden nook, about two miles distant from the spot, where the Indians had been camped, two spies were sent out, to find if their trail led through a certain gap in the mountains and in the direction of a certain known water, but darkness coming on, a decision could not be reached.

At 8 o'clock P.M., five spies were sent off on the best horses, to the nearest known water, around the south Eastern base of Carmel, with instructions to bring me information before daylight, in case they found Indians. At 3.45 A.M. on the 29th instant, I sent the Mexican guide up on the highest peak in our vicinity, to look for the morning Indian camp-fires; he returned shortly after daylight, having seen a camp of five fires. The spies sent out the Evening before, not having returned, I started up the ragged and difficult mountain with one hundred (100) men on foot - leaving a guard of sixty with our animals, it being scarcely possible and entirely impracticable to take them along. It required two hours hard scrambling, to get up the hill, we were suddenly astonished by seeing two of the spies riding into our camp, down below at full speed, shouting and firing their pistols. Geddes, being in the rear with his Company, was ordered back down the hill with all possible haste - and Bullis, being in the advance was called back to interpret, as the shouting was done in the Mexican language, but not hearing distinctly and misinterpreting my order, Bullis followed after Geddes.

In about twenty-five minutes, Geddes was seen to reach the camp and immediately to saddle up and start out at a rapid gait - knowing that he was fully able to protect our stock and whip anything, that might be brought against him in that open country and, knowing that longer delay would be fatal to success, if we had not already delayed too long, I moved forward across the mountain top, on double time, knowing that Bullis would be too much Exhausted, to again climb the hill at once. On arriving at the break, in the head of the cañon, in which the guide had located the Indian camp, it was soon discovered that the Indians had taken fright and were moving with their stock and camp paraphernalia up into the mountains, following a trail on the opposite wall of the cañon, from where we were. The disposition of the command was ordered and commenced in less than five minutes. The Indians were not aware of our presence in their immediate vicinity and it was Evident, they had moved out of their camp as a precautionary measure, having had somewhat to do, in connection with the hurried arrival of the two scouts in my camp, a short time before and whose arrival had, I now felt, delayed me just long enough to prevent a

complete surround and capture of the entire band.

The delay caused by the scouts coming into camp, was Entirely accidental and could not, under the circumstances, have been foreseen or prevented, as on the Evening previous, they carried out their instructions, went to the water, passing the mouth of the cañon, where the Indians were Encamped, who, seeing their trail Early next morning, hid in ambush and suddenly attacked them - two scouts Escaped and rode ten miles into camp, as already described, and three took shelter in a deep and rocky ravine and for some hours defended themselves against heavy odds, with the loss of one horse. I cannot speak too highly of the Energy and perseverance, displayed in this morning's work, by both Officers and men, and although the affair is insignificant, in comparison, yet withal, it could not have been accomplished without hard, tedious and distressing work.

The altitude of Sierra Carmel is great, in comparison to the country surrounding this post, and in addition to the distress, occasioned by vigorous and sudden Exertion in the rarefied atmosphere to unaccustomed lungs, was added the pain, caused by quick respiration of intensely cold air. On my return- march, the command rested three days at Paint Rock Springs, awaiting supplies.

I desire the attention of the District Commander to be invited to the fact of the good condition of the animals of my command – they were twenty-three days without grain and, in Eighteen days of that period, they marched three hundred and thirty five miles and made Eight camps, without water and came in with very few, if any, sore backs. I attribute their remarkable good condition to the fact of their having been herded out every night (Except when on one occasion grass was gathered for them from the mountain-side) and to the unceasing care, the Company Commanders caused to be bestowed upon them.

There was a constant rain during the last Eight days of the march and although the clothing of the men and officers was all torn and tattered and Entirely insufficient, to protect against the inclemency of the weather, yet Everyone appeared to be in a good and happy mood and withal preferred active field service to garrison duty. Enclosed please find Itinerary and map of route. Total distance marched (610) six hundred and ten miles.

I am, Sir, Very respectfully,  
Your obedient servant (Sgd,) S. B. M. Young  
Capt 8th Cav. and Brevet Col. U.S.A.

Note – It is supposed the Indians disposed of their stolen stock in San Carlos – the march was carefully timed and the distance may be under dash, but not over Estimated.  
(Sgd) S.B.M. Young

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**The following is a recollection by Frederick E. Phelps of the expedition. Lieutenant Phelps was Captain Young's subordinate during the campaign.**

Phelps, Frederick E. and Frank D. Reeve. "Frederick E. Phelps: a Soldier's Memoirs." New Mexico Historical Review 25, 1 (1950). Available at <https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/nmhr/vol25/iss1/3>

Sometime in September or October, 1877, I received orders to report to Lieutenant John L. Bullis, 24th Infantry, who was in command of the Seminole Indian Scouts, and to go with him, as we then supposed, to guard a crossing of the Rio Grande near the mouth of Las Moras creek. Lieutenant Bullis had been in command of these Seminole Indian Scouts for two or three years, and had gained a great reputation as a scouter and fighter. These Seminole Indians were a queerly mixed lot. They were the descendants partly of the Seminole Indians who had been removed from Florida, sometime in the forty's, to the Indian territory, and then had drifted down into Texas. A portion of them were only part Seminole, being descendants of negro slaves captured by the Seminoles who had kept them as slaves and inter- married with them. Nearly all had a strain of Mexican blood, so that there was a mixture of Indian, Negro, and

Mexican. Generally a mixture like this produces a vicious man, but these men were quite orderly and excellent soldiers. They had a little village about three miles below Fort Clark, and were constantly employed scouting all over western Texas under Bullis. He was a small, wiry man with a black mustache, and his face was burned as red as an Indian; He was a tireless marcher, thin and spare, and it 'used to be said of him that when he wanted to be luxurious in scouting, he took along one can of corn. Of course, this was only said in fun, but it was a fact that he and his men could go longer on half rations than any body of men that I have ever seen, and I had a great deal of experience with them.

Besides my- self, Lieutenant Maxon and Jones of the 10th Cavalry, with a detachment from their regiment which was, and is, a colored regiment, also reported to Bullis. We made a night march to the mouth of Las Moras and bivouacked under a few scattering trees for nearly a week. By this time I began to suspect that we were there for some other purpose and was not surprised one night, about nine o'clock, when Bullis directed us to be ready to march to the Rio Grande, about two miles distant. We were directed to leave our pack animals behind under guard and to take one day's cooked rations. We forded the Rio Grande by moonlight and then Bullis informed us that we were to make a dash to the head of a creek about twenty or twenty-five miles distant to surprise, if possible, a gang of horse and cattle thieves who made that their rendezvous. We started at once and traveled hard all night, galloping and trotting alternately, but the twenty miles stretched into thirty; just at daylight we caught sight of a large building looming up, which proved to be our destination. This building was in reality an old stone fort, evidently built years before by the Spaniards. It was in the shape of a triangle, each side being about one hundred feet long, and the wall was twelve to fifteen feet high; there was only one door or gate which, unfortunately for us, was on the side opposite the direction from which we approached. We had just emerged from the brush into the open ground when we heard a shrill alarm given, and instantly spreading out, we charged at full speed to gain the gate, if possible, before anyone could escape. As soon as we had surrounded the place, Bullis directed me to take twelve or fifteen men, enter the fort and search every building in it for a notorious thief and desperado who had long been the terror of the frontier. There were about a dozen shacks inside the fort and I searched them quickly and thoroughly, but only found one man. He was a Mexican, and one of the men pulled him out from under the bed by his feet, .and he was evidently scared almost to death, for he immediately got on his knees and begged for' mercy. I sent him to Bullis, but he was not the man we wanted and he was released.

We found plenty of women and boys and soon learned that all the men were absent on a raid, except the leader, and that as soon as we were discovered he had dashed out and made his escape into a swamp which came close to the building. Our trip was, therefore, a failure and, after resting for an hour, we started to return, but fearing that we would be intercepted by the hundreds of thieves and desperadoes that infested the river on both sides at that time, we struck across the prairie for another crossing in the Rio Grande, Hackberry crossing, about fifteen miles below where we had crossed the night before. To arrive at this point we had to make a circuit to · avoid passing over the hills on top of which we could have been discovered for miles. We marched very rapidly and, having had only one meal, and I having had none, for some- way or other the lunch I had taken along had bounced out of my· saddle pocket, we were hungry.

About noon I became very weak and Doctor Shannon, the surgeon with us, noticing my paleness, rode up beside me, handed me a tin cup with a strong whiskey toddy in it and directed me to drink it. I told him that I never touched liquor, that the love of liquor was hereditary with me and I was afraid to use it, but he insisted that I must take it as medicine and finally I swallowed it. It certainly braced me up wonderfully and I kept my place at head of the column, Bullis having command of the rear guard which he supposed to be the point of danger, until we arrived within about a mile of the Rio Grande. We had kept scouts well in advance; they came back and reported that about two or three hundred cattle thieves had prepared an ambush on both sides of a narrow canyon which we must pass through, and were waiting for us. After a

moment of consultation, we plunged into a side canyon and put our horses on the dead run, knowing that the mouth of this canyon would bring us nearly opposite Hackberry crossing anyhow. Arriving at the bank of the river we did not stop to find the crossing but, lead by Bullis, forced our horses over the bank into the swollen river and swam our horses across. We had scarcely emerged on the other side when a crowd of thieves came hurrying down to head us off, but too late. I thought it strange that Bullis did not take us at once into the heavy timber which here lined the river, where we would be protected, but a glance to the right and left brought a broad smile on my face as I discovered, lying flat on their faces at the edge of the brush, about four hundred cavalymen, all from Fort Clark, under the command of Colonel Shafter, and a little to one side were two Gatling guns carefully concealed behind the brush that had been cut off and stuck in the ground, and lying alongside of the guns, ready for business, were the cannoneers. Shafter had carefully arranged the whole plan and was anxiously hoping that these raiders would enter the river when he intended, as he told me off the face of the earth," or to open fire on them should they attack us without attempting to cross the river. We remained in plain sight for perhaps five minutes, but seeing that the thieves had no intention of crossing or firing, the command was given and all the troops rose to their feet; of all the stampedes that I have ever seen, I never saw such a one as those thieves made at once. They evidently had no idea that there were any troops there but ours, and as far as we could see them they were still running.

This was about three o'clock in the afternoon. I had been in the saddle since nine o'clock the night before and, as soon as we got a bite to eat, I threw myself down on the gravel and never woke up till seven or eight o'clock the next morning when the heat of the sun aroused me. We returned to our camp at our leisure; although the trip was not success so far as capturing the men we were after was concerned, it taught the thieves that we were watching them closely and they gave us very little trouble for a long time after. We returned to the Post in December and the next spring I again went out into camp. During the winter I had magnificent quail and duck shooting, and never enjoyed a winter more. I used to ride into the Post once a week and stay one day, each officer taking his turn. I sent game to my family and my friends almost daily, and we caught a great many black bass in the creek, so that we lived well. In September or October, Lieutenant Bullis, who had gone on a long scout to the big bend of the Rio Grande, was caught in a canyon by the Indians and severely handled, only getting his men out by his skill and courage, but losing several animals and all his rations.

We were still in camp on Pinto creek, the camp being commanded by Captain S. B. M. Young, 8th Cavalry, now Lieutenant General, retired. He took four troops of Cavalry, one of them being a colored troop, and we' made a forced march to Myers springs, about one hundred and fifty miles distant, where we met Bullis; we immediately took his trail afterwards, "to wipe them to the Rio Grande, crossed it and pushed rapidly to the place where he had been defeated.

We crossed and re-crossed the river and finally ascended a high mountain, I suppose one thousand feet above the river, where we bivouacked for the night on the naked rock. The next morning we descended to the Rio Grande again, crossed and got up on the other side; after working hard for twelve or fourteen hours, we had not gone more than three or four miles in a narrow line. The sides of the mountain were very precipitous; we passed the place where Bullis had been defeated which was a narrow ledge not more than ten or twelve feet wide, with a mountain towering above and the river hundreds of feet below; how he ever got his men out of there, with Indians on both sides, was a mystery to us all. In our party we had an Assistant Surgeon by the name of Comegys, from Cincinnati. He had just joined the army and this was his first scout; he had suffered greatly during the day from the intense heat and the hard climb, and that evening he asked me where our next camp would be. Young was sitting nearby and I saw him smile when I pointed to a mountain peak perhaps sixty miles away, as I knew, and with a perfectly grave face informed the doctor that our next camp would be at the foot of this peak, and that there was not a drop of water between the two. In despair he turned to Young and said to him, "Colonel, you may as well bury me right now for I will never live to get there." When he heard the roar of laughter from the officers

around he turned on me and upbraided me for playing it on him, but I stuck to it, and the next morning when we started we headed toward this mountain, and I can see yet the look of despair on his face; but we had only gone a few miles when the Indian trail, which we were following, turned abruptly to the left, went down through a canyon and brought us out again on the river, and I think he was the happiest man in camp that night.

The next day we pushed rapidly on the trail, made a dry camp, which means a camp without water, except what we had in our canteens, and about noon the next day arrived at the foot of a range of mountains known as Mount Carmen, or Red Mountains. During the day a blizzard of rain and hail struck us, with a high wind, and we suffered greatly from cold. We finally managed to find a little spring in a hollow and, with cups and knives, dug it out so the water would flow more freely; dipping the water out with our tin cups, we filled our camp kettles and watered the animals which took until nearly mid- night. As darkness approached, I looked around for a good place to sleep where I could be protected from the sleet, if possible, for, of course, we carried no tents. I soon found a hollow or depression about the size of a grave and perhaps four feet deep. This was probably caused by the uprooting of a tree, though there were no trees there then. This hole was half full of dead leaves from the sage brush, so I threw my bundle of blankets in which I had a buffalo robe, and around which I had a piece of canvas, into this hole, to indicate that I had pre-empted that sleeping place. Soon after dark, having completed all my duties, I went to this place, spread my canvas on the leaves, on top of this my blankets, and then my buffalo robe, with the hairy side uppermost. I had a long heavy overcoat with fur gloves and a fur cap; getting down and crawling under the blankets, and pulling the buffalo robe over my head, I was just congratulating myself that I had a warm, cozy place to sleep when I heard the voice of Lieutenant Guest, of my regiment, who had a peculiar habit of talking to himself.

This was Guest's first scout and he had more than once expressed a desire to meet a bear. It was dark as a pocket, but I could hear him or feel him kneel down at the edge of the hole as he threw down his roll of bedding by my side; the next moment he had gotten into the hole himself and, just as he touched the fur of the buffalo robe, I turned on my face, hunched up my back, and gave a groan as nearly as possible to what I thought a bear would make. With one wild yell he jumped out of the hole and ran toward where the men were sleeping, yelling, "A bear, a bear," at the top of his voice, and in a moment I heard the rapid approach of feet. I could hear the rattle of the breech locks as the men loaded their carbines, and I thought it was high time to make myself known. So I stood up and called to the men that there was no bear there. Poor Guest never heard the last of this and in 1888, when our regiment was marching from Texas to Dakota, I again met him at old Fort Concho after a lapse of several years. The day after we left Fort Concho, while I was marching at the head of my troop, Guest dropped back by my side and almost immediately I heard from the men behind me the old familiar words, "A bear, a bear," and I saw his face get scarlet. He said in a low tone, "Will 'F' troop never let up on that damn story."

I laughed and said to him, "There are only two or three of the old men left, Murphy is one of them. He is in the first set of twos, and there are one or two old men back of him. If I were you I would drop back and shake hands with them. They would be glad to see you, and you will never hear anything more of it." He dropped back and I heard him call out, "Lord, Murphy, hasn't the devil got you yet," and Murphy gave a laugh; as I looked back, I saw them shaking hands heartily. Murphy fell out with him and, allowing the troop to pass, called his attention to the two or three old men, all of whom he greeted cordially, and that was the last he ever heard of that story.

The next morning we resumed our march and late in the evening we camped on a piece of ground thickly dotted with both hot and cold springs. In the hot springs the water varied from lukewarm to a heat so great that a person could scarcely hold his hand in it, while in the cold springs the water was cool enough to drink and, as I remember it, there were perhaps half a dozen of each in a space of eight or ten acres. Of

course this was caused merely by two underground streams, one of cold water and the other coming up from hot springs away below the ground.

That evening Bullis sent six or seven of his men to follow the trail a few miles so that we could gain time in the morning. One of these men was sent on top of the mountain immediately above us; just after sunset he came sliding down and reported that the Indians had passed around the point of the mountain and were then encamped in a deep ravine just on the other side of the mountain, not more than a mile away, but four miles around the point by way of their trail. Colonel Young at once gave us orders that at daybreak we would climb the mountain and attack them from above, forcing them, if possible, into the open plain where we could get a chance. He sent for me and informed me that I would be left behind in charge of the camp. To this I strenuously objected, calling his attention to the fact that I ranked Lieutenant Guest, that I thought I should be allowed the choice of going or staying, and that I wanted to go. Colonel Young and I had had some words in regard to managing the mess a few days before, for as usual I had charge of the mess, and while this disagreement was purely personal, there had been a decided coolness between us; he told me afterwards that if he had not feared that I would think that he was taking unfair advantage of his being in command, he would have insisted that I remain behind, and I have always been sorry since that he did not.

We started up the hill at daybreak, and it was a hard climb. The hill was very steep, covered with loose shale and gravel, and we had to work our way up by clinging to the brush wood that thickly covered it; we had just arrived at the flat top when, sitting down to get our breath for a moment, we discovered a commotion in the camp. We saw the men running out and bringing in the horses from the flat where they were grazing; Bullis said that he had seen one of his men ride into camp at full speed and it was evident that something was wrong. Turning to me Young said, "Damn it, Phelps, I wish you had remained in camp, for you would know what to do, and I don't suppose Guest does;" then turning to Lieutenant Bullis, he directed him to go down and take command of the camp and do what he deemed best. It turned out afterwards that the six or seven men, who had followed up the trail the night before, had discovered some of the Indians' horses just at dark; concealing themselves in the rocks, they waited till daybreak when, instead of returning at once to our camp with the information, they tried to steal the Indians' horses. An opportunity to steal a horse is one no Indian could ever resist. As they approached the horses, the Indians, who had evidently discovered them also, fired on them, fortunately, or unfortunately, without hitting any of them; and they immediately took refuge in a pile of rocks. There was only six of them against twenty or twenty-five Indians, but one of them sprang on his pony and went back for help at full speed, and that was the man we had seen ride into camp. Had I remained in camp, I would, of course, have mounted all the men there and gone at full speed to the rescue of these men; we found afterwards that I would have cut the Indians off from the ravine and would have driven them straight into Young's command.

Lieutenant Bullis mounted twenty or twenty-five men and hurried around, but the time lost had been sufficient for the Indians to start up a canyon. As we arrived on the edge of it, crawling up on our hands and knees, Young and one or two of the officers, peering over, discovered the Indians making their way slowly up the opposite side of the canyon; to me it looked as though they were walking along the side of the cliff like flies, but afterwards found there was a narrow ledge, in some places not more than three feet wide, and they arrived at the top of the canyon almost at the same moment that we did. My troop had been deployed as skirmishers; I had charge of the left wing and Captain Wells had charge of the right.

I discovered four or five Indians with their horses not more than one hundred yards distant; apparently they had not yet caught sight of us and were a little undecided which way to go. Raising my rifle, I fired straight at a buck, as the warriors are called, and at that distance I fully expected to get him, but just as I fired his horse moved slightly forward and the bullet struck the poor brute instead of the Indian. Like a flash they scattered among the rocks; for ten or fifteen minutes we banged away at each other without anyone being hurt on either side so far as we could discover. We were simply endeavoring to hold them

there, for another troop had been sent to make a circuit and we had hopes of holding them until this troop could come up on their rear. I was lying flat behind a rock when I became aware of the fact that one of those Indians seemed to have a pick at me, for several of his bullets struck very near me. I finally discovered him about one hundred yards to my left by seeing him raise and lower his arm while loading his rifle. I called two of the men near me and, resting our guns on the top of a rock, we waited a moment until he should raise to shoot, when all three of us fired at him at once. He toppled over backward, his gun going over his head, and we heard no more of him.

Just at that moment a bullet struck a piece of rock near my left foot, chipped off a piece of it which struck my left ankle bone with terrific force; when I arose to my feet the ankle gave way beneath me and I could not walk a step. The Indians had rushed down the side of the hill; the men ran to the edge, opened fire on them and, as we afterwards found, succeeded in killing four or five. One of these Indians was on his pony, for they succeeded in getting part of the ponies down the hill. Bending over his saddle, he was going at full speed when a bullet struck him in the back, and he rolled off. One of the men went down and captured his pony, a cream colored one; tied to the saddle was a complete, beautifully dressed buckskin suit, fringed with beads and porcupine quills, the most handsome Indian costume that I have ever seen. I immediately offered the man twenty-five dollars for it, but he declined to part with it; when we got back to Fort Clark he asked me to send it to his girl for him, which I did. By this time my ankle had swollen enormously and I was helped on one of the captured ponies, which one of the men led back to the camp. I knew the doctor had no medicine of any kind, for the mule bearing his medicine chest had fallen over a cliff a week before, and I was greatly worried about my ankle. They had to cut off the shoe and stocking; ripping up my trousers, the doctors saw that it was already swollen to nearly double its usual size and rapidly turning purple. One of the hot springs, as I have mentioned, was close by and, with my blanket spread beside it, I completely immersed my foot and ankle in the hot water; here I remained all night.

Possibly nothing better could have been done; in the morning the swelling had gone down at least half, and much of the soreness was gone. It was a month before I could walk or put on a shoe, but I wore an Indian moccasin which one of my men had picked up and had given to me. We captured something like twenty-five or thirty mules and horses, and afterwards found that the Indian, at whom we three had fired, was the chief and that all three bullets had struck him squarely in the breast. His gun proved to be an old Harpers Ferry musket, model of 1854, with brass rings and the stock extending clear to the muzzle. It was a smooth bore, carrying a round bullet. The gun was loaded, cocked, and capped, but one of the bullets had broken the stock, or possibly the fall had broken it, and it was lying by his side. The men brought it back to me. I took it back to Fort Clark, sent it to the Ordnance Arsenal at San Antonio, had it restocked and it made one of the best single-barreled shot guns that I had ever seen; when I left the troop the men still had it.

This last skirmish occurred on Thanksgiving Day, though I doubt if any of us remembered it until evening. I had had charge of the mess and knew that our supplies were completely exhausted, except for a little sack, perhaps four or five pounds, of flour, and one can of apples, which I had stowed in my saddle bags on my own saddle a week before, intending to give the mess at least something to eat on Thanksgiving Day. While lying beside the spring, boiling my foot, I called to the soldier who cooked for our mess, gave him the flour and the apples and told him to make some apple dumplings, but not to tell anybody. We had no baking powder, so all he could do was to mix up the flour with water, put in some sugar and the can of apples, and boil the dumplings in a kettle. For supper that night we had hard tack and coffee only, for our bacon was all gone, but just as the officers were about to scatter I told them to wait, and our cook produced the dumplings. Well, we ate them, though they were as heavy as lead, and every Thanksgiving Day I remember the apple dumpling supper that we had that day nearly two hundred miles down in old Mexico.

Among the animals captured, we found several mules loaded with dried deer, horse and mule meat, all of which was divided equally among the men and officers, but it only gave us about two or three ounces each and we started back the next day for Myers springs where we had left most of our rations. We marched very rapidly and I suffered intensely with my foot. Finally we arrived at the point where we crossed the Rio Grande, and here Colonel Young directed me, as Adjutant of the scout, to send two men to Myers springs with instructions to Lieutenant Clay, who had been left there with a small detachment, to send us rations. That same evening we were sitting around a little camp fire when Bullis came over and told us that he had found a small sack with a few pounds of rice in it which he would give us. What he was living on, I don't know, but I have always believed that, like his Seminoles, he was living on rattlesnakes, for I have time and again seen the Seminoles kill and skin rattlesnakes and fry them just the same as fish. I had never tried it but once, and that was enough. We put the rice in a big kettle, poured on a lot of water and set it on the fire. I did not know that rice swelled so, but in a few moments it had swelled clear over the top of the kettle, so we concluded that it must be done. We had plenty of sugar left and stirred in a couple of quarts of brown sugar, then gathered around it and each one helped himself. The rice had been slightly scorched and made me deathly sick; it was twenty years before I could eat rice again.

The next day we marched about fifteen miles, the horses being very weak, for there was but little grass and, of course, no grain; about dark the two men we had sent to Myers springs came into camp with three mules loaded with coffee, bacon, and hard tack, a most welcome sight. The men had a method of cooking the hard tack which made it very palatable to a hungry man. Breaking the hard bread into fragments, they put it to soak and it soon swelled. They then fried their bacon, poured the bacon grease over the hard bread, and mixed a liberal quantity of brown sugar with it; while it doesn't sound very nice, it certainly was very palatable when a keen hunger was the sauce. The next day we arrived at our old camp at Myers springs. We found Clay had sent us all the rations there were, so here we were one hundred and fifty miles from the nearest post and the men living on quarter rations, while the officers had absolutely none. Jack rabbits were very plentiful, so I took my shot gun, which I had left at this camp, and killed great numbers of them, which we boiled, and I got so sick of rabbit that it was years afterwards before I could eat any again. From this point we sent one of the Seminoles to Fort Clark with a letter to the commanding officer, Colonel Shafter, asking that rations and forage be sent to meet us as soon as possible, and two or three days afterwards, as soon as we could shoe up the horses, we started on our return.

By this same messenger, Colonel Young sent a short official report of the scout to Colonel Shafter, which I prepared, under his direction, on leaves torn from my note book and in pencil. I also wrote a note to my wife telling her that I was all right, that my ankle was much better and not to worry. I endorsed on the back of it a request to Colonel Shafter to send it to her, and both were enclosed in an old envelope and addressed to the commanding officer of the Post. I told the Seminole to make the best speed he possibly could and, on arrival, whatever might be the hour, day or night, to report immediately to the commanding officer and deliver the letter. I also told him to go down to my troop barracks, where two or three men had been left, and they would take care of him, giving him something to eat and care for his horse. I afterwards learned that he arrived at the Post about two o'clock in the morning, aroused Colonel Shafter from his bed, delivered the letter and then went over to my troop barracks. As soon as he came in, the men began to question him about the scout, as not a word had been heard from us after leaving Del Rio about two months before. The Seminole could talk very little English and perhaps understand less, and the men only knew a few words of Mexican, which was the language that the Seminoles used. He told them, "Heap big fight, muchos Indians killed," which was, of course, an exaggeration. They then asked him if any soldiers were killed. Not understanding the question but, I suppose, believing that it meant if anybody was hurt, he said, "Yes, Adjutant," which is the Mexican for Adjutant. The men knew that I was Adjutant of the command. They were, of course, keenly interested, and asked him if the Adjutant was

killed, and again misunderstanding the question, the Seminole nodded his head.

By this time it was daylight. The news that there had been a fight and that the Adjutant had been killed was quickly communicated to other companies, and by them communicated to servants up along the officers' line, or to use an old frontier expression, "the news went up the back porch of the officers' line and came down the front." Mary, of course, knew nothing of this, as she had not left the house at that time. At guard-mount, which took place about eight o'clock, it was customary for the officers to sit out on their front porches with their families and listen to music of the band. Mary took May and started to walk up the line to watch guard-mount. She told me afterwards that whereas officers would usually spring to their feet as she passed their quarters and lift their caps, she noticed that every one of them hustled inside, and she wondered why. About half way up the line she approached a group of three officers who had their backs toward her. One of them was Lieutenant Donovan, of the 24th Infantry, who messed with us. As she approached, she overheard one of the officers say, "Hush, here is Mrs. Phelps, now," and it flashed on her mind in a moment that there was some bad news. Walking straight up to Mr. Donovan she asked him, "Is there any news of the scout," to which he answered by inclining his head. "Is anybody hurt," she asked, and again he inclined his head. "Is Mr. Phelps hurt," she demanded. At that question, Mr. Donovan stepped by her side and said, "Mrs. Phelps, let me take you home." He told me afterwards that quick as a flash she straightened up to her full height and, looking him squarely in the eye quietly said, "Mr. Donovan, I am a soldier's wife, if there is any bad news I want to know it instantly. Is Mr. Phelps dead?" He replied, "Yes, Mrs. Phelps, he was killed on Thanksgiving Day at the head of his troop." She turned ghastly white, took his arm, and leading May by the hand, she went back to our quarters, bowed to him, entered the house and closed the door.

In about half an hour Colonel Shafter knocked at the door and she bade him enter. Colonel Shafter was a large, jovial man and generally spoke in a loud tone of voice; in his jovial way, and not noticing the tears streaming down her cheeks, he said to her, "Madam, allow me to congratulate you." A month later he told me that he had not noticed that she had been crying, but that she instantly straightened up and, looking him in the face, she answered in a cutting tone, "Since when, Colonel Shafter, has it been the custom of the Army for the commanding officer to congratulate the widow?" He was dumbfounded for a second, and then blurted out, "If Mr. Phelps is dead, he is a mighty lively corpse, for here is a letter from him." Then, and I believe the only time in her army service, she fainted, and he caught her as she fell to the floor. Laying her gently on the carpet, he rushed out of the room into Mrs. Pond's quarters, next door, and shouted, "For God's sake come over to Mrs. Phelps's house, I have killed her." Mr. Pond ran into the house and dashed water in her face; they lifted her on the bed and in a few moments she revived. We had many a laugh over this afterwards, but at the time it was serious enough.

End of Excerpt



Meyers Spring Canyon



Camp Meyers Spring Terrain

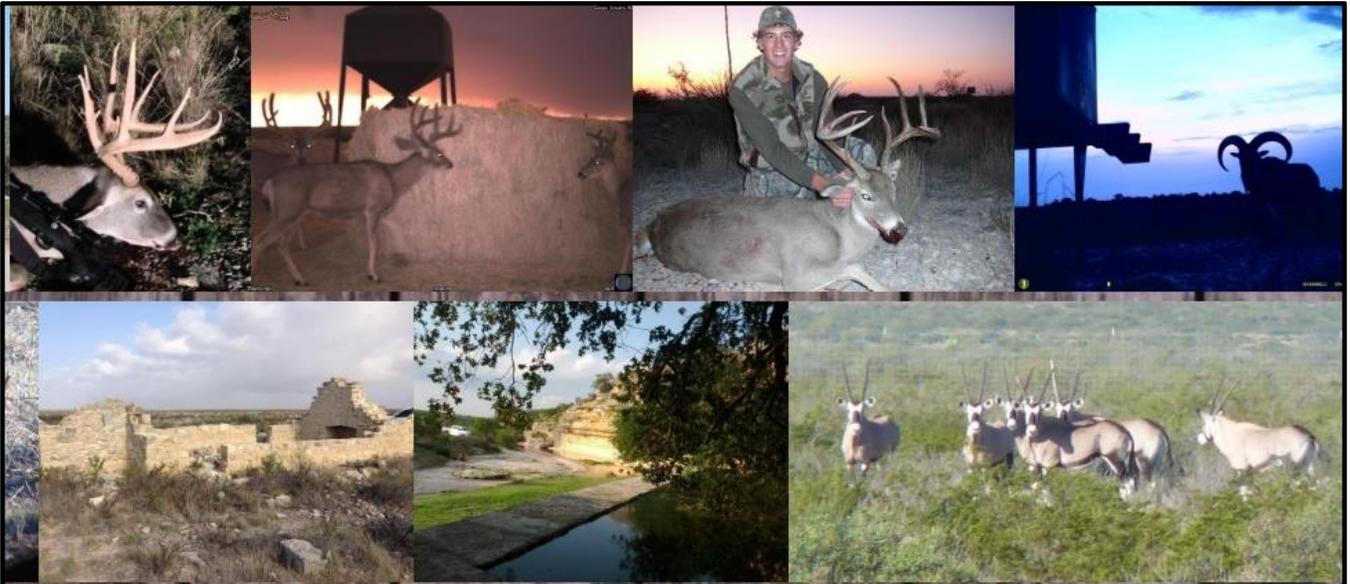
*Meyers Spring has a history of occupation going back through 4,000 B.C., into the prehistoric Indian migrations of 500 - 1,700 A.D., the military occupation of the 1870s and 1880s, and the early giant cattle ranches up in the turn of the century. There have been no less than seven archeological studies of the area over the last 90 years, and they continue to this day.*

*The ranch is both a hunting ranch and an historical archeological property. It is famous for its 100-foot long rock art wall. Both the San Antonio Witte Museum and the Shumla Archeological Research Center conduct special tours to visit this site at least twice per year.*

<https://shumla.org/>

<https://www.witemuseum.org/>





## Welcome To Meyers Spring HUNTING Ranch!

We are a family-owned and operated ranch and we are here give you an experience you will never forget, not just get you a trophy. We are Level 3 MLD for both whitetail and mule deer.

The ranch is divided into a 2800 acre fully high fence pasture and the rest of the ranch is roughly 7200 acres.

Ranch is home to a wild variety of game both native and exotics.

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