

The Walker Expedition

I wonder how many men are living of the party numbering about 250 adventurous young Americans, who left New Orleans late in December 1856 on the Steam Ship "Texas" to join Genl. Wm. Walker's forces then operating in Nicaragua. Of the party on the vessel I recall the names of Maj. Bob Ellis, who had been acting as recruiting officer for the Expedition with office on St. Charles near Common Streets, N.O. Col. Mancosas; Capt Berrington, commanding a company I think from Kentucky with Lieutenant A. R. Coleman, Capt Reynolds & 1st Lieutenant Bentley & company from Mobile. Capt Kingwell & company from Arkansas, Capt Bob Harris with company, raised in & about New Orleans. With this company I was identified as 1st Lieutenant. There were a number of young man in there [sic] companies from other states, besides those mentioned. I recall the names of Levi T. Jennings, from Indiana, Marshall Taylor; -- Wilmot from Indiana or Illinois, Drayton & Morse from Ohio, Wm. H. Wilkins; Jim Williams from some point in La. All anxious to secure, some of the milk & honey; mineral wealth &c &c; with which the land was said to be overstocked. All of this come after the termination of the struggle to secure a good & stable government; for the success of which, struggle, we were led to believe a large number of the natives were engaged with Walker to secure. At this time Genl. Walker has been operating [sic] in the country for about a year, with varying prospects & a few weeks before our part of the Expedition left New Orleans he had been cut off from the States & his base of supplies; being left on the Pacific side of the country & the Enemy occupying the Fortified places in possession of the Transit Line of Steamers on the San Juan River between Genl. Walker & Greytown. We arrived at Greytown early in January 1857 during the rainy season. Our vessel entered the mouth of the San Juan River, passing a number of British war vessels, mostly 20 Gun Sloops, anchored in & about the mouth of the River—with the 3 Decker Orion anchored several miles out at sea. On our arrival at Greytown, we were joined by Col. Sam Lockridge & Capt [Julius] De Brissott (called the Comodore) [sic] Col. Lockridge assumed command of our party & continued in command until the Expedition closed. I have been informed that Col. Lockridge was killed at Val Verde in Arizona during our Civil War. For fear of wearing you readers, I will dwell briefly on the main features of our Expedition, trusting this article may catch the eye of some who participated in it. Our first emancipation after landing was on Punta Arenas; opposite Greytown & across the mouth river; where the Transit Co. of New York had some work shops to look after the repair of their steamers, transporting passengers via the isthmus to California— During our sojourn there, we resurrected a sunken & abandoned sheet iron hull of one of the little steamers of the Transit Co & by means of facilities afforded by their shops & cast off material found there we restored the little steamer to service & called her the "Rescue." We had some accessions to our party from New York & New Orleans about every 30 days—we also had some interviews with the British officers, whose duty was to discourage the business in which we were engaged & offered us free passage to any of us who were disappointed & wanted to return to the United States.

After several weeks of preparation, we started up the river, with all of our force & material that the Rescue would carry safely; with the purpose of reopening communication with & rejoining Genl. Walker— we established a camp & called it Camp Anderson (after Col. Frank Anderson of New York) on the river just below Fort Sarapiqui; said to be occupied with about 700 of the enemy, and the 1st place with which we had to contend. We had to make several trips with the Rescue to get all our forces &

materials up to Camp Anderson. Then after some preparation, we advanced to the attack of Fort Serapiqui, situated in the triangle of the Serapiqui & San Juan rivers with only log barricades bordering 2 sides for defenses. We were repulsed there & were forced to retire carrying some of our wounded in blankets suspended from poles. Among those was Col Rudler, who afterwards recovered; I was present with Genl Walker in his land expedition to that country, when captured & shot by the Hondurans. After our retreat we returned to the river & struck camp. While the rain was pouring down, first around the bend in the river, below the Fork. Here we rested about one week & during this time recovered & buried the bodies of Lieutenant Homan & others who were killed in our first attack on the Fort & made it so hot for the Enemy, that all this and posts were called in & compelled them all to stay very close, within the limit of this entrenchment. At the end of this week under cover of night our force was divided a small number under Maj Bob Wheat, with several pieces of small cannon were moved up & occupied a prominent hill, across the San Juan river from the Fort. The balance of our force were crossed over the San Juan river & moved up & occupied positions from mouth of Serapiqui River up & along the river, opposite this beneath works of log pens filled with earth & debris. The river as I remember it was about 200 feet wide. We opened the ball at crack of dawn, our force taking advantage of trees, logs, stumps, & every thing that would afford shelter from the enemy bullets. One exchange of courtesies continued until about good dark & we slept on one guard, intending to renew it in the morning. During the night the enemy pulled out & we entered the Fort the following morning in grand shape. We made a prompt move on Fort Castillo some 20 or more miles above on the river & captured it leaving a small Garrison under Col Titus (a recent arrival) to hold it. The balance of our force returned to Fort Serapiqui our new base while we were awaiting reinforcements & making the preparations, the Enemy returned against Fort Castillo in sure force as to surprise Col Titus & his small garrison & compelled them to evacuate the place & so the enemy got possession again. After several weeks of preparation & with the arrival of a Hundred or more fresh men from the States, we went up against Fort Castillo again—In the meantime, the enemy had not been slow in gathering together a goodly force & strengthening every weak point in their line of defenses. With a force of about 250 to 300 men on our two boats, we went up & were disembarked at Machuca rapids, a few miles below the Fort & moved out with guides to get in their rear. We got so close to the Enemy, we could not only see him, but hear them shouting defiance behind their barricades. We were halted for a rest & final preparations before the assault should begin. It was at this juncture that news of Walker & the remnant of his force, being taken on board for the US Sloop of War Saratoga on the Pacific Coast & being then on their way to the U States reached us from the rear, via Greytown. For the while only our most prominent leaders were made cognizant of the news—and why we drawn off from the prospect of a most lovely fight & countermarched back to Machuca.

We didn't learn until later & After a consultation of our superior officers & we were informed by them of the situation & the importance of shedding all superfluous weight & getting out of the country as soon as possible; as the enemy, being relieved of Walker, would concentrate all his attention on us & he was so numerous & so well equipped (By Gt Britain) that we would hardly afford him a square meal. Of our race down the Rivers "The blowing up of the J. N. Scott," killing & wounding about 65 men of our small party, a few miles above Fort Serapiqui which we had abandoned, not having force sufficient to leave a garrison. Of our reoccupation of that Fort, hurried preparations for burying our dead, caring for our wounded, & getting out of the river to Greytown with only the Rescue before the enemy should be on

us. At Greytown where we had left a number of British Sloops of War, we had reasonable hope of being protected from complete annihilation which we knew the Enemy would visit upon us, if not restrained by a superior force. We beat them out only a few hours and reoccupied Punta Arenas as this was thought best by our Commanding Officers. It came out about as we had piqued, but for the action of the British officers, backed up by a goodly force of marines, none of our party would have lived to tell this story. Here, at Punta Arenas, we were without supplies either of medicine or provisions only for a few hours. Here again our British cousins came to the rescue. While they took special occasion [sic] to let us know; that we were no better than pirates & not entitled to any sympathy &c &c. They furnished us some provision & medicine for our sick & wounded & not forgetting a goodly amt of soup & told us if we would wash up & cut our hair & shave, that they would manage in some way to start us back to our own country in a few days. Some of our sick & wounded, as well as some of our officers, took refuge in Greytown & were left there. The balance of us numbering about 250 men were divided between two British Sloops of War, the Cossack & the Tartar & taken over to Aspinwall where our British cousins expected to find American Steam Ships, upon which to send us home. They did find one "The Grenada," bound for New York via Havana, Cuba who agreed to take the party of us, brought over by the Cossack., but would not consent to take any more. I was of the party on the Cossack & was transferred at Aspinwall to the Grenada to make the trip on her to Havana, Cuba. There our party were divided again. We were told that all who wanted to go to New York, could continue on the Grenada & those who wanted to go to New Orleans could transfer then & there to the "Empire City" bound for New Orleans. I came back home on this latter vessel and I need not tell your readers, that it was a most happy return for many hearts. The British vessel the Tartar.

Texarkana, Texas 1/17/1904

Alex Fyffe Esq.

Marshall Texas

My dear Aleck,

I am just in receipt of Mr. Torymans letter, announcing the serious illness of Aunt Lou, I will

The Walker Expedition

I wonder how many men are living of the party numbering about 250 adventurous young Americans, who left New Orleans late in December 1856 on the Steam Ship "Texas" to join Genl. Wm. Walker's forces then operating in Nicaragua. Of the party on the vessel I recall the names of Maj. Bob Ellis, who had been acting as recruiting officer for the Expedition with office on St. Charles near Common Streets, **N Orleans**. Col. Mancosas; Capt. Berrington, commanding a company I think from Kentucky with **1st** Lieutenant A. R. Coleman, Capt. Reynolds & **1st** Lieutenant Bentley & company from Mobile. Capt. King with company from Arkansas, **Capt. Schlistch & Co. from New Orleans – with which company I was identified as adjut.** Capt. Bob Harris with Co., raised in & about New Orleans. **There was a sprinkling of**

young men in these companies from Mississippi & other States of the Union. I recall the names of Levi T. Jennings, of Indiana, &c. All anxious to secure some of the milk & honey; mineral wealth &c &c, with which the land was said to be overstocked; after the termination of the struggle for a good and stable government, in which we were led to believe that many of the natives were participating with Walker; who had been operating in the country about a year, more or less. We arrived in Greytown early in Jany. 1857 during the rainy season. Our vessel entered the mouth of the San Juan River, passing a number of British vessels of War, mostly 20 Gun Sloops, anchored in & about the mouth of the River—with the 3 Decker Orion anchored some distance out at Sea off the mouth of the San Juan River. Some weeks before our arrival Walker had waked up one morning & found himself cut off from The States, "his base of supplies," leaving him on the Pacific side of 'The Country' & his enemy occupying the 3 fortified points on the San Juan River from Greytown up to lake Nicaragua viz Sirippiqui, Castillo & San Carlos, also in possession of the several little steam boats (belonging to the Transit Co. of New York) through which Walker had been getting his supplies & recruits from the States. On our arrival at Greytown, we were joined by Col. Samuel Lockridge (whom I have learned died at Val Verde in Arizona during our Civil War) & Capt. [Julius] De Brissot (called the Commodore). Col. Lockridge assumed command of our party & continued in command until the close of our part of the expedition of the weeks of our sojourn at Punta Arenas, opposite Greytown. Of the new arrivals from N.O. & New York every 30 days or so. Of our interviews with the British officers, whose visits to our camp was to discourage our expedition. Of our resurrection of an abandoned & sunken sheet iron hull of a little steamer of the Transit Co. & with the facilities afforded by their shops & castoff material found there restoring her to service. Our ascent of the river & making our first stop on some bluffs just below Fort Siripiqui situated in the triangle formed by the junction of the Sirippique & San Juan Rivers & occupied by the enemy supposed with about 700 men.

It took several trips of our little steamer to get all our little tea party up to our new location, which we called Camp Anderson after Col. Frank Anderson of New York. Of our preparations for an attack on Fort Siripiqui of our repulse there & retreat through the mountains carrying several of our wounded in blankets slung to poles (among the wounded was Col. Rudler I think of Georgia). Of our return to the river & encamping, during a continuous rain, closer to the fort than our Camp Anderson, a week of rest & preparation & a 2nd attack on the fort; during which Maj. Bob Wheat (who I learned died in last fight of Manassas of our Civil War) worked with a small force; several little mountain Howitzers most effectively against the enemy. After about 15 hours the enemy under cover of night evacuated the fort & of our triumphant entry the following morning. Of our prompt advance upon Fort Castillo, the capture of the place & leaving as a garrison, a small force, under Col. Titus (a recent arrival), the return of the enemy reinforced; bluffing Col. Titus to the extent of causing him to retreat from the place, back down the river to the main part of our force. Fort Castillo situated on a prominent hill on the San Juan River at the head of Castillo Rapids & commanding the river. Our high _____ with a series of defenses consisting of Barricades, one above the other on the hill sides, extending down to foot of Hill was regarded as a most formidable place to assault. Shortly after this, "The Little Rescue" with a small force of men under command of Bob Wheat was sent up to make a reconnaissance of the Fort & if possible to secure one of the little steamer boats moored there, which we needed very much in our business at that time. He went up & made a bold & sudden dash & cut out & poled down through the

Rapids the Steamer J. N. Scott (I think named after one of the Transit Co. Managers) The little steamer bore much evidence of the hot place she had come through. Participating in this little adventure I remember Marshall Taylor, I think of Indiana or Illinois wounded in 2 places in arms. Jno King "alias Kentuck" who came through without a stitch. A few days later we sent the little "Rescue" a small force I think under Maj. Bob Wheat up towards Fort Castillo to make a reconnaissance & by making a quick & sudden dash, they secured a steamer landed there the J. N. Scott. The enemies guns both small arms & cannon, left lots of sign on her, as our boys poled her down through Castillo Rapids. In this little scrap I think Marshall Taylor before mentioned was hit twice & John King (alias Kentuck) a private behaved with distinguished gallantry & came off with a whole skin. This boat was cut from her moorings & brought off from right under the guns of the Fort, which is situated on a prominent Hill, with lines of defenses along the slopes extending downward nearly to the River. This gave us two boats.

2A131

✓ ALDEN (L. H.) PAPERS

Correspondence 1859-1861

Broker's Reports

~~ALDRICH (O. COLLIN) PAPERS~~

~~Certificates 1838, 1865~~

24228

✓ ALDRIDGE (WILLIAM B.) PAPERS

Correspondence 1836, 1837

✓ ALEXANDER (ROBERT) PAPERS

Correspondence 1838-1851

Biographical and Related
Sketches

Sermons

Last Will of E. A. Alexander

✓ ALLEN (A. C.) PAPERS

Diary, 1857-1875

Walker Expedition, 1856

~~Papers (Robert) Alexander
1838-1851~~

ALLEN (A. C.) DIARY

81

ALLEN, A. C.

The Walker Expedition

1856

*ALLEN (A. C.) PAPERS, 1857, 1875, 1904.
2 vol.; manuscript.

Photostats of a diary and two copies of a reminiscence of an officer in William Walker's Nicaraguan expedition (1856-1857).

Persons: Allen, A. C.

Places: Nicaragua.

Subjects: Walker Expedition.

Location: 2A131.

May 20 Allen State
/// Allen State linear
may AP, Allen State linear

The Walker Expedition

I wonder how many men are living of the party numbering about 250 adventurous young Americans, who left New Orleans late in December 1856 on the Steam Ship "Texas" to join Genl Wm Walker's forces then operating, in Nicaragua. Of the party on the vessel I recall the names of Maj Rob Ellis, who had been acting as recruiting officer for the Expedition with office on St Charles near Common Street N.O. Col Mancoske; Capt Berrington, commanding a company ^{I think} from Kentucky with Lieutenant A.R. Colman. Capt Reynolds & Lt Lieutenant Duntley & company from Mobile. Capt Kingwell & company from Arkansas, Capt Rob Harris with company, raised in & about New Orleans - with this company I was identified as Lt Lieutenant. There were a number of young men in these companies from other states, besides those mentioned. I recall the names of Rev. J. Jennings, from Indiana. Marshall Taylor; - Wilnot from Indiana or Illinois. - Drayton & Mose from Ohio. Wm N. Wilkins; Jim Brackeen. Leroy & Colbert ^{from N.S.} - Throckmorton from Mississippi & Williams from some point in ~~the~~, all anxious to secure, some of the Milk & Honey; Mineral wealth &c; with which the land was said to be overstocked. All of this to come, after the termination of the struggle to secure a good & stable government; for the success of which, struggle, we were led to believe; a large number of the natives were engaged with Walker to secure. At this time Genl Walker had been operating in the country for about a year, with varying prospects & a few weeks before our part of the Expedition left New Orleans. He had been cut off from the States; his base of supplies; being left on the Pacific side of the country & the enemy occupying the ~~is~~ Fortified places ^{in opposition of} the Transit Line of Steamers on the San Juan River, between Genl Walker & Greytown. We arrived at Greytown early in January 1857 during the rainy season. Our vessel entered the mouth of the San Juan River; passing a number of British war vessels, mostly 20 Gun Sloops, anchored in & about the mouth of the River - with the 3 Decker Orion, anchored several miles out at sea. On our arrival at Greytown, we were joined by Col Sam. Lockridge & Capt de'Russell (called the Commodore) Col Lockridge, assumed command of our party & continued in command until the Expedition closed. I have been informed that Col Lockridge was killed at Val Verde in Arizona during our civil war. For fear of wearying your readers; I will dwell briefly, on the main features of our Expedition, trusting this article may catch the eye of some who participated in it. Our first Encampment after landing was on Punta Arenas; opposite Greytown; & across the mouth of the river where the Transit Co. of New York had some work shops to look after the repair of their Steamers, transporting passengers via the isthmus to California - During our sojourn there, we resurrected; a sunk in, abandoned Sheel iron Hull of one of the little Steamers of the Transit Co & by means of facilities afforded, by their shops & cast off material found there we restored the little steamer to service & called her the "Rescue". We had some accessions to our party from New York & New Orleans about every 30 days - We also had some interviews with some of the British officers, whose aim was to discourage the business in which we were engaged, & offering free passage to any of us who were disappointed, & wish to return to the United States.

After several weeks of preparation, we started up the River, with all of our force & material that the Rescue would carry safely; with the purpose of reopening communication, with, & joining Genl Walker - We established a camp & called it Camp Anderson. After Col Frank Anderson of New York ~~just below~~ on the River just below Fork Siripiqui; said to be occupied with about 700 of the Enemy. and the 1st place, with which we had to contend. We had to make several trips with the Rescue to get all our force & materials up to ~~Camp~~ Anderson. Then after some preparation, we advanced to the attack of Fork Siripiqui, situated in the triangle of the Siripiqui & San Juan Rivers with all the ~~log~~ barricades bordering 2 sides for defenses - We were repulsed there, & were forced to retire carrying some of our wounded in blankets suspended from poles - among them was Col Rudder, who afterwards recovered; & was present with Genl Walker in his last expedition to that country, when captured & shot by the Hondurians. After our retreat; we returned to the river & struck camp, while the rain was pouring down; just around the bend in the river, below the Fork. Here we rested about one week, & during this time, recovered & buried the bodies of Lieutenant Roman & others, who were killed in our first attack on the Fork. ~~It~~ made it so hot for the Enemy, that all their outposts were called in & compelled them all to stay very close, within the limits of their entrenchments - At the end of this week, ^{under cover of night} our force was divided, a small number under Maj Bob Wheat, with several pieces of small cannon were moved up & occupied a prominent hill, across the ^{valley} river from the Fork. The balance of our force were crossed over the San Juan river & moved up to occupy positions from mouth of Siripiqui River up & along the river, opposite their breast works of logs & brush filled with earth & debris. The river as I remember it was about 200 feet wide - We opened the ball at crack of dawn, our force taking advantage of trees, logs, stumps & every thing that would afford shelter from the enemy's bullets. Our exchange of cannon, continued, until about good dark & we slept on our guns, intending to renew it in the morning. During the night the enemy pulled out & we entered the Fork the following morning in great shape & made a prompt move on Fork Castillo some 20 or more miles above on the river & captured it, leaving a small garrison under Col Titus, ^{to hold it} while we were making other preparations. ^{the balance of our force} returned to Fork Siripiqui, ^{to be our new base} ~~where~~ a few days later the enemy returned against Fork Castillo in our force ^{to surprise} Col Titus, & his small ^{garrison} & compelled them to evacuate the place; & so the enemy got possession again. After several weeks of preparation, & with the arrival of a hundred or more fresh men from the States, we went up against Castillo again - In the meantime, the enemy had not been slow, in gathering together a goodly force; & strengthening every weak point in their line of defenses, with a force of about 200 to 300 men on our two boats, we went up, & were disembarked at Machuca rapids, a few miles below the Fork & moved out with guides to get in their rear. We got so close to the enemy; we could not only see him, but here them shouting defiance behind their barricades - We were halted for a week of final preparations before the assault should begin - It was at this juncture that news of Walker's & the remnant of his force, being taken on board of the US Sloop of War Saratoga, on the Pacific coast & being then on their way to the U States, reached us from the rear; via Greytown - For the while only our most prominent leaders were made cognizant of the news - and why we were drawn off from the prospect of a most bloody fight & continued back to Machuca.

Arakana Texas 1/17/1904

Alex Fryffe Esq
Marshall Texas

My dear Alex

I am just in receipt
of Mr Frymans letter, announcing the ~~serious~~ illness of Aunt Lou, I will

of our resurrection of an abandoned & sinking Sheik iron Hull of
a little steamer of the Franck Co. & with the facilities afforded
by their shops & Carhoff material found there; restoring her
to service; our ascent of the river; making our first stop on
some Bluffs, just below Fort Siripiqui situated in the Triangle
formed by the junction of the Siripiqui & San Juan Rivers & occupied
by the Enemy, supported with about 700 men. It took several
trips of our little steamer, to get all our little tea party up to our
new location, which we called Camp Anderson - after Col Frank
Anderson of New York. Of our preparations for an attack on
Fort Siripiqui of our repulse there & retreat through the mountains
Carrying several of our wounded in blankets slung to poles ^{amongst the wounded were} of our return to
the river & encamping; during a continuous rain; closer to the fort
than our Camp Anderson; a week of rest & preparation, & a 2^d
attack on the fort; during which Maj Bob Whelan (who I learn
died in last fight of Manassas of our civil war) worked
with a small force, several little mountain Howitzers most
effectually against the Enemy. After about 15 Hours the Enemy
under cover of night, evacuated the fort & of our triumph ending
the following morning - of our prompt advance upon Fort
Castillo; the capture of the place, & leaving as a garrison, a
small force, under Col Titus (a recent arrival) the return of
the Enemy reinforced; bluffing Col Titus to the extent of causing
him to retreat from the place ^{back down the river to the main part of our force}
The Fort Castillo, situated ^{at a prominent hill on} on the San Juan River, at the head of Castillo
Rapids & commanding the river - ^{entirely} staffed with a series of defenses, ^{consisting} of
Baricades, one above the other on the hill sides, extending down
to foot of Hill, was regarded as a most formidable place to assault
shortly after this "the little Rescue", with a small force of ^{under command of} men ^{was sent}
up to make a reconnaissance of the Fort & if possible to secure ^{one of the little} ~~the~~ steam
boats, which we needed very much in our business at that time.
The work up & made a bold & sudden dash & cut out & poled down through
the Rapids the Steamer J. A. Scott. I think named after one of the Franck
Co managers. The little steamer bore much evidence of the hot place she had
come through. Participating in this little adventure, I remember I remember
Marshall Taylor, I think of Indiana or Illinois, wounded in 2 places in
the "Smoking" alias "Kitt" which came through without a wound.

I think under that boat what

11

A few days later we sent the little "Rescue" a small force up towards Fort Castillo to make a reconnaissance & by making a quick & sudden dash, they secured one of ~~several~~ ^a ~~steamers~~ ^{steamers} landed there. The Lt. Scott. The Enemy's guns both small arms & Cannon, left lots of sign on her, as our boys poled her down through Castillo rapids. In this little scrap I think Marshall Taylor before mentioned was hit twice - & getting (alias Kentucky) a private behind with distinguished gallantry & came off with a whole skin. This boat was cut from her moorings & brought off from right under the guns of the Fort, which is situated on a prominent hill, with lines of defenses along the slopes extending down ward nearly to the River - This gave us two boats