With the First U. S. Cavalry in Indian Country, 1859-1861—Concluded

Letters to The Daily Times, Leavenworth
Edited by Louise Barry

III. The Letters, May 3, 1860-April 28, 1861
Camp on Leaper's Creek, near Fort Cobb, C. N.,
Thursday, May 3d, A. D., 1860.

Editor of Times: The second squadron of 1st Cavalry left Fort Washita, C. N., on the 9th of April last, to proceed to Camp Cooper, in Texas, to join the command of Major [George H.] Thomas, 2nd. Cavalry, then under orders to scout the country northwest of Camp Cooper and along Red river, to chastise all hostile Indians, and to show them no mercy whatever. Our route lay in a southwestern course, over a beautiful, rich and picturesque prairie, in the Indian Territory, to Red river, which we crossed on the following day. The salutation we received upon Texan soil was a drenching shower of cold rain, lasting for about half an hour, when the clouds suddenly broke away, and the sun poured forth its burning rays, almost suffocating us.

The majority of the farmers in this part of Texas have already done all their oat sowing, corn and potato planting; corn is already two inches in height.

Immediately after crossing the boundary line between Texas and the Indian Territory, brought within our view two settlements only, and, composing each, only one family, and at a distance of thirty miles apart, while in Texas we passed settlements every two or three miles. The soil in Texas is superior to any that I have heretofore seen. In picturesque scenery Texas almost surpasses the world.

April 11.—Today we struck the [Butterfield] Overland Mail route to California. The roads were in very poor condition before this, but since we are on this great thoroughfare we have splendid roads. Large herds of horses, ponies and cattle cover the treeless

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45. Leeper's creek—named for Indian Agent Mathew Leeper, who in 1860, after the death of Samuel A. Blaine, succeeded him as head of the agency for the Indians from Texas, near Fort Cobb.—M. H. Wright, "A History of Fort Cobb," Chronicles of Oklahoma, v. 34, p. 55. See also, Footnote 52.

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portions of the country. This evening we pitch camp on Gaine’s
creek, now nearly dry; only a few holes of stagnant water are left
to show that there is a creek in the vicinity. The following morning
we struck the tents, and were in the saddle at an early hour ready
for the march. We passed through Gainesville, a village containing
upwards of 500 inhabitants. The town bears marks of having
been founded a long time ago. About one half of the houses it
contains have been erected since the Overland mail route has been
in operation; the other half have the appearance of being cen-
tenarians. From Gainesville we crossed over a very desolate looking
prairie. Not a solitary tree was to be seen the whole day. Deer,
grouse and turkey are in abundance all along the route. Settlements
are becoming scarce; the only houses we meet with are mail stations.
On the 13th we marched through timbered country a distance of
twenty-seven miles, and pitched camp on Barnsly creek, close to
a mail station.—Here I was informed that most of the depredations
committed in these parts was done by the Reserve Indians, recently
removed from this State to Fort Cobb. They come in parties of
five and six, and steal any thing they can get hold of. Not long
since a blacksmith, employed by the Overland Mail Company to
shoe their horses between Sherman and Fort Belknap, was found
murdered in the road, about eight miles from the latter place; he
had left Belknap on a tour to shoe the horses between that place
and Sherman.

On the night of the 14th, a severe storm passed over camp,
blowing down nearly all of our tents, and drenching the inmates
to the skin. Several coaches have passed us on the road; they are
invariably loaded with passengers. Milk and Butter are very scarce
in this section of the country, notwithstanding farmers have large
herds of cattle, but keep only a few for domestic use—the re-
mainder run at large over the prairies.

On the 16th we had a heavy shower of hail. The hail stone[s]
were of uncommon large size; some were as large as a walnut with
the hull on. We passed through Jacksborough, a neat little vil-
lage. On the 18th we received orders to abandon the Camp
Cooper expedition and to proceed to Fort Cobb, there to join the
command of S. D. Sturgis, Capt. 1st Cavalry. We lay over one

46. Gainesville, Tex., was a ten-year-old town in 1860, settled by persons who had
started west on the California trail. It is near the center of, and the seat of Cooke county,
47. The settlement of this town began in 1835. When it became the seat of Jack
county, Texas, in 1859, it was named Jacksborough. In 1869 the name was changed to
Jacksboro.—Ibid., p. 900.
William H. Emory (1811-1887)
Major, First U. S. cavalry, 1855-January 31, 1861, when he became lieutenant colonel. Commanding officer at Fort Arbuckle 1859, and at Fort Cobb late 1859-1860. Led all U. S. troops in Indian territory to Fort Leavenworth in May, 1861. Highest rank: Major general, U. S. V.

Samuel D. Sturgis (1822-1889)
day in camp six miles east of [Fort] Belknap, to rest our horses.—Accordingly, on the 20th, we set out on our way to Fort Cobb. Every thing went on smoothly until we arrived on the banks of the Little Witchita river, where we were compelled to unload our wagons and ferry ourselves across on a raft. Our horses we turned loose on the bank, and they swam across, while the saddles were put across on the raft. A few days later we came into the Buffalo range. A more desolate looking country I never saw. Grass was eat off so close to the ground that our horses had to do without while we were in the buffalo country. The prairie was perfectly black with them. When in camp near the Witchita mountains, a herd of buffaloes stampeded our mules, and run off five of them for good. Passed through Camp Radzeminski, where Major C. Van Dorn had established his head quarters while on the war trail of the Comanches in 1858-9. We finally arrived at Fort Cobb on the 29th of April.

There has been but little done towards the erection of Fort Cobb. All that has been done towards its erection is the laying of the foundation of a saw mill, but I am informed that as soon as the necessary appropriations are made by Congress, the work will be pushed vigorously forward. The troops stationed here, are, four companies of infantry, and two of cavalry. Their quarters at present consist of tents put on pickets. A few log houses have been built for officers' quarters.

The expedition ordered out under command of Capt. S. D. Sturgis, consists of six companies of the 1st cavalry, (B, A, C, D, E and I). There are no positive orders when we are to set out on the march. In the first place, we have to await the arrival of provisions from San Antonio, Texas, and the arrival of companies A and B, who set out on the march for Camp Cooper from Fort Arbuckle. An express was out after them, but could not cross Red river.

Yours anon,

Rover.

48. Fort Belknap, Tex. (mentioned in the introduction to these letters), had been established in 1851, the same year as Fort Arbuckle, C. N. Both were located by Capt. R. B. Marcy. Fort Belknap's site is about a mile south of present Newcastle, Tex.—Ibid., p. 626; W. S. Nye, Carbine and Lence ... (Norman, Okla., 1897), p. 21. At the point "six miles east of Belknap," the cavalrymen were about 40 miles from Camp Cooper. Here they turned and traveled almost due north to reach Fort Cobb, approximately 150 miles distant.

49. Maj. William H. Emory and the same command who had established the post the previous autumn were still at Fort Cobb in April, 1860. The troops were Companies D and E, First U. S. cavalry (formerly at Fort Arbuckle), and Companies B, C, D and F, First U. S. infantry (formerly stationed in Texas). Only the infantry troops were left at Fort Cobb after the expedition under Sturgis set out on June 9, 1860.

26—6550
Camp on Paw [Pond] Creek,\textsuperscript{50}
Near Ft. Cobb, C. N., June 3, ’60.

EDITOR OF TIMES: We are still in the vicinity of Fort Cobb, awaiting orders to proceed against the Kiowa and Comanche Indians. A sufficient quantity of provision has arrived, but as yet no positive orders have been issued to take up the line of march. —Orders are almost daily issued, but only to be countermanded before the time arrives to put them into execution.

Preparations towards the erection of Fort Cobb are progressing slowly; the sawmill, which I spoke of in my last, is going towards completion at a snail pace.

On the 10th ult., a party of Delaware and Tonkowa Indians made another foray amongst the Kiowa Indians, and succeeded in taking seven scalps. They came upon a party of fifteen Kiowas about seventeen miles from the Fort, killed seven of their number, returned to their camp the following day, and celebrated the event with the war dance, carousing throughout the whole night, and each succeeding night for two weeks. It is of common occurrence for the Kiowa Indians to make descents upon the Indians here, and drive off their horses, ponies, mules and cattle, to the number of ten and twenty at a time.

On the 18th ult., we were joined by Companies A and B,\textsuperscript{51} the command now consists of four companies, under command of Capt. W[illiam N. R.] Beale. Companies B and A marched all the way to Camp Cooper before they received the order to concentrate at Fort Cobb; they returned to Fort Arbuckle, remained there ten days, then set out for this place.

On the 22d ult., three Kiowa Indians made themselves sufficiently bold to drive off eighteen head of cattle belonging to Col. Leaper,\textsuperscript{52} the beef contractor for Fort Cobb; the herder, a Mexican, in attempting to rescue his master’s property, was severely wounded in the right arm with an arrow.

On the 23rd ult., a detachment of fifty recruits arrived from San Antonio, Texas, for the Infantry Companies at Forts Cobb and Arbuckle. A more intelligent set of men are not to be picked up every day by Uncle Sam.

There are rumors afloat that as soon as we leave here, 3,000 Texan volunteers contemplate making an attack upon the reserve

\textsuperscript{50} Pond (not Paw) creek—later known as Cobb creek.
\textsuperscript{51} Apparently Companies A and B, First cavalry (previously stationed at Fort Smith), had been garrisoned at Fort Arbuckle (along with Company E, First infantry), during the winter of 1859-1860 (to replace Companies D and E sent to establish Fort Cobb).
\textsuperscript{52} Mathew Leaper (see Footnote 45) later in the year became head of the Indian agency at this place.
Indians, for depredations supposed to be committed by them on citizens in the border counties of Texas. It is my opinion that the depredations committed on the frontier of Texas, are the work of white men, disguised as Indians.

JUNE 4th.—Orders were issued to-day for us to hold ourselves in readiness to march for the scene of Indian hostilities on the 7th inst., with ninety days' provisions.

The southern column of the Kiowa and Comanche expedition consists of six companies of 1st Cavalry; the northern of four companies of 1st Cavalry and two of 2d Dragoons, and the western of five companies of Mounted Rifles and one of 1st Dragoons—making altogether eighteen companies of mounted troops in the field against the cowardly red skins of the Plains. Should these eighteen companies of cavaliers fall in with these red devils, they will teach them how to murder peaceful emigrants in a manner they will not easily forget.

I hope this Summer's expedition against the Indians will prove more successful than that of last summer.

Rumor says that the Indians number upwards of 3,000, and are in camp one hundred miles north of here on the Washita river.

JUNE 5th.—Capt. S. D. Sturgis, commanding the southern column of Kiowa and Comanche forces, joined us from Fort Cobb today, with companies C and D, of 1st Cavalry.

The weather here for the last two weeks has been exceedingly hot, with a prospect before us of still hotter weather.

Lieut. [Albert V.] Colburn, with seventy-three recruits for the 1st Cavalry, is daily expected to arrive here; he will probably join us before we take up the line of march.

More when time permits.

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53. The Kiowa-Comanche expedition of 1869 was undertaken to punish these Indians for a series of murders and depredations on the Santa Fe trail in the fall and early winter of 1869. The outbreak stemmed from the killing of Kiowa chief Big Pawnee by Lt. George D. Bayard near Allison's ranch (at Walnut creek crossing), on September 21, 1869.—S. J. Bayard, The Life of George Dashiel Bayard (New York, 1874), pp. 154-158. At the time there were large camps of Kiowas and Comanches on Walnut creek seeking a peace treaty with the U. S. The killing of Big Pawnee sent them on the warpath. Within six weeks some 20 persons traveling the Santa Fe trail in Kansas had been massacred by these Indians.—The Daily Times, Leavenworth, November 5, 1859; Weekly Leavenworth Herald, October 29, 1859.

Camp on Arkansas River, Five Miles Southwest of Camp Alert,54 K. T., July 22, 1860.

Editor of Times—Dear Sir: As I stated in my last, we took up the line of march on the 9th of June. Early in the morning of the same day, a batch of seventy-three recruits arrived in camp; they were immediately assigned to the different companies. At eleven o'clock the "general" (signal to strike tents) sounded; after every thing was stowed away in wagons, we took the road for the Kiowa and Comanche country. The first three days we made short marches up the Washita Valley, in order to give the mail rider time to overtake us. After the arrival of the mail, we took up the march in good earnest. The Washita river has some curious freaks about it. Upon several occasions, when we camped on its banks, not a single drop of water was to be seen. Towards evening, all at once, the water rises sufficiently high to swim horses.

The seventh day out, while in camp on the Washita river, some of our Indians reported that there was a party of Kiowas in camp, not far from us. Company B was immediately dispatched to the supposed Kiowa camp, but returned in the evening and reported that the Indians seen were a party of the Keetie tribe, from the reserve at Fort Cobb. Leaving the Washita river to our rear, we struck for the Canadian river. Between these two rivers we passed over the most barren country the globe affords. With the exception of a narrow strip of bearing soil along water courses, the country is a complete bed of sand and rock.

On the 17th of June, after a march of thirty miles, we came to the Canadian, and to our utter disappointment, found not a solitary drop of water in it. We marched about five miles from the north side, where we came to a small lake. Here hundreds of dead fish were floating upon the surface of the water. For want of a better place, we camped here. Along the bottoms of creeks wild game, such as turkeys, grouse, deer, antelope, rabbits and buffalo are very plenty, especially the latter, which are scattered over the prairies in herds by thousands. The bad water we used for the past week has told severely upon the health of the troops—all, or nearly all, having a severe attack of diarrhoea.

The second day after crossing the Canadian, we crossed the North Fork of the same river—a beautiful, clear running stream of water.

54. Although Camp Alert (established as a camp on Pawnee Fork in October, 1859) had been officially renamed Fort Larned nearly two months before this date, the old name still clung. Fort Larned was soon to become an important military post on the Santa Fe trail. The site is on the south side of the Pawnee Fork, west of present Larned.—The Kansas Historical Quarterly, v. 1, p. 204; v. 29, p. 162.
—marched two miles beyond it, and camped by the side of a
beautiful little stream of water, composed entirely of springs, the
waters of which are far superior to the famous springs of Europe.
Up to the 20th of June, we saw neither sign, trail or trace of hostile
Indians. We continued up the North Fork of the Canadian for
several days. One day we passed by what appeared to have been
a large camp of soldiers, only a few days old. From the time we
passed the above place, orders were issued that no firing of arms,
nor blowing of bugles, be allowed on the march or in or about
camp, until further orders.

After sunset, on the 21st of June, while in camp on the north
branch of the north fork of the Canadian, and while a party of men
were bathing in an adjoining lake, John G. Telle, of Company I,
was accidentally drowned. His body was under water for nearly
an hour. When it was brought on shore, the surgeon did all in
his power to restore life, but all to no avail. His body was con-
signed to the grave early next morning. After which we took up
the line of march, and traveled over a grassless, traceless and
waterless prairie a distance of twenty-four miles, and were finally
compelled to pitch camp at a small lake of stagnant water. A hot,
scorching wind blew across the prairie all day long, nearly burning
all the skin off our face and hands. On the 23d of June, we
marched over a beautiful spot of land, between the north branch
of North Fork and Rabbit Ear branch of the Canadian river.

Soon after the tents were pitched, on the banks of the Rabitear
branch of Canadian, our guides came into camp and reported they
had discovered a trail of a party of Indians going North; orders
were immediately issued to prepare for a six days’ scout. Early in
the morning of the following day, we took leave of the train, taking
with us only one wagon to each company. We marched over a
very hilly country, until we reached Kiowa Creek, near the Cim-
aron river, where we found the camp of the Indians, of the night
previous; at this point, a messenger arrived from the wagons and
reported that one of them had broken down; upon hearing this,
the commanding officer concluded to camp.

The broken wagon reached camp some time after dark. This
being our first night without tents, [omission?] and as a consequence
all hands received a severe ducking. The following morning we
resumed the march early, crossed White’s Creek and Cimaron
river—passed over a fine country studded with thousands of plum
bushes; the fruit upon them, is as yet unripe. This day we camp at
a water hole in the center of a large prairie. We kept on marching
for several days, when an express was started to the train for it to follow us.—At the expiration of the six days we had seen no Indians, nor were likely to do so. The train arrived in camp at noon on the 29th of June; preparations were immediately made for a twenty days’ scout with pack mules.—At 9 o’clock on the morning of the 30th, everything was in marching order, and we proceeded forward; before proceeding on the march we were mustered.

We marched from 8 o’clock until after sunset, when we came to the Arkansas river, leaving the train about 55 miles to our rear. The country we passed over was a vast level stretch of prairie, without hill, dale, tree, shrub, or even a spear of grass. Our camp is situated nine miles below old Fort Mackay, and opposite to the train of Maj. Sedgwick’s command,55 on their way to join the command, which is represented to be in a state bordering on starvation. —On the 1st day of July we crossed the Arkansas river and marched up it for three days.—On the evening of the third day some of the officers of Major S.’s column 56 were at our camp. On the 4th we marched down the river two miles and laid over the remainder of the day. The following morning we took up the march and continued down the river until we arrived at our crossing; here we awaited the arrival of our train. The day we crossed the large prairie, the command was scattered about ten miles along the trail. A number of the mules gave out for want of water.—When the rear guard arrived in camp it was past midnight; I happened to be one of the unlucky ones forming the rear guard. Several times when the moon was hidden behind a cloud, we lost the trail; had it not been for two Mexicans who were in rear of all, overtaking us at this point, we probably would have perished. The whole party scattered out in search of the trail and finally it was found, and the Mexicans placed in front, who guided us safely into camp. After the arrival of the train at the Arkansas river we prepared for a fifteen days’ scout; at this time we took with us two wagons to a company.

On the 9th of July we took up the march for the head waters of Walnut Creek, having been informed that the Kiowas were in that

55. The supply train of Sedgwick’s command was camped on the north bank of the Arkansas, on the Santa Fe trail, a few miles below the junction of the “wet” and “dry” routes where Fort Dodge was to be established five years later (1865). Sturgis and his troops were south of the river. “Fort Mackay” was another name by which short-lived (1851-1854) Fort Atkinson was known. The exact location of Fort Atkinson (called Camp Mackay when Sumner’s troops were camped there in 1850-1851), long a matter of controversy, has been established as in the S. W. 1/4, Sec. 29, T. 26 S., R. 25 W., about two miles west of present Dodge City.—The Kansas Historical Quarterly, v. 23, p. 151.

56. Maj. John Sedgwick’s troops (Companies F, G, H, and K of the First cavalry, and two companies of Second dragoons) formed the northern column (see p. 403) of the Kiowa-Comanche expedition of 1866. His First cavalry troops were headquartered at Fort Riley and some of them had patrolled the Santa Fe trail in the Fort Atkinson area for the past three summers.
direction. Marched 28 miles and camped on Coon Creek. The following day we marched over very heavy prairie a distance of 20 miles and camped on Pawnee Fork; when within about five miles of camp, we saw a large herd of elk, the first I have seen this year. The following day we came to Walnut Creek, crossed over, and continued down the stream until we arrived at the mouth; 57 passed a large number of old camping places of the Kiowa tribe. By the appearance of the evacuated camp, I should judge that they numbered upwards of 700.

While laying in camp at the mouth of Walnut Creek, Co. "A" was sent to scout in the vicinity of Cow Creek. The following day one express arrived from Capt. Beale, stating that he had come on to a large trail of Indians. The same evening, (the 15th,) the remainder of the command took up the march for Cow Creek; march twenty-two miles in the night, and pitch a temporary camp for about two hours, to rest men and horses. At day-light we were in the saddle, ready for the march, leaving camp without a bite to eat; arrive at Cow Creek, after marching about twenty miles. Here we took something to eat, the first in twenty hours. At this place we saw numerous Indian camps of recent evacuation. The following day we marched down the creek, to within about five miles of its mouth, 58 where we found about three hundred Kaw Indians in camp, laying in their winter stock of Buffalo meat. During the night's march, one of "C" Company's men got detached from the command, lost his horse, and was left a way wanderer upon the prairie. After arriving at Cow Creek, a corporal and two privates, with a guide, set out in search of him, and found him about twelve miles from camp, in a deplorable condition, having been without food for thirty-six hours. They arrived in camp just as we were on the point of starting for the mouth of Cow Creek.

From Cow Creek to Pawnee Fork, (our present camp,) we made in four days, being a distance of 88 miles.

During our absence from Walnut Creek, one of the houses upon its banks was broken into, the contents stolen therefrom, and then burnt to the ground. It is supposed that the deed was done by a party of outlaws which infest the country along the Santa Fe road. Such men ought to be burnt at the stake.

Forty-four days have passed away since we left Fort Cobb, out of which we marched forty-one and laid over three. We marched a

57. At the mouth of Walnut creek was a log cabin known as Allison's (or Peacock's) ranch; there was also a U. S. mail station at this crossing of the Santa Fe trail.—O. Allen, Guide Book . . . to the Gold Fields of Kansas & Nebraska (Washington, 1859), p. 9.
58. At, or near, present Hutchinson, Kan.
distance of seven hundred and forty-three miles, the longest day’s
march being fifty miles, and the shortest two, making an average
of eighteen miles per day. Our horses are in a poor condition. It
is the calculation of the commanding officer, at present, to lay over
five days, and then to either take up the march for Smoky Hill
Fork of the Kaw River or for home. There are rumors afloat that
the Kiowas are at the first mentioned place. All search for them
thus far has been in vain.

Our command is daily decreasing, by the expiring of the term
enlisted for. But few have re-enlisted.

**Rover.**

**Camp on Platte River, two miles west of Ft. Kearney, Aug. 10, ’60.**

**Dear Times:**—On the 28th ult., we left our camp on the Arkansas
river 59 for Smoky Hill Fork, taking with us all serviceable horses,
and a train of thirty wagons, to carry provisions for the men, and
forage for horses for a fifteen days’ scout; the remainder of the
train with a guard of twenty men, was left in camp to await our
return. Marched more than a day over a broken prairie in a
Northern direction, a distance of twenty-four miles, and camped
on Walnut Creek.

**July 29.**—Left camp at 6 o’clock, marched over a high, dry and
barren prairie for twenty miles and camped on Smoky Hill Fork.
No traces of the Indians were found here.

**July 30.**—A heavy storm passed over camp last night, giving us
a thorough wetting. Left camp at 7 o’clock, marched over a dry,
hilly prairie a distance of twenty-eight miles and camped on Big
Saline Fork. The country we passed over to-day has a wild, beauti-
ful, picturesque appearance, and is better adapted to the haunts
of Indians than any other we have passed this summer. Passed by
several places showing signs where Indians recently were.

**July 31.**—Several Indian relics were bro’t into camp, indicating
the presence of Indians hereabouts. We moved camp down the
stream about two miles to rest men and horses, as well as to give our
trailers time to hunt up the trail. A heavy tornado passed over
camp, blowing down tents, upsetting wagons, and committing great
havoc in general. At 9 o’clock our trailers arrived and reported that
they had discovered a trail leading up the stream, about seven
days old.

**August 1.**—We followed the trail up the stream about ten miles,

59. Five miles southwest of Fort Larned (Camp Alert).
and camped for the third time on Big Saline Fork. The river bottom is a very rich soil, abundantly studded with wild plums. About fifteen miles from camp we came to an Indian camp, having the appearance of having been evacuated about six days. About two hours after encamping, our Indians set up a cry of Kiowa! Kiowa! and the sentinel giving signs of approaching Indians, directing the trailers to come in, and exhibited three scalps yet dripping with fresh blood. The tents were immediately struck, and horses saddled, after which we left camp at a rapid pace. When about ten miles on the way, another unfortunate Kiowa lost his scalp. By this time it was beginning to get dark; we charged upon a party of fifty Kiowas, but darkness prevented us from overtaking them; we marched twelve miles and camped on the open prairie without wood or water. The Little Saline was three miles off, and a large party went to get water to drink.

Aug. 2—[and 3?] Passed over a rough, hilly country for eighteen miles, and camped on Solomon's Fork;\textsuperscript{60} here we came to an Indian camp only evacuated last night. The trail for three miles was literally strewn with dried meat, lodge poles, buffalo robes, moccasins and all sorts of cooking utensils; hides were yet pinned to the ground in their camp, but all were damaged; they must have left in great haste. After sunset\textsuperscript{61} we resumed the march, following up the trail which passes along what is known as the great Pawnee trail; about five miles from camp we came to a place where a large quantity of goods had been dropped and guarded by a dog; five miles further we added a small pony to our command, which evidently could not keep up with the rapid pace of the Indians. Marched fifteen miles and camped on a tributary to Solomon's Fork.—Our camp was in the midst of an Indian camp but one day old; here were a number of saddles and various other equipments left behind.

Aug. 3.—[Aug. 4?] Marched over a rough, hilly country a distance of ten miles and camped on Wolf Creek. Six Indian trailers left camp to hunt up the trail, and when about six miles from camp fell into ambush\textsuperscript{62} of the Kiowas, killing two, wounding three; the

\textsuperscript{60} Captain Sturgis' account stated: "... we succeeded in arriving so close upon the rear of the enemy, at Solomon's fork, on the morning of the 8th, as to get possession of their camp, which they had abandoned during the previous night. Here we found large quantities of buffalo meat and hides, and a considerable number of lodge poles. ..."—Report of Capt. S. D. Sturgis, dated "Fort Kearny, N. T., August 12, 1860," in Secretary of War's Report, 1860, pp. 19-22.

\textsuperscript{61} Sturgis' account: "As we had marched fifty miles within the last twenty-four hours... we remained in camp during the day, and marched again in a violent storm as soon as it was dark, striking directly for the north, by the compass."—\textit{Ibid.} Rover makes no mention of the storm.

\textsuperscript{62} As Sturgis described this: "During the next day [the 4th], five of our Indian scouts fell in with a large party of the enemy, and two of them were killed and the others wounded, one fatally, and has since died; three of the enemy were killed, and several wounded."—\textit{Ibid.}
others escaped and brought the news to camp. Two companies were immediately dispatched to pursue the Indians. About four miles from camp we found the three wounded Tonkoways. Two miles further we found two dead but not scalped. An express was sent for the rest of the command. Several bloody blankets and one dead Kiowa were seen on the trail as we advanced. Marched twenty miles when the command hove in sight; we halted to await its arrival, after which we camped again on Wolf Creek.

Aug. 5.—Soon after leaving camp we came to the main trail; on Prairie Dog Creek we found a large encampment evacuated this morning. After following trail for 49 miles, we encamped on Supper [Sappa] Creek. A short time before camping, the trailers with ten men left to take the general direction of the trail. They soon returned and reported they had discovered a place where the Indians had left in great haste, leaving a great quantity of dried meat behind them. We crossed the old route from Leavenworth to Pike's Peak.

Aug. 6.—Left camp at sunrise. About two miles from camp, over a gentle rise, we came upon a party of thirty Indians. A detachment of thirty men, and the advance guard, immediately charged upon them. They ran them so close that they were compelled to drop lances, rifles, pistols, bows and arrows, and other Indian trinkets, as well as their saddles. The Indians soon gained level ground, and far outstripped us. We followed the trail for fifteen miles. While halting to rest our horses, a party of about fifty made their appearance about two miles in advance of us, and seemed very warlike. One Company of troops, and one hundred of our Indians, went towards them. The fifty, at first seen, soon numbered over five hundred. Our Indians were first in battle; two of their number were killed, and two wounded. The Kiowas left three dead on the field. There is no accurate idea to be formed of how many were killed of their number, as they are nearly all strapped to their saddles. When the main body of troops advanced towards them, they retreated at a rapid pace. The charge was sounded, the 1st and 3d squadrons took up the charge, while the second 63 was kept back as a reserve. The third came upon them just in time to pour

63. Since Rover's squadron was held in reserve he probably did not have a good view of the actual battle. Sturgis' account, though brief, is vivid: "In our front lay a level plain—say a mile in width—intersected by numerous ravines, and contained between a low ridge of hills on the north and a heavily-wooded stream on the south. As we advanced, the enemy poured in from every conceivable hiding place, until the plain and hill sides contained probably from 600 to 800 warriors, apparently determined to make a bold stand."

"But when a cavalry charge was ordered the Indians began to give way and "The whole scene now became one of flight and pursuit for fifteen miles, when they scattered on the north side of the Republican fork, rendering further pursuit impossible.

..."—Ibid.
several volleys into them.—While crossing a deep ravine, I saw several drop off their ponies, and a large number reeling in their saddles. When we arrived at the spot, not an Indian was to be seen—both dead and living had disappeared amongst the timbers of the Republican. As we gained the last rise between us and the river, we could just see them emerging from the timber on the opposite side of the river. We followed after them for about eight miles north of the Republican, and found that we were losing ground, when we returned to where the fight first commenced.

After a ride of fifty miles, we camped on a branch of Supper [Sappa] creek. While we were following the main body of Indians, another party attacked the train, but were sorely disappointed. They lost four killed and five wounded; in return for which they got eight ponies belonging to our guides. One man, returning from the main body of troops with a broken down horse, was attacked by a party of eight Kiowas. He killed two, and wounded another. He broke three of their lances with his sabre. While engaged with the third Indian, aid arrived and dispersed the remainder. His horse was run through with a lance; the man himself received a slight wound in his legs. The prairie over which the Indians ran was literally covered with saddles, blankets, and various other Indian equipments. One of our Indians killed has twenty one arrows sticking in his body. While returning from the Republican to camp, several of the Kiowas kept galloping backwards and forwards upon the crest of a high hill, about three miles distant, probably to take observations of our camp for an attack tonight. Our camp is situated on the side of a gently rising hill, half a mile from the creek. Thus ended the skirmish with the Kiowas on Supper [Sappa] creek. 64

Aug. 7.—An alarm was raised last night which, however, proved false. It was caused by the discharge of a pistol in the hands of a drunken man; he was immediately put under the charge of the

64. Sturgis' report said 20 Indians had been killed, and probably many others wounded, in the several engagements between August 3 and 6. The running fight on the sixth, he said, took place "near the Republican fork" soon after the expedition left camp on Whelan's (Beaver) creek. He made no mention of Sappa creek. (Rover makes no mention of Beaver creek!) The casualties in Sturgis' command on August 6 were: two friendly Indians killed, three soldiers wounded (1st Sgt. John O'Connell, Co. B, slightly; Pvt. Michael Whelan, Co. B, severely; Pvt. Gerard M. Beech, Co. B, severely), and one soldier missing (Pvt. Matthew Green, Co. D).

The location of the 15-mile running battle of August 6 cannot be determined accurately, particularly since Sturgis and "Rover" were at variance on whether their camp on August 5 was on Beaver creek or Sappa creek. However, the locale was evidently in southern Nebraska, probably in Furnas county, but perhaps extending into Harlan county, also. (Furnas county borders on Norton county, Kansas, and Harlan county borders on Phillips county, Kansas.) John S. Kirwan, a cavalryman with the northern column of the Kiowa-Comanche expedition of 1860, later stated that "... Sturgis caught up with their main body on the Republican River above where Concordia, Kansas, now stands."—The Kansas Historical Quarterly, 21, p. 586. But he was wrong by at least 100 miles in his location of the fight.
guard. A man of Company D turned up missing last night at roll call; it is thought he was taken by the Kiowas. We left camp at eight o'clock, marched twelve miles and camped on the Republican Fork. Here we found the horse belonging to the missing man, but no traces of the man could be found. The horse was still saddled and bridled, and quietly grazing in the bottom.—As we passed over the battle field we halted and buried the fallen Indians (two in number) belonging to our ranks. The Kiowas had covered over all their dead. On the top of the hill, near the river, we saw what appeared to be a large body of Kiowas, but after a close examination with telescopes, proved to be buffalo. Eight Kiowas were found dead upon the banks of the Republican, having been shot with poisoned arrows; they were swelled to twice their natural size. Their scalps were immediately torn off their heads.

Aug. 8.—Leave camp early, cross the Republican, and head towards Fort Kearney, for a supply of provisions. Marched over beautiful but waterless prairie a distance of thirty-five miles, and camped at water holes, which are of a stagnant nature. The prairie was literally covered with buffalo on their return to the south. The hills to the west of camp were so thickly covered with them that not a solitary spot of grass was visible. We pass over prairie which has been the scene of great havoc amongst the buffalo. All, apparently, were in great haste—rifles, bows and arrows, were fired in abundance. Buffalos, half skinned, and half cut up, were scattered over the prairie for miles.

Aug. 9.—Left camp at about half past six o'clock; marched over hilly country for ten miles, and came to Platte River about fourteen miles above Fort Kearney; followed down the stream until within ten miles of the Fort, and pitched camp on the Platte River. The weather was tolerably cool. While crossing the last ridge of hills, several wagons, going leisurely along the road, as soon as they saw us took up a fast gallop, evidently taking us for Indians.

Aug. 10.—It is reported here that a body of 1,500 Indians crossed the Platte River about fourteen hours in advance of us. They must evidently have been the Kiowas. They had with them 1,000 head of extra ponies.—While waiting I heard several shots fired; after enquiring the cause, I found that a drunken man had fired two shots at a corporal, with the intention to kill. The corporal returned the fire, and killed him with the first shot.

Rover.

65. Rover indicates the expedition traveled 45 miles from the site on the Republican river (where the August 6 battle ended) to the point where they struck the Platte river. This would indicate that the fight (whether on the Sappa, or on Beaver creek) probably took place in Furnas county, Nebraska.

EDITOR TIMES—Dear Sir: Since my last, changes have taken place, preventing me from presenting my usual quota of news to the many readers of the Times. I will, however, endeavor to make up for past negligence. My last, I believe, was dated at Fort Kearney, where we arrived after the engagement with the Kiowas. After remaining here four days, we took up the march for Fort Riley. During our march over the prairie between Fort Kearney and the Republican Fork, we suffered greatly for the want of water. A few holes containing water were now and then met with, but it was very filthy.

Millions of buffalo cover the prairie hereabouts. One day, after encamping, we were compelled to turn out, en masse, to protect our horses from being run down by them.—The following morning, the surrounding hills and ravines were covered with the dead and wounded buffaloes, unable to go farther. These, however, were the last buffaloes we saw, for this season.

The next day we came to the road leading from Fort Kearney to Fort Riley. By the way, this is the best road I have seen in my western travels; streams and bad ravines are all furnished with bridges. After a twelve days march over the finest land the Territory of Kansas affords, we arrived at Fort Riley.

The Republican Valley is becoming to be the scene of great improvement. Settlements are found all along the river at intervals of from three to five miles, a distance of 12 miles west of Riley.

The heavy drouth that prevailed in Kansas the past summer, has caused a great many to abandon their homes on the frontier for homes farther east, where they could gain a livelihood during the coming winter. In a great many cases everything too cumbersome to carry away, was left behind; evidently, with the intention of returning in the spring, to try it again. A large number, however, yet remain, determined to stay through the winter. I was informed by them, that they were compelled to dispose of some of their stock, not having sufficient forage to keep them during the winter. As we advanced towards Riley, the crops became better, but were as yet insufficient to pay for the labor bestowed upon them. The streams we crossed were nearly all dry. The Republican was the only stream that afforded us camping places.

66. The military road between Forts Riley and Kearny was surveyed in the summer of 1856 under the direction of Lt. Francis T. Bryan. In 1857 some work was done to improve the road, and in 1858 the streams were bridged and the road put into excellent condition. The distance between the two posts by this route was 193 miles.—W. T. Jackson, “The Army Engineers as Road Surveyors and Builders in Kansas and Nebraska, 1854-1858,” in The Kansas Historical Quarterly, v. 17, pp. 44-51.
After laying up at [Fort] Riley six days, we took up the march for Cottonwood Creek, where our commissary train had been ordered to await our arrival. The farmers along the route, between Riley and Cottonwood, were all complaining of the drouth, as having been more severe in that vicinity than in any other locality of the Territory. They are nearly all disposing of their stock, to enable them to winter it through.

While encamped on Clarke's Creek, a heavy thunder storm passed over camp, the lightning striking in all directions. At evening stable call, while Sergeant Perry was returning from the creek with his horse, the lightning struck the horse, killing him instantly, and knocking down Sergeant Perry, Priv't. Green, and six others, all of company "I"; doing, however, no serious injuries to any except Green, who was stunned so severely that he has not yet become entirely well. We arrived at Cottonwood in due time, where we soon erected our camp city, for the first time in thirty-five days. The following morning, we took up the march for Fort Cobb; and after having proceeded on our way as far as Eldorado, we received orders to proceed at once to Fort Smith, Ark. From Cottonwood to Eldorado, the country is well settled, and farmers have been more successful with their crops than those farther north, but still have raised scarcely sufficient to keep them during the winter. All the rivers and creeks we crossed, thus far, were dry, with the exception of a hole of water here and there.67

On the morning of the 7th of September, we left our camp on Walnut Creek,68 twelve miles south of Eldorado, to proceed to Fort Smith, Ark. Before leaving, a detachment of forty men, having in charge all the Indians, left for Fort Cobb, under the command of Lieut. R. H. Riddick. We marched about 150 miles over beautiful country, without seeing a house. I was surprised that such land as this was lying idle, but soon found out the cause—it being the Osage Indian Reserve.

When near the Southern boundary of Kansas, we met a large party of the Osage tribe on their return from the buffalo hunt, having laid in a large quantity of their favorite meat. Leaving the

67. The route followed from Fort Riley must have been almost due south to the camp on Clarke's creek in present Geary county, then through Morris county (crossing the Santa Fe trail probably a little west of Diamond Springs) and Chase county (crossing the Cottonwood river in the west central part of the county), to El Dorado in Butler county.

68. The camp on the Walnut river must have been a little south of present Augusta.
Osage country, we came into the Cherokee Nation, where settlements are quite numerous. The crops (especially corn) look remarkably well, and are the best we have seen this summer. The drought don't appear to have been so severe here as in Kansas.—We did not see a running stream of water after leaving Fort Riley, until we arrived at the Grand, or Neosho river, and this was very low, not having over twelve inches of water in its channel. Even the Verdigris was as dry as a bone. From Grand river to Fort Smith, we marched through one continual stretch of timber. When evening approached, we turned off the road and encamped by the side of some little mountain stream, tying our horses to trees, and giving them their four quarts of corn per day, on which they had to travel from twenty-five to thirty miles a day. We passed through Tallaquah [Tahlequah],\(^{69}\) the Capitol of the Cherokee Nation, a beautiful little village of about three hundred inhabitants, and completely surrounded by woods. I have noticed that all villages built by Indians, whether civilized or not, are invariably located in some secluded, but generally romantic spot.

We arrived at Fort Smith on the 19th day of September, where we were disposed of as follows: Companies E and D, 3d Squadron, under command of Capt. Sturgis, to remain at Fort Smith, to assist the Cherokee Indian Agent in removing unlawful settlers upon the lands of the Cherokees, out of the Nation, should it require force to expel them therefrom. The remainder, companies B and A, 1st Squadron, under command of Capt. W. N. R. Beale, to proceed to Fort Arbuckle, where they were stationed last winter; and Companies C and I, 2nd Squadron, under command of Capt. E. A. Carr, to proceed to Fort Washita, where they were stationed last winter.

The Arkansas river is very low at present—only fourteen inches of water in the channel. Navigation to Fort Smith has been suspended since last May. Steamboats can now run up only as far as Little Rock, where all the government stores, to supply Forts Smith, Washita, Arbuckle and Cobb, are unloaded, and from thence transported, by government trains, to Fort Smith, to be again transported from there to the different forts above mentioned, as necessity requires them.

The 1st Squadron remained at Fort Smith eight days, and then proceeded homewards, where I learn they arrived after a journey of twelve days.

\(^{69}\) Compare with "Know Nothing's" comment on (and spelling of) Tahlequah in his letter of January 7, 1859—an indication that "Know Nothing" and "Rover" were two different persons?
The 2nd Squadron remained fifteen days, to give the horses time to recruit up, they having been nearly used up in marching through the timbered country north of the Arkansas river. On the 3d of October, the 2nd Squadron took up the line of march for this place, where it arrived on the 11th inst., having been on the plains six months and two days, during which time we traveled 126 days, and laid over 47 days; traveling 2419 miles, making an average of 19 3/4 miles for each marching day, or 13 1/5 miles for each day on the plains. This is the longest trip the First Regiment of Cavalry has made since it organization in 1855.  

The weather here is very pleasant, and the troops in good health.

ROVER.

FORT WASHITA, C. N., Nov. 23, 1860.

EDITOR TIMES:—Within the last two weeks there have been brought before Gen. Douglas H. Cooper, Choctaw and Chickasaw Indian Agent, five persons, charged with murder, theft and perjury, and were all committed to the jail at Van Buren, Ark., to await further action of the courts of justice. Two were charged with perjury, one with murder, arson, burglary and kidnapping and the other two have to answer the charge of stealing a wagon and two yoke of oxen. This latter crime was committed in the Chickasaw Nation, opposite Preston, Texas. Immediately upon missing his property, the owner, accompanied by a constable, started in pursuit, and succeeded in overtaking the rascals forty miles north of Perryville, C. N.

A general Court Martial was convened at Fort Arbuckle, C. N., last week, for the trial of all offenders that might be brought before it.

At a recent sale of five condemned horses, the highest bid for a horse was $96; the lowest, $40; total proceeds, $321—an average of $64 1/2 per head—a good price for unserviceable horses, but it is in fair proportion with everything else. Corn sells at $2.21 per bushel; oats $1.80; sweet potatoes, $2; and apples at twenty-five cents per dozen; butter brings from 25 to 50 cents per pound, according to quality; eggs, 40 cents per dozen.

70. In 1858 Companies F and K, First cavalry, were part of an escort for supply trains from Fort Leavenworth to Fort Bridger. They marched over 2,000 miles before reaching Fort Leavenworth again in October of that year.—The Kansas Historical Quarterly, v. 1, pp. 196-198.

71. This would have been about 15 miles south of Fort Washita, close to the Red river.

72. Perryville was a trading post and stage station on the Texas road in the Choctaw Nation, about six miles south and west of present McAlester, Okla.—Oklahoma a Guide . . . , op. cit., p. 340.
About ten days since, orders were received from Department Head Quarters, to cut off the allowance for the horses one half; ever since then our horses have been on the decline, and are rapidly going, going, like South Carolina, to destruction. To-day orders were received to suspend all grain contracts. This looks rather billious. The Buchanan Administration has commenced curtailing its expenses at rather too late a period.

A light snow covered the ground hereabouts early this morning, but had to give way to the influence of a hot Southern sun, towards twelve o'clock.

The post office, at Tishomingo City, capital of the Chickasaw Nation, has suspended, or, in other words, fizzled out, for want of sufficient patronage.

The election of Lincoln is hailed here with much joy. The most ignorant suppose that it will lead to a disbanding of the army, and thus they be set at liberty.

More anon.

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Rover.

Fort Washita, C. N., Dec. 11 [1860].

Editor Times:—Here are a few items that may be of some interest to the readers of the Times.

A few days since, a full-blooded Chickasaw Indian passed through Boggy Depot, with a wagon load of groceries, and by his singular behavior excited suspicion amongst the Light Horse (police) Fraternity. Two of the police followed him, and overtook him at Nail's bridge, where he had just finished unloading part of his load. They did not molest him there, but followed him back to Boggy Depot. Arriving at that place, they compelled him to halt, and searched his wagon; they found two ten gallon kegs of whiskey, nicely done up in square boxes, and marked "Green Corn." The police drew the bungs, and after satisfying themselves that it was whiskey, took an axe and broke in the head of each keg, and spilled the contents upon the ground. There were also two letters found, corresponding with the address upon the boxes. These were also taken charge of by the police. The whole affair will be properly inquired into by the courts of justice, and the offenders punished according to law. The laws in regard to smuggling whiskey into the Nation are very severe, the penalty for the third offence being death.

Lieut. Alfred Iverson,73 accompanied by his family, returned to this place on the 8th inst.

73. Iverson was first lieutenant of Company C. (See, also, letter of March 31, 1861.)

27—6590
A Masonic Hall is being erected at Nail’s Bridge, C. N. 
Lieut. Edward Ingraham left here this morning, on leave of absence for sixty days.  

In addition to the guard house, at this place, six cells have been erected for the further punishment of military offenders, and a string of orders as long as the Mississippi river has been issued.

Rover.

FORT WASHITA, C. N., Jan. 1, 1861.

EDITOR TIMES:—I will open the New Year by presenting to the readers of the Times a portion of my diary for the past week.

DEC. 25th.—A shooting affray took place yesterday, at Tishomingo, between a white man and Indian. The result was, however, without bloodshed. Several shots were exchanged, but without effect. But for the timely interference of the Light Horse, an awful scene would have been the consequence. After the first shots, the natives began flocking to the assistance of the Indian, and would probably have suspended the white man to the nearest tree, had not the Light Horse came up at that moment.

DEC. 26th.—The Second Cavalry recruits departed this morning for Camp Cooper, Texas.

DEC. 28th.—Lieut. Burtwell and detachment arrived here today, having in charge one prisoner, charged with stealing negroes.

DEC. 30th.—Gen. D. H. Cooper, Chickasaw and Choctaw Indian agent, is at present paying to the Chickasaws their annuities, at Tishomingo City. The woods in the vicinity of the Capital affords a good camping place for those living at a distance. The town contains about 12 or 15 houses, and is not capable of furnishing quarters for the whole tribe.

JAN. 1st.—The arrival of the Overland Mail was eagerly looked for this morning. It was supposed to contain the decision of the South Carolina Convention. After its contents were made known, three cheers for a Southern Confederacy were given, and strong hopes expressed that all Southern States should follow the example set by the Palmetto State.

Rover.

74. From April 9-October 11, 1860, Ingraham and some 30 to 40 troops had garrisoned Fort Washita while most of the Second squadron was taking part in the Kiowa-Comanche expedition. (See letter of April 5, 1860.)

We learn, from a reliable source, that the troops stationed at Fort Arbuckle, C. N., have received information from the Pay Master, that he had at present no money, and did not know when he would receive sufficient funds from the United States Government to pay them. This intelligence created quite a panic among those immediately concerned.

Jan. 16th.—An express arrived here at 10 o'clock, from Boggy Depot, for a detachment of troops to assist in capturing one Fred. McCully, a half breed, and an escaped murderer from the Van Buren, Ark., penitentiary; also, to take into custody one Wilson Adair, a white man, charged with disorderly conduct on Christmas day. The detachment, consisting of one non-commissioned officer and eight privates, left here at half-past 11 o'clock, P. M., and arrived at Boggy Depot at 5 o'clock, A. M., and at once proceeded in search of McCully, who, after a few unsuccessful visits at different houses in the vicinity of Boggy Depot, was found hidden under a bed in the house of his brother-in-law, two miles North of the village. Adair had escaped from his place of confinement, but was found at the residence of his employer. He was again arrested. Both prisoners were conducted to this place, and are now confined in the guard house. Adair will probably have his "permit" rescinded, and be ordered out of the Nation. No white man can reside in an Indian Nation without permission from the Governor or Indian agent. McCully will remain here until an opportunity affords to send him to Van Buren.

Jan. 17th.—Adair was this morning examined, by Capt. Carr, and found guilty of the charge, and sentenced to forfeit his "permit," and to leave the Nation without delay.

Within the last ten days, two murders have been committed in this Nation, but as yet I have been unable to ascertain full particulars.

Our supply of provisions is getting low. If Uncle Sam does not soon reimburse us, we will have sufficient cause to secede.

More anon.

Rover.

Fort Washita, C. N., Feb. 19th, 1861

Editor Times: On the 28th ult., a detachment of eight U. S. soldiers, having in charge three prisoners, Fred McCully, J. Connelly and E. Adair, left this place for Van Buren, Arkansas, to turn said
prisoners over to the civil authorities. White men are never tried by the authorities of the Indian Territory, neither are Indians committing crimes upon white settlers; but are taken to Van Buren, and there tried by men of their own color.

In my last I mentioned that Adair had been escorted out of the Nation. He, however, again returned to Boggy Depot, where he was re-arrested and brought to this place, just in time for a free ride to Van Buren jail, where he was released upon paying a small fine, after which he departed for Missouri.

If rumor can be credited, Forts Cobb, Arbuckle and Washita, are at present in danger of being attacked by a Texan mob, to get possession of the arms, horses, mules and stores, belonging to Uncle Sam. Should such be the case, the Texans will find it rather hot work to carry their threats into execution. There are sufficient troops at each of the forts above mentioned, to protect all Government property.

Last Saturday, Deputy Marshal Whiteside passed through here, en route for Fort Arbuckle, where he will take into custody Bill Hall, and take him to Van Buren jail.

J. H. Smith, formerly editor of the Bonham (Texas) Era, is about to establish a new paper at Boggy Depot, C. N., to be called the National Register.

Last week a train of five wagons arrived at this post with provisions for the troops.—Trains loaded with similar articles, are on their way for Forts Cobb and Arbuckle.

ROVER.

FORT WASHITA, C. N., March 31, 1861.

EDITOR TIMES: Since my last, I have not had an opportunity to inform you of the doings here, until to-day.

Deputy Marshal Whiteside, and an escort of six U. S. troops from Fort Arbuckle, arrived here after an absence of six days, having in charge of Bill Hall, the murderer, and departed the following day with an escort of five men from this place for Van Buren, Arkansas. The troops from Arbuckle returned to that place. The escort from this place accompanied the Marshall to Johnson’s Station, on the California Overland Route, and then returned.

Two weeks ago the overland coaches made the trip from Fort

77. Perhaps the Texas editor referred to in Rover’s letter of March 6, 1860.
78. The National Register was probably short-lived. (See next letter.) No reference is made to it in the Union List of Newspapers; nor is the Bonham (Tex.) Era listed therein.
79. “Johnson’s” (as shown on some later maps of the territory), was about half way between Forts Washita and Smith. (See map facing p. 272.)
Smith, Arkansas, to Nail’s Bridge, C. N., a distance of one hundred and seventy miles in twenty hours.

First Lieut. Alfred Iverson, of the 1st Cavalry, and son of Ex-Senator Iverson, of Georgia, has tendered his resignation to the President, having received the appointment of 3d Captain in the Georgia army.

Dixon Ouchaubby, a Chickasaw Indian, convicted of murder, was executed at Tishomingo City, on the 20th inst. Levi Colbert, another Chickasaw, confined in the jail at Tishomingo City, awaits the same fate, for murdering an Indian on Blue river, sometime since. A few days since a Choctaw Indian was brought to this place and confined in the Guard House, being charged with murdering two white men, near Red river.—The prisoner acknowledges killing one man, but denies killing the second. There is, however, sufficient proof that he committed both crimes.

Grass is growing finely. It will soon be sufficiently large to afford good grazing.—Peach trees have been in blossom for nearly a month, but late heavy frosts have destroyed this fruit for this season. The trees of the forest are putting on their summer costume.

The first number of the National Register made its appearance on the 16th inst. In politics it is an uncompromising secession sheet, beneath the contempt of honorable men.

The object of the Choctaw and Chickasaw National Convention, which met at Boggy Depot, C. N., was the sectionalizing and individualizing of their country. Resolutions to that effect, after a discussion of several days, were adopted by a vote of fifteen yeas to eight nays, and are to be submitted to the people, on the 6th of August, 1861, for ratification or rejection.

The General Council of the Choctaw Nation, in general assembly, passed, among a number of resolutions, expressing their feelings and sentiments in reference to the political disagreement existing between the Northern and Southern States of the Union, the following resolution:

[“]Resolved, further, That in the event a permanent dissolution of the American Union takes place, our many relations with the General Government must cease, and we shall be left to follow the natural affections, the educations, institutions and interests of our property [people?], which indissolubly bind us in every way to the destiny of our neighbors and brethren of the Southern States,

80. In describing Tishomingo in his letter of May 2, 1859, “Cato” noted that the Chickasaw capital had “a calaboose, with a gallows in front, to remind the offender of his doom.”
upon whom we are confident we can rely for the preservation of our rights, of life, liberty and property, and the continuance of many acts of friendship, generous counsel and fraternal [material?] support." 81

The garrison of this post was yesterday reinforced by the arrival of Company E, (Capt. Prince’s,) 1st Infantry, from Fort Arbuckle, 82 which has been ordered to take post here.—Capt. [William E.] Prince assumes the command of this fort.

The fort has not yet been taken by the Secessionists, as the Eastern papers have it. Some even go as far as to give an account of the surrender of the government property to the traitors by Capt. Carr. These and similar paragraphs going the rounds in the Eastern papers concerning this fort, are infamously false, and do great injustice to the brave and gallant commanding officer.

A few sympathizers with the Southern rabble, have deserted, taking with them horses, pistols, carbines, and everything they could lay hands upon; but as this was only following the example set by Floyd, Cobb and others, it will have no effect upon the morality of the community at large in the Rhett-ched Confederacy.

ROVER.

FORT WASHITA, C. N., April 28, 83 '61.

EDITOR OF TIMES: Since my last, affairs have assumed quite a different aspect. About a week since, Lieut. Col. Emory and staff arrived here, with the purpose of establishing the Head Quarters of the 1st Cavalry at this post. 84 Fort Smith has since been evacuated, and the troops are on the road for this place. Companies A and B arrived here from Fort Arbuckle yesterday. Company A returned to Arbuckle this morning. Everything at this post is being packed up to leave as soon as Capt. Sturgis and command arrive. 85

81. This was the third in a series of six resolutions passed on February 17, 1861, by the General Council of the Choctaw Nation. As published in The War of the Rebellion, Ser. I, v. 1, p. 632, the words "people" and "material" (as bracketed in above) were used instead of "property" and "fraternal."

82. "Rumors of a contemplated attack from Texas" on Fort Arbuckle caused an order to be issued on March 19, 1861, to move the infantry company to Fort Washita.—Ibid., pp. 635, 660. Captain Prince outranked Captain Carr by seniority. Companies A and B, First cavalry, remained as Fort Arbuckle’s garrison.

83. By the time this last letter of Rover’s appeared in the Times (May 29), Rover and his comrades-in-arms were within three days march of Leavenworth.

84. Lt. Col. William H. Emory (last referred to in these letters as “Major” Emory, commanding at Fort Cobb in April, 1860—see Footnote 49), while in Washington, D. C., in March, 1861, had received the order to make Fort Washita his regimental headquarters, and to concentrate the Fort Arbuckle and Fort Cobb troops there, or near by, at his discretion. But while Emory was on his way to Fort Washita a countermanding order was issued on April 17. He was instructed, instead, to abandon the posts in Indian territory and march all the troops to Fort Leavenworth.—Ibid., pp. 656, 657.

85. Capt. S. D. Sturgis and his men (Companies A and B, First cavalry) evacuated Fort Smith, Ark., on the night of April 23, and with some 20 wagons and teams arrived at Fort Washita, after a 160-mile journey, on April 30.—Ibid., pp. 650, 651.
if not driven out of here before that time. The orders from the War Department are, I believe, not to fire on the rebels unless they follow us. Our horses have, for the last four nights been tied to a picket rope fastened around the quarters. There is great reluctance on the part of the troops, that they are to abandon the Fort without making the traitors smell powder. Ox wagons, and teams of all kinds, have been employed to carry provisions, ordnance, Quartermaster's property, and stores of all kinds. The families of the soldiers were all sent off yesterday. They are to proceed to Fort Arbuckle, and there await our coming.

I can't see into the policy of the Administration. The evacuation of the forts will certainly give the traitors more territory, as well as increase the numbers of adherents to Davis' creed. If the Government does not put a stop to these rebellious scoundrels, they will soon have the upper hand.

Yours in haste,

Rover.

IV. EPILOGUE

Fort Washita was abandoned on April 30 or May 1, 1861, and occupied one day later by Captain Mayberry's Dead Shot Rangers, from Jefferson, Tex. John A. Peel of this ranger company reported they had captured 14 wagons left behind by the federal troops, and that Emory "finding the Texans in close pursuit of him, threw away guns, ammunition and Government stories, into the Ouachita, first destroying the guns by breaking the locks and taking them to pieces." Also abandoned, he said, were "a large quantity of clothing, some provisions and one field-piece." 86

Lieutenant Colonel Emory stated that nothing had been left behind but what would have been left in time of peace. On evacuating the post Emory led his command up the Washita where, he wrote, "the troops at Arbuckle and two companies from Cobb joined me five miles from Arbuckle, on the east bank of the Washita River, May 3. I then marched to relieve Cobb, taking the road which lies on the open prairie to the north of the Washita River, so as to render the cavalry available. . . . On the 9th, I found the command from Cobb (two companies of foot) thirty-five miles northeast of that post, and on the same day I took the most direct

86. The Daily Times, Leavenworth, June 21, 1861 (reprinted from the New Orleans Crescent of June 14[2], 1861).
course to Leavenworth that the nature of the ground would permit.

..." 87

Ten days later Emory reported "I am now in Kansas, on the north side of the Arkansas River, 88 with the whole command—eleven companies, 750 fighting men, 150 women, children, teamsters, and other non-combatants."

The journey from the Arkansas to Fort Leavenworth required 12 more days. This was the scene at Leavenworth on May 31 as described in the next day's issue of the Times:

About one o'clock yesterday afternoon, the troops from Forts Smith, Arbuckle, Cobb and Washita passed up Fifth Street, on their way to Fort Leavenworth. Several ambulances, containing officers' wives, and about eighty waggons containing army stores, with about six hundred horses and mules attached, followed the soldiers, the whole making quite an interesting spectacle. The men looked weary and faded after their long and tedious march, but many of them seemed to be full of vigor and animation. As they moved along, they were greeted, at various points, by the cheers of the people who had assembled to witness the demonstration. The train was nearly a mile in length.

According to the Times, the six companies of cavalry and five companies of infantry totaled 820 men, and there were, in addition, "about 200 teamsters and other army attaches." The companies and their commanders were: First U. S. cavalry: Co. A, Lt. Eugene W. Crittenden (82 men); Co. B, Lt. Oliver H. Fish (82 men); Co. C, Capt. David S. Stanley (80 men); Co. D, 2d Lt. Charles S. Bowman (80 men); Co. E, Capt. Samuel D. Sturgis (82 men); Co. I, Capt. Eugene A. Carr (75 men); First U. S. infantry: Co. B, Capt. Charles C. Gilbert (66 men); Co. C, Capt. Joseph B. Plummer (67 men); Co. D, Capt. Daniel Huston, Jr. (70 men); Co. E, Capt. William E. Prince (62 men); Co. F, Capt. Seth M. Barton (64 men).

Lieutenant Colonel Emory said that his command arrived "in good condition; not a man, an animal, an arm, or wagon...lost except two deserters." 89 Lieutenants Fish and Barton resigned and joined the Confederate army. The other officers and most of their men remained loyal to the North. One writer has said: "The troops thus saved from capture were of great importance beyond the consideration of numbers, as their timely arrival restored the

87. The War of the Rebellion, Ser. I, v. 1, pp. 648, 649. The "most direct course to Leavenworth" referred to above was charted by Emory's Delaware Indian guides (Black Beaver and Possum). According to Muriel H. Wright in her "A History of Fort Cobb" the troops evacuating Fort Cobb met Emory's command, on May 9, near the present town of Minco, Okla. Here they turned north and the route they followed up into Kansas later became a part of the Chisholm trail.—Chronicles of Oklahoma, v. 34, pp. 58, 59.
88. The Arkansas river crossing was probably at, or near, present Wichita.
confidence of the friends of the government in that section, formed the nucleus of General Lyon's army, and probably prevented the secessionists from forcing Missouri into rebellion." 90

Of the First cavalry, Companies B, C and D soon saw action in the engagements at Forsyth, Mo. (July 27), and Dug Springs, Mo. (August 2). Companies D and I took part in the famous battle of Wilson creek on August 10, 1861. On August 3, 1861, the First cavalry was officially redesignated the Fourth U. S. cavalry. But "Rover's" fate will never be known unless his identity can be learned.