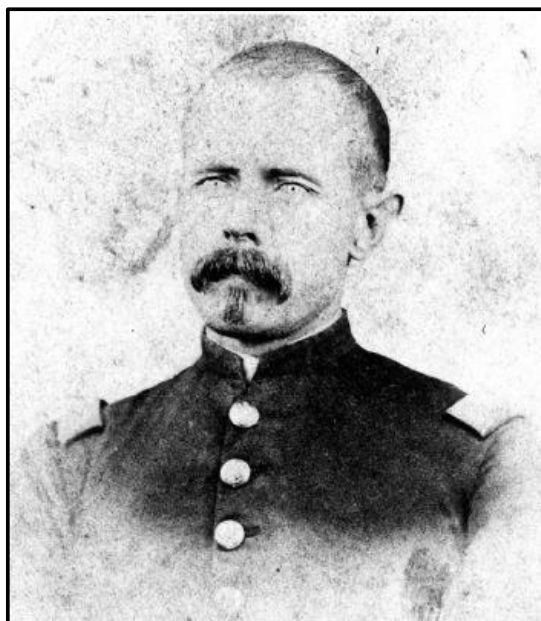


LIEUTENANT JOHN LAPHAM BULLIS
SCOUTING REPORTS
FORT CLARK
1874 - 1881



West Texas Archeological Society

*C.A. Maedgen, III
West Texas Archeological Society
Compiled and edited from National Archives and Fold 3 of Ancestry.com
February 18, 2025*

The Whirlwind

Introduction

Our team of WTAS members has been working on our project at Meyer's Spring Ranch for three years, and the more we get into the story, the more we realize the significance of the teamwork of the Seminole Scouts and John Bullis. Both Bullis and the Seminoles used Meyer's Spring as their base of operations. This report is dedicated to the life story of John Bullis and is designed to be a "stand-alone" document. We will be attaching this report to our Meyer's Spring Ranch archeological report. We will also be placing this document on John Bullis on our home page, West Texas Archeological Society website.

John Bullis was known by his enemies as the Thunderbolt and to the Seminoles as "The Whirlwind" (Eckhardt). We have discovered, through research in the National Archives and Fold 3 of Ancestry, many documents that shed light on the life story of John Bullis. One of these documents that were discovered in the National Archives was the complete text of John Bullis testifying before the Committee on Military Affairs about his war experience leading the Seminoles in Texas and Mexico. If you read nothing else in this report, do yourself a favor and read the report on Bullis testifying before Congress.

While uncovering information on Bullis, we read articles by Edward S. Wallace and C.F. Eckhardt. Both of these authors cover John Bullis in great detail. I recommend that you take a look at these two authors. I'll provide a digital link in this report that will take you to these two authors.

The following is attached from Eckhardt. ***"One of the least-known heroes of the Texas frontier was a man known to his followers as 'The Whirlwind' and to his enemies as 'The Thunderbolt.' His name was John Lapham Bullis, and he was a Lieutenant in the US Army".***

An additional segment from Eckhardt explains the bond between Bullis and the Seminoles. The following is a statement from Joseph Phillips, Seminole Scout. ***"Of LT Bullis, one of the Scouts, Joseph Phillips, said: "That feller suffer just like we did out in the woods. He was a good man. He was a Injun fighter. He was tough. He didn't care how big a bunch they was, he went into 'em every time, but he look after his men. His men was on equality, too. He didn't stand back and say 'go yonder,' he say 'come on boys, let's go get 'em.""***

Many thanks to Kinley Coyan of WTAS for his skill in researching the National Archives and discovering the testimony of John Bullis before congress. We are proud of our team work at WTAS.

Best wishes to all and "happy reading".

C.A. Maedgen, III
V. P. WTAS
Feb 18th, 2025

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John Lapham Bullis

April 17, 1841, Macedon, New York
May 26, 1911, San Antonio, Texas



John Lapham Bullis

Corporal, Co. H, 126th New York Volunteer Infantry
Harpers Ferry Sept 12-15th 1862
Wounded and captured

Gettysburg July 1-3rd 1863
Wounded and captured
Imprisoned 10 months at Libby Prison
Exchanged for a Confederate in the Spring of 1864

Aug 1864 Promoted Captain
118th US Colored Troops Inf

Indian Wars
Sept 1867 commissioned 2nd Lt. 41st Colored Infantry
1869 Reassigned to 24th Colored Infantry at Ft Duncan
1873 Reassigned Ft Clark Seminole Negro Indian Scouts

John Bullis history from the West Texas Archeological Society's 'Camp Meyers Spring' report:

Although raised as a Quaker, John Bullis was drawn to the military. 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, 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 own 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.

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 Colored Infantry Regiment. The 118th was transferred to the Dutch Gap Canal building project. (Wallace) The canal project was to allow ships to bypass the loop of the James River around Farrar's Island, Virginia, which Confederate batteries controlled.

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. 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 out of Fort McKavett, but the 24th Infantry was mainly used to escort and protect stagecoach stations or work 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.

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 back in Washington, D.C., to do something 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. Because of his success, he was transferred, along with the 4th Cavalry Regiment, to Fort Clark in 1873, with orders to stop the raids out of 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 given in person to Colonel Mackenzie at Fort Clark by the Secretary of War, William Belknap, and General Phillip Sheridan.

Colonel Mackenzie knew Lieutenant Bullis from their time together in the 41st, later the 24th Infantry Buffalo Soldier' Regiment. 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. 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 and leading larger forces for Colonel Mackenzie. Mackenzie transferred him and the Fort Duncan Scouts to Fort Clark in 1874. He promoted Bullis to first lieutenant, gave him full command of the consolidated Black Seminole Indian Scout Detachment, and authorized him to conduct patrols independently with the full detachment.

Bullis continued in leadership of the Seminole Scouts with at least 12 recorded battles in Mexico against the encampments of the marauding Indians. Read the congressional record included in this report for more details of the 12 events South of the Border.

Additional Information: After an illustrious career leading the Seminoles, Bullis was relieved of command of the Seminoles (1882) and transferred to Fort Supply in Indian Territory where he served until 1888.

In 1888 Bullis was transferred to Arizona where he served as Captain under General Nelson Miles. Bullis was the agent for the Apache at San Carlos Reservation.

In 1893 Capt. Bullis was transferred to Santa Fe, New Mexico territory, and served as agent for the Pueblos and for the Jicarilla Apache.

In 1897 Capt. Bullis was reassigned to Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio as Paymaster with the rank of Major.

During the Spanish-American War and the Philippine Insurrection Maj. Bullis served in Cuba and the Philippines.

In 1904 President Theodore Roosevelt promoted John Bullis to Brigadier General and on the following day Gen. Bullis retired from active military service. Gen. Bullis stayed on in San Antonio and in 1911 he passed away while at an event on Fort Sam Houston. He is buried in San Antonio at the National Cemetery. A photo of his grave marker is attached as the last page to this document.

Bullis was a very shrewd businessman in his land purchases. In our research on John Bullis, we found that he was actively purchasing sections of land in the western part of Texas from the railroad company building the first railroad from San Antonio to El Paso. From his knowledge of the land west of the Pecos Bullis knew where the all-important waterholes were located. He amassed at least 20000 acres of land that either had valuable water springs or contained minerals that could be harvested. See map of Independence Creek on page 70 for Bullis land. His partners in the minerals were Col. W.R. Shafter and rancher, John Spencer. As a result, John Bullis died a very wealthy man.

A final bit of information that cannot be left out. Despite his long remote military duty, he did find time to court his first wife, Alice Rodriguez, whom he married in 1872. Alice passed away in 1887 and after 4 years Bullis married Josephine Withers also of San Antonio. They had 3 daughters.

Camp Bullis, outside of San Antonio, was named in his honor by the military.

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four men attacked them and maintained the fight for upwards of thirty minutes, but found it impossible to dislodge them and retired, taking with him, however, a second herd of cattle which the Indians had collected - numbering about two hundred.

G. O. No. 6, Dept. of Texas, June 2, 1873.

It is with pleasure the Department Commander (General C. C. Augur) announces to his command the gallant and successful attack by Colonel R. S. Mackenzie, 4th Cavalry, with a portion of his regiment upon the combined camps of hostile Kickapoo, Lipan and Mescalero - Apache Indians. Having ascertained the location of these tribes, parties of which had just made a devastating raid on the Rio Grande frontier of Texas, Colonel Mackenzie assembled six companies of his regiment on the evening of May 17th, marched all that night, encountering and overcoming the difficulties and obstacles incidental to such marches in a strange country, and struck the Indians at 7 o'clock on the morning of the 18th, killing 19 warriors, capturing Costillietos principal chief of the Lipans, forty women and children, and about sixty-five ponies, and destroying three villages with their accumulated property. His own loss was three men wounded - one mortally. The companies and officers engaged were as follows x x x and 2nd Lieutenant John L. Bullis, 24th Infantry, commanding Seminole Scouts. x x x.

Colonel Mackenzie reports that all of these officers acted handsomely and deserve consideration. The following extracts from Colonel Mackenzie's report are published here as a carefully considered and deserved tribute to his command: x x x I wish also to mention Lieut. Bullis, with the Seminole Scouts, who behaved under the command of that gallant officer very well. x x x The Commanding General tenders to Colonel Mackenzie and his gallant command his thanks and congratulations for the very handsome manner in which they accomplished this perilous and difficult work. The cheerful and ready conduct of the men under the unavoidable privations, having nothing to eat for nearly two days but a little hard bread, is quite as creditable to them as their gallantry in the fight. It is believed that a few repetitions of this effective and summary punishment would give quiet to that portion of the Rio Grande frontier so long outraged by these Indians.

G. O. No. 10, Dept. of Texas, May 12, 1875:

The following report of a scout made by 1st Lieutenant J. L. Bullis, 24th Infantry, Commanding Scouts at Fort Clark, Texas, is published to this command: x x x "We left the spring at about 1 o'clock P. M. and marched East for about three miles and struck a fresh trail going Northwest towards Eagle's Nest crossing. The trail was quite large and came from the direction of the settlements, and was made, I judge by seventy-five head, or more, of horses. We immediately took the trail and followed it briskly for about an hour, and came upon a party of Indians, unobserved, attempting to cross the Pecos to the west side. We immediately tied our horses, and crept back of a bush, up to within about seventy-five yards of them (all of which were dismounted except one squaw) and gave them a volley which we followed up lively for about

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three-fourths of an hour, during which time we twice took their horses from them, and killed three Indians and wounded a fourth. We were at last compelled to give way, as they were about to get around us and cut us off from our horses. I regret to say that I lost mine with saddle and bridle complete, and just saved my hair by jumping on my sergeant's horse, back of him. The truth is, there were some twenty-five or thirty Indians in all, and mostly armed with Winchester guns, and they were too much for us". x x x Words commendatory of the energy, gallantry and good judgment displayed by Lieutenant Bullis, and the courageous and soldierly conduct of the three scouts who composed his party are not needed. The simple narrative given by himself explains fully the difficulties and dangers of his expedition. His own conduct, as well as that of his men, is well worthy of imitation, and shows what an officer can do who means business.

Late Lt. Col. I. D. Davis, 118th U. S. C. I.
x x x I can recommend him (Bullis) as a most diligent and attentive officer, a strict disciplinarian, and a man of the best moral character I ever saw in the Army. x x x

Extract copy of telegram:

Fort Clark, Texas, May 6, 1881. General C. C. Augur.
The Assistant Adjutant General, San Antonio, Texas.
Bullis reports from camp ten miles below mouth of Pecos that on the 2d instant he struck Indian camp at day break, killed four bucks and one squaw, captured a boy and wounded squaw, and twenty-one animals. x x x Bullis reports that this is the party that killed the McLawin family. x x x (signed) Sweitzer.

Extract copy of telegram:

Fort Clark, Texas, May 6, 1881.
General C. C. Augur, San Antonio, Texas.
The facts in regard to Bullis are as follows: He left Fort Clark with thirty-four scouts on the 26th ultimo, a few hours after the ranchman gave information of the trail. Found trail on 27th, reached the Rio Grande, ten miles below mouth of Pecos, on the 30th, crossed the next morning following the trail which led into the Burro mountains. The 2d at 4 P. M. espied the Indian camp two miles distant in a rough and broken country. Bullis concealed his party until midnight, when he led 27 of his men to the Indian camp (leaving the rest in charge of animals at day break he rushed on them with the result reported by Sweitzer. x x x (Signed) Stanley.

Brigadier General C. C. Augur, U. S. Army (retired) June 2, 1890.

x x x I was in command of the Department of Texas in 1861. The conduct of Lieutenant Bullis on this occasion was very bold, enterprising and persevering. I respectfully recommend that he receive a brevet for his conduct. I have already recommended Lieutenant Bullis for a brevet for his conduct previous to this occasion while operating with General Mackenzie's command in 1872 - 1878. x x x

Col. C. M. Terrell, Pay Department. (retired)

I take pleasure in testifying to the qualifications and

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eminent fitness of 1st Lieutenant John L. Bullis, 24th Infantry for appointment as Paymaster in the Army. Lieut. Bullis is more widely known in Texas, as an energetic scouting officer than officer of his grade who has ever served in the state. He has been frequently mentioned for his courage and capacity by the Department and Division Commanders. I have known him for fourteen years as a sober, careful and painstaking business officer, whose papers when presented to me to have been uniformal correct.

Hon. Thomas M. Paschal, (member 53d Congress from Texas.)

It is with feelings of sincere pleasure that I can conscientiously say that Lieutenant John L. Bullis, of the United States Army, in every capacity and relation of life in which he has been tried has won a place in the confidence, respect and admiration of the entire people of the state of Texas, and has never been surpassed and but seldom equalled in the history of this State. To account or to enumerate the conduct and acts of his, which have gained for him this high position, would be a task, which would involve writing the history of a large portion of the border of Texas, during one of its most trying and eventful periods. His conceptions of his duties and privileges as a citizen were none the less clear and exalted on account of his manifold and arduous and active duties as a soldier, and both combined have not only rendered his name especially dear to the people of Texas (more particularly those whose homes and firesides he has so gallantly defended) but has made it a household word in the Lone Star State throughout her vast extent. He is indeed a gentleman, and civilian and a soldier "sans peur et sans reproche".

Copy of a concurrent resolution adopted by the House of Representatives and Senate of Texas, in Legislature assembled, April 7, 1882.

Resolved by the House of Representatives, the Senate concurring, That we tender our sincere thanks in the name of the people of this State, to Lieutenant J. L. Bullis, of the Twenty-fourth Infantry, United States Army, for the gallant and efficient services rendered by him and his command in behalf of the people of the frontier of this State, in repelling the depredations of Indians and other enemies of the frontier of Texas.

Forty-seventh Congress,
Committee on Military Affairs,
House of Representatives,
Washington, D. C., Apr. 14, 1882.

To the
President.

In view of the long and distinguished military services rendered by Lieutenant John L. Bullis, on the frontier of Texas, for which our people are very grateful, we cheerfully commend him to favorable consideration for promotion.

Very respectfully,

(Signed) C. Upson.
" D. E. Culberson.
" G. W. Jones.
" Olin Wellborn.

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We cordially concur. No officer of the grade of Lieutenant Bullis stands higher in Texas. Senate Chamber, April 24, 1882.

(Signed) S. B. Maxey.
Richd. Coke.

Colonel William R. Shafter, 1st Infantry. April 26, 1882.

x x x Lieutenant Bullis has served on the frontier of Texas since 1867, and the greater part of the time, has been in the field, operating against hostile Indians.

He has been a zealous faithful officer, and his success in overtaking and punishing marauding Indians has been remarkable. He has rarely failed to capture stolen stock and punish parties that he had been sent in pursuit of.

The appointment asked for will in the opinion of those who know him, be no more than a suitable reward for his valuable and distinguished services.

Brig. Genl. D. S. Stanley, U. S. Army. (retired) (May 20, 1882.)

x x x Lieutenant Bullis served honorably in the war of the rebellion, and directly after the war being transferred to the 41st Infantry and stationed in Texas, he commenced, and continued up to this date last year, the most successful career of an Indian fighter that has ever been recorded in the history of the American Army.

In this brief paper I can only say that Lieutenant Bullis has been about one dozen times complimented in Orders, in especial and general reports, for successful enterprises against the Indians, that he has had the thanks of the Honorable Legislature of the State of Texas, and upon leaving this Department he has had two swords presented by two separate communities, for his gallant services in protecting the frontier of Texas. There is no officer now in the Army with such a record.

Edward J. Davis. (Governor of Texas - June 5, 1882.)

As a Texan I feel a great interest in the future of Lieutenant J. L. Bullis, U. S. Army. This is not only because he has become a Texan x x x but because he has done such good service on our frontier - his many gallant exploits against our frontier enemies being no doubt well known to you.

I have therefore to request that Mr. Bullis' name be favorably considered for appointment to one of the vacancies in the Paymaster's Department. x x x .

Brig. Genl. C. C. Augur, Comdg. Dept. of Texas. (Oct. 25, 1882.)

Understanding that you (Major Bullis) are an applicant for advancement in the service, I take pleasure in stating that you served in this Department while I was in command from January 1872 to March 1875, and from January 1880 to July 1881. That from June 1873, when I placed you in command of the Seminole Scouts, you were, a large portion of the time on scouting duty with your command, during which time your services were valuable and important and contributed greatly to the security of the Rio Grande frontier.

In your various engagements with Indians your conduct was that of a brave, cool and determined officer, and

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your operations were conducted with skill and sagacity. The records of the Department show that you were in the field scouting with your command - Seminole Scouts, from

May 16th to 21st 1873.
October 23rd to November 25th 1873.
January 29th to February 26th 1874.
February 27th to April 17th 1874.
May 17th to June 15th 1874.
July 10th to October 1st 1874.
December 28th 1874 to January 23rd 1875.
July 21st to November 10th 1875.
March 6th to April 8th 1876.

On detached service with Colonel Shafter's command from April 11th to September 4th 1876.

On scouting duty from

November 23rd to December 20th 1876.
March 15th to July 24th 1877.
July 29th to August 6th 1877.
August 10th to October 4th 1877.
October 14th to December 16th 1877.

On detached service at Washington, before Military Committee, from

December 25th 1877 to February 6th 1878.

On detached service in the field, in command of Seminole Scouts from

March 28th to June 23rd 1878.
September 7th to October 19th 1878.
December 30th to April 19th 1879.
July 8th to September 8th 1879.
September 27th to December 21st 1879.
January 6th to April 20th 1880.
May 31st to June 5th 1880.
July 24th 1880 to January 16th 1881.
March 3rd to April 7th 1881.
April 26th to May 8th 1881.
May 13th to June 3rd 1881.

You (Major Bullis) have received complimentary notices in General Orders from Headquarters of this Department as follows:

General Orders No. 17 of 1871.
General Orders No. 6 of 1873.
General Orders No. 10 of 1875,

and in addition several complimentary telegrams from the Department Commander.

Altogether your record is such as to entitle you to the favorable consideration of your application for advancement.

Brig. Genl. D. S. Stanley, U. S. Army (retired)
May 6, 1890.

x x x I have the honor to state that on or about April 27th 1881, I ordered Lieutenant John L. Bullis, 24th Infantry, then in command of the Seminole Scouts at Fort Clark, Texas, to pursue and destroy or capture, a band of hostile Lipan Indians, from Mexico, which had murdered a woman named McLauren on the head of the Rio Frio; had robbed houses and had stolen horses. Lieutenant Bullis with thirty scouts, struck the trail on the 28th and followed over the rugged, precipitous mountains and canons of Devils River where the mauraders killed thirty of their horses, and they could not drive them through this terrible country. The Indians escaped across the Rio Grande into Mexico, the trail leading towards the Burro Mountains, and second day Lieutenant Bullis discovered their camp well

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up the mountains. Concealing his force until midnight, he surrounded the Indian camp, and at dawn of day attacked, killing and capturing all in the camp excepting a noted chief and murderer named San-da-ve, who escaped mortally wounded, and soon died as was afterwards learned from Mexicans.

This raid of the hostiles and their swift punishment is notable because it is the last time hostile Indians set foot on Texas soil.

For his perseverance, skill and good management of this successful expedition, I respectfully recommend that 1st Lieutenant John L. Bullis (now Captain) receive a brevet dated from May 3rd 1881.

Major Theo. J. Wint, 10th U. S. Cavalry.

Having been informed that Captain John L. Bullis, 24th U. S. Infantry is an applicant for appointment as Major and Paymaster U. S. Army, I am pleased to state in his behalf, that, in my opinion, such appointment would be a most suitable one, and reward an officer whose active service on the frontier has been long with important and most creditable results.

Brig. Genl. Z. R. Bliss, Comdg. Dept. of Texas. (May 15, 1896.)

I beg leave to invite your attention to the claims of Captain John D. Bullis, 24th U. S. Infantry, for appointment as Paymaster U. S. Army. I have known Captain Bullis about twenty-five years. His service while in command of Seminole-Negro Indian Scouts are of record in the War Department and were so valuable that he received the brevet of Major from the President, and two valuable swords, one voted by the Legislature of Texas for his gallant conduct and successful engagements with Indians, and the other given by the citizens of Western Texas for his services in ridding Texas of renegade Lipans and Apaches and rendering the homes of the settlers safe from their outrages.

Captain Bullis has a perfectly clear record. He served in the war of the rebellion, and is number ninety in the lineal list of captains of infantry. He will retire for age in 1904, and has very little if any chance of reaching the grade of Major by regular promotion. I know him to be an officer of most distinguished services on the frontier, of strict integrity and ability, capable and energetic, and I respectfully recommend him to the favorable consideration of his Excellency the President and the Honorable Secretary of War for appointment to the grade of Major and Paymaster U. S. Army, on the occurrence of the next vacancy.

Brig. Genl. J. C. Breckenridge, Insp. Genl. U. S. A. (Nov. 29, 1895.)

In any selection for promotion, especially in the Pay Department, permit me to invite your attention to the record of Capt. J. L. Bullis, Twenty-fourth Infantry, whose arduous and important services have received notice in legislative resolutions and presentation swords, brevets and orders, but would be worthily recognized by positive promotion.

Major General N. A. Miles, Comdg. U. S. Army.

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Under date of May 2, 1896 forwarded Captain Bullis' application for promotion to Major and Paymaster endorsed as follows: x x x "Approved and strongly recommended. Captain Bullis' services with troops and with Indians have been marked in a high degree by capacity and faithful efficiency under very trying circumstances, as his record will show. His capacity, character and habits well fit him for the appointment he seeks and the reasons he assigns for seeking such an appointment are valid".

Major F. S. Dodge, Pay Department. (May 18, 1896.)

x x x I have known of no one who, by reason of hard and hazardous service on the frontier and in the field is entitled to more consideration x x x I believe that ever since the war your service has been rendered exclusively in the Plains and among Indians, unrelieved (until recently) by any detail in a civilized community, and rarely even by a leave of absence.

Having known you personally for many years I can testify to your intelligence, capacity and fidelity, and your social standing in the Army.

Few men in any service have had a better record or are more entitled to the promotion which I sincerely hope may fall to your lot.

---oOo---

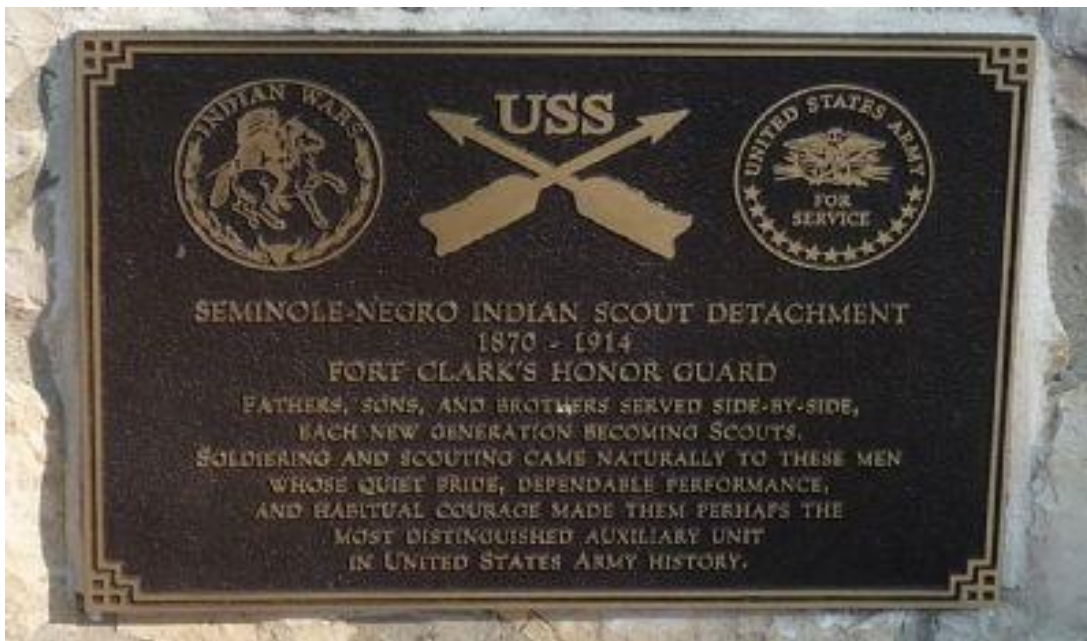
Plan of Action Reports by Lt. Col. William R. Shafter

The following pages encompass multiple units of the US Army, and these reports are included in this project because one of the integral units of Shafter's command was that of the unit commanded by 2nd Lt. John Bullis. Lt. Bullis and the Seminole Scouts were the tip of the spear, the eyes, and the ears for Lt Col Shafter in their pursuit of the marauding Indians. Without the services of the skilled Seminole trackers the military units would not be able to bring the full might of their military power upon the Lipan Apache, Kickapoo, and the Comanche.

These documents are in their original cursive-written form.



Seminole Negro Indian Scouts at Fort Clark, Texas



Copy.

Telegram.

Head Devils River Mexico July 31st
via Duncan Aug. 1st 1876.

Received at San Antonio Tex. Aug. 1st 76. 3:30 P.M.

Maj. General Dept. of Tex.

July twenty second spies reported to me at camp on Rio Grande from Indian camp started next day - July twenty eight got to within thirty miles of where Indians were reported to be. - I then laid up a day & sent spies again to camp, they returned reporting both camps broken up and gone one small one of four families as being near a rancho and the big camp gone to the mountains north west at 4 P.M. 29th soon after return of spies I broke camp sending Capt. Bullis and Evans with forty men to get the small camp while with the main command I started for the trail of party going to mountains - after marching twenty miles I met one of my guides from whom I learned that the reported trail of camp was only a small party of Indians going to Texas on a raid and that the main camp was near Saragossa at least thirty five miles from my ten beyond the camp. Bullis was to hit it, was there ten o'clock at night and I could only march down towards Bullis - camp was a small town. He was expected to return by, so as to protect him if molested by Mexicans. By a Sergeant and four men I found last night lost from Bullis command I learn that he struck the camp at daylight the 30th killing ten, capturing four, entirely destroying camp and taking about one hundred horses. - Bullis suffered no loss or injury except wounding two or three horses. - He has passed above me or gone into Clark. This will stop all scouting for Indians

in this direction for a long time, there is now only Mesqueros to look after. Nothing can be heard of them - They are either at springs in the desert south of San Carlos or on the Staked Plains. If I am to go for them I will have to send an officer to Del Norte to get a guide and make inquiries after them. - All men employed especially for this scout will be discharged. There are now thirteen Lipans in Texas stealing, they crossed Rio Grande on the 22^d and on the 25^d. I found their ponies with saddles and blankets at a water hole near Rio Grande. Bridles & Lariats they had taken with them. I shall leave a company at the water holes to morrow & try to catch them when they return with their plunder. The spot is about half way between mouth of Pecos & Devils River and on the Mexican side. If they have not already been heard from they soon will be. One of the horses and some clothing was recognized as belonging to Mexican captives who lives with the Lipans. There is therefore no doubt as to who they are. I will reach camp on Pecos about August fourth will you send me orders by courier from Clark. - Command is in good shape for work. - Camp hit by Bullis was the main one instead of a small one of four families as reported by guides.

Yours

Lt. Col. Comdg Scout Expedition

Official

H. D. M.

2^d Lieut 25th Infantry

H. D. M.

207
+
August 18th, 46.

Sir:

I have the honor to transmit,
for your information, copy of a report
of Colonel Shafter — with remarks
thereon of General Ord — of Lieutenant
Bullis's encounter with Chickapoo
and Sipan Indians, in which ten
were killed and four captured, &c. &c.

Very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,



Chief Clerk.

For the Secretary of War,
in his absence.

To the Honorable

The Secretary of State.

Copy U.S. Dept. Texas and Div. Ins

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Copy

San Antonio, Texas

October 10th. 1876.

Colonel J. N. Taylor, Major.
Assistant Adjutant General
Department of Texas.
San Antonio Texas.

Sir:

I have the honor to submit for the information of the Brigadier General commanding the Department, the following report of the operations of the troops composing scouting expedition under my command during the past summer.

Pursuant to telegraphic instructions of April 8th. directing me to proceed to Fort Clark Texas, and there take command of Companies then at that post and proceed to Devils River, and establish a camp from which to scout for hostile Indians. I left the post of Fort Duncan April 8th arriving at Fort Clark on the morning of April 9th and at once assumed command of the two Companies of the 10th Cavalry and Co Fth 24th Infantry. Co Hth 10th Infantry did not report to me as the commanding officer of Fort Clark understood that it was simply to act as a train guard to my supply camp.

I remained at Fort Clark until the 13th of April turning in surplus and unnecessary

Company property and as far as possible re-
filling the wagon train. Everything being
in readiness I left for old Camp Hudson
on April 13th. and arrived there on the 18th.
I found that large herds of cattle had been
wintered at Hudson, and consequently no
graze, and as the location of the camp had
been left somewhat discretionary with me,
I moved on April 21st to old Stage Stand near
Bear Lake, 20 miles above Camp Hudson,
where I found good graze and there established
my supply camp.

As all scouting for Indians, would have to be
in the direction of the Rio Grande, I thought
it best to make my supply camp on the Pecos
at or near mouth of Howards Creek, if a prac-
ticable wagon road could be made. With this
object in view I took Lieut. Pullis with his
Company of Seminoles, and with 15 fire wagons
started for the Pecos, reaching there in two days,
finding no difficulty in making the wagons
across and that with a few days labor of our
Company a tolerably good road could be made.

The graze on the Pecos was found to be good
and immediately after returning to head
of Devil's River, I moved my supply camp
to the Pecos, where I remained until the
expedition was ordered in.

I at this time (May 1st) submitted to the

Commanding General, as directed by him
the following general plan of operations:

Headquarters, Scouting Expedition
Camp at old Sage near Beaver Lake, Texas.
May 1st 1876.

Assistant Adjutant General
Department of Texas.
San Antonio Texas.

Sir:

Referring to the last clause of your
telegram of April 12th to me I have the
honor to give the following as a general
plan of operations for this command
this summer.

It is of course well known that all
depredations at present or for the last
two years by indians in this part of Texas
have been made by indians who at the time
they make the depredations any where within
one hundred miles of this place or Ft. Clark
are living and have their families and main
camps across the Rio Grande. Of this there is
no doubt, as I know from men trading
at the camps, and from men that I have sent
to them, that when indians have been un-
usually active about here, the traders were
equally so at their camps, and that when it was

in the direction of San Vicente on the mountain below them, and if fresh
trails are found by and come down from the north and back any camp
of Indians.

guid on this side, there were no camps of
Lipans or Mescaleros to be heard of on the other,
at these times the Indians probably being on
the plains hunting Buffalo or in New Mexico.
If an arrangement could be made with the
Governor of Coahuila such as exists with the
Governor of Chihuahua we should operate
from near Fort Clark, crossing below the
Devil's River, where the banks are low, and
where we could easily recross to this side by
swimming, no matter how high the Rio
Grande should get. But until this arrange-
ment can be made and understood by the
frontier authorities of Coahuila, it is too
slow to the towns, and crossing of troops would
at once be known and cause alarm to the
people, if nothing more.

I therefore prefer to establish for the present
a camp on the Pecos at the mouth of Howard
Creek and scout up & down the Rio Grande
above mouth of Pecos. This will keep bands
from camping temporarily on this side
and will cut their trail if they go the plain.
I will also cross the river and see if I can
find and strike any camps, opposite mouth
of Pecos and Devil's river, and as far down
as opposite San Felipe. This can be done without
disturbing Mexican settlements and in fact
without the people on the other side, knowing

anything about it, and it will be very demoralizing to the Indians to know that we will cross the river after them, whether we get them or not. They dare not go far toward the settlements in Mexico, and stored upon the other side will break for the plains or Guadalupe Mountains.

From mouth of Pecos to near Presidio del Norte the Rio Grande flows through a Canon.

The most of the way it is difficult to get down to the river and in some places for many miles it cannot be done. The crossings at an ordinary stage of water are not difficult, but in high water which comes from first of July to September, it would be very dangerous crossing. It will therefore be best to see about Indians on the other side with as little delay as possible and I propose to do so on my first scout.

I am Sir

very respectfully
your obedient servant


(sgd) W. D. Shafler.
Lieut. Col. 24th Inf. Cav.

As two additional Companies (F: 8th & K: 10th Cos.) had been ordered to report to me, I remained in camp until May 24th awaiting their arrival, before commencing operations under the plan I had suggested, meanwhile fitting out my pack train. - As Indians were reported raiding in the vicinity of

San Felipe, stealing horses and killing several people, I determined to start at once for the Rio Grande and let "F" Co. 8th Cav. which had not yet arrived, follow my trail.

I left camp on Pecos May 24th with 30 days rations on pack mules. My command reached the Rio Grande distance fifty miles after a hard march of three days. I remained on camp on the Rio Grande about days, and sent from there one party to within seventy five miles of Fort Davis, and another down the Rio Grande to near its junction with the Pecos. Both parties reported that no fresh sign of Indians could be found. June 1st. Lieut Puller with six men was sent across the river to see if he could find any indication of Indians. He returned on the 4th reporting that he had found very fresh trails indicating that a camp must be located near a large mountain in Mexico, known as Sierra Carmel, about seventy miles south-west of my camp. On the same day of his return, I started with the whole command (having been joined by "F" Co. 8th Cavalry under command of Lieut Pullman) crossing the Rio Grande fifteen miles below and reaching the vicinity of the camp on the 11th. to find that it had consisted of only eight lodges and was simply a hunting camp. That the Indians had been staying there for 5 or 6

days only and had been gone 3 or 4 days when I got there. I found several large springs in the mountains and many old camps showing it to be a place much resorted to by Indians. The march from the Rio Grande to the Sierra Carmel was difficult from lack of water, there being no permanent water the whole distance. I remained in camp in the mountains four days, starting back in the afternoon of the 14th to my supply camp which I reached on the 18th June.

At the Sierra Carmel Lieut Bullis with 32 men was detached and directed to proceed in a westerly course,  crossing the Rio Grande near San Vincente, and to come round south of Fort Davis and Stockton to supply camp which he reached on the 27th of June, bringing in fourteen Indian ponies which he had picked up in a recently abandoned Indian camp on the Texas side of the Rio Grande, a short distance below the old post of San Vincente in Mexico. The trail from this camp, which was two weeks old, was followed by Lieut Bullis toward Fort Davis and then directly west towards Del Norte. After following the trail three days, heavy rains set in completely washing it out and he was forced to abandon it.

The party consisted of eight or ten lodges

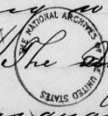
and had seventy five or one hundred horses.

The trail where abandoned was leading in the direction of Del Norte. These Indians were undoubtedly a part of the band of Mesquiteros that disappeared early in April from the vicinity of Saragosa, Mexico and that have not with this exception been heard of since.

This scout convinced me that the Indians, who were during this time continuing their depredations on this side, had their camps considerably further down the river, and in the vicinity of some of the small towns forty or fifty miles back from the frontier.

Leaving my command in camp, I proceeded to Fort Duncan, Texas and there engaged two trusty Mexicans, who had been in the habit of trading with the Indians, to go and find the camps and then come directly to my camp on the Pecos by July 15th. I waited there for them until the 19th and then started with four companies of Cavalry, one of Infantry and the Seminoles, for the Rio Grande striking it at Eagle Nest Crossing, twenty eight miles from my camp on the Pecos. On the second day after my arrival at this point, Lieut Jones who had been sent up the river with a small detachment to look for a crossing, discovered my guides on the opposite side of the river and brought them into camp. They reported that they had

left the Indian camp five days before - that the camps were two in number, one small one of 5 lodges, situated on the San Rodrigo, about five miles west of Penuolima, the other about thirty five miles further west in the mountains and on the same stream. The crossing of the river at this point was difficult and would have been impracticable had we not been supplied with boats, of which we had three, - one large scow and one small row-boat and one rubber boat.

With these a crossing was safely made in a few hours,  the infantry Co. being left at the crossing as guard. On the morning of July 24th I left ^{the} Rio Grande for the Indian camps arriving on the 28th at the head of the San Diego River, distant from thirty to forty miles from where the camps were supposed to be.

The marches up to this time had been made mostly at night. As 12 days had elapsed since the guides saw at the camps, I determined to remain here and send the guides forward, to see if any change had taken place in their location. - One of the guides returned at 2 o'clock P.M. on the 29th reporting both camps broken up and gone, one small camp of four families as being near a rancho a few miles from and west of


Saragosa and that the main camp had gone to the mountains, North west of where I then was, and that the other guide was on the trail of the latter camp and would wait for me at a gap in the mountains about 20 miles distant. At 4 o'clock P.M. on the same day, soon after the return of the guide, I broke camp, sending Scouts Bullis & Evans, with forty men and the guide to get the small camp, to do which they would have to make that night a march of forty miles to the South passing in the immediate vicinity of a town of four hundred inhabitants, while with the main command, I started for the trail of party going to the mountains. After marching twenty miles I met the guide, from whom I learned that the reported trail of camps was only that of a small party of Indians going to Texas, whose trail we had crossed on our way down from the Rio Grande to the San Diego, and that the main camp was near Saragosa, at least forty miles from me and ten beyond the camp which Bullis was to hit. It was then 10 o'clock at night, and I could only march down

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toward Bullis and wait for him, remaining near a small town he was expected to return by, so as to protect him if molested by Mexicans.

The next day by a Sgt. and four men who had become separated from him and come into my camp, I learned that Lieut Bullis had struck the main camp and that he had returned to San Diego by a route different from that which he went down, I immediately broke camp and returned to the San Diego, reaching there about midnight on the 30th. The attack on the Indian camp was a success, being a complete surprise. Lieut Bullis arrived in the immediate vicinity of the camp just before day and attacked at dawn by charging with his entire force mounted. The country about the camp was very hilly, bushy, and cut up by ravines, which enabled a number of the Indians to escape. The result of the fight was however very disastrous to the Indians, they losing fourteen killed in the camp four captured, and the Chief, who, though at the time very sick succeeded in mounting his horse and getting away in the direction of Saragosa, but after running about four miles fell from his horse in the road and died. The entire camp with all its supplies

was completely destroyed by burning. Eighty seven horses and six mules were captured. A large amount of property of great value to the Indians, such as saddles, bridles, robes, tentage, cooking utensils etc was destroyed. The Indians in fact saving nothing except what they wore away. Our loss consisted only of two horses shot.

On the way down from the Rio Grande to the San Diego, the guides discovered near the river on the Mexican side, five Indian ponies and saddles at a water hole, where they had been left by a party of raiding Indians who had gone across the river on foot. This party of Indians was known to belong to the band whose camp I was trying to strike as one of the horses and some of the saddles were identified by the spies, and the names of their owners given, which was afterwards confirmed by the captive squaws, who gave the names of eleven Lipan Indians and three Mexican captives, who were in Texas skating at the time of the attack on their camp! As I knew the exact time these Indians had crossed the river the trail having been found (not more than two hours after it had been made) about half

between the mouths of the Pecos and Devils River, by a small party which I had sent down the river to look for a crossing, I know that it was not probable that they would recross before I returned. I therefore paid no attention to them on my way down. - August 1st on my return, as I passed the place where the indian ponies were left, Lieuts. Bullis & Seymour with the Seminoles were detached and directed to stay at the water hole to watch the return of the party of indians, as I was quite sure they would return that way to get their ponies and saddles. With the remainder of the command I marched to the Rio Grande and recrossed to the Texas side, losing in  doing one private of Co. "B", 10th Cav. and two horses, drowned. One of the captive squaws promising, in consideration to her liberty, to guide me to the camp where the women and the children of the Indians raiding in Texas had been left, I gave Capt. Lobo four detachments of twenty five picked men and horses each, directing him to recross the river and, with the squaw for guide, try and get the Indian camp, which she reported in the mountains.

about seventy five miles from the Rio Grande, and opposite the mouth of the Pecos. This he fortunately succeeded in doing but not through the instrumentality of the squaw.

Leaving a small Infantry guard at the Rio Grande to take charge of the boats and await the return of Capt Lebo and Lieut. Bullis, with the remainder of the command, I returned to the camp on Pecos. Soon after my return I learned that a party of Indians with a large number of horses stolen in the vicinity of Phanis and Noalde were on their way to the Rio Grande. To intercept them if possible I immediately started Captain Kelley & Lieut. Beacom with twenty men each down the river, one to remain at Painted Case Spring, and the other to go to near mouth of Devils River. Lieut. Seymour with 13 men was sent ^{to scout} up the Pecos as far as Lancaster. Lieut. Bullis with twenty five men was sent to Geddes Springs south of Central Station on the Staked Plains. Lieut. Jones with fifteen men to Beaver Lake, the head of Devils River and thence to go to a water hole more than half way from Beaver Lake to

head of South Lane. The Scouts of Lieuts. Bullis & Jones were intended to strike the trail of the Indians should they prove to be from the Plains instead of from Mexico. The attempt to head the Indians on this side of the river was however fruitless, as they passed into Mexico about twenty five miles below the mouth of the Pecos the day before Lieut. Beacom got there. Captain Lebo, however, was more fortunate, as he struck their trail about thirty miles west of the mouth of the Pecos as he was returning to the Rio Grande and only a few hours behind the Indians. The trail was going nearly west towards the mountains about forty miles distant. Captain Lebo with eighty men immediately started in pursuit, sending back a train with twenty men to the camp on the Rio Grande for rations. The trail was followed for about fifty five miles and into the mountains when he sighted the Indian village about four or five miles distant, and moved rapidly towards it. The Indians had however observed his approach, which they could readily do, as their camp was situated on a high mountain overlooking the plain, the troops had to creep, and which had to be crept by daylight as there was

no means of finding the camp except
by following the trail. It was found
that the camp had been abandoned in great
haste, the Indians leaving everything behind
them - the camp standing and food cooking
over the fires. The camp contained, about
one month's supply of provisions consisting
of dried meat, fruits and a quantity of Coffee
and Sugar, a great number of Robes, saddles
bridles, blankets, lariats, bows and arrows &c.
all of which was destroyed, with the exception
of what was taken away or used by the com'd.
there being sufficient corn to make a good
feed for a hundred head of horses. After
destroying the camp, Captain Lebo took
up the trail and after following a few miles
he found where the Indians had rounded
up and killed thirteen horses to prevent them
falling into his hands, and had evidently
scattered at that point, going in separate
parties of only two or three. The next day
an attempt was made to follow the trail
further, but on account of the mountainous
character of the country it was found im-
possible to do so. Captain Lebo captured
from this party fifty six animals in all,
which was undoubtedly all they had except
what they rode away. These horses were all
those recently stolen in this vicinity of

Thavis and Uvalde and were mostly mares and colts, a number of them having the Medina County brand (13) on their necks. They were nearly broken down from their long and rapid drive, and more than half of them gave out on the way back.

Those giving out in Mexico being killed to prevent them from again falling into the hands of the Indians. Capt. Lebo returned to camp on the 20th bringing in twenty six captured ponies.

On the 3^d. of August the party of Indian Scouts Bullis & Seymour had been left to watch was seen approaching. Lieut Bullis with his command immediately started for them, but the Indians fairly outran him. He however succeeded in getting their entire herd with the exception of the five animals they rode away. The herd consisted of ten or twelve horses and five mules, all of which had been stolen five days before from some stock men at Kekapoo Springs near the west prong of the Neceps.

The command then remained in camp refitting and recuperating horses preparatory to another Scout until Sept. 4th. when the troops were ordered in and the scouting expedition broken up.

On September 11th while at head of

Devils River on my way in I received notice that Indians had been depre-
dation in the vicinity of Fort Terrett, stealing
from there a lot of horses, and was directed
to look out for them. In order to do so,
Lieut. Seymour, with fifteen men was sent
to patrol the road ten miles above Sanguero,
on the Pecos. Lieut. Joubert with a similar
detail was sent to a water hole on the
Staked Plains near head of south Starvo.
Lieut. Orlean with fifteen men was sent
down the Devils River and toward the head
of the west prong of the Nueces, and Capt.
Kelly, commanding at San Felipe, at my
request sent a detail of the same size with
an officer up the Rio Grande to near the
mouth of Pecos. The frontier therefore, so far
as finding the trail should it pass into Mexico
was concerned, was thoroughly patrolled, and
as no trail passed out in that direction
I am convinced that the party stealing the
horses at Terrett were either Indians from
the upper plains in Texas or some of the
horse thieves now infesting the Nueces,
Llano and Rio country.

The band of Indians against whom I was
operating this summer have been severely
punished, as every member of the Tribe has

been reached, to a greater or less extent, through the total destruction of all the camps of the tribe, the recovery of nearly all the animals lately stolen by them, together with the capture of considerable number of unbranded mares and colts, which they were evidently raising, and the loss by death and capture of nineteen members of their tribe. I do not think it probable that any stealing parties from that tribe will be over for some time. Spies sent to Saragosa report that the tribe has vanished and that their whereabouts is now unknown even to the Mexicans. They have undoubtedly gone far to the interior as did the Kitapoo in '73 when struck by Genl. Mackenzie, or have joined the Mescaleros, who are supposed to be either on the Staked Plains or in New Mexico. It is a well established fact that some of the depredations recently committed on the Rio Grande below Fort Clark and about Duncan have been committed by white men as three recent instances show.

In the first a bunch of mares and colts which were stolen from their range about four miles below Fort Duncan were followed by their owners with a few men and recovered near Pleasanton.

A few days later a bunch of thirty mares and colts were stolen from about fourteen miles above the post. The owner pursued them with a party of ten or twelve men, and recovered them near the Pendericia, the thieves abandoning them on the approach of the owners. In the third instance and still later, all the oxen of a large cart train were taken from near Eagle Pass. They were pursued by the Sheriff and a small force and a detail of ten men which I sent to assist him. This party succeeded in recovering eighty three oxen and one horse. The thieves in this instance as in the others abandoning the stock on the approach of the pursuers.

This shows very clearly that all the depredations committed on the frontier in the vicinity of San Felipe, Fort Clark and Fort Duncan should not be attributed to Indians or to Mexican thieves. My own opinion is, that quite as much danger to life and property is to be apprehended from the outlaws now infesting the frontier, and against whom the military authorities are powerless, as from Indians and thieves from Mexico.

The country scouted by my command during the late expedition had been very difficult to operate in on account of its -

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mountainous character. The attempt to cross with wagons from the head of Devils river west to the Pecos was the first ever made, and has been very successful, three tolerably fair roads having been made. The longest leaves the Stockton road on the divide about ten miles above the old stage stand near Beaver Lake, from there running west to Howard's Cañon and thence nearly south to the Pecos. The distance by this road from water at old stage stand to permanent water in Howard's Cañon is fifty five miles. The second road leaves the Devils River Cañon ten miles above Pecos Spring, thence running nearly west, striking Howard's Cañon three miles above where it empties into the Pecos. The distance by this road from water to water is forty miles. This is the best road of the three for ordinarily loaded wagons.

The third and shortest road leaves the Devils River Cañon two miles below Pecos Springs, running nearly west, and intercepting the middle road about twenty miles from the Pecos. distance from water to water about forty miles. A saving of ten miles is made, however in the Devils River Cañon by taking this road. The grass on all the roads is excellent, but the country is very

much broken and very rocky.

On my first scout I found the Country between the Pecos & the Rio Grande to be passable for Cavalry and succeeded in getting two wagons across. The distance from the Pecos to the Rio Grande by this trail is fifty four miles.

The passage of the wagons was attended with but slight difficulties except the crossing of two very deep and precipitous arroyos both of which appeared to extend many miles to the right and left of the trail.

Twenty nine miles west of the Pecos and on the trail there is a large spring of living water, called Paint-rock Spring. The grass in the vicinity, excellent.

The Rio Grande, where I struck it, is impassable, even in low water, except by swimming, the river for a great many miles above and below flowing nearly all the way through a channel of perpendicular rock from fifty to three hundred feet high with only occasional breaks where it is possible to get down to the water.

Fifteen miles below an excellent and shallow ford was found, where I crossed.

After crossing the country for some miles was very rough and rocky. After that for twenty

miles the trail passed over an Alkali plain covered with small bushes. It then enters a gap which extends entirely through the first range of mountains. This gap is from one-fourth to one-half mile in width, and sixteen miles in length, and is straight that standing at the end nearest to Rio Grande the view is uninterrupted to the Sierra Carmel forty five miles beyond. It is evidently a rent in the mountain range as for the whole distance the walls are nearly perpendicular, both sides being without verdure, and presenting exactly the appearance that would naturally be expected where a sudden separation of the mountain had taken place. There was no place observed where it would be possible to get out of the gap after entering, except by passing through it. After passing out of the mountains the trail for some miles passed over slightly rolling country and then for twelve or fifteen miles over another Alkali plain to the foot of the Sierra Carmel. This is by far the highest mountain anywhere within a radius of a hundred miles and can be seen from the divide between the Rio Grande and Pecos at a greater distance than that. Several fine springs and one stream of one half mile in length were

found. This stream was situated far up in the mountains and near a beautiful mountain-locked plain of five miles in length and two miles in width covered with luxuriant grass. A practical miner who accompanied the column for the purpose of prospecting claimed to have here found some rich and extensive veins of metallic ore.

On the second scout no difficulty was found in taking a wagon train from the Pecos to the Rio Grande, the course from the supply camp to the Rio Grande being nearly due south. There is no permanent water on the road and the grass is very good. From the Rio Grande south the first ten miles is very rough. After that it is level with but little alkali. The line of march was nearly parallel with the river and from twenty five to forty miles from it, and about the same distance from the mountains, west of us, crossing the head of the arroyos emptying into the Rio Grande, in all of which permanent water was found. Grass good all the way to the San Diego. The San Diego is one of the finest rivers, I have seen on either side of the

Rio Grande. It rises in a plain out of hard, gravelly banks, and in a few hundred yards, by several large springs flowing into it becomes a fine stream, considerably larger than the Las Moras at Fort Clark. A very large section of country could be irrigated from it without much labor or expense. The spring along the stream is of good size and abundant.

From this point to the Indian camps forty miles south and to the mountains (from here only twenty five miles west) the country is generally level. The San Rodrigo about twenty five miles south is a stream of about the same size as the San Diego. Upon this stream is the extreme frontier town of Pecos, near which the Kickapoos, Lipans and Mescaleros have made their camps for several years. It was four miles above this town that Gen. Mackenzie in 1873 hit the Kickapoos since which time they have either returned to their reservation in Kansas or kept far in the interior of Mexico.

In pursuing and attacking the Indians in Mexico, the citizens of that Republic have been in no way disturbed or alarmed, nor has there been any injury done their

property by any of the troops of my command.

In fact I was at no time, except the day of the capture of the camp near Saragosa, anywhere in the vicinity of their towns or ranchos; and at that time both Remolina & Saragosa were in the hands of the revolutionists, who had deposed all officers of the government and appointed their own.

Chasing Indians and raiders from Mexico, while on this side of the Rio Grande, is useless, and nothing has ever been accomplished by it. They can only be punished by following them to their camps, as was done during this scout.

I have learned from good authority that the well disposed citizens and the Mexican authorities now in power are not at all displeas'd at or disposed to take exception to, - the capturing made by my command.

A full record of all the brands and marks of the horses and mules captured was made, and at all times open to the inspection of citizens who were looking for stolen horses. And every horse or mule claimed by a citizen, and sworn to as his property was delivered to him without further proof.

In accordance with my promise to them, about sixty horses were distributed among the guides. Nearly all the others were either claimed by their owners or distributed among the command.

The unclaimed mules have been branded and taken up by the Quartermaster Department. A record showing the exact disposition of every horse and mule captured by my command has been kept and is open for the inspection of any person looking for stolen stock.

The number of horses lost during the scout was small, the total loss being only sixteen - as follows - ten broken down, two drowned, one killed in action, one by disease and two stolen by deserters.

This year, as last the supplies of all description have been ample and furnished without delay whenever called for.

The behavior of the troops was excellent - officers and men uncomplainingly and cheerfully enduring the hard marches, made during the hottest weather of the year, with water at long intervals; in two instances marches of sixty five miles being made without water for the horses, occasioning considerable suffering.

I am under many obligations to

The Commanding Officers at Fort Clark who have rendered all the assistance asked for and promptly co-operated with me whenever it was possible or advantageous to do so.

Lieut Jones the Engineer officer of the Expedition, will submit with as little delay as possible, a map of the country operated in.

I am Sir very respectfully
your obedient servant
(sgd) W. R. Shaffer
Lieut Col. 24th Infantry
Commanding Scouting Expedition

1st Endorsement

Headquarters Department of Texas
San Antonio, Texas Oct. 14th 1876.

A true copy respectfully forwarded to the Assistant Adjutant General Mil. Division of the Missouri for the information of the Lieutenant General commanding.

(sgd) E. O. C. Ord.
Brigadier Genl. Commanding

Official
Endorsement
Asst. Adjt. General.

Testimony of John L. Bullis

Congressional Committee on Military Affairs.

January 12, 1878, Washington, D.C.

Source: National Archives

We are including this testimony by John Bullis to the committee because it gives a clear concise firsthand view of what happened in the battles that Bullis and the Seminoles were engaged in. A firsthand account by the person directly involved in the military action is the heart or reality of historical fact. Too often this kind of firsthand knowledge is just not available. We know that you will appreciate the value of this account by Bullis.



45TH CONGRESS,
2d Session.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

Mrs. DOD.
No. 64.

TESTIMONY

GIVEN BY THE

COMMITTEE ON MILITARY AFFAIRS

IN RELATION TO

THE TEXAS BORDER TROUBLES.

JANUARY 12, 1878.—Ordered to be printed.

WASHINGTON:
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE.
1878.

be found on pages 19 and 20 of the message of the President in regard to Mexican border troubles, Ex. Doc. No. 13, Forty-fifth Congress.

By Mr. MARSH :

Q. Have you a copy of the order issued by your department commander, which was based on the order of the Secretary of War of June 1?—A. I have not.

Q. Your operations against the Mexican border since the 1st of June have been under that order of General Ord's, your department commander?—A. Yes, sir. I wish it to be understood that I did not myself cross the river on every occasion referred to in the foregoing testimony, but that all the crossings were either made by me or by my order by troops of my command.

W. H. SHAFTER,

Lieutenant Colonel Twenty-fourth Infantry, Bvt. Col., U. S. A.

Testimony of First Lieut. John L. Bullis, Twenty-fourth Infantry.

COMMITTEE ON MILITARY AFFAIRS,
Washington, D. C., January 8, 1878.

First Lieut. JOHN L. BULLIS sworn and examined.

By Mr. MAISH :

Question. What is your rank in the Army?—Answer. I am first lieutenant in the Twenty-fourth Infantry, and I am in command of the Seminole scouts, stationed at Fort Clark, Texas.

Q. You have made a number of raids into the territory of Mexico, I believe?—A. I have, quite a number.

Q. Begin at the first one of those raids which you made and give us an account of it?—A. In May, 1873, my command was with that of Colonel Mackenzie's in the attack on an Indian village composed of Lipans and Kickapoos. We attacked them about 7 o'clock in the morning of the 18th of May, 1873, killed 19, captured 40 women and children, and one chief, and 60 or 70 head of horses.

Q. Did you pursue those Indians?—A. No, sir; we went directly to the village from our own side of the Rio Grande.

Q. You have not stated how it came to your knowledge that these horses were there or why it was that the attack was made upon the village.—A. The Indians had been stealing and murdering on the American side of the Rio Grande, and it came to the knowledge of the military authorities, and in order to prevent it and to assist the people of the frontier, the attack was made on this village. No trail whatever was followed at that time.

Q. What did you do with the 60 horses that were recaptured?—A. They were brought to our side of the river and were turned over to the owners, who made affidavits, I believe, as to their property. The Indian prisoners, I think, were sent to Kansas to the Kickapoo reserve. They were all Kickapoos, with one exception, and he was a Lipan chief.

Q. Can you tell how many of those horses were restored to their owners?—A. I should say that 40, or perhaps more, horses were restored. I cannot say definitely, as the turning them over to the proper owners was not a matter within my control.

Q. Do you know what part of the country those Indians inhabited at that time?—A. Yes, sir; they were living at a place called Rimolino,

at the head of the San Rodriguez River, in Mexico, about south-south-west from Fort Clark, and about forty miles from the river.

Q. Both tribes?—A. Yes, sir; both tribes. They were encamped about a mile apart.

Q. Did these Kickapoos originally belong there?—A. No, sir; they are American Indians. They had been residing for years within the territory of the United States. Their reserve (Kickapoos) I think is in Kansas or in the southern part of the Indian Territory.

Q. Proceed with your account of the second raid.—A. About the 1st of June, 1876, Colonel Shafter's command, consisting of about 5 companies of cavalry, was encamped on the Rio Grande, about 60 miles above the mouth of the Pecos River. While in camp at that place, Colonel Shafter started me across the river with three Seminoles and two Mexicans for the purpose of spying out or reconnoitering the whereabouts of Indian villages which we supposed were then in the mountains within 60 or 80 miles of the river. On leaving his command I found some Indian sign, but nothing that would indicate that there was any village near about. I returned to his command in about 4 or 5 days and reported the result. He started me out afterward (the next day, I think) with three or four Seminole scouts and two Mexicans. I went in a southerly direction, found fresh sign of Indians, returned to his camp on the Rio Grande and reported the fact. He crossed the river the following day, and went to the point in the Sierra Carmel, but was unable to find a village. He returned in a few days to the American shore, and sent me with 29 Seminole scouts and one Mexican in a westerly direction. I crossed the Rio Grande below San Carlos, an Indian village on the Mexican shore, about 50 miles below Del Norte. Before crossing to the Mexican shore I found camps of Indians which had been recently abandoned. The sign indicated that they had crossed to the American side of the Rio Grande. On reaching our side I found 15 horses secreted at the mouth of a cañon, the Indians having discovered us and fled to the north. I followed their trail some two or three days, when (my horses being worn-out) I abandoned it and returned to Colonel Shafter's camp on the Pecos River. That is the third expedition.

In July, 1876, Colonel Shafter left his camp on the Pecos River, about the 20th of the month, and crossed the Rio Grande 25 miles above the mouth of the Pecos River, at a point known as the Eagle's Nest Crossing. We marched south for some five or six days, and on the night of July 29th he gave me the command of twenty enlisted men of Company B, Tenth Cavalry, and twenty of my scouts and one commissioned officer, and directed me to proceed to the south and to try and hunt up an Indian village, which we supposed was then located on the San Antonio River. I left his command at 4.20 p. m.; marched at a brisk walk, trot, and gallop until three o'clock the next morning, July 30th. We made camp in a brush thicket near the river, and at the first appearance of day we discovered an Indian camp, distant about a mile. I had my men saddled up underneath the cover of the trees, and shortly afterwards we attacked the camp, killed fourteen Indians on the field, captured four squaws and ninety-six horses and mules, and destroyed their entire village. Then we marched towards the Rio Grande, and joined Colonel Shafter's command. The following day, July 31st, Colonel Shafter returned to the American shore, and sent me off on another expedition into Mexico.

Q. State what tribe of Indians these were.—A. The Indians who were attacked were the Lipans.

Q. Are they Mexican Indians?—A. No, sir; they are American Indi-

ans. Before the war they lived on a United States reserve in the State of Texas.

Q. You have no personal knowledge of the disposition of the horses that were taken from the Indians?—A. Yes. There were ninety-six horses and mules captured. They mostly had American brands, and they were turned over to the claimants residing on our side of the Rio Grande, with some few exceptions. All that were claimed, however, were turned over to the owners.

Q. Did you bring the whole of them back to the American side?—A. Yes; with the exception of four or five that may have been killed or dropped on the road.

Q. You may proceed now with your narrative.—A. On July 31st I reported to Col. Shafter at an arroyo, known as the Zorro Cañon, in Mexico, and the following day, August 1st, I left his command and proceeded to a water-hole about ten miles distant from the Rio Grande, in Mexico, for the purpose of watching for Indians who were then known to be raiding on our side of the river. There I remained three or four days, and on the morning of the 4th of August two of my men discovered a party of Indians coming to the north of us marching up the cañon. I immediately had my men saddled up, and endeavored to intercept the Indians, but we were discovered. The Indians dropped their herd of horses, numbering, I think, fifteen horses and mules, and made good their escape. These Indians were Lipans, and they were returning at the time from a raid into Texas. They had stolen horses at Dennis, Guihi, New Fountain, and the settlements between the Rio Grande and San Antonio.

I returned in a few days afterward to the American side of the river, and reported to Colonel Shafter, at his supply camp on the Pecos. I think that that is about the fourth raid. The total number of horses and mules captured by me within three weeks or about that time was 127 head. They were all taken back to the American side of the river, with some few exceptions, where we were compelled to drop them by the way. With those exceptions they were all brought to our side of the river, and turned over to citizens who claimed them, on their making affidavits that they were their property. Those horses that were not claimed were given to guides as part payment for their services, and some few of them were also given to officers and scouts.

The next raid or crossing of the Rio Grande was in January, 1877. On December 31, 1876, the Indians made a raid and stole 42 head of horses from a citizen living within 7 miles of Fort Clark, and from other parties, gathering up about 20 head more. I was sent out from the garrison with 10 Seminole scouts on the 2d of January, 1877, struck the Indian trail about ten o'clock of the same day, and in four days followed them to the Rio Grande. The distance was about 40 miles, but the Indians were very cunning and drove their stock over very rough, broken country, and also over country where horses and cattle ranged, so that we were thereby delayed in following the trail. The Indians, on nearing the Rio Grande, collected up some 200 or 300 head of cattle, mostly owned by American citizens living at San Felipe, Tex., three or four miles distant from the mouth of Devil's River, and they crossed the cattle along with their herd of horses. About the 5th or 6th of January I reported to Colonel Schafter, at Fort Clark, the fact of the crossing of these Indians, and, by his direction, I returned to my command on the Rio Grande, took the trail across the river, and followed them some 20 or 30 miles into Mexico. I was instructed to do that and to save distance if possible, because a larger command was then en route

to the crossing of the river, being sent out for the purpose of following up this party of Indians. I crossed with my command some 10 miles below the crossing made by the Indians, so as to save distance, and on January the 12th a party under the command of Captain Keys, of the Tenth Cavalry, numbering about 200 men, crossed the river, and I conducted them by a near route to a water-hole near the mountains, thus saving about 15 miles marching.

We followed the trail into Mexico about 125 miles, marching around through the mountains, and on the 18th of January, I think between 2 and 3 p. m., we made camp; but, unfortunately, very near to the camp of Indians who discovered us and ran.

The following morning we broke camp early, and shortly after found the abandoned camp of the Indians. We also found where they had killed (it was estimated by scouts) about 100 head of the cattle which they had stolen from the American side. We found the heads and the bones and also found some of the meat drying. In their haste to escape they had left portions of their camp and camp equipage, and, I think, three horses, two of which were stolen from citizens who were living at or near Fort Clark, and whose stock had been stolen on the 31st of December, 1876. We returned to the American shore about the 23d of January. That winds up my next trip. These Indians were composed of Lipans and Mescalero Apaches. The Apaches are supposed to be American Indians, although the State of Chihuahua is well filled up with them, and they are very troublesome there; but they properly inhabit Arizona, New Mexico, and the lower part of California.

Q. Do these Indian tribes remain in Mexico permanently, or do they go there periodically from the United States?—A. My belief is (and I have been on the Indian frontier between ten and eleven years) that they live in Mexico. They confess themselves that they cannot live on the American side, as the troops annoy them constantly.

Q. Do any of these Indians belong to reservations?—A. No, sir; although some of the Lipans are at present on a reserve on this side of the river at Fort Griffin, Texas. There are bands of Kickapoos at present in Mexico, some few of them, but they are mostly on the reserves in the northern part of the Indian Territory or in Kansas. There are some few Apaches on reserves in the Indian Territory and some on reserves in New Mexico—for instance, on the Fort Stanton reserve. There are five bands of Indians on the Mexican shore, none or very few of whom have ever been on reservations. I have followed them for years and years and fought them, and know their chiefs. The name of the present chief of the Lipan Indians is Washa Lobo. This Indian and his people reside most of the time near Saragossa in Mexico. They steal constantly on the American side and have done so for years. They came over and made two raids in 1876. On one of these raids they killed thirteen men and one woman. That was in September and October, 1876, and in the months of April and May of the same year the same party of Indians (Washa Lobo's) came over and killed twelve men. Washa Lobo is a cunning fellow. When we left the Rio Grande on the 27th of December he was then in front of the town of San Felipe. We were very anxious then to get a drive at him, but you, gentlemen, frightened us a little about the Rio Grande affairs. Washa Lobo's party of men does not exceed thirty. There is also a tribe of Mescalero Apaches residing near Del Norte, Mexico, under a chief known as Magnus Colorado. He has from forty to sixty men. These Mescalero Apaches are marauding Indians. There are also three parties of Indians living at or near San Carlos, about fifty miles below Del Norte. San Carlos is an

Indian town distant about eighteen miles from the Rio Grande in the State of Chihuahua. One party is under a chief by the name of Tejano. There is also a party of Mescalero Indians living at or near the same place under a chief named Leon. There is also a party residing at or near the same place under a chief named Cheno. There is also a party living south of San Carlos, about sixty miles in the Sierra Carmel, under a chief known as Alsate. All of these Indians depredated on the American side of the river. The total number of them I suppose to be about 225 men.

The next raid that took place was on July 1, 1877. When returning from an expedition in the mountains, up the Rio Grande, on the American side, on the 29th of June, two of my men found an Indian trail between the Pecos and the Rio Grande, distant about 70 miles from the mouth of the Pecos. On the 30th of June I took the trail with my scouts, numbering about 35, followed it that day to the Rio Grande and crossed the river. We crossed on a raft of logs, the river being very high at the time. We took the trail on the following morning, July 1, followed it about 30 miles, and camped on the trail after dark. The following morning, July 2, we saddled up before daylight, continued on the trail, and discovered the Indians a few miles distant. We attacked them, captured 23 horses, killed one Indian, wounded 3, and returned to the American side of the river on the 4th of July. This party of Indians was composed of Lipans and Mescaleros. They had been stealing stock in Kerr County, Texas, and had wounded one boy, who was placed in the post-hospital at Fort Clark, Texas, and received treatment from the post-surgeon. That was the first crossing that was made after the President's order.

The next crossing was in October last. On the 26th of October three guides, who had been in Mexico for the purpose of finding the exact locality of an Indian village, reported at my camp on the Rio Grande that the Indians were then camped about 20 miles west of the city of Saragossa. A day or two previous to that three of my Seminole scouts who had been up the Rio Grande about 120 miles reported to me that they had found three or four small Indian trails where the Indians had crossed and gone into Texas, mostly on foot, wearing moccasins, and that the Indians had fired the grass in eight or ten places within a distance of 50 miles, both on the Mexican and American side of the Rio Grande. That is very frequently the case in Texas and in Mexico. The Indians, in order to hide their trail, will set fire to the grass, which burns very rapidly, and this obliterates a small trail. About 1 p. m. of that day, October 26, I crossed the Rio Grande with about 91 men. I was acting at the time under the orders of Lieutenant-Colonel Shafter, commanding the post of Fort Clark. On reaching the Mexican shore Colonel Shafter came in person and informed me that he would cross with a command and be at the head of the San Diego River, in Mexico, to support me on the morning of October 28, I think.

Before crossing the Rio Grande, I had sent \$15 to a Mexican, living in Mexico, who was then trading and had been for years with the Indians. This money was sent to enable him to purchase articles to take to the Indian camps and find out their exact localities. It had been sent to him some two weeks before I crossed the river. The three guides who reported to me stated that this man would meet me at the head of the San Rodriguez River, at about 8 or 9 o'clock on the night of the 27th. I reached the place about the hour of 7 or 8, but no Mexican guide was to be found. I secreted my command in a live-oak thicket, and remained at that place during the night of the 27th, and all the day of the 28th

until about 11 o'clock in the night, when (as the Mexican trader did not join me) I started out to hunt the Indian camp. We took the trot and gallop until near daylight, and at a point situated within a few miles of the city of Saragossa (which is about 40 miles from Eagle Pass, Tex.), we found, about sunrise, some sign of the Indian village, and we marched up the bed of a stream known as the Perdido (or Lost Creek), and about 7 o'clock we discovered the Indian village. The Indians at the time were on the move. We went for them; that is, we pitched into them without any delay, and after a hard run of about 4 or 5 miles we captured three squaws, a boy, and a girl, 15 horses and 2 mules. We burned the Indian village and started for the head of the San Diego River, in Mexico, the point at which Colonel Shafter had directed me to report to him. We marched all day at a fast walk and trot, and made camp about 9 o'clock at the head of that river, 42 miles distant, but could not find Colonel Shafter's command. We broke camp the following morning, October 30, a little after sunrise, and started for the Rio Grande. As I was moving from my camp some of my scouts spied a column of Mexican troops following our trail. We continued on our course, and shortly afterward discovered a heavy dust on our right, which proved to be that of the command of Colonel Shafter, to whom I there reported. That finishes this expedition.

Q. You did not encounter the Mexican troops, did you?—A. No, sir.

Q. What did Colonel Shafter's command consist of?—A. It consisted of about six or seven companies of cavalry, numbering in all about 450 men, inclusive of my command.

Q. Could you form any estimate of the strength of the Mexican troops?—A. Yes. The Mexican command we supposed to number about 75 or 100 men. Colonel Shafter had been in camp and the herds were out grazing, and in running them in, when they saw us and the Mexicans, there was quite a heavy dust raised, which attracted our attention. Colonel Shafter immediately broke camp and directed me to take the course to the point where I had crossed the Rio Grande. We took a brisk walk and crossed the river that night about 12 or 1 o'clock. The Mexican command followed us for a few miles, and then retired.

Q. Was there any disposition on the part of the Mexican troops to attack you?—A. The Mexican troops showed no disposition to engage us.

By Mr. MARSH:

Q. How close did they follow you?—A. They kept about a mile in our rear.

Q. Were they in sight all the time?—A. Yes, sir.

By Mr. MAISH:

Q. Did you hurry to get away from them?—A. No, sir.

Q. What did Colonel Shafter do after you left him?—A. Colonel Shafter had his command saddle up. He directed me to take the course toward the point where we had crossed the Rio Grande. We marched that day about 30 or 40 miles, and crossed the river about 12 or 1 o'clock in the night. Colonel Shafter crossed with me at the same point.

Q. You were all together?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. And the Mexicans marched in your rear?—A. Yes; they followed us for a few miles.

Q. Do you know why Shafter crossed into Mexico with so large a body of men to support you?—A. Yes, sir. This Indian camp was supposed to number at the time 40 men well armed, and Colonel Shafter thought that I might have some wounded men with me, and for that reason he

told me that he would cross the Rio Grande to render me assistance if needed.

Q. He had some knowledge of the existence of the Mexican troops there, had he?—A. Yes, sir. Two hundred Mexican troops were encamped within a few miles of the Indian village, and had been for weeks and weeks.

Q. And Colonel Shafter's object was to come to your assistance if they should attack you?—A. I could have gotten away from the Mexicans; I am accustomed to that kind of work; but in case I had wounded men with me I might be pressed, and should, of course, dislike very much to leave my wounded behind. So far as the Mexican troops were concerned, I do not think that Colonel Shafter had any fear that they would gain any advantage over my command. In fact, I should not have fought them unless they had brought it on.

Q. What number of men had you with you?—A. Ninety-one men.

Q. And the Mexicans had 200?—A. Yes; but their horses were all poor; I knew it at the time, and I could have evaded them easily.

Q. Were they regular Mexican troops?—A. Yes, sir; regular troops of the Mexican army.

Q. Do you know who commanded them?—A. I think they were at that time under the command of General Falcon, stationed at Piedras Negras, on the Rio Grande, opposite Fort Duncan, Texas.

By the CHAIRMAN:

Q. You thought your 90 men equal to their 200?—A. Yes, sir; their horses were very poor, and I thought I could evade them all. I knew the country as well as the Mexicans or Indians, as I have been on that frontier upward of ten years.

By Mr. BRAGG:

Q. Do you think that Colonel Shafter came across the Rio Grande with a body of 300 men for the simple purpose of assisting your 91 men to escape from the attack of about 40 Indians?—A. No, sir; not solely. Another object was, in case I had wounded men with me and was pursued, to intimidate the Mexicans and prevent them attacking me. Colonel Shafter did not wish to bring his troops in contact with the Mexican troops; he tried to evade it, in fact.

Q. He and General Falcon were on good terms, and had a good understanding at the time?—A. Yes, sir.

By Mr. MAISH:

Q. Some notice of that raid was taken by the Mexican Government?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. What was the complaint about it?—A. General Falcon made a complaint (as I saw in the papers) that American troops had crossed and had attacked an Indian village near one of the Mexican towns or cities in which were stationed regular troops of the Mexican Government. But I was informed that at the time he gave instructions to his officer in command of the troops not to molest the American troops of the line. He was fearful at the time that there might be a party or parties of revolutionists crossing over from the Texas side, and for that reason he was cautious. Escobedo had been endeavoring to raise a force of revolutionists in Texas in opposition to President Diaz, and also a Mexican revolutionist by the name of Pedro Valdez.

Q. You have not stated very clearly what his complaint was.—A. I do not know it. I paid very little attention to it at the time. I was

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constantly in the field, and I have no recollection of the particulars of his complaint. Minister Foster forwarded papers relating to it.

By Mr. BRAGG:

Q. Was it a fact that the complaints made by the Mexicans were of so little consequence that you did not attend to them?—A. No, sir; I thought of Falcon's complaint for some time afterward, as I was an interested party, and I did not know how our officials might look upon my action in the matter.

Q. Were you not a little fearful that you had transgressed some of the regulations that ought to control between this government and Mexico?—A. No, sir; I had acted under the orders of my commanding officer, and I was delighted to have such an opportunity. It was peace times, and we had nothing to do but to fight Indians.

I omitted in my narrative one raid which took place some time before that. About the last of July, I think, Mexican thieves stole cattle and horses from a ranch at the mouth of Piedra Pinta in Texas, and crossed them into Mexico above Newtown. The total number of animals stolen by them was about thirty oxen and horses. Colonel Shafter, commanding at Fort Clark, sent me to the point of crossing with one hundred and fifteen men. It rained very heavily the night before, and the trail was almost entirely obliterated. I was directed to remain at that point, and to show the Mexican troops the point of crossing, in case they came up from below, as Colonel Shafter informed me that he had telegraphed to General Falcon. The Mexican troops did not come to the point, as it was hoped they would, and, acting under instructions from Colonel Shafter, I marched down the river about two days (fifty or sixty miles), and then returned to near the mouth of Sycamore Creek, about twelve miles above the mouth of the Pinta. On the night of the 3d of August I received instructions to cross the river, and to try and find the cattle and horses which had been stolen. I crossed over about 12 o'clock, midnight; marched to near the head of the San Diego River, about twenty miles; reached it at daylight, and shortly afterward found five horses bearing American brands, which had been stolen from the Texas side. I recrossed the river about 12 o'clock on the 4th of August and reported to Colonel Shafter, who was at the point of crossing with several companies of cavalry to cover my crossing, and the following day we returned to Fort Clark. That is everything relating to that raid (which I had omitted in my narrative.)

Q. Was it not with reference to that crossing, and to the transaction at Sycamore, that affidavits were taken at Fort Clark before you left there?—A. No, sir; not that I know of.

By Mr. MAISH:

Q. In reference to crossing in violation of the order—with which Colonel Shafter was charged?—A. No, sir; we had reference to the crossing before that, in October.

Q. You have not finished your raids yet?—A. No, sir; there are two more. 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 running 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 cañon 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. That is the end of that expedition.

Captain Young left Pecan Springs about the 16th 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 23d 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 29th 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 recrossed the river a few days later, and arrived at Fort Clark on the 16th of December.

That is the last expedition that I have been on across the river. I think that I have enumerated them all.

Q. Were you not in some way connected with the raid which Captain McNally made?—A. No, sir; he was on the Lower Rio Grande and I was on the Upper.

Q. It was only on one occasion, then, that you encountered Mexican raiders and thieves?—A. Only on one occasion.

Q. Is this country where you have been making these raids inhabited by Mexicans?—A. No, sir; there is a space of country there about two hundred miles in extent in which no one but Indians lives.

Q. There are no civil authorities there?—A. No, sir.

Q. No Mexican authorities either to countenance the raids or to give aid to your forces?—A. No, sir; there is no one living in the country other than Indians. Even portions of it are unexplored. The Saragossa raid, the one from which so much trouble resulted in diplomatic circles, is the only one in which we were near settlements, with the exception of that of Colonel Mackenzie in 1873, which was near the town of Rimolino.

Q. What is the character of the population on the Texas side of the Rio Grande in that country?—A. They are a mixed population, mostly Americans; some few Mexicans.

Q. Are there a good many ranches along there?—A. There are none above the mouth of Devil's River. San Felipe is the upper settlement on the Rio Grande next to Fort Clark. From San Felipe on the Rio Grande there is but one settlement on the Texas side for five hundred miles.

Q. How far is San Felipe above Fort Clark?—A. Thirty miles, nearly west.

Q. At any time during your experience in that part of the country, did the Texas Rangers co-operate with you?—A. No, sir; they have never co-operated with the troops to my knowledge, more than this: There is a party of them numbering 20 stationed about 50 miles north from Fort Clark, at a deserted camp known as Camp Wood, on the Nueces River. They co-operate to this extent, that whenever Indians are known to be in the neighborhood, they inform the commanding officer at Fort Clark, and in one instance, I think, within the past year, they captured horses from Indians in Texas. I have never known them to cross the river.

Q. Do you know of any instance where our troops have aided the civil authorities in Texas in capturing thieves?—A. Yes, sir; I have not mentioned a number of instances in which I myself have helped.

Q. You may mention them.—A. The State of Texas was under martial law at the time, and of course the military authorities were supreme. In January, 1877, I accompanied the sheriff of Kinney County with 20 men to make arrests.

Q. Did he make the arrests?—A. No, sir; he was in pursuit of thieves who numbered about as many men as my command, which numbered about 20. The thieves heard of our coming and made good their escape, and subsequently most of them went to Colorado. They were murderers and horse-thieves.

Q. Were they Americans?—A. Mostly Americans, I think, and perhaps some few Mexicans were among them.

Q. Was there any other case of that sort?—A. I think there were other cases, but I do not recollect them just at present.

Q. When was the State of Texas under martial law?—A. Immediately after the rebellion.

Q. Have you been on the frontier from that time on to the present?—

A. Yes, sir; I have been on the frontier ten or eleven years. I have not been out of the State of Texas excepting in Mexico from the time I went there in 1867 until the present time.

Q. What is the condition of things among the inhabitants of Texas in the vicinity of Fort Clark? Are property and life secure there, as they are in a well-organized country?—A. No, sir. Life and property are very insecure, but the country is settling up; many are coming in with capital. Some are engaged in the raising of goats, sheep, and cattle, but it is so insecure that many men with families will not venture there. For instance, I have already said that last September and October the Lipan Indians crossed over the Rio Grande, and in one raid there killed thirteen men and one woman, and it was said that that one raid caused 250 families to turn back, who were at the time *en route* to Western Texas to settle.

Q. What is the nature of the country there? What is it best adapted for?—A. Western Texas is best adapted for grazing, although in Kinney County alone, in which Fort Clark is situated, there are 20,000 acres under irrigation.

Q. Where the land is cultivated is irrigation necessary?—A. Yes, sir, generally; although there are low bottom-lands which produce in wet seasons very good crops.

Q. What kind of crops?—A. Principally corn and vegetables.

Q. Is it prairie land?—A. No, sir; there are some extensive prairies, but it is principally a rolling country.

Q. Is there timber on it?—A. There is very little timber in Western Texas; there is some timber on the streams, but Western Texas bordering on the Rio Grande, more particularly above the mouth of Devil's River, is quite rough and broken and well adapted for grazing. In fact, the Pecos River Valley is said to be as good a grazing country as any portion of the State.

Q. Can you give us some idea of the population to the square mile in that country for, say, 100 miles along the Rio Grande?—A. I know a portion of it where there is not a man within 100 miles; for instance, above the mouth of Devil's River.

Q. How is it immediately in the vicinity of Fort Clark?—A. It is settling up rapidly. Many are engaged in agriculture principally by irrigation. There are some stock-men in that locality.

Q. Where do these marauders steal their cattle?—A. In the settlements principally, between the Rio Grande and San Antonio. The valleys that are subject to these raids are the Frio, the Sabanal, the Hondo, the Leone, the Carisa, the Pendencia, and others which I do not call to mind.

Q. How do these Indians collect the cattle in Texas; in what number do they enter Texas, and what is their method of operations?—A. The Indians cross the Rio Grande in parties of from two up to thirty-five or forty. I think that I have never known more than thirty-five to cross at one time. They invariably come in on foot, wearing moccasins, although I have known one or two instances where they have brought in one horse carrying their packs. They work east from the Rio Grande through the rough, broken country, through cedar-breaks and through brush. During the day-time they hide or stay on the top of the highest peaks or mountains, and when the moon is nearly or quite full they come down. I have known them to gather up within one or two nights 200 head of horses. Then they put out, driving night and day, and cross the Rio Grande generally within four days and nights.

Q. They drive the cattle very rapidly?—A. Not cattle, but horses. They change from one horse to another. They ride bare-back. They have no saddles whatever. They take a piece of rawhide from cattle which they kill while on the Texan side, put a string of it over the head of a horse and pass a piece of wood through the horse's mouth for a bit, and use a strip of rawhide for a bridle-rein, and in this way they will travel from 60 to 80 miles in a day and night.

Q. Are those raids on the increase or on the decrease?—A. They are on the decrease, more particularly since the order was issued by the Executive to follow the raiders across the river into Mexico.

Q. Had Escobedo anything to do with those raids?—A. No, sir; I think not.

Q. What arm of the service is most efficient for preventing these raids?—A. Cavalry, except in a very rough, broken country. When operating in a very rough, broken country, horses are an impediment. For instance, in the last Indian fight that I mentioned, on the 29th of November, the troops dismounted, left their horses two miles back, and walked over a mountain nearly a mile in height and attacked the Indians on foot.

Q. Do you approve of the policy of having posts there, or would you patrol the Rio Grande? In other words, do you think that the method pursued by the Army there now is the best for preventing those raids?—A. I would be in favor of establishing more posts.

Q. Do you think there are any other posts necessary?—A. Yes, sir; I have often thought of it and have often heard it discussed that a post is necessary above San Felipe. There is an extent of country of 500 miles on this side without inhabitants in the entire district. There is but one very small settlement of a few houses opposite the Mexican town of Del Norte. Indians cross invariably above the mouth of Devil's River and pass through this uninhabited country making for the settlements. In fact, I have known them to steal within 25 miles of San Antonio within the last nine months.

Q. These Indians do not number very high?—A. No, sir.

Q. Would it be possible, if there were a sufficient force, to annihilate them entirely?—A. No, sir; they are too cunning. They can hide their families in the rocks and fastnesses of the mountains, and it is almost impossible to get at them. They have no regular villages whatever. They are broken up into small bands, and the country is so very rough and broken that it is very difficult, indeed, to strike them.

Q. The raids are principally made from this portion of Mexico that you speak of?—A. Yes, sir; the Indian raids are all made from this portion.

Q. You do not know that there are many Mexican raids made, do you?—A. No, sir; I know of a few instances of Mexicans crossing to this side of the river.

Q. Do you know what kind of Mexicans they were?—A. I know of Cortina's band crossing at the mouth of the Rio Grande, from hearsay, but know little of his raids. They have been less frequent within the past year.

By Mr. BRAGG:

Q. What regiments on the Texas frontier are white and what colored?—A. The Twenty-fourth and Twenty-fifth Regiments of Infantry and the Ninth and Tenth Regiments of Cavalry are colored; all the rest are white.

Q. Tell us, from your experience, whether the civil authorities in

Texas have used all of the civil power at their command to protect the property of their citizens, or whether they are in the habit of simply calling on the United States to discharge their police duties.—A. I think that the civil authorities in Texas have done all that they could to protect the property and lives of the citizens. They have a good deal to contend against there. Bloodshed is frequent. But invariably, when raids are made from the other side, the authorities call upon the military.

Q. Are the bands which come into Texas of such size and proportions and so armed as to overawe the civil authorities?—A. The bands that come into Texas are quite small, and the civil authorities, or even the citizens themselves, could join together and drive them back, but it is difficult to find these bands, the country being so extensive.

Q. Then the necessity for Federal troops arises from the difficulty of finding the raiding parties, rather than from the want of force necessary to be employed in preventing the commission of the offenses?—A. Yes, sir; on account of the country being so extensive and so varied. As I have said, there is a portion of country above the mouth of Devil's River, extending four hundred miles and upward, in which there is but one settlement, and that, I suppose, does not number twenty men.

Q. But still the State of Texas has a large population, has it not?—A. No, sir; very small indeed.

Q. About what population does the census show Texas to have?—A. I think that Texas now has more than a million. I think that in the last census it numbered about nine hundred thousand, but the population has increased rapidly within the past few years. In fact, it is stated that last year the increase was three hundred and fifty thousand.

Q. There is a village grown up at Fort Clark, is there not?—A. A small village.

Q. What is it called?—A. Brackettville.

Q. What population has it?—A. About four hundred.

Q. In what business and occupations are the people engaged?—A. Some are merchants, some stock-raisers, and there are a great many gamblers.

Q. They thrive on the business made by the establishment and maintenance of a military post at that place?—A. Principally, in that village.

Q. Wherever a military post is established it furnishes a market for the surrounding country?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. And for that reason it is considered a great benefit to have troops stationed there?—A. It is.

Q. And a large increase of military force in Western Texas would add largely to the sources of wealth and prosperity of the people in that country?—A. Undoubtedly.

Q. It would furnish them markets?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. And a cheap and easy way to get rich?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. I see by a letter which I have been reading that at some time a fight took place at the mouth of Sycamore Creek between Colonel Shafter's troops and Mexicans?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. Has that been described by you?—A. Not by me. I know nothing of it.

Q. When did that fight take place?—A. I think in April last.

Q. Was it on the American soil?—A. I think that the American troops were encamped at the time on our side of the Rio Grande. The Mexicans came down under a noted thief and murderer, against whom

there are many indictments in Texas, by the name of Areolo, and fired upon our troops in the morning.

Q. Did an engagement ensue?—A. I think our troops returned the fire. No one was hurt, to my knowledge.

Q. Did the troops use the Gatling gun?—A. No, sir.

Q. Who was in command of our troops?—A. I think a sergeant. I do not know positively.

Q. Who is Captain Kelley?—A. A captain of the Tenth Cavalry, stationed at San Felipe.

Q. Has he command of that post?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. Was he at Sycamore?—A. I think not.

Q. Does he, from his post, make raids into Mexico?—A. I think he has crossed, or detachments of his company, in two instances.

Q. He is considered as among that class of officers on the frontier (if there be such a class) who are anxious for active work?—A. I would rather not answer that question. He is my superior officer.

Q. Are you in the Tenth Cavalry?—A. No, sir; I belong to the infantry.

Q. Captain Kelley is an intimate friend of Colonel Shafter's, is he not?—A. He is an officer under Colonel Shafter's command. I cannot say as to their intimacy.

Q. Is he not one in whom Colonel Shafter reposes a good deal of trust and confidence?—A. If I answered that question I might criticise my superior officer.

Q. Do you not know that the persons who are interested, or are supposed to be interested in having a representation presented to this government of a condition of affairs there which might induce a crossing of the border in force, have requested or desired that Captain Kelley should be sent for so that he should present his views, he being a man favoring such an interest?—A. No, sir; I do not.

Q. I want to know if there is a distinction among the officers on the frontier into two classes, one of which is in favor of active work and the other not in favor of it?—A. There are many officers of the Army on the frontier of Texas who are desirous of leading an active life. In fact, the more opportunities there are of following raiders to the opposite side, the better they are pleased. And there is also a class of officers, I must say, who are not in favor of crossing the Rio Grande, and who take much more pleasure in lying in garrison and doing garrison duty than in being in the field.

Q. Is it not true that that class of officers of the Army on that frontier who so thirst for active duty and for opportunities to pursue raiders, would gladly avail themselves of an opportunity where they could cross without any regard to raiders and engage hostile troops?—A. No, sir. My belief is (and I have been on the frontier upward of ten years) that there are no officers there who desire to bring on a conflict of arms without just cause.

Q. I do not suppose so; but what might seem just cause to one might not to another.—A. Certainly.

Q. And an officer who thirsts for glory would scarcely be willing to remain satisfied with the pursuit of a few vagabond Lipans when he might get the opportunity to engage a respectable force and achieve a victory?—A. Certainly; of course there are those that have ambition.

Q. You have such men, I suppose, in the Army on the frontier?—A. No, sir; I cannot say that there is any officer on the frontier who desires a conflict between the two nations without just cause, although there

are those stationed on the frontier who are ambitious and who would like to have a good field to work in.

By Mr. MARSH:

Q. How far from Piedras Negras are these 225 Indians?—A. The nearest party of Indians to Piedras Negras is that of Washa Lobo, distant about 35 or 40 miles. The other tribes reside from within 60 to 200 miles.

Q. How many of them reside within 60 miles of Piedras Negras?—A. Principally the Lipans, not to exceed 30. They are encamped mostly near Saragossa.

Q. Do they recognize the authority of the Mexican Government?—A. Not in the least, to my knowledge.

Q. Those who are camped so near to Saragossa, do they recognize the civil authorities?—A. Not at all. They trade with the people constantly.

Q. Is there any effort made on the part of the Mexican authorities to prevent these Indians stealing stock?—A. Not in the least. Extradition papers were sent over last summer for Indians who were encamped within a few miles of the town of Saragossa, but no attention whatever was paid to them.

Q. Is the trade in the property stolen by Indians encouraged by the Mexicans?—A. It is greatly encouraged. The Mexican authorities could capture or kill all of the Lipans within a week if they so desired.

Q. Do the Indians there shun the Mexican authorities as if they were afraid of them?—A. Not the least.

Q. Do they shun them as they do the American authorities?—A. Not at all. The Indians pass in and out of the town whenever they wish. When I made the attack on them on the 29th of October there were 14 of the Indian men drunk in the town of Saragossa.

Q. And how many were sober outside in camp?—A. About half of the men were in camp, and some of those who were in camp were drunk also. One of them, a noted thief and murderer, was given a close chase, but he succeeded in escaping.

Q. And the Indians have no fear of arrest from the Mexican authorities?—A. Not the least. I have known the Indians to take 150 head of horses from the American side and camp within a mile of a Mexican town—the city of Newtown, for instance—which is on the Rio Grande, about 40 miles above Piedras Negras.

Q. Do you know how many regular troops are stationed now at Saragossa?—A. I do not. I do not know that there are any.

Q. Have you ever known any effort on the part of the Mexican authorities, civil or military, to return stolen property?—A. I have not; but, to the contrary, I have heard American citizens say that they have been to the town of Saragossa and have seen Indians riding their horses and having them there for barter—the horses having their brands upon them—and that they have called upon the alcalde to have the horses turned over to them, and that he has positively refused to do so.

Q. Is the trade on the part of the Indians with Mexico in this property stolen from Texas a considerable trade?—A. It is a great trade.

Q. Where do the Indians dispose of the horses and cattle which they steal?—A. In Newtown, Saragossa, Rimolino, San Carlos, Del Norte, and Santa Rosa.

Q. Where is Del Norte?—A. Del Norte is 250 miles northwest of Piedras Negras. San Carlos is 50 miles below Del Norte, and 18 miles from the Rio Grande and about 200 miles from Piedras Negras.

Q. Where is Rimolino?—A. Rimolino is about 30 or 35 miles from the Rio Grande—about 35 miles northwest of Piedras Negras.

Q. And those are the towns where the Indians dispose of this stolen property?—A. Yes, sir.

Q. Do I understand you to say that the people and authorities there encourage them in that trade?—A. They do, most assuredly.

Q. And that, if the authorities were so disposed they could very readily put a stop to these raids?—A. They could do it very readily.

Q. From your experience on that border, do you know of any other way to suppress these stealings than by following the Indians into Mexican territory?—A. I do not, except, perhaps, holding the Mexican Government responsible.

By the CHAIRMAN:

Q. Do you think that if we had possession of that country on the opposite side of the Rio Grande we could put a stop to these robberies?—A. We could do this much: We could cause these Indians to move farther back into the mountain-passes of the Sierra Madre or some other of the ranges to the west—farther from civilization.

Q. How long have you been on that frontier?—A. Upward of ten years.

Q. Has the American population increased or decreased on that frontier since you have been there?—A. It is increasing rapidly.

Q. Have these raids caused any portion of the country there to be abandoned?—A. Yes, sir; for instance, the Frio and Sabanal Valleys. They are a very good farming and stock country, and I have heard Texans remark that they would not venture to live there with their families, in a country so subject to raids and where life and property are so insecure.

Q. Have the lands there ever been occupied?—A. No, sir; but few citizens have moved in, and many have left shortly after settling. Many houses can be found there which have been abandoned.

Q. Were they built when the troops were stationed at those points?—A. No troops have ever been stationed permanently in these valleys. Troops have been stationed to the west. In April and May, 1876, the Lipans crossed over and killed twelve men, and in September and October of the same year they crossed over and killed thirteen men and one woman.

Q. And these raids have caused these grounds to be abandoned?—A. Certain portions have been abandoned. Other frontiersmen, more venturesome, have held on, and some have been killed, and those that are there now are constantly losing their stock, more particularly horses.

Q. If it were not for those Indian raids, would life be secure on that frontier?—A. I think so—quite secure; although it is a new country and many desperate men and many criminals from justice flee there. The class of people who come in there at times is very bad. Many flee across into Mexico and reside on the Mexican side and try to avoid the extradition laws.

Q. Aside from those Indian raids, you think that the Texas Government would be able to keep good order on that frontier?—A. Yes, sir. The presence of troops, however, is very necessary there.

Q. Have raids been as frequent during the last year as they have been in previous years?—A. No, sir; much less frequent; more particularly since the order was issued by the Executive to follow raiders over the river. In fact, since the first of July, there have been very few raids on this side—very few indeed.

Q. Were there not comparatively few raids previous to July?—A. They were constantly raiding.

Q. Do you think that more troops are needed on that frontier than are there now?—A. I know the frontier well, from the mouth of the Rio Grande to New Mexico, but that is a question which I am not competent to answer. There is such a vast country uninhabited, from the mouth of Devil's River to the El Paso Valley, that some posts seem necessary. In fact, if a post were built 125 or 175 miles above Fort Duncan, it would have a great tendency to stop the raiding of Indians.

Q. You have given the number of those Indian tribes that do the raiding, making them all less than three hundred men?—A. My belief is that they do not exceed two hundred and twenty-five men, although I think that at times Indians from the Western part of Mexico—from Chihuahua for instance—come into Texas and steal. For instance, in June, 1875, during one month, the Indians carried off from Texas upward of a thousand head of horses. I found a series of trails that covered a distance of 3 miles in the same month.

Q. There are now over four thousand troops on that frontier. Do you not think that that is enough of an army to protect that frontier from all the Indian raids?—A. I should think so. It would appear to me that that number of troops ought to be sufficient. It depends, however, on what the orders are relative to following raiders. If we can cross the river in pursuit of them, the raids can be prevented to a great extent.

Q. Do you think that if we could cross the river in pursuit of them, four thousand troops would be necessary to put down that number of Indians?—A. The Indians can come in and steal. They come in during the dark of the moon and work on through the cedar-brakes toward the settlements, and you might place all the troops in the Army on the frontier and it would be very difficult to entirely prevent the Indians doing this, more particularly if we are not allowed to follow them to their homes on the Mexican shore.

Q. If you are prevented from following them to their homes on the Mexican side, you do not think that any number of troops can prevent these thieves?—A. No, sir; the Indians will come in and steal in spite of the troops.

Q. And it is almost impossible to capture them in this mountainous region that they flee to?—A. It is very difficult, indeed.

Q. You say that these Indians are on such friendly terms with the Mexican authorities that you think the Mexican authorities could capture the Indians if they wished to?—A. Most assuredly. I have known the Indians to live in the suburbs of the town of Saragossa. Last year four different bands were living in San Carlos, an Indian town near the Rio Grande.

Q. Do the Indians depredate any on the Mexican people?—A. Very seldom. They depredate principally on our side of the Rio Grande, although I can cite instances where they have robbed and murdered Mexicans. But, in doing so, they work well back from where they live—three or four hundred miles, for instance, into Mexico—and the Mexicans never know positively what Indians do the depredations. In the State of Chihuahua there are a great many Indians living. It is a rough, broken country, and the Apaches are very numerous there.

Q. Is not the good treatment which the Indians receive from the Mexicans more a matter of necessity on the part of the Mexicans and for their own safety?—A. No, sir; the governor of the State of Chihuahua has a standing offer of \$200 for every scalp of an Indian man presented, and \$100 for the scalp of every woman and child.

Q. Then he is doing his best to put an end to these troubles?—A. The governor of the State of Chihuahua is, because the people there suffer terribly from depredations committed by the Indians; but in the State of Coahuila, lying south, they are not so much troubled by Indians, and in fact many Mexicans are living in that State who make a good livelihood from trading with the Indians, and it is therefore not their interest to have the Indians subdued. Saragossa and Piedras Negras and Rimolino are in the State of Coahuila.

Q. Were you with the command which went to Piedras Negras for the purpose of releasing two men who were imprisoned there?—A. No, sir; I was encamped at that time above the mouth of Devil's River on the Rio Grande.

Adjourned.

JOHN L. BULLIS,

First Lieutenant, Twenty-fourth Infantry.

The following correspondence was ordered to be printed in the testimony:

Mr. Wilson to Mr. Fish.

No. 243.] CONSULATE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
Matamoras, July 22, 1876. (Received August 7.)

SIR: I have the honor to transmit herewith copies of correspondence which have passed between Charles A. McLane and William Scanlan, a committee on behalf of the community of Brownsville, and General Revueltaz, military commander of this city, and myself, in regard to the alleged kidnaping of three persons near Brownsville, Tex., by a party of armed men from Mexico. As it was feared that these persons would be summarily shot, and there was considerable excitement in Brownsville in regard to the affair, I requested General Revueltez not to allow any harm to befall the men until the manner of their apprehension could be ascertained, as I understood that the governor of Texas had asked the intervention of the government on the ground that the sovereignty of the United States had been violated in the affair. I informed you by telegraph of what I understood were the facts of the case.

* * * * *

I am, &c.,

THOMAS F. WILSON.

[Inclosure 1 in No. 243.]

Messrs. McLane and Scanlan to Mr. Wilson.

BROWNSVILLE, July 16, 1876—10 o'clock p. m.

SIR: We have the honor to inform you that it became known this afternoon in this city that a party of armed Mexicans, said to be policemen of Matamoras, crossed into Texas at the public ferry between this place and Matamoras, at the unusual hour of two o'clock in the morning, and proceeded some three miles above here and kidnaped three Mexicans, who had taken refuge on the American side of the river, named Marcos Lopez, Candelario Jacindo, and Pedro Basquez, from the house of Jesus Lizardo, and forcibly crossed them from the Texas side across the river into Mexico, where they are now in the Matamoras prison. It is feared that they will be summarily dealt with by the military commander of Matamoras. As there is reason to believe that the territory of the United States has been unlawfully invaded by these armed Mexicans in the night time, and the persons named have been kidnaped and forcibly carried away, in

The 1877 Winter Campaign



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. The following documents are accounts by several officers included in that short campaign. It is a very good account of the difficulties these men took on in order to follow their mission of protecting Texas from Indian raiding parties, and the extent they went to in order to carry out that mission.

In these reports they reference Carmel. That is now Mt Carmen Nature Preserve, Coahuila, Mexico, southeast of Big Bend National Park.

These documents were acquired from, and are courtesy of the Seminole Negro Indian Scouts website. You can visit their site, which contains more source documentation, at the following web address:

<https://www.seminolenegroindianscouts.org>



Document Metadata

Document Type	Letter
Date	18 December 1877
Brief Description	Details of search for a band of Mescalero Apaches that had a skirmish with Lt. Bullis and some Seminole Negro Indian Scouts in Oct. 1877
Keywords:	1877, Capt. Young, Companies A and K 8th Calvary, Company C, 10th Calvary, 25 th Infantry, Seminole Negro Scouts, Lieut. Beck, Lieut. Bullis, Lieut. Clay, Col Shafter, Capt. Lebo, Capt. Wells, Lieut. Phelps, Lieut. Geddes, Lieut. Guest, Assistant Surgeon Comegys, United States Army, Lipan, Mexican guide, Seminole trailers, Alsate, Mescalero-Apache, Big Bend, Fort Clark, Paint Rock Springs, Pecan Springs, Rio Grande, San Carlos, San Felipe, Sierra Carmel

<<SOURCE TEXT BEGIN>>

Fork Clark, Texas
December 18, 1877
To the Acting Assistant Adjutant General
District of the (An?)
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]. (33.jpg) 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 (34.jpg) 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) on 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 (35.jpg) 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." (36.jpg)

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 (37.jpg), 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 (38.jpg) 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 recommenced, 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 (39.jpg) 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 reconnoitre. (40.jpg) 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 (41.jpg) 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 (42.jpg) 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. As the little affair is so minutely described in the itinerary Rept and made up by 2nd Lieut. F.E. Phelps, 8th Cav., who was specially detailed for that duty, I do not consider it necessary here to re-describe it.



Document Metadata

Document Type	Letter
Date	18 December 1877
Brief Description	Details of the November 28, 1877 skirmish between Seminole Negro Indian Scouts, 8 th and 10 th Calvary, 25 th Infantry and band Mescalero Apaches. This document is referenced in Col. Young's Dec. 18, 1877 letter to the Acting Assistant Adjutant General
Keywords:	November 1877, Thanksgiving Day, Col. Young, Companies A and K 8th Calvary, Company C, 10th Calvary, 25 th Infantry, Seminoles, Lieut. Beck, Lieut. Bullis, Lieut. Clay, Col Shafter, Capt. Lebo, Capt. Wells, Lieut. Phelps, Lieut. Geddes, Lieut. Guest, Assistant Surgeon Comegys, 1 st Sgt Wilson, Juan, Mexican guide, Indians

<<SOURCE TEXT BEGIN>>

Nov 29
Thanksgiving Day

At 4 Am Juan the Mexican guide was sent up to the high peak with a glass and came in about 7 a.m. saying he could see 5 Indian fires at a point about 3 miles South (across country) and nine miles by trail. Immediately Col Young with Capt A.B. Wells and 2 Lieutenant F.E. Phelps, 8 Cav with 30 men, Co "A" Lt Geddes, 25th Inf with 25 men Co K, 8 Cav. Lt Beck with (...) men Co C 10th Cav and Lieut. Bullis with 15 Seminole scouts left camp on foot to attack this camp. 2 Lt Guest, 8 Cav and Asst Surg Comegys (..) were left in charge of campground and animals. The column at once commenced unseen ascending a very steep mountain in rear of camp which was overcome only after 2 hours hard work. When nearly at top 2 Seminoles were seen riding into camp on a run, shouting and firing their pistols. Lt Bullis who was in advance was sent down to ascertain what they said and it was soon learned that

three of the Seminoles were cut off and surrounded by Indians. Lt Geddes, K Co, at once returned to camp on double time and the remainder proceeded.

Arriving at top of Mesa the level ground was quickly passed over and the edge of a ravine reached. Here the command halted while Juan and Capt Wells crept up to the edge to reconnoitre and discovered Indians moving up canon with their animals packed. The ravine formed a horseshoe and Lt Beck with his Co was at once deployed on one crest, the Seminoles deployed to cover the head while Capt Wells was ordered to occupy the other side - the two first got into position without being discovered, and Capt Wells was moving to his position in double time concealed by a rocky crest when Indians suddenly appeared leading their ponies about 200 yards distant and discovering Capt Wells and Lt Phelps fired on them. Lt Phelps fired back, being the first shot from our side. The Indians at once took to rocks and for several minutes fired rapidly with Winchester guns, but being charged by "A" Co 8 Cav. fled down the hill hotly pursued by all (61.jpg)

the Cos. Such of the Indians as got their ponies down fled across a broad bottom covered with rocks and cut up the ravines while those on foot fled to the underbrush in the same direction followed by our men who could get down the steep cliff. Lt Geddes made his appearance at this junction and promptly dismounting followed the Indians closely who fled up a narrow and precipitous cañon to the top of a cliff whence they fired rapidly but only struck one man 1st Sergt Wilson Co K 8 Cav who received a slight wound in cheek. Capt. Wells having joined Lt. Geddes with men of the various Cos the whole advanced up the cañon, all efforts to outflank the Indians and surround them was unsuccessful the men getting on a

cliff equally high with that on which were the Indians but separated by an immense chasm over which no crossing could be made. The joining of the troops however was so rapid and accurate as to entirely silence the Indians and finally the troops were withdrawn. When retreating up the cañon, the Indians were forced to abandon every horse they had gotten down the hill where first attacked but one. (62.jpg)

<<SOURCE TEXT END>>



**National Archives Microfilm Publications
Reference**

Collection	"Special Files" of Headquarters, Division of the Missouri, Relating to Military Operations and Administration, 1863-1885
Microfilm Publication Number	M-1495
Roll(s)	Roll-13, Part 1 (Seminole Negro Indians, Aug. 1872-June 1876)
Digital Image File(s)	060-062.jpg

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 (43.jpg) 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 (44.jpg) 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 (45.jpg)

<<SOURCE TEXT END>>



**National Archives Microfilm Publications
Reference**

Collection	"Special Files" of Headquarters, Division of the Missouri, Relating to Military Operations and Administration, 1863-1885
Microfilm Publication Number	M-1495
Roll(s)	Roll-13, Part 1 (Seminole Negro Indians, Aug. 1872-June 1876)
Digital Image File(s)	033-045.jpg

Excerpt from Frederick E. Phelps: A Soldier's Memoirs

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 scout 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 cavalrymen, 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 Lieu-tenant 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. we 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, Adjutante," 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.

San Antonio National Cemetery



References

Edward S Wallace

[General John Lapham Bullis: Thunderbolt of the Texas Frontier, II](#)

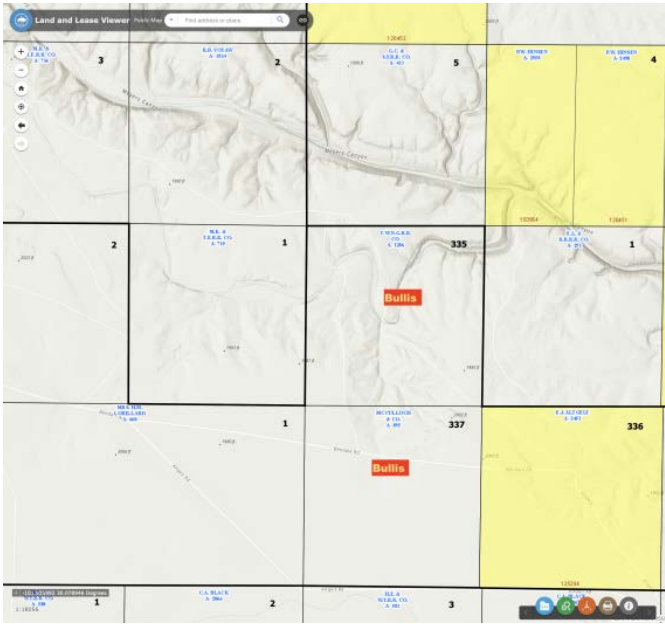
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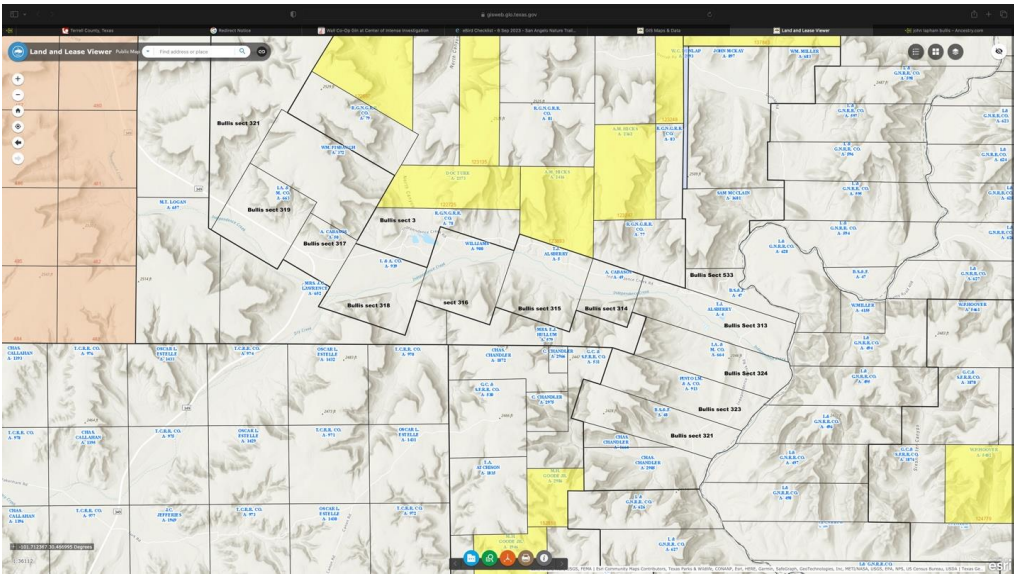
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<http://westtexasarcheologicalsociety.website>

Appendix A: Bullis-owned properties at vital water sources



Map shown above is of Meyers Spring Creek where Bullis owned prime sections of the spring area of the canyon and surrounding land. The sections in yellow do not pertain to this study. (Source Ancestry on Section ownership)



Map shown above is of Independence Creek where Bullis owned 13 prime sections or portions of sections along this vital water source all the way to the Pecos River. One of the sections does include Caroline Springs which has a strong volume of water even to this day and time. Each section that Bullis owned is marked in black with his name. The sections in yellow do not pertain to this study. (Source Ancestry on Section ownership)