

grist-mill on a stream called the Sta. Gertrudes, about four and a half miles from San Juan.

From Nadadores to Monclova is about sixteen miles in a southeasterly direction; the road is good, and much of the land in a high state of cultivation. The inhabitants of this village are not very favorably disposed towards us; but many gentlemen of wealth and intelligence are bitterly averse to their present form of government. One of them, who had been in the United States, said to me with great emphasis: "Sir, we have a glorious country, and a good population; but our government is the worst in the world. I would rather be under the dominion of a Comanche chief." The great scourge of this country, which I have attempted to describe in these papers, after its government, is to be found in the sudden irruptions of the Indian tribes—the Lipans, the Mescaleros, and the Comanches—the most treacherous and ruthless of our nomadic races. On our return we found the country in alarm. Couriers had been sent to all the small villages to say that a party of three hundred warriors had passed through the mountains near Santa Rosa, and was descending upon the upland villages, by the way of Santa Catarina. We saw nothing of the Indians, but heard of their being on our trail. So bold are they, or so little do they respect their Mexican neighbors, that a few of them will not hesitate to ride into towns of the size of Cienegas, and lay them under contribution.

I was escorted on this tour of duty by Captain Porter's company of Arkansas cavalry; and it is but an act of justice to the officers and men to say that I have no complaints to make of their conduct, but everything to commend.

The distance to Cienegas, *via* Pozuelos, is about fifty miles; *via* Nadadores, (by a smoother road,) it is some six miles farther. For the dry season, this is the preferable route.

I was accompanied in this expedition by Captain Howard, commissary of subsistence, who succeeded in purchasing a large quantity of wheat flour.

Very respectfully, &c., &c., &c.,

GEO. W. HUGHES,
Captain Topographical Engineers.

Captain J. H. PRENTISS,
Assistant Adjutant General, Centre Division, &c., &c., &c.

A.

August 31.—From La Vaca, eight miles, to the Placedores, a small rivulet, course nearly west across level prairie; very muddy prairie—very muddy from recent rains; thence four miles further in the same direction to the house of —, a Frenchman, on the right bank of a small muddy stream, with banks eight to ten feet high.

September 1.—After crossing this the road continues about WNW. over the same kind of prairie, six miles, to another stream of the same character as the last, up the right bank of which it runs some two miles; and thence a little more northerly to a belt of timbers, two miles from Victoria. Whole distance thirty miles.

September 2.—At Victoria crossed the Guadalupe, some 200 feet wide, by a ferry; thence about two miles, through a thickly timbered bottom, to an open rolling prairie, dry and hard, except at the crossing of two gulleys and a rivulet, twelve miles to the Coletto, a small clear stream, with hard sand and rock bottom. Thence in the same general direction, a little N. of W., thirteen miles to the Manahuila, the crossing of which was muddy and difficult, and six miles further to Goliad, passing another stream of similar character.

September 4.—From Goliad seven miles to the Cabeza, and thence NNW. six miles to a pond in the prairie, near which we encamped.

September 5.—Twelve miles to a grassy stream, with bad water; thence two miles to another small stream of good water, having a pretty grove upon its banks. Five miles further crossed a fine stream, with high steep banks. Thence sixteen miles to a rancho, on the right bank of the Cibolo, a considerable stream, with hard stony bottom; the whole distance over rolling prairie, dry and sandy, and covered with muskeet (mezquite?) grass; the timber becoming more abundant. Course about NW., a little N. From the Cibolo six miles to a small stream, and six miles further to a rancho, which is some distance off the road to the left, and on the banks of the San Antonio river. The San Antonio is here some 100 feet wide, with very high, steep banks. Nine miles hence, through pretty well timbered land, to Canteen's rancho, on a fine stream, with steep banks at its crossing. From Canteen's rancho twelve miles across open prairie to the Salado, and nine miles thence to San Antonio, which we reached on the 6th of September.

Respectfully, your obedient servant,

L. SITGREAVES,
Brevet Captain Corps Topographical Engineers.

B.

MEMOIR.

There are two roads leading from La Vaca, Texas, to San Antonio de Bexar. One of these, the shorter of the two, diverges from the other at Victoria, thirty miles from La Vaca. This passes through Goliad, and is the road which was used by General Wool for the transportation of his supplies. The other passes through Gonzales and Seguin.

I was ordered by you to proceed by the latter route from Victoria to San Antonio, and incidentally to make a reconnaissance of the country passed over by it.

There were no supplies furnished by the quartermaster's department on this road; consequently I was obliged to leave my instruments at Victoria, to be sent by the shorter route, and to set out with no other instrument than a pocket compass. As it was mid-summer, to save our horses we left Victoria just at dusk. During the day the flies are so numerous that the horses are set nearly frantic, and humanity as well as his own comfort will dictate to the traveller in this part of Texas that he must lie by during the day and travel at night. In consequence of this night travelling, my notes have been very imperfect.

Ex.—4

The road continues along the left bank of the river Guadalupe, varying in its distances from the river from a quarter of a mile to a mile and a half.

For the first twelve miles the road goes over a wet prairie, which had been washed by the water into holes, which gives the euphonious name of "hog-wallow" to the prairie. The road is miserable even in dry weather, and in wet weather is said to be impassable. From the soft nature of the soil, the slightest fall of rain makes it bad; and a long continued rain, one can easily imagine, would render the prairie fitter for navigation in boats than for travelling in wagons.

After crossing the prairie the country in the vicinity of the road is found to be thinly timbered with a growth of what is commonly called the post-oak. The road itself is good, being sandy, and the face of the country is level. This timber does not grow regularly, as in the woods of the north, but is scattered in clumps. The height of the tree seldom exceeds twenty feet. The road generally winds through parts where there is no timber. The soil seems to be fertile, but the country is very thinly settled. The distance from Victoria to Gonzales is sixty-three miles, and from the point at which timber commences, fifty-one miles from Gonzales. I noticed in the whole distance but one place where the timber was not post-oak. This was at a small creek eight miles from Gonzales, called McCoy's creek, the banks of which were well timbered with sycamore, oak, &c.

The country becomes more hilly as the road approaches Gonzales, but in no other respect did I notice a change.

Gonzales is a small place of but little interest, containing about 300 inhabitants. It is situated near the junction of the St. Mark's and Guadalupe rivers. The former is crossed by a ferry, the road still continuing along the left bank of the Guadalupe. In the vicinity of Gonzales the country is more thickly settled than I had yet found it.

After leaving Gonzales the soil became visibly more sandy. The hills increased in height, were stony, and the whole face of the country was unprepossessing. This appearance continues as far as a short distance from Seguin, in the vicinity of which place the country visibly improved, and the settlers became much more numerous.

Seguin is thirty-four miles from Gonzales. It is a small place, but little larger than Gonzales. Here, as well as along the whole route, the houses are built of logs. They are divided into three parts. The centre is merely a shed, the roof of the house being all that protects it from the weather. The other two parts are on each side of the centre shed, and are the kitchens, bedrooms, &c., of the establishment. They are rude but very comfortable dwellings, particularly so for so new a country.

About two miles from Seguin the road crosses the Guadalupe, by means of a wooden bridge. The banks of the river are here well timbered with a fine growth of oaks, of various kinds, sycamores, &c.

After leaving the Guadalupe, the road runs nearly west to San Antonio, a distance of thirty-two miles. The muskeet (a variety of the acacia) covers the whole face of the surrounding country. Here it is first seen on the route west, and it continues with little intermission as far as the centre division marched. A succession of parallel ridges, running nearly north and south, intersect the road, giving to the journey something which at first appears to be variety, but which soon proves to be an interminable sameness. The traveller looks forward to see San Antonio in the distance when he has arrived at the top of one of these hills, but he is

disappointed again and again, until he gives up in despair, and, without looking to the right or left, rides sluggishly on until the gray walls of the Alamo, immediately in front of him, give him the pleasing assurance that his journey is ended.

Half way between the Guadalupe and San Antonio the road crosses the Cibolo, a fine, clear stream, about thirty feet in width, very shallow, but with a fine gravelly bottom. Several smaller streams are crossed at intermediate distances, so that this part of the route is as well watered as the first part.

On the whole, this route from Victoria to San Antonio may be said to be a good natural road. With the exception of the first twelve miles the road is good in all weathers, and in all seasons of the year. The greatest obstacle is the St. Mark's river. At present the only means of crossing it is by a ferry, but in a few years the more thickly settled state of the country will render a bridge indispensable; and when this is constructed, there will be an uninterrupted communication from La Vaca to San Antonio.

There will never be any difficulty about supplies on this route, for as the country grows older the farming population will continually increase.

Respectfully submitted:

W. B. FRANKLIN,

Brevet 1st Lieut., U. S. Topographical Engineer.

To Major GEORGE W. HUGHES,

U. S. Topographical Engineer,

Chief of the Topographical Staff, Centre Division.

Captain GEORGE W. HUGHES, *Corps of Topographical Engineers*, will find, in the following memoranda, a hasty and imperfect account of the march of the Arkansas regiment of mounted volunteers to the general rendezvous, at San Antonio de Bexar, which I submit in obedience to his request, accompanied by a rough map of the route taken by the same. This notice must necessarily be very unsatisfactory, not only because I was absent from the command during a considerable portion of the march, but, as I now greatly regret, I took my notes with too little care during that part of our expedition. I then supposed (yet, I have since had reason to believe, very erroneously) that, as the interior of Texas had been so often traversed by tourists, we could find in print reliable and satisfactory information as to the geography of the country, &c. And as there are already extant some two or three maps, compiled, professedly, from *actual surveys*, any topographical notes, with the idea of correcting the current maps, seemed equally supererogatory; yet experience has convinced me that the latter are likewise remarkably imperfect. I should note, with regard to the map, that though I endeavored to keep an approximate estimate of distances, I paid very little attention to courses; and, what I still more regret, I was able to determine but very few latitudes, owing, in part, to ill-health, but more to a series of cloudy weather—excessive rains, in fact—during a large portion of the trip. I happen to have with me the diary of a tour through the interior of Texas in the year 1841; but my notes of courses and distances were kept in a separate memorandum-book, which I unfortunately

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