GENERAL
WILLIAM JENKINS
WORTH
Monterey's Forgotten Hero

EDWARD S. WALLACE

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DALLAS
For several years, while living in New York City, I wondered, when passing the imposing monument over the grave of General William Jenkins Worth in Madison Square, just who he was, and why more was not known about him. Fate seemed to throw his name in my way, for upon stopping later in Hudson, New York, I found the hotel there to be named the “General Worth,” and again his name appeared before me on a bronze plaque upon an old colonial house in Edgartown on Martha’s Vineyard. Still later, as my interest in the Mexican War of 1846-48 grew, I found that General Worth had played a major part in that colorful episode, yet had received only minor credit at the hands of most historians; probably in part because of his death immediately after that war, in part because the Civil War almost eclipsed the earlier and smaller struggle, in part because of the propaganda of his enemies which seems to have been accepted from sheer inertia in research, and in part because of the present lack of interest in military history for which our educational system has largely been to blame. That Worth deserves more attention from posterity became increasingly apparent as I dug into the records and correspondence of his times.

There were many discouragements in gathering material, and it seemed at times as if the baneful dead hand
of Winfield Scott was at work. For example, I found, after a search of months to locate Worth's personal letters and papers, that they had been destroyed. Luckily they were available to Professor Justin H. Smith, and his references to them can be traced in his monumental work, *The War with Mexico*. Even more fortunately, a picked selection of these letters was published in the *New York Times Magazine* for July 16, 1916. These, with other material located in various libraries and historical societies and in the possession of individuals, furnished enough data to form a reasonable outline of Worth's life, although there are still some obvious blind spots in his early career which only the discovery of new material can fill in.

In the background and battle descriptions of the Mexican War, Justin H. Smith gives such a masterly condensation from such an infinite variety of sources — the product of twenty years of research — that it is almost a waste of time to check back on these except for personal incidents. He did, however, miss a few important sources such as Kendall’s manuscript and the files of the *American Star*, and I have relied heavily on these to supplement his basic outline. Kendall, particularly, being a staunch admirer of Worth, is a healthy antidote to Smith's hero-worship of Scott and his rather cavalier dismissal of Worth as a good fighting general but too much of a prima donna in temperament to warrant favorable consideration.

In somewhat different form, this biography of General William Jenkins Worth served to satisfy one of the requirements for the Ph.D. degree at Boston University. A great many people have been interested and most helpful. Of the greatest assistance was the loan by Professor Fayette Copeland of the University of Oklahoma of a typescript of 935 pages of George Wilkins Kendall’s unpublished manuscript about the Mexican War. Miss Louise Hardenbrook of the Columbia County (New York) Historical Society supplied invaluable information about the founding of Hudson, New York, and the boyhood of Worth. General Worth’s great-granddaughters, Miss Edith Hubbell and Mrs. James Woodruff, have also been of the greatest assistance.

Most of the original letters used were found in the library of the United States Military Academy at West Point, and deep gratitude should be expressed for the co-operation there of Lieutenant Colonel W. J. Morton, Librarian, and Mr. Sidney Forman, Archivist. I received the best of advice from Colonel William A. Ganoe and Major Charles Winslow Elliott (although the latter disagrees with my opinions on Winfield Scott). Miss Edna L. Jacobsen of the New York State Library went to infinite trouble to send me copies of the charred remains of the John P. Gaines letters. Other individuals and institutions who have been of much help are: Mr. Dexter B. Wiswell of the Military Historical Society of Massachusetts; Mr. Marshal Shepard of the Dukes County Historical Society (Edgartown, Massachusetts); the Massachusetts Historical Society; the American Antiquarian Society; the New York Historical Society; the Library of Congress; the War Department; the National Archives; the Fort Worth Public Library; the Daughters of the American Revolution, Hudson, New York; Miss Mary Wimpenny of Edgartown; the New York
FOREWORD

Public Library; the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society; the New York State Historical Association; the State Historical Society of Wisconsin; and the Roswell P. Flower Memorial Library of Watertown, New York.

The illustrations of battle scenes are used by courtesy of the Yale University Library. The first four are from Whittings Army Portfolio, and the remaining five are by Carl Nebel, from The War Between the United States and Mexico Illustrated, by Carl Nebel and George Wilkins Kendall. The map of Monterey in 1846 is reproduced from T. B. Thorpe, Our Army at Monterey (Philadelphia, 1847). The medallion portrait of Worth as a young officer was obtained from his granddaughter. The portrait of Worth as brevet major general was engraved by J. Sartain for Graham's Magazine, May, 1848, from an original daguerrotype.

EDWARD S. WALLACE

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orders to Quitman and Worth to proceed slowly and cautiously into the city and occupy the key points. Worth advanced as far as the Alameda, within three or four blocks of the Gran Plaza, where, in compliance with his orders, he stopped. But Quitman, having earlier received word of the evacuation direct from the Mexicans, proceeded, shortly after daybreak, to the Gran Plaza where he occupied the National Palace and raised the American flag. At eight o'clock in the morning of September 14, General Scott, in full dress uniform—gold epaulets, yellow top-feathers in his dress hat, and all—and mounted on a giant charger, dashed into the Gran Plaza, followed by a clattering escort of dragoons. If ever a man looked the part of the triumphant conqueror, of the noble soldier, Winfield Scott, with his towering height of six feet four inches, did on that occasion; and the American soldiers, recognizing his splendor as the personification of their grimy glory, greeted him with cheers which seemed to rock the palace and the cathedral on their foundations.

Thus ended the official hostilities of the war, but there were two more days of sniping and disorder in the capital before the American army settled down to routine occupation duty. Before leaving, Santa Anna had released all the criminals from the jails; and these, with the disbanded militia and the treacherous leperos, had been looting all night and now started to snipe at the Americans. It began when a musket was fired, almost point-blank, at Worth, while he was returning to the Alameda from the Plaza. As Worth told it in a letter to his daughter, Mrs. Sprague, dated Mexico, September 28, 1847:

The day we entered they commenced a fire upon us from the housetops, and cut down several of my officers and men. My friend Garland [the colonel commanding one of Worth's two brigades], who was at my side, caught a shot aimed at me. I caused the heavy guns to be turned against every house, whether palace, church, or convent, and after a few hours of such appliance, not regarding where or who it hit, quelled the dastardly villains, but it cost me some fifty brave fellows...

Such drastic measures had their effect. By the afternoon of the next day, general peace and order were restored to the capital, to last until the evacuation of the city by the Americans in June, 1848. It is true that there were assassinations of individual soldiers during this period, but never again were there any mass disorders.

The army then settled down to the anticlimax of routine occupation duty. Discipline was tightened up and spit 'n and polish and "chicken" raised their ugly heads, as always in such circumstances. The punishments for infractions were severe and "rugged," by our present-day standards. But the results were good, for the army, on the whole, behaved admirably. Scott was at his best in this kind of duty. For the soldiers there were compensations as well. Stores, restaurants, and saloons were soon reopened by the Mexicans, and many others were started by American entrepreneurs. Gambling houses, bullfights, and horse races offered their attractions to the sportively inclined; an American theatrical company and an Italian opera troupe appeared at the National Theatre (formerly the Gran Theatre de Santa Anna); and for the more serious-minded there were sight-seeing tours and a Reading Room with a
circulating library. Two American newspapers were soon started, the North American and the American Star, the latter receiving all the official business of the army. But the primary diversion of all soldiers, since wars began, quickly took its natural place; and "fraternization" soon reigned supreme, during off-duty hours, in the many dance halls, where fandangos and masquerades were held nightly, and the sound of gay music, particularly the waltzes of Straus, could be heard until daybreak.30

The officers formed the Aztec Club, with General Franklin Pierce as president, which provided "good cheer at moderate rates." To this organization, it is interesting to note, almost all the officers, including General Worth and Lieutenant Colonel James Duncan, belonged, but not Generals Scott and Gideon Pillow, nor Colonel Ethan Allen Hitchcock.31

General Worth's personal activities, except for his acrimonious dispute with Scott and the ensuing court of inquiry, are not so clear. The American Star, September 28, 1847, contained a short article about him which read:

Worth is so careful of his men that he must see a chance. In a word I think that Twiggs would have fought at Buena Vista. . . . Worth, I think, would not . . . But he thinks as much of a private as he does of an officer, and he will never expose a soldier without necessity.32

On October 7 this paper noted that Worth had been to the National Theatre twice within the week, and on October 21 it carried a notice of the presentation to him by the New York state legislature of a sword and a costly set of plate—and, the paper understood, a beauti-

ful country seat was given too.33 On November 2 there was the report of a court of inquiry, upon which Worth sat, which investigated the discovery of two Mexican howitzers from Chapultepec in General Pillow's bags,

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On a national scale Worth received more publicity. At the Jackson Day dinner of the New York City Democrats, on January 8, 1848, a toast to him as a man of "real worth" was received with wild enthusiasm, while no mention was made of any other general but Taylor.35 On January 15, 1848, the New York Herald printed a call for a meeting to take place on February 22, to nominate General Worth for the presidency,36 a boom which had been initiated the previous August by the New York Sun.37 Nothing seems to have come of this talk, but Worth was bitterly attacked later by the violently partisan, pro-Scott American Star as a seceder Whig who had turned Democrat and wanted to annex Mexico, Central America, and Cuba.38

This latter accusation had a real basis, for Worth had written to Secretary of War Marcy, from City of Mexico, October 30, 1847, a long letter in which he definitely espoused the cause of Manifest Destiny, saying, in part:
ARMISTICE AND FINAL BATTLES

That our race is finally destined to overrun this whole continent is too obvious to need proof. Like an axiom in mathematics, it is only necessary to state the proposition to ensure belief; and we may state it thus: Put two distinct races in juxtaposition, one more powerful and superior in civilization, and it will absorb the inferior. The most that can be said in opposition to this is that we are somewhat premature, perhaps half a century. . . .

It being then a part of our destiny to overrun the country [Mexico], a destiny which we can no more avoid, despite the struggles of short-sighted politicians, than we can change the order of nature, the question is whether we shall complete the work we have already so nearly accomplished or leave it to be undertaken de novo by our children! Having spent most of the blood and treasure which the conquest requires, shall we relinquish it and thus impose the same sacrifice upon another generation? 89

Worth again expressed this conviction in a letter to his old friend Major Gaines, dated Mexico, December 14, 1847, in which he wrote: "We 'but jump the life to come' and anticipate destiny by forty years — a small leap for our people — in finishing now what our children must of necessity do — therefore, I would say take all — hold all." 40

But all Worth's personal actions were soon overshadowed by his bitter dispute with Scott, which developed into probably the most scandalous and unfortunate quarrel in the history of the United States Army. 41

A contemporary and diverting sidelight on the breach between Scott and Worth was furnished by "Old Zach" Taylor, who growled a sort of "plague on both your houses" and wrote his son-in-law from Monterey on September 14, 1847, "As to Scotts and Worths falling out, unless to mask some dirty work, I do not believe a word of it. You will see when understood what it all amount to." 41 On the twenty-seventh of the same month he wrote further: "Between ourselves Genl. Scott would stoop to any thing however low & contemptable as any man in the nation, to obtain power or place, & be as arbitrary in using it when in possession." 42
The big explosion came in November. General Scott had not enjoyed a convenient quarrel for some time, now that his differences with Nicholas Trist were adjusted and his standing dispute with the administration had been somewhat dulled by time and distance. This was an abnormal condition, for Scott seemed to live for controversy and had defied or quarreled continuously, during his career, with one superior officer after another, including Presidents John Quincy Adams, Jackson, and Polk. Also, the astonishing strength of the Zachary Taylor boom for the Whig nomination for the presidency in the following year's election must have rankled; for Scott had an inordinate ambition for that office, and Taylor, despite his crudeness as a general, was far more popular in the army as well as among civilians. Then, there was little doubt that many of Scott's officers looked upon their commanding officer as a lucky windbag who had gained his victories largely because of the excellence of his subordinate officers and the courage and dash of the men; and Scott undoubtedly sensed this. It was all rather like a smoking and smoldering volcano upon the verge of an eruption.

The trouble started when the American Star, in its issue of October 22, mentioned a letter published earlier by the New Orleans Delta and signed "Leonidas." The next day the Star printed in full this letter, which it had obtained from the New Orleans Picayune of September 20. The Picayune, in turn, had republished it from the Delta. The letter was a fulsome panegyric about Major General Gideon Pillow, to whom it attributed full credit for the victories at Contreras and Churubusco. It contained passages such as this:

He [Pillow] evinced on this, as he has done on other occasions, that masterly military genius and profound knowledge of war, which has astonished so much the mere marti­nets of the profession. . . . During this great battle, which lasted two days, General Pillow was in command of all the forces engaged, except General Worth's division, and this was not engaged; except in taking the last work. General Scott gave but one order and that was to reinforce General Cadwalader's brigade.

The letter went on to the height of absurdity when it described a hand-to-hand combat in which Pillow engaged a Mexican officer. Pillow called out to his adversary:

"Let the honor and prowess of our respective countries be determined by the issue of this combat." Strait-way the Mexican, a large and muscular man attacked with lance and sword, handled his arms with great vigor and skill but our general was his superior in dexterity and coolness. At last the Mexican made one terrible charge at our general with his lance, which the latter evaded with great promptitude and avidity, using his sword, tossed the weapon of the Mexican high into the air, and then quietly blew his brains out with his revolver. Both the American and Mexican armies witnessed this splendid effort.

This last nonsensical description had been printed in italics in the Picayune. It was afterward discovered that it had been made up out of whole cloth by the editors.
of the Delta and inserted as a joke on the unpopular Pillow when the Leonidas letter arrived in the mail pouch from Mexico City. Of course it left General Pillow wide open to a counteroffensive of ridicule which would probably have laughed him out of the army and public life; but General Scott, whose ponderous and humorless mind did not move in such subtle channels, evidently took it all as a personal insult.

A little later, an American paper in Tampico reprinted a letter that had appeared in the Pittsburgh Post on September 25, which described the turning movement south of Lake Chalco quite factually. After telling of Scott’s reconnaissances toward the Peñon and Mexicalcingo, it went on to say:

In the meantime General Worth, whose division had been left at Chalco, while General Scott with Twiggs had gone on to Ayotla, sent Colonel Duncan with a large party to examine the denounced route. Colonel Duncan found it just the reverse of what it had been pronounced to be; it was firm, rocky, and quite practicable, requiring to be sure, a little labor here and there. General Worth instantly sent Colonel Duncan with this information to General Scott, and urged the movement of the whole army to the left of Lake Chalco. The direct attack was abandoned, and on the morning the whole army was in motion.

This was a mild letter indeed compared to the insane Leonidas affair, and it stated simply and modestly what all concerned in the examination of the Chalco route believed to be the truth. But it produced the grand eruption from the smoldering Scott. On November 12 he issued his famous General Order No. 349, in which he quite rightly called to the attention of the officers of the army the regulation forbidding them “from detailing in private letters or reports the movements of the army”—a regulation which Scott had flagrantly and grossly violated himself upon numerous occasions in the past. He then mentioned specifically the above two letters and let loose a flood of billingsgate upon the suspected authors, saying:

It requires not a little charity to believe that the principal heroes of the scandalous letters alluded to did not write them, or especially procure them to be written; and the intelligent can be at no loss in conjecturing the authors, chiefs, partisans, and pet familiars. To the honor of the service, the disease—prurience of fame not earned—cannot have seized upon a half dozen officers present, all of whom, it is believed, belonged to the same two coteries.

False credit may, no doubt, be attained at hand by such despicable self-puffings and malignant exclusion of others, but at the expense of the just esteem and consideration of all honorable officers, who love their country, their profession, and the truth of history. The indignation of the great number of the latter class cannot fail in the end to bring down the conceited and envious to their proper level.

This psychopathic tirade naturally produced a wave of criticism against Scott when it was published at home. He was bitterly attacked by various newspapers, and the New York Evening Post went so far as seriously to doubt his sanity. On his personal staff, Captain Robert E. Lee did not think Scott temperate and made efforts to heal the widening breach with his two generals.

But one of “the principal heroes of the scandalous letters alluded to,” General Worth, happened to be completely innocent of all charges. He had neither written nor caused to be written the “Tampico” letter;
nor did he have any knowledge about it when it was written. He quite naturally wrote to Scott the next day, November 13, saying that "I learn with much astonishment that the prevailing opinion in this army points the imputation of 'scandalous'..., and the invocation of the indignation of the great number..., to myself as one of the officers alluded to." And he asked most respectfully, "whether in any sense or degree he [Scott] condescended to apply, or designed to have applied, the epithets contained in that order to myself...".

On the same day, November 13, Lieutenant Colonel James Duncan, in a letter to the editor of the North American, acknowledged himself to be the author of the "Tampico" letter, which he had written to a friend in Pittsburgh with no thought of its later publication. He completely exonerated General Worth and said further, "The statements in the letter are known by very many officers of this army to be true." As it happened, the recipient of the letter had taken the actual description of the reconnaissance of the Chalco route from another letter which he had received from Lieutenant Colonel James E. Mason, an engineer officer, who had been assigned to Worth's division just before the Chalco reconnaissance and who had been wounded at Molino del Rey and returned to the States. Duncan, however, manfully never mentioned this fact, and Mason escaped all trouble.

Scott's answer, on November 14, to Worth's request, which seemed especially reasonable in view of Duncan's assumption of all responsibility for the Tampico letter, was sent through his adjutant and simply repeated that General Order No. 349 applied to "the authors, aiders and abettors" of the Tampico and Leonidas letters—an unsatisfactory reply, to say the least.

On the same day Worth once more respectfully asked for a definite answer as to whether he was one of the persons referred to, saying that he was doing so "with the view to further measures to protect myself" and that the order left no doubt, "in public military opinion, in regard to persons." Again Scott quibbled and replied, also on the fourteenth, through his adjutant, "that he [Scott] has nothing to do with the suspicions of others, and has no positive information as to the authorship of the letters alluded to in general orders No. 349. If he had valid information he would immediately prosecute the parties before a general court martial."

Then came the counterexplosion. Worth was ill, his leg wound of the War of 1812 had bothered him during the whole march, and he probably felt that he and his men were by no means receiving a fair share of the credit for the victorious campaign; for of some 2,700 casualties suffered by the four American divisions in the Valley of Mexico action, Worth's First Division lost 1,270 men—over twice the loss suffered by Quitman's division, which lost 580, the next greatest sum of casualties.

Worth acknowledged Scott's last letter (also on the fourteenth, which day must have been given up completely to letter writing), stating that he had received no satisfactory answer to his just and rightful inquiries, and that, knowing himself to be deeply aggrieved and wronged, he intended to appeal, through the prescribed channels, to the President. Two days later he did so.
in a letter which for intemperance almost matched Scott's general order, saying in part:

From the arbitrary and illegal conduct, the malice and gross injustices, practiced by the general officer ... Major-General Winfield Scott, I appeal ... to the constitutional commander-in-chief, the President of the United States. I accuse Maj.-Gen. Winfield Scott of having acted in a manner unbecoming an officer and a gentleman.

Worth went on to say that Scott's General Order No. 349 was "calculated and designed to cast odium and disgrace" upon himself and to destroy his authority, and that Scott had declined to state in his reply whether he intended to impute authorship to him, although he acknowledged he had no definite information about the author of the letters. Worth closed by saying, "I do not urge present action on these accusations, because of their inconvenience in withdrawing many officers from their duties," but asked for the President's examination into the case and protection from any arbitrary conduct of Scott.¹⁸

Scott, in a fury, now placed Generals Worth and Pillow and Lieutenant Colonel Duncan under arrest and preferred charges against all three. This arrest was somewhat mitigated by the trio's being allowed the freedom of the city instead of being confined to their quarters as is the usual rule in such cases.¹⁷

It was all a most unfortunate matter and complicated by the utter lack of humor of all concerned, except possibly Duncan. The Honorable Maury Maverick of Texas some years ago coined the expression "gobbledygook" to describe the verbose, turgid, and unintelligible statements issued by many federal agencies, and "gobbledygook" well describes this whole affair. Worth and Scott were old comrades-in-arms in the minuscule regular army of the times and were much of a type in many ways — intolerant, vain, truculent, and extraordinarily sensitive about their "sacred honor," but eager for praise and willing to perform prodigies of valor to get it. Pillow appears to have been a scoundrel, a small-town criminal lawyer, formerly a law partner of President Polk, who had reached his high military position through political chicanery. His ineptitude as an officer was notorious through the army. James Duncan was a hard-working and efficient artillery officer with a superb war record, an intimate friend and devoted admirer of Worth, who became involved partly through his loyalty to the latter. The pity of it all was that such splendid soldiers as Worth and Duncan, justified as they may have been, should have found themselves on the same side of the fence as the shyster Pillow.

When word of this scandalous quarrel reached Washington, President Polk was much upset — particularly by the troubles of his protégé Pillow.¹⁸ On January 3, 1848, the matter was brought before his cabinet, and it was unanimously agreed that Scott should be relieved of his command; that Worth should be released from arrest; and that a court of inquiry should be instituted to examine the case and Worth's charges against Scott.¹⁹ A little later it was decided to release Pillow and Duncan from arrest as well, and rather than to order a court-martial, to extend the authority of the court of inquiry to cover all the cases involved; in other words, to see first if the evidence warranted any trials later by a formal court-martial.²⁰ Major General William O. Butler,
who was then in Mexico City as second in command, was chosen to succeed Scott.

This order, issued against Worth's request in his letter, through channels, to President Polk, was a stunning blow to Winfield Scott; and it created much sympathy for Scott, even from those who had thought his treatment of Worth arbitrary and unfair. The court did not meet until March 17. In the meantime all concerned lived in an atmosphere of nervous tension and frigid formality. Worth wrote his family that "unless I mistake my countrymen, they will not quietly see one who has served with fidelity and distinction trodden down in mere wantonness by a jealous and vindictive superior."22

While all the principals were on their most circumspect behavior during this anticipatory lull, the two American newspapers in Mexico City, representing the opposing factions, went at each other hammer-and-tongs. The North American, a strong Democratic sheet partly edited by Captain Mayne Reid, took up the cudgels for the Worth-Pillow-Duncan faction, while the American Star, which enjoyed all the official army patronage, was strongly Whig and violently pro-Scott. The principal editor of the Star was a sergeant in the Ninth Infantry (New England regiment) named John H. Warland, who had been especially assigned to this duty by General Scott. Warland had graduated from Harvard College in 1827, and, after a checkered career as a journalist in Lowell and Boston, had enlisted for the war. Warland, quickly realizing the value of ridicule, pilloried Pillow by satires and parodies on the Leonidas letter, which were very funny and far more destructive than Scott's abstruse pomposities.24 Worth he attacked directly, bringing up his impetuous resignation before Matamoras and the court of inquiry at Puebla. He also said that Worth woke up one morning a staunch Democrat, when always before he had been a Whig, and suddenly became the ally of another officer (Pillow) who had been the constant theme of his ridicule and abuse.25

In February, General Worth served with Brigadier General Persifor F. Smith on the American commission which drew up an agreement with the Mexican military authorities for a suspension of hostilities pending the ratification of the peace treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, which had been sent home to the United States by Nicholas Trist. This convention was dated February 29, and was ratified by Major General Butler on March 5.28

Before the court of inquiry began its sessions, various peacemakers had evidently been at work to shelve the whole disgraceful affair, if possible; for on March 14 Worth wrote to his son-in-law, Captain Sprague:

The court is endeavoring to quash the investigations, and will probably succeed. If the charges against Duncan and Pillow are withdrawn I have agreed for the good of the service and its harmony to abandon mine against Scott. My triumph has been complete and I can afford to be magnanimous.27

The court of inquiry was composed of three officers, Brigadier General N. Towson, paymaster general; Brigadier General Caleb Cushing; and Brevet Colonel William G. Belknap. It met first on March 15. "And such a court!" wrote Scott derisively, years later, in his memoirs, although it is hard to see why a man with
THE COURT OF INQUIRY

the legal talents of Caleb Cushing should be considered of inferior ability. Worth, as he had written his son-in-law, presented a formal note in which he requested permission to withdraw his charges against Scott, and the latter offered to do the same with Duncan and Pillow. Duncan agreed to this, but Pillow objected and insisted that the inquiry go forward in his case, and this it proceeded to do until April 21, when it adjourned to the United States.

Worth, however, was then called as a witness to testify for Pillow, and Scott's dudgeon mounted again. On March 17 Scott put on an exhibition of acrimonious hysteric s in which he bitterly attacked Worth, saying that he was "done with him forever," and claimed that Worth, not being any longer a principal in the case, had no right to answer this tirade. And so it went from day to day, with Scott interrupting, quibbling, and assuming a bullying attitude toward all concerned to such an extent that it was a wonder the court did not cite him for contempt. From the perspective of today it is all quite amusing and would have made a fit subject for a Gilbert and Sullivan opera, for Scott bore a startling resemblance to a giant, cantankerous cockatoo. Worth finally managed to insert a written statement into the record, as an answer to Scott's attack, saying:

I shall say nothing in relation to the appeal of Major-General Scott to public sympathy, or the attitude of defiance he has thought proper to assume before this court. . . . Gen'l Scott has been pleased publicly to announce that, at the end of this court he shall "be done with him [me] forever." Be it so. I have the consolation of knowing, that the ties of friendship, formed from intimate personal and professional association, and strengthened, for thirty-five years, by many reciprocities of kindness and obligation, have not been broken asunder by any act of mine.

At the session of the court on the following day, Scott arose to his full six feet four inches of contumacy and protested against the publication of this letter in the Star's report of the proceedings, saying he considered it a very great outrage to the dignity of the court.

It was brought out, a little later, that other letters had been written by other officers and published, in disobedience to army regulations— notably a letter from Captain Robert E. Lee to Mrs. Totten, wife of the Chief of Engineers, which was printed in the New York Courier and Enquirer on September 16, 1847— and also that Colonel Hitchcock had written one, even after the issuance of Scott's General Order No. 349 of November 12, 1847, which appeared in the same newspaper on January 23, 1848. Hitchcock's letter was a venomous attack on Scott's opponents and especially denied the Duncan-Worth claims to the discovery of the Lake Chalco route.

Of course this letter of Hitchcock's was a complete violation of the army regulations involved and of Scott's later general order; and Worth wanted to prefer charges against the author. On the next day (April 2, 1848) Worth wrote to Duncan:

I have deeply reflected upon our conversation this morning and argued against myself—with all my respect for your judgment & opinions, & my confidence in respect to each is equal to that I entertain for any other man, I cannot reconcile myself to the course you suggest.

In the case of a common assassin, it is the duty of every honest man to aid in stripping him of the power of mischief— The scoundrel & coward Hitchcock is fairly caught at
THE COURT OF INQUIRY

last in his own trap — I owe it to honor & the service to keep him engaged! If I consulted policy or "that rascally virtue prudence" it would be well to let him run. His attack is undoubtedly under counsel & advisement of Scott, upon my reputation as a soldier. I cannot, I must not let him escape — If the service is wrong now, it will come right by & by — I must demand his arrest & trial & God save the right.56

Worth, however, was eventually persuaded by Duncan, and probably also by General Butler, to refrain from preferring charges. Hitchcock smugly noted in his diary that if this action had been taken he would "lay a load upon his [Worth's] shoulders that it would require a strong man to bear."57 This referred to certain allegedly rash dispositions Worth had made with C. F. Smith's troops at the battle of Monterey in September, 1846. There is no other evidence than Hitchcock's diary for this allegation; and considering the combat record of the two officers, it seems an absurdity that Worth could be dissuaded from a course of action by any threat of a man whom he considered a coward.

Worth appeared on the stand twice more toward the end of the court's sessions, on April 14 and 15, to testify that General Pillow had opposed the ill-considered armistice granted to the Mexicans after the battle of Churubusco, and that he had himself opposed it without the possession of Chapultepec Castle as sine qua non.58

On April 21 the court adjorned, to meet later in the United States.

The Aftermath

GENERAL WORTH remained in Mexico City until June 12, when he led his division, the last to leave, down the highway to the coast to embark for the States.1 There is evidence that on this homeward march to Vera Cruz he was approached at Jalapa by agents of the Cuban revolutionary junta, who wanted to enlist five thousand American veterans for the impending revolution, under the command of Worth, who "seemed to combine the qualities of head and heart — as he possessed the chivalry and the gallantry of the Bayard of the American army," and the agents received the impression that he would accept this post, contingent upon his resignation of his rank in the army.2

Upon his arrival in Washington, Worth informed James Duncan, on August 5, that he had written the Secretary of War, insisting upon an examination of Scott's charges;3 but this demand was evidently shelved by the higher authorities. After this he received a leave of absence to attend to his personal affairs. He is said to have found that his house in Watervliet, New York, had been sold for taxes during his long absence in Florida and Mexico.4 Upon his return to Washington, later in the fall, he was ordered to San Antonio, Texas, as commander of the military districts of Texas and New Mexico. On December 5, 1848, he left the capital
for this duty, with the expectation that his family would follow him in the spring. Some time in December, before leaving, he found time to write to his old friend Major Gaines, who was then a congressman, asking him to find a position as a page in the House of Representatives for the nephew of the late Colonel Fanning, because the boy was the sole support of his widowed and destitute mother. Also, it was probably during that autumn that he changed the name of his young son from Winfield Scott to William Scott Worth.

On December 26, 1848, Worth issued an order at Galveston, Texas, whereby he assumed command of the Military Departments of Texas and New Mexico and established his headquarters at San Antonio. On December 17 his old regiment, the Eighth Infantry, arrived at Port Lavaca, and four days later a bad epidemic of cholera broke out among the men. On January 17, 1849, this regiment arrived at Camp Worth, some five miles from San Antonio, with many orphans, whose parents or soldier fathers had died from this disease. Worth kept the Eighth Infantry in Texas and sent the Third on to New Mexico, ordering both regiments to extend protection against the hostile Indians but to try to conciliate them at every opportunity.

On February 6 Worth wrote to Duncan congratulating him on his appointment as inspector general of the army, but warning him that his path would be strewed with thorns, for Scott is to be called to the head of the army, so General Taylor has declared to a friend of his own who informed me. He hates you, as he does every one else, in direct proportion to your merit. ... My health is none of the best.

Away from my family, I have hardly a line from any correspondent since leaving. The world forgetting — by the world forgot — so be it.

Worth's remark about his health proved all too true. He contracted the Asiatic cholera from the infected soldiers — the same disease which had so nearly proved fatal to him during the Black Hawk campaign of 1832. On May 7 he died at his headquarters.

On the next day his funeral was held at three in the afternoon, and by Orders No. 67, Headquarters Eighth Infantry, Camp Worth, it was announced that "Every officer and soldier will attend."

Several months later a cavalry major, who had been ordered to establish a fort in northern Texas for protection against the Indians, halted his troop toward dusk:

It was chance and a brilliant sunset that stopped Major Ripley A. Arnold and his troop of cavalry on the bluff over the Trinity River where the Tarrant County courthouse now stands. During that pause Major Arnold looked about, examined the terrain and decided the height would make as good a place to build a blockhouse as any.

While he had ridden along during that day, Arnold had ruminated about the past Mexican campaign; about the siege of Monterey and the brilliant strategy of Gen. William J. Worth of New York, which had made possible a surprisingly easy victory. Worth was a dashing officer and a great horseman. His personality drew his fellow officers about him in an admiring circle. So Arnold, as he ordered his soldiers to make camp, decided to call the new fort after his friend.

Thus the city of Fort Worth was founded; and perhaps Scott and Worth, meeting in some Valhalla, with all quarrels spent, may muse amiably together over


29. Ibid., p. 864.

30. General Cadmus M. Wilcox, History of the Mexican War (Washington, 1892), pp. 710-11. This club was still active in 1892 when it was addressed at its annual meeting by Colonel De Lancey Floyd-Jones, *Proceedings and Addresses at Annual Meeting, Aztec Club of 1847* (New York, 1892), and the next year a *Constitution and List of Members* (Washington, 1893) was issued.


32. "Notes from My Knapsack or Reminiscences of a Campaign on the Rio Grande — No. 4," (Signed) E. P. R.

33. The country seat was never given, but Worth was also presented with two other swords; one from the city of Troy, and the other from Hudson and Kinderhook.

34. Comparisons with World War II are certainly odious.

35. *Niles National Register* (Baltimore), January 29, 1848.


40. General Cadmus M. Wilcox, *History of the Mexican War* (Washington, 1892), pp. 710-11. This club was still active in 1892 when it was addressed at its annual meeting by Colonel De Lancey Floyd-Jones, *Proceedings and Addresses at Annual Meeting, Aztec Club of 1847* (New York, 1892), and the next year a *Constitution and List of Members* (Washington, 1893) was issued.

41. *Letters of Zachary Taylor*, p. 130.


**CHAPTER FIFTEEN**


4. Leslie Chase to James Duncan, New Orleans, January 11, 1848. Duncan Papers, United States Military Academy Library.

5. *American Star*, March 8, 1847, attacked the *North American* for reprinting this article.


9. - - - to Duncan, Philadelphia, January 1, 1848. Incomplete letter without signature. Duncan Papers, United States Military Academy Library.

10. Mason felt badly about the whole affair and in two letters from Newport, Rhode Island, to Duncan, of January 4 and March 24, 1848, offered to testify for him in the court of inquiry. He also said, "... it is Genl. Scott's fault ... I should like to see the president order him home on the ground of want of capacity to maintain subordination without ridiculous and scandalous exposures. ... Some strong whig papers are very severe on the want of tone and temper and magisterial dignity in his order - 'coteries' 'partizans' 'pet familiars,' to whom do these phrases picked up in the sewers of Billingsgate apply better than to him and his. If we could get a thorough investigation into the secret history of the campaign and into the influence of his personal self in producing its brilliant results, it might pluck a feather or two from the plumage of his frame! The most remarkable example of mediocrity, in the world, the very sublime of mediocrity, remarkable for nothing in the world but disgraceful and ridiculous affectation, he has by luck, under the supreme influence of Fortune, (more supreme in war than in any thing else) gained a great name." (Letter of January 4.)

In this same letter he also wrote: "Capt. Lee gave me to understand when I was leaving Ayotla to go to Chalco to report myself to Genl. Worth, that the mass of the army was to attack Mexicalcingo while Worth should pass round the Lake and cooperate on the other side. ... These facts I am ready to swear to in any court of Earth or Heaven."
NOTES

Duncan Papers, United States Military Academy Library.

12. Ibid., p. 586.
13. Ibid.
16. Ibid., p. 587.
18. Polk: The Diary of a President, entry for December 30, 1847.
19. Ibid., January 3, 1848.
20. Ibid., January 9, 1848.
25. American Star, February 10, April 22, 1848. (Wardland incidentally was writing letters himself during the whole campaign to the Boston Atlas, in which he attacked the southern officers in the army.)
30. Pillow was eventually cleared and the charges dropped against Duncan, at Frederick, Maryland. A full account of the inquiry is given in Sen. Ex. Doc. No. 65, 30 Cong., 1st Sess.
32. Ibid., March 21, 1848.
33. Ibid., March 22, 1848.
34. Ibid., March 29, 1848.
35. Ibid., April 2, 1848. Lieutenant Colonel James L. Mason wrote to Duncan about this letter from Newport, Rhode Island, March 24, 1848, before the author was known, saying: “Hitchcock was suspected by some, but it was too unguarded & bold, had too much of what Napier calls ‘intrepidity of error’ for that timid cautious thing — It was quite open to attack, but I thought I would not do anything that should impair the force of my testimony if I should be called before the present Court of Inquiry or any Court Martial that may grow out of it.” J. L. M. to Duncan, Duncan Papers, United States Military Academy Library.
Hitchcock’s letter was, as Colonel Mason said, “open to attack.” For example, the author claimed that General Santa Anna had previously used this route for an attack upon the capital in 1842; but there are two true copies of affidavits by the Mexican generals Vilamil and Terres in the Duncan Papers, which state that this is untrue and that nobody had ever used this road previous to 1847 for the passage of artillery; and that Santa Anna, in 1842, had approached the city from Ayotla via Mexicalcingo, as Scott afterward also planned to do. The claim seems to be simply another example of Hitchcock’s vindictiveness and unreliability.
36. Worth Papers, United States Military Academy Library.
37. Hitchcock, op. cit., p. 325.
38. American Star, April 15 and 16, 1848.

NOTES

2. Ambrosio Jose Gonzales, Manifesto on Cuban Affairs Addressed to the People of the United States (New Orleans, 1853), pp. 6-7. Three million dollars were to be raised by the Cubans and James Duncan went to Cuba to look over the ground. Ibid., p. 7. The deaths of Worth and Duncan the next year ended this plan, and upon the recommendation of Jefferson Davis, the command was then offered to Robert E. Lee, who refused it. Freeman, op. cit., I, 307. The expedition was finally led by the ill-fated Narciso Lopez.
3. Worth to Duncan, Washington, August 5, 1848. Duncan Papers, United States Military Academy Library.
7. Scarborough, op. cit., p.
NOTES

295. This son, born in Albany in 1840, joined the Eighth Infantry as a second lieutenant in April, 1861. He was cited for gallantry and distinguished conduct during the Civil War. During the Spanish War he was severely wounded at San Juan Hill, and retired in 1898 as a brigadier general. He died, without issue, in New York City in October, 1904. Heim, op. cit., p. 1061.

11. Ibid., II, 22-23.
12. The Dallas Morning News, October 1, 1935.
15. Ibid., passim.
16. Ibid., p. 254.
20. Ibid., p. 217.
22. Braxton Bragg to Duncan, Camp Near Monterey, Mexico, 13 January 1848. Duncan Papers, United States Military Academy Library.
24. See Copeland, Kendall of the Picayune, Introduction. (This manuscript should not be confused with Kendall's shorter, published book, illustrated by Carl Nebel, The War Between the United States and Mexico, New York, 1851.)
25. See Kendall's Narrative of the Texan Santa Fe Expedition for an interesting account of this.
26. Elliott, pp. 570, 573; Justin H. Smith, op. cit., I, 72, 505.
29. Keyes, op. cit., p. 153. (The metaphor of that generation was incurable.)
30. Ibid., pp. 154-55.

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