

HEADQUARTERS
DEPARTMENT OF TEXAS
SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

May 12, 1875

GENERAL ORDERS NO. 10

The following report of a scout made by First Lieutenant J.L. Bullis, 24th Infantry, Commanding Scouts at Fort Clark is published to this command.

Fort Clark, Texas
April 27, 1875

Lieutenant G.W. Smith, 9th Cavalry,
Post Adjutant.

Sir:

I have the honor to render the following report of a scout, made in compliance with verbal instructions received from the commanding officer of the post, the object of which was to find out if a large party of Indians were camped on the lower Pecos or Rio Grande, Rivers, or between them.

I would say that I left the garrison on the 16th day of the present month with but three Seminole Scouts, as I desired to leave but little or no trail and not to be seen. We accompanied Co. A, 25th Infantry, (enroute to Fort Stockton), as far up as Beaver Lake, a distance of one hundred miles, and during the time we kept our horses upon corn transported with the infantry train. We left the company on the morning of the 22nd Instant and marched west, toward the Pecos. We saw signs of Indians on Johnson's Run, a dry arroyo that runs into the Pecos, on the east side. We marched this day about fifty miles and went into camp, after dark, at a water hole in a rock, grass good.

The following morning (the 25th Instant) we left camp at 4 o'clock and marched south for about eighteen miles and crossed the Pecos about a mile above the mouth, at an Indian crossing; we then marched southeast for about six miles and went into the country between the Pecos and the Rio Grande we did not see any fresh Indian signs, but plenty of old, nearly all of which, went toward the shallow crossing of the Rio Grande, known as Eagle's Nest Crossing. We left the spring at 1 o'clock p.m. and marched east for about three miles and struck a fresh trail going northwest toward 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 dismounted and tied our horses, and crept, back of a bush, up to within about seventy-five yards of them (all of which were dismounted except a squaw) and gave them a volley which we followed up lively for about 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 to my sergeant's horse, back of him. The truth is, there were twenty-five or thirty Indians in all; and mostly armed with Winchester guns, and they were too much for us. As to my men, Sergeant John Ward, Trumpeter Isaac Payne, and Private Pompey Factor, they are brave and trustworthy, and are each, worth a medal, the former of which had a ball shot through his carbine sling, and the stock to his carbine shattered. Relative to the Indians, I would say, in my opinion, they were Comanches, and were from Mexico.

After the fight we marched about twelve miles and went into camp at Paint Creek, grass and water plentiful and good. We marched this day fifty-six miles. The following morning (the 26th Instant) we left camp at sunrise and took the main road to Fort Clark where we arrived at 3 p.m.; we marched this day forty-three miles. Total distance marched three hundred and twenty-six miles.

I remain, Sir,
Very respectfully,
Your obedient servant

John L. Bullis
1st Lieutenant, 24th Infantry
Commanding Scouts

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.

BY COMMAND OF BRIGADIER GENERAL ORD:

J.H. Taylor
Assistant Adjutant General