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Published for the first time, this is an image of some of the officers of the Eighth Infantry who were taken as prisoners of war by Texas troops at San Lucas Spring on May 9th, 1861. From left, Lt. James Judson Van Horn; Lt. Royal Thaxter Frank (seated); Brevet Lt. Col. James Voty Bomford, Sixth Infantry, who was on leave traveling with the column when taken; Lt. Zenas Randall Bliss (seated); Lt. William Graham Jones. This picture was probably taken in San Antonio in 1861. Bliss was a prisoner of war in Texas and Virginia until he was exchanged on April 5, 1862. *Courtesy of Zenas Work Bliss II, Rumford, Rhode Island, who generously donated this photograph, along with other Z. R. Bliss drawings, watercolors, and photographs, to the Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin.*

Notes and Documents

San Antonio and the Secessionists, 1861–1862: From the Reminiscences of Maj. Gen. Zenas R. Bliss

EDITED BY THOMAS T. SMITH, JERRY D. THOMPSON,
ROBERT WOOSTER, AND BEN E. PINGENOT*

The five-volume typescript, “Reminiscences of Zenas R. Bliss” by Maj. Gen. Zenas Randall Bliss, is a remarkably detailed account of his army service in Texas before and after the Civil War. Many scholars consider Bliss’s recollections to be one of the best from a soldier of the “Old Army,” a rare and important window into Texas history that has been a staple primary resource for Texas frontier research for the last three decades. The memoirs cover Bliss’s graduation at West Point in 1854; his antebellum service at Fort Duncan, Camp Hudson and Fort Davis; his Civil War experience; and his return to the Texas frontier in 1870–1876. Bliss served in Texas longer than any other army officer (twenty-three years) and rose in rank from second lieutenant to departmental commander.

Apparently Bliss wrote the five volumes in chronological sequence beginning about 1882 and finishing in 1894. Bliss died in 1900 and the manuscript did not surface for public view until 1929. In that year the daughter of Major General Bliss, Mrs. Alice Ingoldsby Bliss Massey of Boerne, Texas, allowed the University of Texas to make a typescript from the original typed manuscript (now lost), for the Archives Collection, later consolidated at Barker Texas History Center, now the Eugene C. Barker Texas History Collections, a division of the Center for American History. Eight years later the Bliss family allowed another authorized copy from the original for the United

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States Army War College, a manuscript currently housed at the Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

In 1968 historian Ben E. Pingenot became interested in editing the Bliss manuscript for publication and worked on and off on the project until he passed away on July 7, 1999. Following that sad event, several of Ben's historian friends decided to continue his project, which is scheduled for publication by the Texas State Historical Association Press in the fall of 2007.

Zenas Randall Bliss was born to upper-middle-class circumstances in Johnston, Rhode Island, on April 17, 1835. After his West Point graduation in the summer of 1854, Bliss served the next six years on the Texas frontier, the first few months in the First Infantry Regiment, afterward being transferred to the Eighth Infantry. On the antebellum Texas frontier Bliss served at Forts Duncan, Davis, Inge, and Quitman, as well as Camp Hudson. In May 1861 Bliss joined the Federal exodus from Texas but was captured with an Eighth Infantry column on May 9, 1861, at San Lucas Spring, west of San Antonio. He spent most of the next year as a prisoner of war in San Antonio and in Richmond, Virginia. The following is an excerpt from Volume III, which outlines the capture and the nine months Bliss spent as a Civil War prisoner of war in Texas before being sent to Virginia in February 1862. The volume has a cover sheet noting, "written in 1889."



In commencing this volume, which will probably include all I have to record of my experiences and reminiscences of the Rebellion, I wish to state that it is written entirely from memory, without notes of any kind, as all my letters written to my family were destroyed by fire, and I have not even a scrap of paper bearing on the occurrences of that period.

James Magoffin, who had been appointed by the state to receive the property at Quitman from me, did not come in person, but sent his son Samuel, who receipted to me for all the property, and with his train helped to move our supplies to San Antonio. He and his brother-in-law Gabriel Valdez went with us. After a long march of one hundred and forty miles we reached Fort Davis and found that a Company of Rangers from San Antonio had already reached there, and Capt. E. D. Blake of the Eighth Infantry, who was in command of Davis, had turned over all the Government property to them. He had heard of their coming, and had cut down the flag-staff, in order that no Rebel flag should ever be floated from it. He was a native of South Carolina, but at that time had no idea of joining his fortune with the South.¹

¹ U.S. troops abandoned Fort Davis on April 13. Texas and Confederate soldiers, loosely directed by Lt. Col. John R. Baylor, temporarily reoccupied the former federal positions at Forts Clark, Duncan, Lancaster, Davis, Stockton, and Camp Hudson. *War of the Rebellion: Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1884), Ser. 1, Vol. I, 502 (hereafter cited as *OR*); Donald S. Frazier, *Blood and Treasure: Confederate Empire in the Southwest* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1995), 13-15, 36-37.

After a day or two at Davis, waiting for his command, we started again. The command at this time consisted of six Companies of the Eighth Infantry all under Capt. [Isaac Van Duzer] Reeve of the Eighth and Brevet Lt. Col. [James Voty] Bomford, who had just been promoted major, had been in New Mexico on a court-martial, and had returned to Fort Davis and awaited the arrival of this command in order to take advantage of it as escort. Capt. Blake commanded his company; I commanded mine; and the other companies were commanded by Lts. [James Judson] Van Horn, [Henry Martin] Lazelle, [Royal Thaxter] Frank, and [Lafayette] Peck; and Lt. William G. Jones was with one of the companies.² Asst. Surgeon De Witt C. Peters and Mrs. [Emily] Peters were with the party, he being the medical officer of the command.³ Lt. [Henry W.] Freedley of the Third Infantry had been detained in San Antonio after his regiment left, and sent to Davis in charge of a government train, to

² A New Yorker, Isaac Van Duzer Reeve had graduated from the United States Military Academy in 1835 and had won two brevets for gallant and meritorious conduct during the war against Mexico. Reeve was promoted to major and transferred to the First Infantry on May 14, 1861. Following an undistinguished Civil War career, he retired from the army in January 1871 and died nineteen years later. Ohio-born James Judson Van Horn served in Texas after graduating from West Point in 1858. Breveted for gallantry at the battle of Cold Harbor, Van Horn remained a career soldier, eventually rising to the rank of colonel. He died on August 30, 1898. Tennessean Lafayette Peck had joined the Eighth Infantry in 1857 after graduating from West Point. He resigned his Federal commission to join the Confederate Army on August 23, 1861. Rising to the rank of major, he died on March 25, 1864.

An 1832 West Point graduate, Col. James Voty Bomford transferred to the Eighth Infantry in 1838 and served ably in the Mexican War, receiving brevets for gallantry at Contreras and Churubusco and at Molino del Rey. During the Civil War, he was breveted for meritorious service at Perryville. He retired in June 1874 and died on January 6, 1892. Francis B. Heitman, *Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army, From its Organization, September 29, 1789, to March 2, 1903* (2 vols.; Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1903) I, 229 (Unless otherwise noted, all references to Heitman will be to Vol. I.).

Appointed to West Point from Massachusetts, Lt. Henry Martin Lazell graduated in 1855 and was assigned to the Eighth Infantry. In 1859, he survived two severe chest wounds in fights with Mescalero Apaches. From 1856 to 1858 and from 1860 to 1861, Lazelle was stationed at Fort Bliss. Promoted to captain in June 1861, he went on to command the Sixteenth New York Cavalry and was breveted for heroism at Culpeper, Virginia. After the war, he became a major in the First Infantry, a lieutenant colonel in the Twenty-Third Infantry, and while commanding Fort Clark from 1889 to 1894, a colonel in the Eighteenth Infantry, before retiring because of a disability in November 1894. Lazelle wrote books on the evolution of warfare, farmed in Virginia, and died on July 21, 1917, at Georgeville, Quebec, Canada. Heitman, *Historical Register*, 620.

Lt. Royal T. Frank graduated from West Point in 1858 and was assigned to the Eighth Infantry. As a captain in the Union Army, he fought in the 1862 Peninsula Campaign and at Fredericksburg. After the war, he rose in the First Artillery to become a colonel. After serving as a brigadier general of volunteers during the Spanish American War, Frank retired in October 1899. Heitman, *Historical Register*, 434.

William G. Jones was born in Ohio and graduated from the United States Military Academy in 1859. During the Civil War he rose to the rank of colonel in the Thirty-Sixth Ohio Infantry. Jones was killed at the battle of Chickamauga. Heitman, 780, 982, 583, 229, 620, 434, 822.

³ Assistant Surgeon DeWitt C. Peters, a native of New York, had originally joined the army in 1854. In a letter dated June 12, 1860, he assured his mother-in-law that his wife Emily "was intended for the army." The Peterses claimed property totaling \$4,200 in 1860, and owned the only slave at Fort Davis enumerated in the year's census. The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, houses a collection of their letters. Heitman, *Historical Register*, 786; NARS M653, Eighth Census, 1860, roll 1293, Texas, Presidio County.

bring these troops down the country.⁴ There were also about two hundred and fifty enlisted men.

The command of Fort Davis was turned over to the Texas Rangers, and we marched away. The sutler at Fort Davis, Alexander Young, a native of Pennsylvania, accompanied us, and took with the goods he had been unable to dispose of. He had a large supply at the post, probably \$40,000 to \$50,000 worth of goods, and these he sold as far as he could find purchasers and was not very particular as to the terms.⁵ . . .

Our order from Gen. Twiggs was to take only such rations as were necessary to take us from post to post, and only such ammunition as we thought was necessary to defend ourselves from the Indians. We had seen no one on the road; the mail had been stopped, and I presume our only thoughts were what would be done with us when we got to New York. All the other troops had gone out of the state and taken passage for the City of New York, and we of course expected to do the same, and our speculations were more on what would be done with us when we reached the North than on anything else.⁶

We approached Fort Clark one morning, having camped the night before on the Piedra Pinta Creek, seven miles from the post. As we approached the post, Lt. Freedley and Mrs. Peters were ahead on horses, and as they rode into the post they were taken to an office and held there as prisoners, till the troops arrived and went into camp. We were met at our arrival by an officer of the post and requested to camp on the opposite side of the creek from the post, near the little village of Brackett, which we did. We were out of rations, and were obliged to draw them there, and received enough to take us to San Antonio.

Maj. [Trevanion T.] Teel of the Texas troops was in command of Clark, and he acted as though everything was all right, and that we would go directly

⁴ Henry W. Freedley, a Pennsylvania native, graduated from West Point in 1855. Promoted to captain in 1861, he was breveted for gallantry at Chancellorsville and again at Gettysburg. Freedley retired from the army at the rank of major and died in November 1889. Heitman, *Historical Register*, 436.

⁵ Alexander Young had held the sutlership at Fort Davis since 1855. He also secured contracts for supplying the garrison with wood, hay, and corn, and picked up the sutlership at Fort Quitman in 1860. An army inspector reported that he kept his store "well supplied with all the requisites for the troops and gives satisfaction." His estate of \$28,000 made him the wealthiest man at Fort Davis before the Civil War. NARS, Registers of Post Traders, Record Group 94, Vol. I: 136, 166; Vinton to Nichols, Jan. 21, 1861, LR, DT, 1860-1861; Jerry Thompson (ed.), *Texas and New Mexico on the Eve of the Civil War* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2001), 106; NARS M653, Eighth Census, 1860, roll 1293, Texas, Presidio County.

⁶ Federal authorities chartered several ships and began rendezvousing troops twenty miles from Indianola at Green Lake. Five hundred twenty-two men and officers, along with sixty-two dependents, escaped aboard the *Daniel Webster* and *General Rusk* on March 19-20. Another contingent, totaling 609 officers and men and including six companies of the Second Cavalry, left aboard the *Coatzacoalcas* on March 31. The *Empire City*, with its passengers including the regimental band and staff of the Second Cavalry, nine companies of cavalry and artillery, forty-seven laundresses, and fourteen servants, sailed on April 9. J. J. Bowden, *The Exodus of Federal Forces from Texas, 1861* (Austin: Eakin Press, 1986), 89, 91, 93-95.

to the coast, and there take transports to the North.⁷ I went to the post on business, and was surprised to see that walls had been built between the houses looking up the road in the direction from which we came. These walls were bullet proof and had embrasures, through which the guns of the post were pointed, covering the road over which we had approached. When I asked why these warlike preparations, Teel said that he did not know but we might attempt to take the post and had thought it best to be on his guard.

We remained there in camp that night, and we started next morning for San Antonio. What we had seen at Clark made us suspect that there was something in the wind that we were not posted on, but we got no intimation from anyone that there had been a change in the programme, and there was nothing for us to do but keep on. We marched through the small settlements on our road to San Antonio but heard nothing of importance, but a general regret that we were to leave the state. Everyone seemed to be as much in the dark as regards to the future as we did, and a general gloom and anxiety seemed to hang over all with whom we talked. Many of the settlers in and near these small towns along the road had large herds of cattle, and they very well knew that they could not remain there without the protection of the troops, and they looked forward very anxiously to some settlement of the troubles between the sections.

On the 8th of May 1861, we encamped on the Medina, near Castroville, and as we made a long march that day, nearly all the officers and men retired early. Lt. Freedley and I went over the river to Castroville and went into a large beer saloon. While in there a man beckoned to Freedley to come into a back room. He went in, and on his return proposed that we should walk down to camp. When we were out of ear shot of the saloon, he told me that the man had told him that we were to be attacked that night in camp; Gen. [Earl] Van Dorn was on the road from San Antonio with two thousand men and would if possible surprise and attack us that night.⁸ We went directly to camp and found nearly all the officers in bed, and we awoke them, and Col. Reeve called a short council of war to decide what we had better do

⁷ Born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in 1824, Teel studied law in Missouri and fought in the war against Mexico, receiving two wounds at the battle of Buena Vista. He moved to Texas following the war and practiced law in San Antonio. Having joined the Knights of the Golden Circle, Teel mustered a company of Knights into Confederate service with the onset of secession. Promoted to major of artillery in February 1862, he fought in New Mexico, Arkansas, Missouri, and Mississippi during the Civil War. He later won considerable fame as a criminal defense attorney. Teel died at El Paso on July 6, 1899. Thomas W. Cutrer, "Trevanion Theodore Teel," in Ron Tyler, Douglas E. Barnett, Roy R. Barkley, Penelope C. Anderson, and Mark F. Odintz (eds.), *The New Handbook of Texas* (6 vols.; Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 2000), VI, 284.

⁸ After nearly nineteen years of hard service for the United States Army, including an important victory over the Penateka Comanches in 1858, Earl Van Dorn, a native of Mississippi, resigned on January 31, 1861. Commissioned a colonel of Confederate states troops, he was appointed to head the newly formed military Department of Texas two and a half months later. Mark Mayo Boatner II, *Civil War Dictionary* (rev. ed.; New York: David McKay Co., 1988), 867.

under the circumstances. There were many propositions made and discussed, and the only ones of any importance were those made by Col. Bomford, and that was to cross the river, capture or take possession of Castroville, destroy the out buildings, and take all necessary measures to put it in a state of defence, and then try and hold it or hold out until we could get some advantageous terms from the enemy.

Col. Reeve did not want to take the responsibility of doing all this on a mere story told by some men with whom none of us were acquainted, and as the agreement made between Gen. Twiggs and the Rebel Commissioners had so far been strictly carried out, he did not think we would be justified in committing any act of hostility or in destroying any private property.

I knew an old road that had not been used in some years that ran to the south of the usually travelled road to San Antonio, and I suggested that we should make large camp fires and do all we could to make the people of the town believe that we were to remain all night, and then move out and try and pass the Rebel Army, and get into San Antonio behind them, and there attempt to make a fight. If we could at least reach Adams Hill, where there was a large stone ranch with corral walls, and a fine spring of water, and where we could make a better fight than at any other place on the road, and we would be in a stronger position there. After some discussion this plan was adopted, and we moved out of camp about midnight, and with pickets well pushed ahead on the road, we started. The pickets had orders to move very carefully to avoid being seen, and immediately upon discovering the Rebels to return to the command, and we would lead the command off the road and try to march around the Rebel Army, and take and hold San Antonio to the time that we could get what we wanted.

We marched all night, at least till daylight, and finally reached Adams Hill without having seen or heard anything of a Rebel force, and many or perhaps all thought we had been deceived by the man at Castroville. On our arrival at the hill, the troops were formed in line of battle and arms stacked. As none of us had had any sleep in twenty-four hours, everybody laid down on the ground, and most of them were soon asleep. I was soon awakened by a soldier who was shaking me and calling out that the Rebels were coming. I jumped up and the command was formed under arms instantly, and we looked out to the east and saw the Rebel force approaching.

Adams Hill was quite prominent and was capped by the ranch of Adams, and on the west side of it the San Lucas Spring had its source. From this the men had filled their canteens and the small supply of cartridges had been distributed, not more than eight or ten to a man.⁹

⁹ The 1860 census for Bexar County lists a Robert Adams as living outside San Antonio. A thirty-three-year-old native of Arkansas, he was married, had three children, and claimed property totaling \$2,000. A farmer, he had in 1850 lived at Fort Inge, Texas. NARS M432, Seventh Census, 1850, roll 908, Texas, Bexar County, Fort Inge; NARS M653, Eighth Census, 1860, roll 1288, Texas, Bexar County.

This was the morning of the 9th of May 1861, and a beautiful day it was. The troops were formed in line on the east side of the hill near the top and extending across the road, on the north side of which was a large stone corral, which would have afforded splendid protection against musketry. The house of Adams was on top of the hill, and to the west of the corral was of stone; against infantry we could have held this position against superior numbers, but the stone walls would have been worse than nothing when attacked by artillery.

Immediately in front of us was a valley perhaps eight hundred yards wide, and on the opposite side of this a ridge nearly as high as Adams Hill crossing the road at right angles. Over this the Rebel troops made their appearance, stopped a few minutes, and then moved down towards the bottom of the hill, and formed across the road. On their right was a company of infantry composed of very young men and boys under the command of old Mr. Maverick; near to them was a battery of six-pounder guns, six in number, under the command of Lieut. Mechling, who had been dismissed from my regiment for stealing, or for having his safe robbed too often when it contained government funds.

Next to the battery, to the left of it, was a large body of infantry, eight hundred to one thousand, and on their extreme left was a body of cavalry of about the same strength as the infantry. Up on top of the ridge a good many coaches and private conveyances could be seen, and over the ridge from us the Rebel train was parked.

My company was formed with its left resting on the road that ran through our, and the Rebel lines. Soon after the Rebel line was formed, two officers, Jack Wilcox, a former member of Congress from Mississippi, and Lt. [James P.] Major, an officer who graduated in '56 and had resigned from the Second U.S. Cavalry and joined the Confederacy. He was I believe, from Missouri, and had recently distinguished himself in an Indian fight with Van Dorn, in which he was said to have killed three Indians himself.¹⁰ Van Dorn was also a graduate and major of the Second U.S. Cavalry, a Mississippian, and a friend of Jeff. Davis. He had been appointed to the command of the Rebel troops of all Texas.

The two officers, Major and Wilcox, were at that time serving as aides to Van Dorn, and they came up the road. One of them carried a drawn sabre on which a white handkerchief was tied as a flag of truce. They rode up at a gallop and were very much excited, pale and nervous. I was

¹⁰ Having graduated twenty-third in his West Point class, Lt. James P. Major killed three Comanches during the battle of Rush Spring (sometimes called the battle at the Wichita Village), October 1, 1858. After resigning his federal commission, he joined the Confederacy and rose to the rank of brigadier general. He died on May 8, 1877. Heitman, *Historical Register*, 685; James R. Arnold, *Jeff Davis's Own: Cavalry, Comanches, and the Battle for the Texas Frontier* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 2000), 206, 210, 328, 335.

surprised that he did not recognize me when he spoke to me and asked where the commanding officer was, but he said that he did not, and that they were too excited at the time to recognize anyone.

They told us that they had brought a demand from Van Dorn for the unconditional surrender of our command. They sat under the tree some time, but there was very little, if anything said on either side. They remained seated under the tree until Col. Reeve sent for them. He told them that he would not surrender his command on a simple demand and show of force, but must be permitted to send an officer to inspect the Rebel troops, to see if they were armed, their number, etc., etc., that unless he was permitted to do this, he would defend the position he held. Major and Wilcox then mounted, and bearing their white flag rode back to their lines.

Soon after, Major returned and told Col. Reeve that he would be permitted [to] send an officer as he desired. I was sent for by the Colonel and told to inspect the Rebels, to find out if they were well-armed, if they had ammunition for their infantry and artillery, and to learn the number of men, and their character, etc. I mounted my steed and started down toward the Rebel left, accompanied by Major, and when we arrived at their line we were joined by Joe Minter, another officer of the Second Cavalry who had joined the Rebels. He was a civilian appointment. He was also on the staff of Van Dorn.¹¹ As we passed around the left of their line they continued and carried me up on the ridge, almost as far in rear of their line as I was in front of it when I started.

I told them I could see no more from there than I could from our line, and that I should make no report unless I was permitted to go nearer. Minter replied that I could not go any nearer, and I said that I would return to Col. Reeve. Minter asked me what I was going to report, and I told him that I should report nothing; that I could not see any more than Reeve could, and he could judge of their command as well as I could at that distance. "Very well," he replied, "then we will fight." I told him that was none of my business and started towards our lines. Major rode with me and seemed to regret that I had not been permitted to go close enough to the troops to make a report. Minter went directly to Van Dorn and spoke to him, and soon came towards us at a run, and met us just as I was going around the left of their line, and said, "Van Dorn says you may come just as close as you please, and the closer you get, the worse you will like the looks of them."

¹¹ Born in Virginia but appointed from the Washington Territory in 1855, Lt. Joseph F. Minter became the Second Cavalry's regimental quartermaster in October 1856. After resigning his federal commission, Minter served as major in the Confederate quartermaster corps. Heitman, *Historical Register*, 715; *List of Staff Officers of the Confederate States Army, 1861-1865* (Bryan, Tex.: J. M. Carroll and Co., 1983), 114.

I then turned and rode along within ten feet of the rear rank, and counted the men as well as I could. I looked into the limber and caisson boxes and saw that there was plenty of ammunition and plenty of good arms, as we well knew there must be, as they had been in possession of the arsenal at San Antonio for several weeks.

I saw many men in the ranks that I was intimately acquainted with, and was spoken to by many, but the report that I was cheered as I rode along their lines was incorrect. It was so stated in their papers. I rode along the whole line, and then returned to the road, and passed by the right of the cavalry and through the line towards ours. As I went by the cavalry, Bill Tobin, whom I believe was in command of the right company of cavalry, rode out from the ranks and asked me if I did not want an escort, and I said yes, so he took a few of his men and rode with towards our troops. He asked me if I thought there was going to be a war or a fight, and I told him I did not know. "Well," he said, "you are a pretty good shot, and you know I am, and if you will agree not to shoot at me, if there is a fight, I won't shoot at you." I told him all right, and he rode back to his troops.¹²

I reported to Col. Reeve that there were at least 1,400 men well-armed, with a battery with plenty of ammunition, and that there was a company of nearly one hundred under old Maverick. I estimated the Rebels at about 1,800 all told, but did not want to put too high a figure in my report, as on it all action as to a surrender was to be based, so I reported at least 1,400. Minter told me afterwards that he issued that morning over 2,000 rations, so I presume there were at least 2,000 men.

When I made my report to the Colonel, he went in the house with Col. Bomford and Capt. Blake, and we waited in silence the result of the council. After awhile someone came out and communicated with one of Van Dorn's aides, and he returned to his chief. It was not known what that conclusion was, or what action Reeve and his council had taken, but it was soon known that there had been some sort of surrender. Very soon the people commenced to arrive in carriages. Many of the people expressed sympathy for us, but the majority were glad of our capture. . . .

The army in the mean time had marched the men over the hill and out of sight, towards that city. We remained in camp until some time in the afternoon, when we took up our march for the place. Everyone was blue and depressed, and we had little idea what was to become of us. After

¹² William G. Tobin was born in South Carolina in 1833. He moved to Texas in 1853, briefly acting as city marshal of San Antonio before volunteering for military service during the conflicts with Juan N. Cortina in the late 1850s. He became a captain in the Confederate army. Following the war, Tobin helped to popularize Tex-Mex dishes, especially chili con carne. He died at San Antonio in 1884. Zelime Vance Gillespie, "William Gerard Tobin," *The Handbook of Texas Online* <<http://www.tsha.edu/handbook/online/articles/view/TT/fto4.html>> [Accessed Nov. 11, 2003].

marching a few miles, the command was halted at a small watering hole for the men to refill their canteens and rest. Col. Reeve called the men to attention and told them what had been done. He said that he had surrendered and had agreed to march the men to the head of the San Pedro, and encamp there till some arrangements could be made for the future. The Colonel was very much affected, and shed tears, and there were many in the command who showed as much sorrow as he did. All knew that he had done the best and only thing that he could do under the circumstances, and to show their confidence in him and their sympathy, he was given three cheers, and we marched sadly along to Leon Creek, where we encamped for the night.¹³

Gen. Van Dorn was encamped in a large tent on the opposite side of the road from us, and in the evening he sent an aide and invited the officers of our command to his tent. We all went, and had a few minutes' conversation about the events of the day, but no one seemed to enjoy the visit much, and after an offer of champagne from the General, which nearly all declined, we returned to our camp, and the next morning marched into San Antonio and to the head of the San Pedro where we went into camp, and awaited the next move on the board. We heard afterward that the troops who went out to capture us had a very hard time of it. They were taken from their business and organized for the occasion, and of course none of them were prepared for a march of fifteen miles to Adams Hill; they became lame and foot-sore and had to be hauled back to town in wagons. Some of them did not reach the city until the next day, and all were nearly used up.

Van Dorn, in his conversation, said that he had gotten together as large a command as possible in order that there might be no question about the propriety of the Colonel's surrender, and to put all thoughts of a fight on our part out of the question. The troops of the U.S. had all left the other posts long before we came down. Fort Clark and Fort Duncan had been turned over to the Rebels by orders from the Department Commander, Gen. Twiggs, and all had left the state. The lower posts on the Rio Grande were occupied by Rebel troops and were not abandoned by them until much later.

We soon learned in San Antonio of all that had taken place; that [Fort] Sumter had been fired on, and that there had been some skirmishing at other places.¹⁴ All of this was entirely new to us. We had been without mails for a month or two, and of course had no means of learning any-

¹³ Colonel Reeve's report of the surrender is in *OR*, Ser. I, Vol. I, 567–568.

¹⁴ On February 1, 1861, the Texas secession convention had voted 166–168 in favor of leaving the Union. Fifteen days later, pro-secession forces led by Ben McCulloch seized the Federal arsenal at San Antonio, along with its small garrison. Twiggs agreed to turn over all Federal property in Texas; his men were to keep their sidearms and have safe passage out of the state. Texas voters approved the secession ordinance on February 23, and the state quickly joined the Confederacy.

thing of what had taken place in the States. As soon as the agreement was entered into by Gen. Twiggs and the Texas Commissioners, all troops near San Antonio were ordered to take transportation to the North. Some of them went unmolested by the Rebels. . . .

My old company, in which I had served six years, Company A Eighth Infantry, was stationed in San Antonio, and their barracks was surrounded by Rebels in the night, and the house-tops covered with armed men, so that when they came out in the morning they were under arms of the Rebel troops and were obliged to surrender also. Lt. [Edward L.] Hartz of the Eighth, and Lt. [Edwin W. H.] Read, were with this company and were of course captured at the same time. They had about forty-five men and of course could make no resistance against the several hundred who had silently gathered in the night and surrounded them.¹⁵

Just before this, probably in April or the latter part of March, Col. [Carlos A.] Waite had been sent from the North to take command of all U.S. troops and try and get them out of Texas. He was very quietly captured by the Rebels, and all the other officers who were with him in San Antonio at the time. They said they would not surrender on a simple demand, so troops were marched there, to their offices, and they surrendered. If Waite had been sent there early in February with power to supercede Twiggs, perhaps he might have done something, but he came too late, but got there in time to add his name to the list of the captured in Texas.¹⁶

All troops captured before the arrival of our party were paroled and sent north, and we supposed that would be our fate, and waited in camp till necessary arrangements were made. The success of the Rebels was due

¹⁵ Born in Ohio, Lt. Edwin W. H. Read was commissioned in 1856. Promoted to captain in 1861, Read received a brevet promotion to major for his gallantry at the battle of Gettysburg. He resigned from military service in 1873 and died two years later. *Ibid.*, 818.

The Pennsylvania-born Lt. Edward L. Hartz was assigned to the Eighth Infantry upon graduation from West Point in 1855. During the time he was stationed in Texas, Hartz led several camel excursions into the more remote areas of the trans-Pecos, including a lengthy reconnaissance out of Camp Hudson in the summer of 1859 to explore an area west of the Pecos and south of the San Antonio–El Paso Road. He was dropped from the army in July 1864 but resumed his career as a captain in the Twenty-seventh Infantry in July 1866. Hartz died on November 11, 1868. A number of Hartz's letters from the Texas frontier are in the Manuscript Division at the Library of Congress. Heitman, *Historical Register*, 508; Eva Jolene Boyd, *Noble Brutes: Camels on the American Frontier* (Austin: Republic of Texas Press, 1995), 111–118. Hartz's diary of the excursion can be found in his papers at the Library of Congress and in Sen. Exec. Doc. 2, *Report of the Secretary of War*, 36th Cong., 1st Sess., 1859 (Serial 1024).

¹⁶ Originally commissioned in 1820, New York-born Col. Carlos A. Waite had won two brevet promotions during the war against Mexico. The outbreak of the Civil War found Waite at Camp Verde, Texas. On January 28, 1861, the War Department relieved Twiggs of command of the Department of Texas, appointing Waite his successor. Assuming command on February 19 at San Antonio, Waite hoped that his widely scattered garrisons could rendezvous at Green Lake and carry out the terms of their transfer from the Lone Star State. News of the firing on Fort Sumter, however, convinced state officials to arrest Waite, along with most of his departmental staff, on April 23. Exchanged in early 1862, Waite found himself relegated to non-combat assignments. He retired from the army in 1864 and died two years later. Heitman, *Historical Register*, 993; *OR*, Ser. I, Vol. I, 521, 533–534, 552–553, 585; *Ibid.*, Ser. II, Vol. I, 76.

in great part to the fact that we were acting in good faith, carrying out the orders of the department commander, and we supposed the wishes of the government at Washington; while the Rebels were using those orders and agreements as a blind to entrap us, and only following them so far as they suited their purpose. Whenever they thought best to depart from the agreements entered into they did so, and their excuse afterwards to us was that the state of affairs had changed; that Sumter had been fired on; hostilities had been commenced by the North, and that agreements made before these events were not binding on them.

If Col. Reeve had made a fight, the result would have been just the same, as far as the troops were concerned. We could not have whipped two thousand men with our small party, and even if we could have done so, we were out of rations and ammunition, and three thousand miles from home, without transportation if we could have reached the coast; and had an uninhabited country behind of one thousand miles in extent, that we should have had to cross before we could have reached a place of safety. Any thought of fighting, with the hope of getting home, would have been absurd. As the situation was for us, I have no idea that there was a man that would have done any differently than Col. Reeve did.

The only chance we had to escape was at Uvalde. We had no information at that point of our march that would justify any such action. If we had turned off the road there and gone to Eagle Pass (Fort Duncan), we could have captured that post, and have crossed into Mexico, and have been made prisoners of war in that country, whence we should probably have reached the North. Troops in time of war, fleeing to a neutral country, become prisoners of war to that country and generally are not allowed to depart till the war is over. However, such a course was not at all practicable, for Maj. Teel of the Rebel army was in command at Fort Clark, and had followed us with a battery of six pieces of artillery and one hundred men; and if he had seen that we were marching on Duncan he would have joined his force to those at that post, and with the help of the citizens, whom they could have pressed into service, they could probably have defeated us; for we had not more than ten rounds of ammunition per man, and no artillery or cavalry. So now looking back with the knowledge I now have of the conditions of affairs at that time, I think Col. Reeve did exactly right to surrender.

Though there were numerous Union men in San Antonio at this time, and we had many friends among them, not one attempted to do anything to prevent our capture, but John Dunlap. At the risk of his life, he hired a Mexican to come up the road and meet us and deliver a letter to us, telling us what would befall if we came to San Antonio. The man started with Dunlap's letter concealed on his person, and got as far as San Felipe Springs, one hundred and forty miles west of San Antonio, but was stopped

so many times by Rebel pickets and others, that he became frightened and returned to San Antonio. If he had met us far enough up the road, we could have turned back and have marched into New Mexico, perhaps, before they could have gotten together sufficient men to follow us. However, I doubt if Reeve would have turned back even if he had received the information, or the letter sent, for it was very short, and Reeve would have had to act on the advice of a citizen who was totally unknown to him, although I knew him very well and was the only one who did; he might not have considered the information sufficient to justify him in violating his orders and attempting to retrace his steps into New Mexico. However, the letter never reached us, and we walked into the trap and were corralled.¹⁷

We were captured on the 9th of May 1861, and marched into San Antonio the next morning, May 10th, with drums beating, and would have had colors flying if we had had any, but they were with the Headquarters of the Regiment, and were concealed and saved by Sgt. Maj. [Joseph K.] Wilson, who was afterwards a lieutenant in the Eighth.¹⁸ We marched to the head of San Pedro Creek, about three miles from the city, and went into camp. We remained there several days without anything being done, and we were entirely in the dark as to our future.

Finally it was decided that the enlisted men should be put in camp on the Salado River, about six miles east of San Antonio, and that the officers should sign a parole, but have general supervision of the men. Things remained in this state for at least a week, and then Lt. Minter came to the camp and all government property was turned over to him, for which he gave regular receipts; and we closed our accounts with the government for the U.S. property, and put our papers in the mail, as it was said they would go through to Washington. I believe up to that time the mails were still being transported throughout the South. My papers never reached Washington, and I had considerable trouble about them several years afterwards. . . .

We remained some days at the head of the San Pedro, but soon after Lt. Minter receipted us for our property we moved into the city, and the men went into camp on the Salado. We exercised a supervision over them for awhile, but that gradually disappeared, and we seldom saw them, except when individuals would come to our quarters for advice or assistance.

¹⁷ The 1860 census lists John Dunlap as a twenty-eight-year-old native of Scotland. He resided at Fort Clark, sharing a household with a fellow Scot, James Shaw, who had a beef and forage contract with the post. Thomas T. Smith, *The U.S. Army and the Texas Frontier Economy, 1845-1900* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1999), 207, 212, 213; NARS M653, Eighth Census, 1860, roll 1292, Texas, Dawson County.

¹⁸ Born in Ohio, Joseph K. Wilson had enlisted in the army in 1844, rising to the rank of sergeant major on December 15, 1855. Commissioned in May 1863, he won a brevet commendation for his gallantry at Petersburg a year later. Lieutenant Wilson died on September 19, 1869. Heitman, *Historical Register*, 1047.

An agreement was entered into by Col. Reeve and Gen. Van Dorn by which we were permitted to select our own boarding houses, and the Rebels were to pay our board. They did not take from us any private property or public funds. I had about \$400 belonging to the Subsistence Department that I had left when I turned over to Magoffin at Fort Quitman, and I still had that and kept it.

Bomford, Frank, Van Horn, Jones, Peck, and myself went to Mrs. [Ladreska] Phillips's to board, while the others went to different places. Mrs. Phillips was a widow lady and an old friend of Col. Bomford's at the time. She had two daughters, one of whom was married while we were there to Edward P. Alsbury, and now lives in a little town about one hundred miles east of San Antonio. The second daughter [Aglæ Phillips] was a very pretty girl, and has since married Mr. Beauregard, the nephew of Gen. [P. G. T.] Beauregard.¹⁹

While we were still in camp at the head of the San Pedro, I had a little experience of a military nature. I was in town one night and was asked by a gentleman to accompany him, and I went with him to his store, and through it to the large yard in the rear. The store had been closed for the night, and there was no one about. We went to the back of the yard among some lumber that was piled there and sat down. After some casual remarks he asked me if I could depend on my company at camp, and I told him I could for any emergency. He then proposed that I should get them to come to town, bringing their arms and ammunition, and that I should capture the arsenal and hold it till morning, and that he would guarantee that the Union men would rally, and that I would have enough men by daylight to hold the town and make any terms I desired.

This was only a day or two after we had been captured, and as the plan looked practicable, I told him I would go to camp, and if everything turned out favorable there, I would be back before daylight and capture the arsenal. It was only guarded by a few men, and I could easily have taken it.

I rode to camp about eleven o'clock and went to Bomford, who was my right hand man, and I did not want to do anything of this kind without consulting him, and besides, I thought he would approve of it and probably join me. I was very much surprised to find that he would not do anything of the kind, and he said although we had not given any parole we were on an implied parole, and that it was only supposition that Col. Reeve would keep

¹⁹ In 1860, Ladreska Phillips, a native of Louisiana, operated a boarding house in San Antonio's First Ward. In addition to her seventeen- and fourteen-year-old daughters, fifteen persons were living there at the time of that year's census. The most famous boarder was Col. Robert E. Lee. Born about 1838 in Louisiana, Edward P. Alsbury had been a pro-secession candidate for the state's convention and was later a second lieutenant in Capt. S. G. Newton's "Independent Company." NARS M653, Eighth Census, 1860, roll 1288, Texas, Bexar County, San Antonio, First Ward (Phillips household), Fourth Ward (Alsbury); *San Antonio Daily Ledger and Texan*, Jan. 3, May 14, 1861. For the Beauregard marriage, see note 29.

his men in camp and do nothing until arrangements were made by the Rebel authorities, that we were permitted to retain our arms; and that we had been given the liberty that we had; and he further said that if I did not promise him that I would do nothing more in that direction, he would get up and report me to Reeve and have me immediately put in arrest.

This rather dampened my ardor and disgusted me at the same time, though I could see that there was a good deal of truth and sound reasoning in his remarks. I therefore promised him that I would do nothing further in the matter, and mounted my horse and rode into the city, where I soon found the gentleman and told him the result of my interview with Bomford. He was very much disappointed and tried to persuade me to still make the assault on the arsenal, but I told him it was impossible.

I thought at the same time that everything was practicable and was guided entirely, of course, by what he told me of the number of Union men in the town and their readiness to help me, or anyone who would make such a move. If I had known the true state of affairs, I should never have entered into the scheme, for I am now positive, as I can be of anything, that if I had made the assault that he would have been hung, and that these pages would never have been written by me. There was no trouble in capturing the arsenal and getting all the arms there, as it was only defended by a few men, but the trouble would have been to get the Union men to use the arms after we had them.

My friend was deceived by his own strong sympathies with the North, and his Union sentiments, and he believed that all Union men were willing to sacrifice just as much as he would. Of this he was undeceived before he got through with the Rebellion, for many of the men that he would have depended on eventually fought in the Rebel ranks.

Of course we all felt humiliated at the surrender of our command, and there were all sorts of schemes suggested by which we could get out of the scrape, and our condition was the subject of all discussions. I had been stationed at Fort Duncan when I first went to Texas and knew something about the country between San Antonio and the Rio Grande, and a result of all this talk was that Will Jones and I made up our minds to try to escape by crossing the country to the Rio Grande and getting into Mexico. We agreed to ask Bomford to go with us, or at least to tell him of our plans, and find out from him whether we could make the attempt without compromising ourselves or Col. Reeve. We spoke to him, and he immediately said that we could not do it; that we were permitted to go about the streets and have our entire liberty, only on the promise of Col. Reeve, that we would not take advantage of these privileges, and I remember very well the final words on this subject he said, addressing me, "Bliss, we have lost everything in this surrender but honor, don't let us do anything to sully that," and that was the last of any plans or talk of escape.

At the time we were captured, there was a newspaper in San Antonio called the *Alamo Express*, I believe. It was edited by James Newcomb. He was a strong Union man, and on the 10th of May, the day after we were captured, he published in his paper an account of the expedition to Adams Hill. It was very bitter against the Rebels, and very sarcastic, and dwelt particularly on the honor of the capture of these men whom the Texas Commissioners had denominated "our friends." In the report of the agreement with Twiggs they stated that the troops were their friends, that we were there to protect the frontier from the Indians, and not as enemies, and that every courtesy should be shown to us etc. Newcomb referred to the manner we had been treated by our capture. It was a long article, about two columns, and was very bitter to the Rebels.²⁰

The night after this article appeared in the paper, I was at the Menger Hotel, and was asked by Dusenbery and some others to ride over to the Main Plaza, as there was to be some disturbance or attack on the office of the *Alamo Express*. I went, it was a rainy night, and very dark. The *Express* office stood in the Main Plaza on the south side. Soon after we arrived there a party of men entered the building expecting to find Newcomb there, and with the intention perhaps of killing him. He was not there and they smashed up the furniture of the office, and then set it on fire, and it was consumed.²¹

The next morning Newcomb made his appearance on horseback in the Plaza. He was armed with a shotgun and two six-shooters, and rode down Commerce Street and around the ruins of his press. He was a Southern man, born in Texas, I believe, and had been quite popular with the people, but they were not in the mood to be laughed at or ridiculed for their part in the Adams Hill affair and so destroyed the press and the paper. Newcomb rode out of town, and I believe went North and did not return till after the war, when he was made secretary of state under the Republican rule of the state. He has since been engaged in various enterprises, and is at present the editor of an evening paper in San Antonio.

²⁰ Born in 1837 in Nova Scotia, James P. Newcomb moved with his parents to Texas two years later. Orphaned at age fourteen, Newcomb entered the newspaper business in San Antonio, eventually establishing the pro-Union San Antonio *Alamo Express*. Forced to flee to New Mexico and then California, Newcomb later published *Sketch of Secession Times in Texas and Journal of Travel from Texas through Mexico to California*. Following the war, Newcomb returned to San Antonio and was secretary of state during the Edmund J. Davis administration. He published several newspapers, including the forerunner of the *San Antonio Light*. Newcomb died at his farm near San Antonio in 1907. Ernest B. Speck, "James Pearson Newcomb," in Tyler, et al. (eds.), *The New Handbook of Texas*, IV, 989-990.

²¹ A rival San Antonio newspaper described the incident this way: "It should have been destroyed long since by an outraged community. Those whose contributions established it, and those whose regular assessments sustained it, as well as those who furnished articles for its columns, should be held to a strict accountability . . . We will not brook the presence of traitors nor tolerate the existence of nuisance." *Daily Ledger and Texan*, May 14, 1861.

There were in San Antonio at the commencement of the secession movement a great many Union men, and they attempted to oppose the tide of secession without any effect.²² I met for the first time Charles Anderson, of Kentucky. He was the brother of Lars Anderson of Cincinnati, a very wealthy man, and also the brother of Gen. [Robert] Anderson who commanded Fort Sumter when it was fired on by the Rebels. Anderson was a Kentuckian and a slave-holder, but a very pronounced Union man. He had been in Texas but a few months when the war broke out, and as he said, he had come to Texas to get out of politics, so he took no part in the political proceedings of the day. He was a splendid looking gentleman, well-educated, and a remarkably fine speaker. He had come to Texas with the intention of starting a horse ranch, and had purchased land about four miles from San Antonio, and built a very fine house, of stone, and had imported some very fine horses from Kentucky. He was about six-feet in height, with sandy hair, and long flowing red beard. He had heavy eyebrows and an acquiline nose, and was a man that would attract attention in any assembly. He dressed in ranchero fashion, and seldom changed his attire when coming into the city, and he was the picture of a rough ranchero, and no one would have recognized in him the polished gentleman of society that he really was.²³ . . .

A few weeks after we were captured, Lt. H. M. Lazelle, and Lt. Peters and Mrs. Peters left for Richmond after having signed the parole, and succeeded in getting through the lines and getting North, where they remained on parole, till long after we were exchanged. That is, those who remained in the South were exchanged before those who went North. Of course the question as to what we had better do was discussed daily and nightly. Col. Bomford who was twice as old as any of us, was listened to in all the discussions with great respect.

He had been through the Mexican War, and had had a great deal of experience that we had not yet had, and we naturally placed great confidence in his judgment. He always insisted that by remaining where we were, we would get exchanged sooner than those who went North, and in

²² San Antonio voters rejected the state referendum on secession by a 562 to 535 margin. Bexar County as a whole, however, favored the measure, 827 to 709. Arthur James Mayer, "San Antonio: Frontier Entrepot" (Ph.D. diss., University of Texas at Austin, 1975), 435.

²³ Born June 1, 1814, in Louisville, Kentucky, Charles Anderson was admitted to the bar in 1835. Shortly before the war broke out, he had moved to Texas, where he ran a hotel and bred horses. His estate in 1860, valued at \$16,000, included an eighteen-year-old female slave. Following a harrowing escape from Texas, Anderson was wounded at the battle of Stones River. Elected lieutenant governor of Ohio in 1863, he assumed the state's highest office when the governor died two years later. Anderson died in 1895. NARS M653, Eighth Census, 1860, rolls 1288 (free inhabitants), 1304 (slaves), Texas, Bexar County; Clinton P. Hartmann, "Charles Anderson," in Tyler, et al. (eds.), *The New Handbook of Texas*, I, 163; Robert Sobel and John Raimo (eds.), *Biographical Directory of the Governors of the United States, 1789-1978* (Westport, Conn.: Meckler Books, 1978), I, 1210-1211.

fact we were; but if there had been any certainty that we could have been permitted to pass through the lines and go North, I think I should have tried it, but the danger was that we would be kept in Richmond or some other place, where we were not known, and be more uncomfortable than we would be in San Antonio, where we at least had some friends.

It was several weeks after we were captured before we signed the parole. Lt. Freedley and myself were the last to sign it, and we did not sign till we were informed that we could either sign it or go to prison. We then signed, and he soon after left. I have lost my parole. It was probably burned with my other war papers. We stated that we would not bear arms against the Southern Confederacy or exercise any functions of our office, until we were properly exchanged as prisoners of war. In consideration of this parole we had liberty to go anywhere within the limits of the Southern Confederacy, and to be treated kindly, as prisoners of war. We were to be supplied with rations and that necessary clothing, though I do not think the last was specified in the parole, but was a verbal agreement between Reeve and Van Dorn. These paroles were signed by the officer, and by Van Dorn on the part of the Confederates. The officer was furnished with a copy, which was to be his safe-guard while in the South.

It was agreed at first that the men should be kept in camp on the Salado River, and that we should have supervision over them. That part of the agreement was not held to by the Rebels, for the men were soon scattered among the frontier posts in hopes that they would soon tire of the life there, and could then be induced to enlist in the Rebel Army. It was understood, though I do not know on whose authority, that officers joining the Southern Army would receive a commission one grade higher than they held in ours, and after awhile I think our men were offered all the pay they had due them from our government and a year's pay, if they would enlist in the Rebel Army. There was scarcely one that did so. My First Sergeant deserted and joined the Rebels, and one man of my company who was a stonemason went to work in San Antonio. However, I think he went North with the rest of the men when they were exchanged.²⁴

One evening I had been playing billiards with a friend in the Plaza House, and as I came out, I met two men in the bar room of the hotel. They were English, and I thought they were Union men, or at least neu-

²⁴ The regular army included about fifteen thousand enlisted men at the onset of the Civil War. Of these, 2,079 were in Texas in January 1861. Traditionally, historians have contended that only twenty-six regulars were known to have joined the Confederate army. Pointing out that at least 319 soldiers deserted from Texas-based units between February and April 1861, Richard P. Weinert Jr. has more recently estimated that four hundred did so. The actual figure is probably somewhere between these two extremes. Boatner, *Civil War Dictionary*, 495; Richard P. Weinert Jr., *The Confederate Regular Army* (Shippensburg, Pa.: White Mane Publishing Co., 1991), 26.

tral. I stopped to talk with them, and the conversation turned on the relative merits of Southern and Northern soldiers. It had become almost universal talk that one Southern man could whip about six Yankees. Something was said in this connection and I said I believed that in cavalry the South would be superior to us for some time, at least until we had time to teach our men to ride and take care of their horses etc., but they would not be superior in any other arm of the service; that the idea that a Southern man was better or equal to half a dozen Yankees was absurd; that I had been South several times, and was there for several years, and I had never seen a man that I thought was equal to six like me. While I was talking, this corporal [formerly of the Eighth Infantry] had entered the room, and sat down behind me. I did not know that he was there, or anyone else, except the men I was talking to. As I made the above remark, in which my friends acquiesced, he stepped up to me and very roughly asked me if he had understood me to say that I was the best man in San Antonio, to which I replied that I guessed he had. He then said that he thought he knew several better men than I, and I asked him if he were one of them. He then said no, and I then said you are nothing but a — — — deserter, and ordered him to leave the room, and he went out. He had deserted previously and joined the Rebel Army. There was no other conversation carried on and no threats made by any one.

The next day there was an editorial in the San Antonio paper, I think then called the *Herald*, headed "Good Faith" and asking, "if it was good faith on the part of a Federal officer who had given his parole to do nothing against the Southern Confederacy, to offer violence to a Confederate soldier to the extent of threatening to kill him; such we learn has been the conduct of one of the officers now on parole in San Antonio." It then went on to say, "The conduct of Cunningham and Whipple shows how much these officers value their parole, and should put us on our guard." This last statement referring to the escape of these two officers without signing the parole, though the Rebels claimed that they had violated their promise to sign a parole before they left.²⁵

When I went in to dinner the next day, I found all the prisoners very much incensed at this article, and wondering who it could refer to. The table was full of parolees, and I told them that I supposed that I was the man, but that I had made no threats of any kind, and had simply ordered the deserter out of the room. Will Jones arose from the table and said, "Bliss, you will go out and cow-hide that old scoundrel (meaning [Jeremiah

²⁵ On September 17, 1861, the *Daily Ledger and Texan* printed a definition of "parole," implicitly criticizing the actions of Federal officers. Throughout his text, Bliss often confused the *Herald*, which changed its editorial sympathies frequently, with the avowedly secessionist *Daily Ledger and Texan*.

Y.] Dashiell, the editor of the paper), and I will buy the cow-hide and go with you." There were many Rebels at the table at the time.²⁶

I went to Gen. Van Dorn with a copy of the paper, and he told me to do nothing about it, that it was a lie, and that he would attend to it, and I suppose he saw Dashiell about it, for it was some weeks before that paper had anything more in reference to me. The next time he saw fit to refer to me he had what he thought a good joke on me, and made the most of it.

When we were first captured it was the opinion of nearly all the Southerners that we would soon be exchanged, but we did not believe it. One evening towards the latter part of August '61, I met Hunter, who went up the road with the mail party when I went up in '55, and he was very friendly, and asked what the prospects were for our being exchanged etc. Someone turned to me and said, "Bliss, you did not get exchanged in July as you expected." I had not expected it, but replied, "No, but Old Abe will send a fleet down the coast in September and scoop you people all in and release us." There was a laugh, and no one seemed to take any offense at the remark. "Mr. Dashiell would be glad to hear that," he said. "Well," I said, "You can tell him so if you want to and give him my compliments." I had no idea that he knew Dashiell, or that he was in any way connected with his paper. It was Ford who had replied to me and said that Dashiell would be glad to hear it. It seems that he was a printer on the paper, and told Dashiell what I had said.²⁷

The next day there was a flaming editorial reading like this, "We are very much obliged to Lieut. Z. R. Bliss, U.S. Army, now a prisoner of war in San Antonio, Texas, for the very valuable information that he has given us. He says that in September 'Old Abe will send a fleet to the coast and scoop us all in and release him.' We will inform Lt. Bliss that whether he is released in September or in Eternity, it will be by order of Jefferson Davis, President of the Confederate States of America."²⁸

²⁶ Jeremiah Y. Dashiell was born at Baltimore, Maryland, in 1804. After receiving his degree, Dashiell practiced medicine in Mississippi and Louisiana before being appointed an army paymaster at the outset of the Mexican War. He was dismissed from the army in 1858 (one Union soldier held prisoner by the Texans claimed that he had embezzled \$30,000 from the government), and had by early 1861 become an editor of the *Daily Ledger and Texan*. During the Civil War, Dashiell served as a military advisor on the staff of Gov. Francis R. Lubbock. He edited the *Herald* following the war, and his papers are at the Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin. Thomas W. Cutrer, "Jeremiah Yellott Dashiell," in Tyler, et al. (eds.), *The New Handbook of Texas*, II, 514–515; Stephan Schwartz, *Twenty-two Months a Prisoner of War* (St. Louis: A. F. Nelson, 1892), 76; *Daily Ledger and Texan*, May 14, 1861.

²⁷ Neither Hunter nor Ford has been identified.

²⁸ The editorial, published August 8 in the *Daily Ledger and Texan*, read as follows: "Courtesy. We beg leave to express our thanks to Lieut. Z. R. Bliss, 8th U. S. Infantry, now prisoner of war, for his courteous message that the prisoners now here will be freed in October next. We were under a different impression, we deemed that the column of troops, which we are advised, will land on our coast (and the advices of such landing we are looking for hourly), would free our excellent guests, at a very early day. We can assure them and his gallant comrades, that they are such clever fellows that we shall persist in retaining their agreeable society as long as we can."

I was very much annoyed at this article, but as I had said it, and he had come by the information honestly, I could not say anything to him, but I was very much incensed at Ford, whom I thought was a friend of mine, and who was certainly under many obligations to me. I passed Ford in the street a few days after and did not speak to him. The next day I was called on by a Virginian named Archer whom I had known at Fort Davis. I spoke to him and asked him to sit down, but he declined very preemptorily, and said he had been sent by Ford, his friend, to demand an explanation or an apology from me for not recognizing him in the street that morning or the morning before. I again asked him to be seated, but he said no, that he was on business of importance, and would not sit down till it was settled. I told him then that I had no apology to make, and that he and Ford could both go to — — — .

After waiting about the room a short time, he said that Ford was out on the street and would like to see me, and I told him if he wanted to come in and apologize to me for what he had done, he could do so, otherwise I did not care to see him. He went out and soon brought Ford in, who apologized and made an explanation of the matter. He said that he did not tell Dashiell, and had no intention of doing so, but some one else told him, and Dashiell told him that he had heard of it, and merely asked to know if it was so, and Ford told him it was, and as he was employed by Dashiell in the office, I did not blame him for doing so.

During the summer and fall of '61, the condition of society was very strange and abnormal. There was more gaiety, with parties, balls etc., than ever before. The ladies formed sewing societies and made clothes for the soldiers, and other articles which were sold, and the proceeds turned over for the benefit of the soldiers and their families. They met in a hall, and sewed till about noon, and then called on some merchant to send them a lunch. Some people would send them very elegant lunches, and the names of the donors were published in the papers with a card of thanks. They had committees who went about and found the wives and children of soldiers and supplied them with such necessities as they stood in need of.

A Calico Ball was given and all the ladies made their own calico dresses and danced the first dance in them. They were then removed and they finished the evening in their usual ball costumes; the calico dresses were given to the families of soldiers. Patriotism was the fashionable thing, and as usual the ladies led the fashions, or set them.

Twice or three times a week, from three to four o'clock in the afternoon, the stores were closed and all the able-bodied men turned out for drill on the military plaza. There were many old soldiers who had been discharged from our Army in San Antonio, and they had no difficulty in getting all the instructors they required. It used to be great fun for us prisoners to go over and see these people drill. Of course they were igno-

rant and awkward, and as we met the same men at entertainments with their dress suits etc., it seemed very strange to see them the next day playing the part of a raw recruit.

There were balls or parties at private residences nearly every night, and we were almost always invited, and met many very pleasant and pretty young ladies. One of the belles of San Antonio at that time was Miss Teuton, the niece of Gen. Beauregard. Her father was the General's brother, but called himself at that time Teuton or Tuton, and did not take the name of Beauregard until the General had made the name famous.²⁹

John C. French was my most intimate citizen friend,³⁰ and he with Charles Anderson and John Dunlap and their families, were the only ones that I considered as intimate friends. They of course were Union people, and though at first out-spoken, they very soon found that they must keep quiet, or at least be neutral. I should in this connection mention John Twohig. He was very kind to all of us, and to me particularly so, but he claimed to be a strong Southern man, and though I never really believed it, still I was not so sure of him. He was wealthy, a banker, and gave very handsome entertainments, to which we were always invited; and he frequently had small parties, to which none but the prisoners and a few young ladies were invited. Twohig is still living in San Antonio, and is an active business man, though nearly eighty years of age. He is short and thick set, and an Irishman by birth, and was as fond of fun and frolic as a man could be. He was a great favorite with the officers of the Army, and never allowed any of them to pass through San Antonio without at least taking one meal with him.³¹

²⁹ Augustin Toutant de Beauregard, brother of Gen. Pierre Gustave Toutant de Beauregard, had come to Texas from Louisiana during the early 1850s. He and his wife had five children: Alcée, Leo, Amelie, Estelle, and Richard, a major in the Confederate army, who married Aglae Phillips. In 1867, the family officially abbreviated the last name to Beauregard. Frederick C. Chabot, *With the Makers of San Antonio: Genealogies of the Early Latin, Anglo-American, and German Families* (San Antonio: Artés Graficas Press, 1937), 265.

³⁰ John C. French was born in New Jersey or Pennsylvania about 1825. After moving to San Antonio during the 1840s, he operated a grocery business and helped to organize the city's first bank. In 1860, his estate was valued at \$125,000. His wife, Sarah Roberts ("Sally") French, kept house. She was eight years his senior. Following the war, Mr. French became an influential supporter of the construction of the Gulf, Western Texas and Pacific Railway Company. He died in Cuero, Texas, in 1889. S. W. Pease, "John C. French," *The Handbook of Texas Online* <<http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online/articles/view/FF/ffr1.html>> [Accessed Nov. 11, 2003]; NARS M653, Eighth Census, 1860, roll 1288, Texas, Bexar County, San Antonio, Second Ward; NARS M593, Ninth Census, 1870, roll 593, Texas, Bexar County, San Antonio, Second Ward.

³¹ Born in Cork County, Ireland, John Twohig was a leading merchant and banker in San Antonio. He was in the siege of Bexar in 1835 and was captured by Gen. Adrián Woll in 1842, imprisoned in Mexico City and later at Perote, where he escaped and was one of only nine who was never recaptured. He became one of the wealthiest men in Texas, best noted for his breadline for the poor and unfortunate. He died at his home in San Antonio in October 1891. Erma Baker, "John Twohig," in Tyler, et al. (eds.), *The New Handbook of Texas*, VI, 606.

When I left San Antonio to go to Richmond he came to me and asked me if I would do him a favor, and I said I certainly would, and he said that he wanted me to take two hundred and sixty dollars and give it to Maj. Larkin Smith in Richmond.³² I told him that I might not meet him, and he said, "Very well, when you get home to Rhode Island, send it to the Bishop of Boston." I took it and turned it over to Maj. Smith, but I nevertheless appreciated his kindness, for it was a sly way of supplying me with funds for the journey, without apparently having helped or sympathized with a Yankee. Towhig was captured by the Mexicans in the Mexican or Texan War, at San Antonio, and was a long time prisoner in Mexico, and worked on the streets in a chain gang chained to old Maj. Colquhoun, a man twice his size, and of a very irascible temper. They escaped from the Castle Perote, and I think it was through the assistance of a band of robbers. Towhig is very mysterious about his escape, and will never tell how it was accomplished, but frequently asks if you know that he was once a bandit, that he was sworn in as one of them, and I think that he was rescued by them and had to take the oath of secrecy while he remained with them. Towhig was exempt from military service by his age, but French was not, and only avoided the recruiting or conscript officer by means of a certificate that he was unfit for military service on account of his eyesight, which was at that time very defective; he could not read and could not recognize his most intimate friend, except by the sound of his voice or his size.

He was a Northern man, but had married a very wealthy lady from Mississippi, and as all his and her property was in the South, he had to stay there and look out for it. He was persecuted by the authorities, and had lost a great deal of his property. Mrs. French was an invalid, and very nervous. She suffered terribly from fear that the Rebels would confiscate their property, and was as unhappy as any person I ever saw in the South. I was at their house a great deal and made myself useful by shooting the quails for her suppers and lunches. Our parole allowed us liberty to go where we pleased within the limits of the Southern Confederacy, and I took advantage of the privilege to go hunting as often as possible.

I generally went about six miles from town on the Leon or Salado Creeks. I remember one occasion of killing thirty-nine quails on the wing, and I took with me but fifty-three loads for my gun. I went hunting frequently, and sometimes went with Tom Corry. He was a Kentuckian, and a Rebel, but a very clever man, and a great friend of Anderson. He lived several

³² Larkin Smith had graduated from West Point in 1835. Assigned to the Eighth Infantry three years later, he was promoted to captain in 1846 and breveted to major for his gallant and meritorious conduct at the battles of Contreras and Churubusco during the war against Mexico. Smith resigned his federal commission on May 13, 1861, and became a colonel in the Confederate quartermaster department. He died in 1884. Heitman, *Historical Register*, 901.

miles from town, and I used to go several times and stay a few days each time.

There was in San Antonio at this time a man by the name of Jim French [Fisk]. He was rather small in size, had a crooked leg, and was quite lame. He held some office, policeman or constable, and I frequently saw him. I knew nothing about him, except that he was a rabid secessionist, and consequently I had no particular use for him, but after awhile I noticed that almost every time I went hunting, that sometime during the day's hunt, I would meet French [Fisk]. I did not notice this at first, as it was not at all unusual for people living in the city to have stock, horses and cattle to look at them. He generally asked me about cattle, if I had seen any etc., and I thought nothing about it, but I met him so often that I began to suspect that he was watching me.³³

Ned Gallagher's uncle, Peter Gallagher, who was a very wealthy man, had a ranch on the San Geronimo Creek, about twenty-five miles from San Antonio, and I went up there and stayed a few days with Ned two or three times.³⁴ My suspicions in regard to French [Fisk] were confirmed when one day I was hunting on Ned's ranch, I unexpectedly met him. I asked him what he was doing so far from town, and he replied that he was hunting his stock. I then was convinced that some one had taken enough interest in me to have him watch my movements, and he was probably hired to do so. I of course disliked him for the reason that I knew he was a spy on me, and our conversation was very short when we met, and I never spoke to him unless I was obliged to do so. I was very much surprised during the war when I was told by a gentleman (whom I knew very well in San Antonio, and who was then in Washington), that he had run away from San Antonio, and had brought on a correct return of all the troops from Texas in the Rebel Army, and had turned it over to our War Department. He asked me who I thought had furnished it to him, and I of course could not guess. He told me it was this man Fisk, and that he was in the employ of our government as a spy. I was never more surprised in my life, for I had thought that he was one of the worst Rebels in the state. When I found he was born and raised in

³³ Bliss subsequently refers to "French" as "Fisk." If so, it was possibly James N. Fisk, whom the 1860 census lists as a forty-five-year-old farmer, born in Vermont, with an estate of \$12,000. If his name indeed was "French," it could be J. H. French, a twenty-five-year-old clerk with an estate of \$1,500, but whose birthplace was not recorded. NARS M653, Eighth Census, 1860, roll 1288, Texas, Bexar County, San Antonio Post Office; *ibid.*, Third Ward.

³⁴ A stonemason, merchant, and land developer, Peter Gallagher was born in 1812 in Ireland. He came to the United States in 1829, settling in Texas eight years later. Gallagher joined the Santa Fe Expedition in 1841, then served in the Texas Rangers during the late 1840s. He was county judge of Bexar County from 1861–1864. After the Civil War, he invested heavily in land in the Fort Stockton area and was an army contractor. Clayton W. Williams, *Texas' Last Frontier: Fort Stockton and the Trans-Pecos, 1861–1895* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1982), 92–95, 105, 153–154.

New Hampshire, it did not seem quite so strange. The place of a man's birth did not have much to do with forming his opinions in regard to secession as where he lived. Those officers from the South who were stationed North at the out-break of the Rebellion remained true to the North, and did not join the Rebels, but every one who was Southern born and stationed in the South went with the South, so far as I know. Many Northern men also went with the South, simply because they were living South and had property there.³⁵

Charles Anderson lived about four miles from the city at the head of the San Antonio River, and had a beautiful house. I used to visit him frequently and would sometimes stay a week at a time. His wife was an elegant and charming lady, and he had two daughters with him, one about twenty years of age, who was engaged to Will Jones, one of the prisoners. Anderson had better knowledge of national affairs than any man I ever met, and it was a great pleasure to hear him talk. He was a strong Union man, and his life was hardly safe while he remained there. He was only endured because he was respected for his ability and said nothing in public, and never expressed his sentiments except to his confidential friends.

In the early summer, when we were captured, the sentiments of the people were very mild and friendly towards us. Many of them believed there would be no blood shed, and of course if the trouble was settled by arbitration, as they secretly hoped, we would be restored to our former condition as protectors of their frontier, consequently they were disposed to treat us very kindly, in fact they had no reason to treat us otherwise, and our position in society was very much as it had been previous to the secession of the Southern States.

After the Battle of Bull Run, however, things changed perceptibly. Many returned to Texas wounded and were very bitter. The indications were that the North was going to force the South back into the Union if they could, and it was evident to some people, if not to all, that there was to be a long and bitter, bloody struggle. We soon saw that there was a change towards us, and we were cautioned to talk less and not to express our sentiments quite so freely, but I do not think it made any difference to us. We talked about as we pleased and claimed the right to do so. We were prisoners of war, and could not be expected to have any sympathy with their side, nor to keep silent. Many people came to our house and listened to language that they would not have permitted in a citizen.

³⁵ In late November 1860, the regular army included 1,080 officers. Of the 620 from Union territory, 16 (2.6 percent) joined the Confederate army. Four hundred and sixty officers had come from the seceding states; of these, 297 (64.6 percent) entered Confederate service. Boatner, *Civil War Dictionary*, 495.

At first our rooms were the favorite resort of nearly all our acquaintances, but they finally ceased to visit us, except our most intimate friends, and I suppose they came with a good deal of dread lest their associating with us too much should cause them more trouble than they were having. The papers were full of reports of skirmishes and small engagements, and all told the same story, that twenty Rebels had attacked about one hundred Yankees, had killed several, captured a large number, and with a loss of only one Confederate wounded; that the Yankees were all cowards, and that one Southerner could whip from six to a dozen of them. Of course this was not pleasant reading for us, and still more unpleasant to talk about to the Rebels, so our rooms became in a measure deserted by the secessionists.

We had received no mail from home in several months, and all of us felt anxious to hear from our families, and that they should know how we were faring, but an opportunity seldom or never occurred to write to them direct.

I remember one day a man of my company called to see me, and said he had enlisted in the Rebel Army, and was ordered to Brownsville, on the Rio Grande. I was angry to think he should have deserted, and said very little to him. He asked me the address of my father, and said perhaps he would have an opportunity to send a letter through Mexico to him. I gave him the address and told him what to say, and he left. I saw from his manner and language that he intended to desert as soon as possible and get North. He remained in the Rebel service but a few days, when an opportunity to escape across the river occurred, and he stole the horse and arms with which he had been supplied, and went across the river, and eventually reached the North where he reported to the commander of our regiment. I do not recall whether he communicated with my people or not, perhaps he got some officer to write to them for him.

Several of our men enlisted and did the same thing, until the Rebels got tired of that sort of service, and would seldom enlist a man to serve on the Rio Grande.

A regiment was raised to serve on the frontier of Texas, and was commanded by Col. [James] Duff, a Scotsman, who had formerly been a soldier in our army. The principal duty of this regiment seemed to be to hunt down Union men and hang them, especially the Germans in the settlements north of San Antonio. A great many of these men were hung and shot, and the remaining ones finally got together and formed a party to leave the state and go to Mexico, probably with the intention of getting to the North. They were intercepted by several companies of Duff's regiment and nearly all killed. I think there were about eighty Germans in the party, and only ten or a dozen escaped with their lives. The fight or massacre

occurred near the head of the West Fork of the Nueces, and the place is now known as the German Battle Ground.³⁶

The secessionists had become so embittered and reckless that no man was at all safe, if he was known to be a Union man. The state of society was about as bad as it could be. There were soldiers stationed about San Antonio; many of them very bad men. Murders and thefts of horses were common, and the law-abiding people had to take very severe measures to keep these desperados in check. A Vigilance Committee had been formed before the war, and had hung a great many of these men, and occasionally they would hang an innocent man by mistake. This Vigilance Committee was not formed with any intention of interfering with the Union men, but they were ready to hang anyone that they thought needed hanging, and the fact that the victim was a Union man would not have stopped the execution, but might have made it more certain. The vigilantes were a terror to all evil-doers and to many who were not.³⁷ . . .

Gen. Earl Van Dorn remained in command of the Department of Texas till late in the summer, and then went east of the Mississippi, and Gen. Henry McCulloch took command in his place.³⁸ We were more pleasantly situated during the reign of Van Dorn than afterwards, but whether it was due to his influence or the sentiments of the people generally, I do not know. He told us, while in command, that he would arrange it so that we could draw our pay from the Rebel paymaster, but when we attempted to do so, we were put off, till finally we gave up all efforts to get any money in

³⁶ In summer 1862, between sixty to eighty German-Texans led by Maj. Fritz Tegener left the Kerrville area in an attempt to reach Mexico. Capt. James Duff dispatched about ninety Texas Partisan Rangers, led by Lt. C. D. McRae, to prevent their escape. On August 10 they surprised the Germans on the west fork of the Nueces River, about twenty miles from Fort Clark. Accounts of the contest vary widely, with German casualties set as high as fifty and as low as twenty-five. It is clear, however, that several wounded German prisoners were executed. Confederate casualties numbered two killed and nineteen wounded. The bodies of the dead Germans were recovered after the war and buried at Comfort, where a monument, inscribed *Treuer der Union*, commemorates their loyalty. Wooster, *Texas and Texans in the Civil War*, 114–115; Stanley S. McGowen, "Battle or Massacre? The Incident on the Nueces, August 10, 1862," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, 104 (July, 2000), 65–86.

³⁷ Several Texas communities formed Vigilance Committees during the 1850s. Typically, such groups stemmed from their dissatisfaction with local law enforcement, fears of a slave rebellion, or determination to prevent Unionist activities. For treatment of Unionists during the war, see especially James Marten, *Texas Divided: Loyalty and Dissent in the Lone Star State* (Lexington: University Presses of Kentucky, 1990), and Richard B. McCaslin, *Tainted Breeze: The Great Hanging at Gainesville, Texas* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1994).

³⁸ Henry E. McCulloch, brother of Ben McCulloch, was born on December 6, 1816, in Tennessee. After coming to Texas, both brothers served in the Texas Rangers, with Henry also holding a variety of elected offices. Ben was killed at the battle of Pea Ridge; Henry, though brave, showed little capacity for leading division or brigade-level commands in Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi. McCulloch returned to the Lone Star State in 1863 to command the northern sub-district of Texas. After the war, he returned to his farm at Seguin, save a three-year (1876–1879) term as superintendent of the Texas Asylum for the Deaf and Dumb. He died in 1895 at Rockport, Texas. Ralph A. Wooster, *Lone Star Generals in Gray* (Austin, Tex.: Eakin Press, 2000), 151–155.

that way and had to depend on the money we had when we were captured, or what we could obtain from our friends. . . .

In August or September of '61 a proclamation was issued by Jeff. Davis directing all alien enemies to leave the Confederacy by the 30th of September; owing to the distance of Texas and the long time it took for the proclamation to be distributed throughout the state, the time was extended to the 31st of October.³⁹

Anderson was the only one of our friends who took advantage of the proclamation, and on receipt of it commenced to dispose of his property and prepared to leave the state. He had a beautiful ranch that he had owned but two or three years, which he had fitted up and stocked at an expense of over thirty thousand dollars, and he was of course obliged to sell for what he could get and had no time to wait for better terms. He got some cash and the balance in whiskey that was stored in Louisville, but belonged to a man living in San Antonio. Trading for this whiskey turned out very fortunately, for when the tax was put on it by the United States he still held it, and as it nearly doubled in value, I do not suppose he lost much money by the transaction, but his home was broken up, and he was again so placed that he could not help entering into politics, of which he had become heartily tired. As soon as he had disposed of his property, he came to the city and stopped a few days with a friend, and one morning started with his wife and two daughters across the country to Mexico. He left early in the morning, and I and three or four others were the only ones present to bid him good bye and wish him a safe and speedy return to the North. He left in ample time to reach the Rio Grande before the expiration of the allotted time, and there was no objection made to his departure. It was a very sad parting to us all, still we were glad to see him leave, as we did not consider his life safe at all while he remained there.

He had proceeded about sixty miles on his road when a detachment of cavalry, under the command of Lt. [Arthur K.] Leigh of the Rebel Army overtook him and searched all his trunks and baggage and brought him back to San Antonio a prisoner.⁴⁰

Lt. Leigh, who had been at West Point with me, and was a very nice gentleman, accompanied Mrs. Anderson and her daughters to the Rio Grande as escort, Anderson having decided to have her proceed on her

³⁹ Jefferson Davis signed the Alien Enemies Act into law on August 8, 1861. The measure provided for the naturalization, apprehension, or expulsion of all male citizens of enemy nations over the age of fourteen then in the Confederacy. *Journal of the Congress of the Confederate States of America, 1861-1865* (1904; reprint; 7 vols.; New York: Kraus Reprint Co., 1968), I, 319-327.

⁴⁰ Arthur K. Leigh, a native of Maryland born about 1834, was commissioned a lieutenant, serving in Mechling's Battery and later the Second Texas Infantry. One of his legs was amputated following a wound received at the battle of Corinth, but he remained in Confederate service. He died on October 7, 1864 in Galveston. NARS M323, Compiled Service Records, roll 267, Texas.

journey without him. Anderson was brought back and taken before Gen. McCulloch at the Menger House, under guard. The General said it was a disagreeable duty, etc., etc., and that if Anderson would give his parole not to leave the city, he would grant him the liberty of San Antonio, to which Anderson replied, "Mr. McCulloch, I wouldn't give me my parole for one minute to save your soul from H— —." "Very well then," said the General, "You will be placed in camp on the Salado under guard," and he was accordingly taken there and put under a sentinel in the camp of Capt. Mechling, who was then captain of the Rebel artillery. We all went to see Anderson and expressed our sympathy for him. He was in pretty good spirits, but very anxious to hear of the safe arrival of his family in Matamoros, Mexico. He said to me one day, "No bride ever waited more anxiously for the coming of the groom than I do for the return of Lt. Leigh." After some weeks he returned, and Anderson then became more reconciled to his lot.

Capt. Mechling had his company of artillery in camp on the Salado, six miles east of San Antonio, and had his family there with him, and Anderson took his meals with them. He had two wall pitched tents facing each other, with a fly spread between them. In one of these tents he slept, and the guard over him walked around that tent. He had been a prisoner for some weeks and had begun to suffer from asthma, to which he had been subject in Kentucky, and which was one reason for his settling in Texas. One day he sent to Dr. [Ferdinand Ludwig] Herff in San Antonio and asked him to send him some Jamestown weed, stramonium, to smoke for the asthma, and received it.⁴¹ He said to Capt. Mechling that night that the Doctor had told him to take but a few puffs at a time of the medicine, as it was very strong, but he had smoked a whole pipe full, and hoped if it did not kill him that he would be able to sleep one night. He asked, if he were not up before breakfast, not to be disturbed, and then went to bed. The next morning he did not arise at his usual hour, but on account of his sickness, and his request, he was not disturbed. About ten o'clock Mechling went to his tent and spoke to him, but he did not answer, and Mechling let him sleep some time longer, and then fearing that he was dead, or suffering from the effects of an overdose of stramonium, he entered his tent and discovered that the prisoner was not there, but in his bed was a camp chair and some clothing, making a "dummy" and his boots were on the outside of the tent where he had left them to be blackened. The night was

⁴¹ Born at Darmstadt, Hesse, in 1820, Ferdinand Herff was a surgeon in the Hessian Army until he led a failed effort to establish a communistic society at Bettina, Texas, in 1847–48. Herff soon settled in San Antonio and helped to organize the Texas State Medical Association. Henry B. Dielmann, "Dr. Ferdinand Herff, Pioneer Physician and Surgeon," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, 57 (Jan., 1954), 265–284.

very dark and rainy, and he had taken advantage of it and escaped. These circumstances I learned of afterwards.

The morning after Anderson left I was standing in the street in San Antonio and saw Mechling and two or three mounted soldiers coming up the street at a very rapid pace. Mechling rode up to me and said, very roughly, "Where is Charley Anderson?" I replied that I did not know, that I supposed he was in his camp, as he had charge of him. "Well," he said, "he isn't in my camp, but has violated his parole and escaped; my whole company is out after him and damn him, if they catch him they will hang him to the first tree." I said that I had understood that Anderson had refused very positively to give any parole, and that it was known by everybody that he had never been on parole. He calmed down a little and took another tack, and said that he had not escaped but had been made crazy by the use of stramonium, and had wandered off in the night and fallen into the river and been drowned, and that some of his men were then searching the river for his body. Though I knew nothing of any plan to escape, I was positive that he had done so, and the next few days were very anxious ones for all us prisoners, for we feared that he would be recaptured and perhaps hung by the soldiers who caught him. However, he got across the Rio Grande, and when he went on board the steamer in the Mexican port from which he was to sail to the North, he was very agreeably surprised to find Mrs. Anderson and her daughters on the same steamer. They had been delayed, and had had a very rough experience.

When they reached Matamoros they went to the house of the British Consul; soon after they arrived a revolution broke out in Mexico, and Matamoros was bombarded.⁴² They remained under the protection of the Consular flag, and after many delays they reached the port, and by accident were on the same steamer with him. They had not heard a word from him since he was taken prisoner, and their anxiety and suffering on his account must have been intense.

Anderson told me afterwards of his escape, but he would never give the slightest hint as to who assisted him, though we knew very well that he had had help from some quarter. He said that everything was quiet in camp. He slipped out under the tent wall and crawled along till out of sight of the sentinel, and then walked rapidly. He got lost in the darkness and wandered about for some time, but finally he saw some lights, and he thought he would go to them and try to locate himself. As he was walking

⁴² On November 15, 1861, troops led by Gen. José María Jesús Carvajal moved within five miles of Matamoros, seeking to seize control of the city from insurgents sympathetic to Cipriano Guerrero, who had recently lost a bitter race for the governorship of Tamaulipas. Carvajal's troops mounted a major assault on November 20, and laid siege to the city for several months thereafter. Ronnie C. Tyler, *Santiago Vidaurri and the Southern Confederacy* (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1973), 61–66.

along, he was surprised by being suddenly challenged by a sentinel. He at once knew that he must be near the camp of Gen. [Henry H.] Sibley, who had a brigade encamped on the Salado preparing for a campaign into New Mexico.⁴³ He answered the challenge of the sentry, and immediately asked where Gen. Sibley's tent was, and was told by the sentinel and proceeded towards it, but as soon as he was out of sight and hearing of the soldier, he made rapid strides in an opposite direction.

After travelling all night, he found himself at daylight near the old powder house on the outskirts of San Antonio, when he thought he was some fifteen or twenty miles away. What he did that day or for the next few days he would not tell, but he finally started toward the lower Rio Grande, and after going about sixty miles his horse gave out, and he had nothing to do but get another by some means. He went into a ranch and accosted the owner, and in reply to his questions told him that he was the bearer of important dispatches to Jeff. Davis, and that he was to take them to Mexico and then send them by steamer to Richmond, via the North etc. He said that his horse had given out, and he wanted to trade his for another and that he would pay anything necessary in exchange. The man told him that if he was a bearer of dispatches to the President, he could have any horse he had, and that he would take care of his horse until he returned. He then asked Anderson to take breakfast with him.

When in concealment in San Antonio or about that vicinity, he had cut off his beard, which was red, trimmed it, and dyed his hair and whiskers black. Just as they were to sit down to breakfast he went to the creek to wash his face, and gave it a pretty thorough washing I guess, for when he opened his eyes, he discovered that he had washed all the coloring matter out of his hair. Of course he could not go to the house after that, so he mounted his new horse, which had been already saddled, and without even thanking his host or bidding him good bye, rode slowly off.

As he was nearing the Rio Grande, he met a man who accosted him as Anderson. Anderson told him that he was mistaken, that he was Mr. Brown from some other place than San Antonio. The man laughed and said that it was useless to attempt to deceive him, that he recognized him as soon as he saw him. Anderson suddenly drew a pistol, and covering the man with it said

⁴³ Born at Natchitoches, Louisiana, on May 25, 1816, Henry Hopkins Sibley graduated from the United States Military Academy in 1838. After serving in the Second Seminole War, Sibley was breveted a major for bravery at Medellin during the Mexican War. Stationed in Texas during the early 1850s, he designed the Sibley tent. Sibley subsequently participated in the army's efforts to reestablish order in Kansas, to enforce Federal authority in Utah, and to crush the Navajo. With the onset of the Civil War, he resigned his commission, joined the Confederacy, and convinced President Jefferson Davis to allow him to attempt to capture the Southwest. Alcoholism eventually led to his dismissal from Confederate service and, in 1873, the Egyptian army. He died at Fredericksburg, Virginia, in 1886. Jerry D. Thompson, *Henry Hopkins Sibley: Confederate General of the West* (Natchitoches, La.: Northwestern State University Press, 1987).

that this was a case of life or death for him, that they were after him, and if caught he would be hung without judge or jury, and that if this man knew what was best for him, he would promise to keep it a secret or otherwise he would kill him on the spot. The man told him to put up his pistol, that he was a friend of his and would help him to escape; that he thought he had been treated outrageously by the authorities. He then told him that the river was guarded at every ford by the Rebel troops looking for him, and that if he went on the direction he was going he would soon be in the midst of them. He then told him of a ford and trail that he had just used to smuggle his stock into Texas, and told him how to get on it without being seen. Anderson followed his directions and thus escaped the troops. If his friend had not warned him, he certainly could not have avoided meeting them.

After he was once across the river and out of Texas, he had comparatively little trouble, and with his family reached the North without further adventure. He was appointed a colonel of an Ohio regiment and was wounded in some engagement, but recovered. However, he was so sick and so afflicted with asthma that he could not serve in the field, and resigned. He was elected lieutenant governor of Ohio, and soon after, on the death of Governor [John] Brough, he became governor of the state and served his term as such. After that he retired to comparatively private life, and after the war settled in Kentucky, where he was living a few years ago.

I was in command of Lexington, Kentucky, in '63, and he went there to see me, but I was in Cincinnati at that time, and he came there. As I was turning a corner of 4th Street one morning I unexpectedly met him, and his first exclamation was, "Bliss, I am hungry for a sight of you." I had gone to Cincinnati on this occasion at the request of the family to act as pall-bearer at the funeral of Will Jones, who had been killed at Chickamauga. It was a sad time for all of us. We called on Mrs. [Kitty] Anderson and family at the residence of Lars Anderson. They were in deep grief, and I do not think we saw the daughters.⁴⁴

Soon after this escape of Anderson, Mechling had his old luck and was again robbed of funds placed in his possession for the benefit of his company. The ladies of the Sewing Society had turned over to him four hundred dollars, as his company's share of their earnings, and his trunk as usual was soon robbed. This with the escape of Anderson was too much for the authorities to stand, and Mechling was placed in arrest, and the command of his company was given to someone else and his career soon ended.

After the escape of Anderson, things seemed to go rapidly from bad to worse. All our friends had more or less trouble with the Rebel authorities,

⁴⁴ Kitty Anderson, eldest daughter of Charles and Eliza Anderson, had been born in Ohio about 1842. She lived with her parents in Bexar County until the Civil War. NARS M653, Eighth Census, 1860, roll 1288, Texas, Bexar County.

or with the people. Dunlap was assaulted on account of some unguarded utterances, and French was in trouble all the time, and things looked very blue and discouraging. Though we were still invited to social gatherings, we did not move about with so much freedom, and were frequently warned about not expressing our sentiments too freely. I do not think that these warnings had any effect on us. We had become rather reckless and did not take the warnings always in good part, as they were generally intended.

Many troops had been gathered about San Antonio in anticipation of the expedition to New Mexico, and many of them came from the eastern parts of the state and were strangers to us, and had no more regard for us or appreciation of the peculiar circumstances under which we had been captured, than they had for other Yankees.

One night we were sitting in Frank's room on the lower floor, it was quite late, nearly one a.m., and we were sitting there talking over among ourselves the state of affairs, and wondering perhaps if our government had forgotten us, when we heard the clank of a sabre on the side-walks. It gradually approached our door and finally stopped and there was a knock. We of course wondered what could have caused a visit at that late hour, but called out "come in." The door opened slightly and someone asked if Lt. Bliss was in. I answered, yes, and said come in. The man declined, but asked me to come to the door, and I went. He then asked me to get my hat and come outside. I did so, and he led the way to [the] Callihan Building. It was a very bright moonlight night, and he went in under the outside stairs to the building, where there were a lot of boxes piled, and we sat on them in the shadow, so that we could not be seen.

As soon as we were there he turned to me and said, "Well, what have you been doing?" I replied, nothing, and he said, "Yes, you have, you have been talking or doing something." I assured him that I had not, in fact had not been down [the] street or with anyone for several days. He insisted on it, that I had been doing something wrong or indiscreet, and I finally got tired and asked him what he meant by accusing me in this manner, and he replied, "Why you are going to be hung." That was cheerful information, and I asked him how he knew, and he said he had just overheard three men talking about it, and told me what he had heard said. This man's name was [A.] Zander. He was a German, and had served five years in my company, and had been employed by me as a striker, or assistant about my house most of the time. He had been appointed a first lieutenant of artillery and was stationed in San Antonio. He was on this occasion officer of the day, and had on his sword and sash, and was in full uniform. He told me that I must be very careful, and not go out nights, for if they got hold of me in the night, they would certainly hang me; that I had many friends in San Antonio, and they would not dare to touch me in the daytime, but if they could get hold of me in the night, they would kill

me. He said that as long as his company was stationed there, he thought I was safe, and added, "They think I am a mighty good Rebel, but I think more of you and Maj. Smith than I do of the whole damned Confederacy." After advice to remain in the house nights and be very careful in my conduct, we separated.⁴⁵

I went to our room and told the other prisoners what had been told me, and we talked the matter over. I do not now remember what was said. Of course I would have been justified in leaving at once, for one of the conditions of our parole was that we should be protected. I said nothing about my plans to anyone, but I had a friend living some miles from San Antonio, and I told him that I might want a horse, saddle and bridle pretty badly some night, and would like to get one of his. He told me exactly where his own saddle-horse was tied in the stable, and where his saddle and equipments were, and it was understood that if I needed the outfit, I was to take it without notifying him, for he would certainly have been hung if it had been known that he assisted me to escape. I made all the preparations I could to get away very suddenly, and if I could have had a few minutes start in the night, I think I could have crossed the Rio Grande before they could have captured me, but it was a long ride of one hundred and seventy five miles through Indian country, and I did not want to take the chances without I was obliged to.

Just after this meeting with Zander, I received an anonymous letter asking me to be at the Post Office just after dark, as the writer had something of the utmost importance to communicate. The Post Office was very close to our house, and I went in answer to the call of our letter. I saw no one about the office, and entered, and was surprised to find Mr. Dewey the postmaster and Judge Devine; the latter was an Irishman and one of the Rebel Commissioners and was one of the rankest old Rebels in the whole country, and has always remained so to this day.⁴⁶ I of course knew that they had nothing to tell me, and asked for my mail and got out as soon as possible. They seemed

⁴⁵ Born about 1832, Lt. A. Zander was a member of Company A, Third Texas Infantry (sometimes known as Luckett's Regiment). Plagued by poor health, he received a ninety-day furlough in late 1862, followed by another leave in spring 1863. He apparently never returned to his unit. NARS M 331, Compiled Service Records, roll 134, Texas.

⁴⁶ E. C. Dewey, a farmer born in Ohio about 1823, was the only "Dewey" located in the 1860 census for Bexar County. He declared his estate to be valued at \$9,000. NARS M653, Eighth Census, 1860, roll 1288, Texas, Bexar County, San Antonio Post Office. Thomas J. Devine, who was born in Nova Scotia, the son of Irish immigrants, came to Texas with a law degree from Transylvania University in Kentucky in the early 1840s. Selected San Antonio City Attorney and District Judge, in 1861 he was also chosen to the Secession Convention, where he was appointed as one of the commissioners to negotiate with Bvt. Maj. Gen. David E. Twiggs to arrange for the removal of all Federal forces from the state. Rather than swear allegiance to the Federal government at the end of the war, Devine fled to Mexico, but upon returning to Texas, he was arrested and accused of treason, one of only three individuals to be so charged. Pardon without a trial, Devine died in San Antonio on March 16, 1890. The town of Devine was named in his honor. Yancey L. Russell, "Thomas Jefferson Devine," in Tyler, et al. (eds.), *The New Handbook of Texas*, II, 613.

astonished and confused when I appeared before them, and I was a little disturbed myself. After this warning, and my preparations, I went about just as I had previously done and heard no more about it. . . .

After Anderson escaped we became more discontented than ever, and very much disgusted that our government did not do something towards our release or exchange. We could not hear anything from Washington or from our families in the States, and we were becoming very much disheartened. Some time in December or January, Lts. Frank and Jones decided to leave San Antonio and go to Richmond to see if they could do something from there. They left and got to Richmond without much difficulty, but on their arrival they were arrested. Of course they had their paroles, which permitted them to go anywhere in the Southern Confederacy, but some charge was trumped up against them, and they were confined, but were released in two or three days and went to Washington.

Soon after they left San Antonio, Bomford, Van Horn, and myself, the only prisoners left of the original eleven, were ordered to Galveston as witnesses on the Rebel court that had been organized to try Capt. Mechling for allowing Anderson to escape and for losing the money he held for his men.

When we arrived at Galveston, which we did without adventure of any kind, we put up at a second class hotel to be out of the way, and immediately proceeded to the office of the district commander. I think his name was Gen. [Ebenezar B.] Nichols.⁴⁷ We had letters of introduction to him. We heard nothing from him for several days. One day as we were sitting in front of our house, a sergeant with a file of men came up and asked for us. We told him we were the persons he was in search of, and he informed us that Gen. Nichols desired to see us at his office immediately. We started and he followed some distance behind us with his pistol. We did not understand this performance and wondered why he should send a guard after us.

We went to his office and met him. He introduced himself and asked us to be seated. He then said that he had just received a telegram from the governor and thought it would interest us. He then took from his desk a telegram blank and read from it the following message, "It is a long time between drinks," at which we were greatly relieved, and before we were through laughing at the joke, a colored man came in with champagne punch, and we proceeded to enjoy it.

⁴⁷ Ebenezar B. Nichols was born at Cooperstown, New York, in 1814. He moved to Texas in 1838, becoming a dry goods merchant, banker, real estate investor, and one of the state's wealthiest men. A delegate to the Texas Secession Convention, Nichols was appointed colonel of the Ninth Texas Infantry, and commanded the military District (later Subdistrict) of Galveston from December 1861–May 1862. He died at Galveston in 1872. Eicher and Eicher, *Civil War High Commands*, 406; Julia Bezley, "Ebenezar B. Nichols," in Tyler, et al. (eds.), *The New Handbook of Texas*, IV, 1010.

Nichols was a Northern man, formerly of Albany, New York. He had gone South many years before and become very wealthy, and was perhaps worth a million dollars. Of course he stayed South, and was made a brigadier general, and was placed in command of that military district with his headquarters at Galveston. He was a splendid looking man, about fifty five years of age, with gray hair and whiskers, and had a fine good-natured face. He treated us magnificently, told us they had had detectives shadowing us ever since we had been in the city, and told some good jokes on members of our party, which he seemed to enjoy very much. He invited us to dinner that day, and we had as nice a one as I have ever eaten. We had green turtle with all the accompaniments.

Gen. [Paul O.] Hébert of Louisiana was at that time a general and military governor of Texas. He was a graduate of West Point, but had resigned many years before and had been governor of Louisiana.⁴⁸ He was in Galveston at that time, and on his staff as aide was "Dad" [George R.] Wilson, a classmate of mine at the Point. He had come South and married and remained there, though he was from Pennsylvania.⁴⁹ He also treated us very kindly and took us over to the observatory, and let us look through the large telescope at the blockading fleet. The vessels of the fleet were several miles off, but it was a great pleasure to look at the flag even at that distance.

We learned more about the North and how things were progressing from Nichols and Wilson than we heard in six months in San Antonio. We were summoned down there by Mechling for his defense, but were not called before the court. He was found guilty of the charges and dismissed, and went to South America, where I hope he has not been robbed as many times as he was in Texas.

On Saturday, after it was known that we would not be needed by the court, Gen. Nichols invited us to go to his ranch on Buffalo Bayou, and we went, accompanied by Nichols and Hébert. He had a beautiful summer residence, and we met Mrs. Nichols and the other members of the family. Sunday afternoon he asked me if I did not want to take a sail in a small

⁴⁸ Born in Louisiana in 1818, Paul Octave Hébert graduated first in his West Point class of 1840. He secured a brevet promotion to colonel for his bravery at Molino del Rey. Returning to civilian life, he was elected governor of Louisiana in 1852. Commissioned a brigadier general in the Confederate army, Hébert was appointed commander of the Department of Texas, but was widely criticized for not having done more to prevent the Federal capture of New Orleans in October 1862. He fought in the battle of Milliken's Bend, Louisiana, but spent most of the war administering various geographical commands. Returning to engineering and state politics, Hébert died in 1880. Heidler and Heidler, "Paul Octave Hébert," in David S. Heidler and Jeanne T. Heidler, *Encyclopedia of the American Civil War: A Political, Social, and Military History* (5 vols.; Santa Barbara, Calif.: ABC-Clío, 2000), II, 960–961; Boatner, *Civil War Dictionary*, 391.

⁴⁹ George R. Wilson spent most of the war in Texas in a variety of staff positions, eventually achieving the rank of major. NARS, M331, Compiled Service Records of Confederate Generals and Staff Officers and Non-Regimental Enlisted Men, roll 270.

boat that was anchored in the bayou, and I very gladly went. There was very little wind, but I sailed around or drifted for some time. When I went to the boat he sent a slave with a bottle of champagne in a pail of ice and a tumbler, and told me to sail and enjoy myself, and I did. I ran over to the opposite side of the bayou from the house and tacked, and then laid back for a run down the bayou to ruminate. I had been there some time, when the servant came down and called me to dinner. I put the helm down, but was surprised that the boat did not turn. I tried the helm both ways, but without success, and finally discovered that I was aground, and had been for half-an-hour perhaps and had not known it. Nichols thought it a great kind of joke, and I did not hear the last of it while I was there. They had to send a negro over in a small boat and tow me across the bayou to the dock. There was quite a large party at the dinner, which was an elegant one, and we had a delightful afternoon and evening. They talked about affairs in the States almost as freely as they would if we had been Rebels.

The next morning we had to leave at daylight and Gen. Nichols came in with a tray full of champagne cocktails before we were out of bed. It snowed during the night, for almost the only time on record I guess, and Nichols came to our room which was in another house in his slippers, and got them full of snow. I think it was the only time he had ever seen snow on the ground in the many years that he had lived there.

When we thanked Nichols for his kindness, he told us to never mind that, but if we ever caught any poor devil of a Rebel and had him a prisoner to treat him as well as he had us. I did get six or eight in one battle, and as they went by my tent to go to prison, I stopped them and gave them all a drink of liquor and told them if they ever got back to Texas and saw Gen. Nichols to tell him that I had not forgotten him, but had given them a drink in his honor. . . .

Soon after our visit to the Nichols's residence, we returned to San Antonio and the dreary and monotonous life there. In the latter part of the summer, or perhaps in September, Gen. Sibley, the inventor of the tent that bears his name, commenced to concentrate troops on the Salado River near San Antonio for the purpose of an expedition into New Mexico. Our government had done very little, if anything, towards putting New Mexico in a condition to resist an invasion, and the capture of that country seemed to be a very easy military feat.

Gen. Sibley was a major in our service, had resigned, made a brigadier general, and placed in command of the troops for this expedition. I think they had between two and three thousand men, mostly Texans, and all mounted. They also had some artillery. They were short of proper arms for so large a command, as there had already been many soldiers sent from Texas armed with the rifles etc. that they had captured in the spring or that had been turned over to them at the time of Twiggs's surrender.

When these troops were ready to start, they were formed on the Main

Plaza in San Antonio and reviewed by Sibley. One or more companies, composed almost entirely of Mexicans, were armed with pikes. In addressing these men, Sibley said that he was sorry that he could not give them better arms to start with, but as soon as they met the enemy he would arm them with the best guns that the United States could furnish. I was on the balcony overlooking the Plaza and I remember that I thought at the time that he would find a little different state of affairs in New Mexico from what had existed in Texas at the outbreak. I also remember our mortification when we heard some months later that they had captured Fort Fillmore with nearly all its garrison, and had secured arms and ammunition for a long campaign.⁵⁰

I remember a young Texan who used to come to our room frequently. He was not much of a Rebel at that time, and used to talk freely about the state of the country. He finally volunteered as an aide to Sibley, and told us that he did not want to take part in any fight against the North, but he thought it would be such a fine chance to see the country that he would go with Sibley; they would capture New Mexico, and then go across country and take St. Louis, and return to San Antonio by way of the Mississippi River. When he started, he had no doubt but what that programme would be carried out.

After the loss of Fort Fillmore, and the Rebels had everything their own way for some weeks, Gen. [E. R. S.] Canby received orders to oppose the Rebels, and he soon made it very hot for them, and eventually destroyed the command. Many of them were killed or captured, and the few that got back to San Antonio were in a sorry plight. They had lost their transportation, and what few wagons they had were drawn by oxen or mules, and sometimes by both, and they were also destroyed as an army.⁵¹

[John D.] Burgess of Presidio del Norte had contracted to furnish his train as transportation and went with them. It was the finest train I ever saw, and he lost it all. The Rebel government, I believe, paid him fifty thousand dollars for it in Confederate scrip.

During the first nine months of the war, the Rebels were successful almost everywhere and were in good spirits, but they had learned that the road to successful rebellion was a hard one to travel, and that the end was a long way off. San Antonio was as gay as ever, and there were parties and

⁵⁰ The army had established Fort Fillmore, located about six miles south of Mesilla, New Mexico, in 1851. Seeking to create a Confederate empire in the west, Lt. Col. John R. Baylor gathered 258 men at Fort Bliss, Texas, and moved to threaten Fort Fillmore in July 1861. Nearly four hundred Federals, led by Maj. Isaac Lynde, engaged the Confederates in a sharp skirmish at Mesilla on the 25th. Abandoning Fillmore on the 27th, demoralized Union units quickly disintegrated, and Lynde surrendered unconditionally. Confederate troops captured hundreds of rifles, ample ammunition, and large quartermaster stores. On August 1, Baylor declared the region to be under Confederate control, established a new Territory of Arizona, and installed himself as governor. Frazier, *Blood and Treasure*, 58–61.

⁵¹ Following his army's victory at Val Verde on February 21, 1862, Sibley pushed up the Rio Grande toward Santa Fe and Fort Union. Fighting at Glorieta Pass on March 28 was inconclusive, but, in a separate action, Union troops destroyed the Confederate supply train. Sibley's army then disintegrated as an effective fighting force. *Ibid.*, 137–274.

entertainments of some kind almost every night. The casino built by a German society was the only hall of any size in San Antonio, and most of the large entertainments were given there. I remember on one occasion they had a tableaux and represented the Confederate States. They had thirteen young ladies, all very beautiful, dressed in appropriate costumes, each representing a state. Miss Aglae Phillips, the daughter of our landlady, represented Louisiana, and the affair was a great success and was loudly applauded.

A short time before the performance, while they were preparing for it, a man asked me to loan him my uniform coat, as he was to take part in it. I told him he could have it, but soon learned that he was to represent Commander [Charles] Wilkes in the *Trent* affair, when [James M.] Mason and [John] Slidell were captured,⁵² and that a young lady representing Miss Mason or Miss Slidell was to slap his face, and I concluded that would not be pleasant even by proxy, and decided not to let him have the coat; but he never called for it, probably thought it would not be the proper thing to do. We were present at the tableaux by invitation, but when that scene was to be enacted, we were notified, and all left the room, and did not return. I do not know that there was any young lady on board the *Trent*, but according to their version, a daughter of one of the principals slapped the officer's face and spat on his coat.

Some time in February '62, we were made happy by an order to proceed to Richmond, there to be exchanged. We were to travel with all diligence, as the officers for whom we were to be exchanged were in Richmond waiting for us. It did not take us long to get ready and bid our friends good bye. The parting from our friends in San Antonio was very sad. We did not have a great many friends, but those we had were true ones, and it seemed almost like starting out from home. The chances were very slight that we should ever meet those we parted from again, and all felt the sadness of the occasion. I received a token of remembrance in the shape of a buckskin tobacco bag, beautifully worked with my initials, and though I lost it on that trip, it was restored to me, and I kept it for many years.

As we went down Main Street the morning we left San Antonio, George Horner who kept a saloon came out to the stage and gave us a splendid basket of lunch, enough to last us to the coast, and he was the only man in the city who did anything of the kind, and he had our hearty thanks, and if occasion had ever offered itself, he might have been more substantially repaid.⁵³

⁵² On November 8, 1861, the USS *San Jacinto*, commanded by Charles Wilkes, stopped the British steamer *Trent* during its regular run from Havana. Wilkes seized James Mason and John Slidell, the Confederacy's ministers to England and France, respectively, as "contraband of war." Averting an international crisis, the Lincoln administration released Mason and Slidell seven weeks later, on the grounds that Wilkes had acted without instructions from his government. See Norman B. Ferris, *The Trent Affair: A Diplomatic Crisis* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1977).

⁵³ A native of Baden born about 1835, George Horner claimed an estate of \$2,000 in the 1860 census. NARS M653, Eighth Census, 1860, Roll 1288, Texas, Bexar County, San Antonio.



Exchanged as a prisoner of war in April 1862, Bliss took command of the Seventh Rhode Island Infantry, leading the unit through Civil War battles at Fredericksburg, Vicksburg, and Petersburg and the battle of the Crater. For gallantry at Fredericksburg he received the Congressional Medal of Honor.

After a post-war stint as a Freedman's Bureau assistant commissioner and military district commander at Chester, South Carolina, in August 1867 Bliss served as a major of two black soldier regiments, first the Thirty-ninth Infantry, then the Twenty-fifth Infantry, which he brought to Texas in June 1870. Over the next six years on the Texas frontier Bliss commanded Fort Duncan, where he created the Seminole-Negro Indian Scouts; Fort Stockton; Camp Concordia; Fort Bliss; and finally Fort Davis, where his narrative ends in 1876.

Subsequently Bliss served at Fort Clark and Fort Ringgold, Texas, as well as at Kansas and New Mexico posts, until he returned in 1895 to command the Department of Texas until his retirement in May, 1897. Maj. Gen. (Retired) Zenas Randall Bliss died on January 2, 1900, in Providence Hospital, Washington, D.C., at the age of sixty-five. He is buried in Arlington National Cemetery.