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THE SAN JACINTO CAMPAIGN.

HUGENE C. BARKER.

[INTRODUCTION: In this paper little claim is made to originality of matter. I have been able to find but few documents bearing directly upon the San Jacinto campaign that were unknown to others who have handled the subject,—and those few are not of great importance. But from all of the available material I have attempted to construct a clear and absolutely unpartisan narrative, a task which can hardly be said to have been accomplished with any degree of success as yet by any historian save Bancroft. To this end, I have confined myself strictly to a narration of facts, avoiding—so far as is consistent with an intelligent treatment of the subject—any expression of personal opinion or discussion. And where, upon disputed points, it has been necessary to choose between conflicting statements, I have endeavored to present in the notes both sides of the question, in order that the reader may draw his own conclusions.

A word is necessary concerning the material in English for a history of this campaign. Though there is a good deal, very little of it is contemporaneous, Houston's letters, published in the appendix to Yoakum's *History*

hand, in charge of the sick, and of heavy, immovable baggage, was probability of conflict in which they must oppose more than thrice their number, with no chance to attack or even to change position for defense, and more than a double chance to be overpowered, crushed, and routed. * * * Sympathy for the sick and the importance of protecting the ammunition, with the fear that the guard could not be made strong enough, caused them to consent to remain.

On the same day, the main army proceeded down the bayou. On the 20th, some men that had been left sick at Donoho's came up, making our number about 200, including the sick. On the night of the 20th, as we confidently expected, Cos's division, six hundred strong, entered Harrisburg. * * * Having received an express from Santa Anna, Cos decamped, and marched with his division down the bayou. * * *

Respectfully and truly yours,

W. P. ZUBER.

XI.

Burning of Vince's Bridge.

[This letter was published in the *Texas Almanac*, 1861, 55-58. The writer says the idea of destroying Vince's bridge originated with John Coker, and that Deaf Smith proposed it to Houston, and secured permission to destroy the bridge.]

SAN ANTONIO, January 14, 1858.

Hon. Jesse Grimes: * * *

On the morning of the 21st of April, 1836, Captain Carnes' cavalry company, commonly called Deaf Smith's Spy Company, were drawn up in line on the edge of Gen. Houston's position. As well as I recollect, we were between thirty and forty strong. * * * While sitting in our saddles, John Coker, my left file-leader, made the following remark, and the suggestions following:

"Boys, * * * I believe it would be a good idea to go and burn that bridge, so as not only to impede the advance of reinforcements of the enemy, but it will cut off all chance of retreat of either party."

The proposition was seconded by the whole company, when Deaf Smith proposed to go and see the General, and get his approval of the enterprise. * * * Smith told us Houston asked him: "Can you do it without being cut to pieces by the Mexican cavalry?" Smith said that he replied to Houston: "Give me six men, and I will try." * * *

He said: "I want six men. I am going to burn the bridge." * * * I will here mention the names of all who joined Deaf Smith in the enterprise; * * * Deaf Smith, Denmore Rives, John Coker, Y. P. Alsbury, — Rainwater, John Garner, — Lapham. * * *

In a few minutes the bridge was in flames. If I recollect aright, it was built of cedar. * * *

Respectfully and truly yours,

Y. P. ALSBURY.

I, John Coker, of the county of Bexar, State of Texas, have no hesitation in stating that the material facts in the preceding narrative are correct.

Signed this 7th day of January, 1858.

JOHN COKER.