

BAYLOR'S CAMPAIGN

The Arizona Territory (which encompassed the present states of New Mexico and Arizona) was sympathetic to the Confederacy and in convention in 1861 formally declared that the territory was part of the Confederacy. The territory asserted that all its problems (especially Apache depredations) were due to neglect by the U.S. government. While of little value to the Confederacy, Arizona was essential because it connected Texas to southern California with its strongly pro-Confederate population, and the possibility of making the Confederacy an ocean to ocean nation. Confederate Lieutenant-Colonel John Baylor embarked on the "Arizona Campaign" in June 1861 utilizing 350 Texas Mounted Rifles stationed at Fort Bliss. The balance of his troops remained at Fort Bliss to protect the fortification. The invasion route was up the Rio Grande Valley and its initial target was Fort Fillmore in present Mesilla, New Mexico (just south of the present day city of Las Cruces). Fort Fillmore was garrisoned by 700 members of companies A, B, D, E, G, I and K of the 7th U.S. infantry under command of Major Isaac Lynde, a 34 year veteran of infantry service. Companies C, F and H were en route to Fort Fillmore from Fort Craig to the North and Fort Buchanan to the West in present day Arizona. Vastly outnumbering the Texans, Lynde was supremely confident of victory and ordered the garrison to attack the Confederates in Mesilla on July 25th 1861. But after losing 4 killed and 7 wounded in the Battle of Mesilla, Lynde withdrew. He had Fort Fillmore burned and commenced a 150 mile retreat of his troops to Fort Stanton. The Texans in pursuit first encountered 200 troops of Lynde's rear guard who had lived up to the 7th Infantry tradition of being a unit with an alcohol problem. The Federal troops had filled their canteens with whiskey prior to leaving Fort Fillmore and were found by the Texans strung out along the trail, dehydrated and too drunk to walk, much less fight and barely able to comprehend their capture and transport back to Mesilla by wagon.

The Texans reached Lynde's main force and demanded surrender even though they were outnumbered by the Federal troops. Federal officers begged Lynde to attack and defend their honor. Lynde instead choose to surrender. Three days later, the Federal prisoners were returned to Las Cruces where they were paroled and commenced a 300 mile march to Fort Union where they were immediately put to work to repulse the invasion.

Upon learning of the fall of Fort Fillmore and Lynde's surrender, commanding officer B.S. Roberts of Fort Stanton ordered the forts abandonment and destruction with its supplies by fire. A storm came in behind the retreating forces which put the fire out. This allowed the Mescalero Apaches to salvage all that the semi-destroyed fort had to offer. Upon their arrival, the Confederates were attacked by the Apaches and while able to take the fort, were unable to control the Apaches and abandoned the fort.

Baylor issued the following proclamation to the people of the Territory of Arizona on August 1, 1861: "The social and political condition of Arizona being little short of general anarchy, and the people being literally destitute of law, order and protection, the said territory, from the date hereof, is hereby declared temporarily organized as a military government until such time as congress shall otherwise provide. I, John Baylor, Lieutenant-Colonel, commanding the Confederate army in the territory of Arizona, hereby take possession of said territory in the name and on behalf of the Confederate States of America. For all purposes herein

specified, and until otherwise decreed or provided the Territory of Arizona shall comprise all of that portion of New Mexico lying below the 34th parallel of North latitude."

Baylor designated Mesilla the capital, organized a military government, and appointed himself governor. He ordered the evacuation and destruction of Forts Buchanan and Breckenridge. This action enabled the Apaches to take repossession of the area and start their depredations anew. The people of Arizona subsequently elected Granville Oury to the Confederate congress in Richmond and on February 14, 1862 Jefferson Davis issued a proclamation accepting the Confederate Territory of Arizona.

The following are the official Confederate Battle and Skirmish Reports of Baylor and his subordinates as researched by Bill Manley:

July 25-27, 1861 - Skirmish at Mesilla

Report of Lieut. Col. John R. Baylor, (C. S. Army, of the skirmish at Mesilla, and the surrender of Union troops at San Augustine Springs, and subsequent operations.

PICACHO, MESILLA VALLEY, Arizona, August 3, 1861.

SIR: I have the honor to report that I had an engagement with the U.S. forces, numbering over 500 cavalry and infantry with four pieces of artillery, at Mesilla, on the evening of the 25th of July, in which the enemy were repulsed with a loss of 3 killed and 7 wounded.

On the 27th, I captured at San Augustine Springs the entire command of the enemy under Major Lynde, consisting of eight companies of infantry, three of Mounted Rifles, with four pieces of artillery, together with all their transportation, arms, ammunition, commissary and quartermaster's stores, all of which, with Fort Fillmore, are now in my possession.

Too much praise cannot be given to the officers and soldiers under my command, and especially to Captain Hardeman and company, who were the only part of the command engaged with the enemy.

I have thought proper to release upon parole the entire command of officers and men, as I could not, with less than 300 men, guard over 600 and meet another force of 240 of the enemy that is looked for daily.

I have the honor to be, respectfully,

John R. Baylor,
Lieut. Col., Comdr.. Second Regiment Mounted Rifles, C.S.A.

HEADQUARTERS, Dona Ana, Ariz, September 21, 1861.

SIR: I have the honor to submit the following report of the engagement at Mesilla on the 25th of July, the capture of the United States forces the day after the next succeeding at San Augustine Springs, in the Organ Mountains, Territory of Arizona, and of my operations in the Territory up to the present time:

On assuming at Fort Bliss I ascertained that the United States forces were concentrating in force at Fort Fillmore, and the proximity of that post I supposed that the object of the enemy was to attack the forces under my command at Fort Bliss. I was satisfied that if I permitted them to concentrate, my command was too weak to maintain my position. I therefore determined to attack the enemy in detail, and prevent, if possible, the contemplated concentration. For that purpose I sent a detachment, under Major Waller, to reconnoiter Fort Fillmore and see the position of the enemy pickets, and also whether the fort could be approached without discovery. The report of Major Waller satisfied me that I could easily gain a position between the fort and the river (Rio Grande), and cut off the animals as they went for water, then the enemy would have to attack me in a strong position, thus rendering the protection afforded by the fort of no use. I accordingly took up the line of march in the night of the 23rd of July with 258 men, and in the night of the 24th succeeded in taking a position on the river near Fort Fillmore. The surprise of the enemy would have been complete except for the desertion of a private from Capt. T. T. Teel's company who reported to Major Lynde our strength and position. The long roll call was distinctly heard, which apprised us that our approach was known to the enemy.

On the morning of the 25th I determined to occupy Mesilla, and prevent, if possible, the enemy from getting a position there, as it was one that would be easily held, and would enable them to hold the country. I reached Mesilla in the afternoon of the 25th and was soon informed that the enemy were marching to attack us. I posted my men in position and awaited the arrival of the enemy. At about 5 o'clock I discovered their cavalry approaching the town by the main road, and soon after the infantry came up in sight, bringing with them three howitzers. They formed within 300 yards, and were, as near as I could tell, about 600 strong. A flag was sent in to demand the "unconditional and immediate surrender of the Texas forces," to which I answered that "we would fight first, and surrender afterward," the answer was followed by the enemy opening on us with their howitzers. After four or five rounds of bombs, grape, and canister, the cavalry formed and marched up within 250 yards, preparatory to making a charge. Captain Hardeman's company, being in position nearest the enemy was ordered to open on them with his front rank, to see if they were within range of our guns. The fire was well directed and proved effective, killing 4 of the enemy and wounding 7. The cavalry was thrown into confusion and retreated hastily, running over the infantry. In a few moments the enemy were marching back in the direction of their fort, but supposing it to be a faint, intended to draw me from my position, I did not pursue them, but kept my position until next morning, the 26th, expecting that they would attack us under cover of night.

The enemy not appearing, I sent my spies to reconnoiter, and discover, if possible, their movements. The spies reported the enemy at work at the fort making breastworks, and evidently preparing to defend themselves.

Upon hearing this, I sent express to Fort Bliss, ordering up artillery to attack the fort on the arrival of my reinforcements

On the morning of the 27th, a little after daylight, my spies reported a column of dust seen in the direction of the Organ Mountains, distant 15 miles, on the Fort Stanton road. I could from the top of a house with a glass the movements of the enemy. I immediately ordered the command to saddle and mount, for the purpose of intercepting them at San Augustine Pass. I had reached the river, distant 1 mile, when I received intelligence that a messenger had arrived from the fort, and stated that the enemy had fired the buildings, that it had been extinguished, and but little had been destroyed. I at once ordered Major Waller to take a detachment of men and go to the fort, and save, if possible, the property therein, and to leave enough men to guard the post, and then to overtake me as soon as possible. On reaching the foot of the mountain, distant 15 miles, I could see the rear of the enemy, composed chiefly of famished stragglers, endeavoring to make their way to water. I disarmed and collected a number of them, and finding most of them dying of thirst, we gave them water we had, and were compelled ourselves to go to a spring in the mountain for water. Lieutenant Baylor and Mr. Barnes, a citizen of Las Cruces, who acted as a guide, found 24 of the enemy at the spring, who had from exhaustion gone to sleep, whom they captured.

After getting water for my men I started in pursuit of the enemy, who had passed through San Augustine Pass. I was delayed for some time waiting for Major Waller, who, mistaking my orders, had carried with him the whole command, except Captain Hardeman's company, to Fort Fillmore. So soon as they joined me I started in pursuit, and found the enemy's cavalry drawn up to cover the retreat through the pass. These I charged with Captain Hardeman's company. They retreated in haste, leaving behind their wagons and artillery and all their supplies. Upon gaining the summit of the Pass, a plain view of the road to San Augustine Springs was presented. The road for 5 miles was lined with the fainting, famished soldiers, who threw down their arms as we passed and begged for water. At the springs the enemy had drawn up in line of battle some 200 or 300 strong. I ordered Major Waller to charge with Captain Hardeman's company until he reached the end of straggling soldiers, then to form and cut them off from the main body. I followed, disarming the enemy, and as fast as our jaded horses would go. On reaching Captain Hardeman's company, who were formed, I saw Major Waller and Captain Hardeman riding into the enemy's lines. I was in a few moments sent for by Major Lynde, who asked upon what terms I would allow him to surrender. I replied that the surrender must be unconditional. To this Major Lynde assented, asking that property should be respected. The articles of capitulation were signed, and the order given for the enemy to stack arms.

Major Lynde's command was composed of eight companies of infantry and four of cavalry, with four pieces of artillery, the whole numbering nearly 700 men. My own force at the surrender was less than 200. I regret to report that the regimental colors were burned by the enemy to avoid surrendering them.

I was delayed at the place of surrender for two days on account of the condition of the enemy and the want of transportation. As soon as possible I marched them to Las Cruces and there paroled them, as I was informed that Captain Moore was enroute for Fort Fillmore, from Fort Buchanan, with 250 men. I could not guard the

prisoners I had and meet the coming forces. Being desirous, to, to afflict the enemy in every way, I considered that it was much better for them to bear the expense of finding the prisoners than for me to do so.

After getting rid of the prisoners, I immediately selected a strong position near the village of Picacho to await the arrival of Captain Moore's command. Here I was joined by Brig. Gen A. S. Johnston, with a party of officers of the U.S. Army, who had resigned and were en route for Richmond, Va., also a party of Californians, under Capt. Alonzo Ridley. I tendered to Brigadier- General Johnston the command of my forces, believing that the best interest of the service required that I should relinquish the command to an officer of his rank and distinguished ability, which he did me the honor to accept, and remained in command until there was no further necessity for his services. He sent Captain Coopwood's spy company to meet the enemy and send him word where they were, and to watch their movements and prevent any communications with them. The spies discovered them on the Miembres, and reported them moving carelessly, evidently not suspecting danger. On the evening of the 6th of August an express reached Captain Moore from Fort Craig, telling him of the defeat of Major Lynde's command, and ordering him to burn up his transportation and supplies, and to make his escape to that place. This was done. The jaded condition of our animals alone prevented us from capturing them.

The accompanying abstracts of quartermaster's subsistence, medical, and ordnance stores will show but a part of the property captured, much of it having been stolen and destroyed while I was awaiting the enemy at Picacho and some since I left the command to Major Waller. A number of muster rolls are lost, the remainder only showing about half of the prisoners captured, and the correspondence with the commanding officer in reference to his regimental colors was lost. I regret the loss of these papers, but in the hurry and excitement it was unavoidable. I can only give the number of the enemy as it was reported to me by the officers captured.

On the 10th of August an express reached me from Fort Stanton, stating that the news of the capture of Major Lynde's command had created a stampede among the United States troops, who hastily abandoned the fort after having destroyed a considerable portion of their supplies and Government property of all kinds, and all would have been destroyed but for a storm of rain, which extinguished the fire intended by the enemy to destroy the fort. The few citizens living near the fort took possession of it, and saved a valuable lot of quartermaster's and commissary stores. The Mexicans and Indians in large numbers demanded the right to pillage the fort, which was granted. The citizens being too weak to resist, and not knowing that they would get aid from me or not, were forced to abandon the fort to the Mexicans and Indians. Captain Walker's company, on receipt of the express from Fort Stanton, was ordered to that post, and he succeeded in recovering a portion of the property stolen. For particulars of his operations I refer you to his report. I sent a train to bring from Fort Stanton all the property and stores of value. The invoices will acquaint you with the property recovered from the post. I will mention, among other things, four pieces of artillery, two of which are uninjured and two so much injured as to be of no use. Believing that the interest of Arizona demanded imperatively some form of government, I issued my proclamation, of date 1st August, 1861, to the people, a copy of which I forward to you.

I cannot conclude this report without alluding to the courage, fortitude, and patriotism of the officers and

soldiers of my command and to those citizens who participated with us, all did nobly their part. I cannot make distinction between men so willing and ready to do their whole duty. To the courage of my officers and men the country is indebted for the success of our arms and the acquisition of a Territory valuable in many respects.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JOHN R. BAYLOR,

Lieut. Col., Comdg, C. S. Forces in Arizona

CAPT. T. A. WASHINGTON,

Asst. Adjt. Gen., C. S. Army, San Antonio, Tex.

August 2, 1861.—Fort Stanton, N. Mex., Abandoned by Union Troops

Report of Lieut. Col. John R. Baylor, C. S. Army.

SIR: I regret to report that the United States troops, consisting of four companies—two of cavalry and two infantry—that were en route from Fort Buchanan to Fort Fillmore, succeeded by ignominious flight in making their escape. On the night of the 7th instant an express reached them from Fort Craig, when they immediately burned all their transportation and supplies, and fled in great disorder and haste, saving nothing but their arms and animals.

By express from Fort Stanton I learn that upon the receipt of the news that Major Lynde had surrendered, Colonel Roberts, in command of that post, fled in haste, leaving the post on fire, which was extinguished by a storm of rain. Most of the commissary and quartermaster's supplies were saved and a battery. On the receipt of this intelligence I sent Captain Walker's company to occupy Stanton, and will send a train for the commissary and quartermaster's stores, leaving only a two months' supply for the troops now there. The families there were at the mercy of Indians and Mexicans, and I thought it proper to garrison the post, at least until I could learn the wishes of the Government. I have also established a Provisional Government for the Territory of Arizona, and made appointments to fill the offices necessary to enforce the laws. I have proclaimed myself the governor, have authorized the raising of four companies to hold the Territory and afford protection to the citizens, and extended the limits of the Territory to the parallel of 36 degrees 30 minutes thence due west to the Colorado, and down that stream to its mouth.

The vast mineral resources of Arizona, in addition to its affording an outlet to the Pacific, make its acquisition a matter of some importance to our government, and now that I have taken possession of the Territory, I trust a force sufficient to occupy and hold it will be sent by the government, under some competent man.

I urge acceptance of the companies I have raised, as they are composed of the very best material, and are invaluable as soldiers. Captain Coopwood's company has been of great service to me, as spies cannot be supplied.

I have acted in all matters relating to the acquisition of Arizona entirely upon my own responsibility, and can only refer the matter, through you, for approval of the government.

Inventories of all property captured from the Army will be sent to you as early as possible. I regret to say that a good deal has been stolen by both prisoners and Mexicans, but in the excitement of the time I could not avoid such acts, my time being occupied with other matters. The arms and ammunitions are valuable, and many that are broken and injured by the enemy can be repaired. I will send down to the arsenal by the first opportunity, the artillery (twelve pieces) can be used by mounting them again, as no damage was done to the guns except spiking them.

I cannot conclude without alluding to the manner in which my men have conducted themselves in this short campaign. They have endured hunger and fatigue without complaint, and for a week did not eat more than a meal in twenty-four hours. For four days they did not unsaddle their horses, and during the whole time behaved worthy of veterans.

Yours, very respectfully,
JOHN R. BAYLOR, Lieut. Col., Comdg.
Second Reg't Texas Mounted Rifles

General EARL VANDORN,
Commanding Department of Texas

SEPTEMBER 25, 26, 1861.— Skirmish at Canada Alamosa (25) and near Fort Thorn, N. Mex. (26th).
Report of Capt. Bethel Coopwood, Confederate Forces Dona Ana, Ariz., September 29, 1861

SIR: In obedience to your order of date September 18, 1861, I started from Camp Robledo on the 22nd instant to make a reconnaissance of the country around Fort Craig with a detachment of 112 men, including officers, detailed from Captain Pyron's company, B, and Captain Stafford's company, E, Second Texas Mounted Rifles, and my spy company, as shown by lists from the different companies, hereto annexed; also one man, the Rev. William J Joyce, of Captain Hardeman's company, A, Second Texas Mounted Rifles.

Having obtained reliable information that a company of U.S. volunteers had started from Fort Craig to occupy the town of Alamosa, 35 miles from Fort Craig, I marched with all precaution to that place, and on the morning of the 25th instant succeeded in getting between that place and Craig without being discovered. I immediately marched my force into town, and after some skirmishing captured Capt. J. H. Minks, Second Lieut. Metiáze Medina, and 23 privates and non-commissioned officers. In the skirmish 4 of the enemy were killed and 6 wounded. The remainder of Capt. Minks' company fled early in the action, and escaped by crossing the river and taking to the mountains.

In the camp of Capt. Minks I found an amount of public property, and immediately appointed Lieutenant Poore to take charge of the same; and the duplicate of his inventory, hereto annexed, exhibits the amount of property taken, except for four Sibley tents and a number of saddles and other articles of small value, which were burned by my order, not having transportation for the same. Not having transportation for the prisoners, I administered to 22 of them a strong oath, binding them not to take up arms against the Confederate States during this war unless exchanged, & c., and then set them at liberty without arms; but I held Capt Minks and Lieutenant Medina and one sargeant as prisoners, and delivered them to you to abide your order.

From Alamosa I marched along the river road with the property taken to the place known as E Company Grove, and encamped for the night. On the morning of the 27th, while at breakfast, I was informed that my pickets were running into camp, and, rising to my feet, I saw the enemy pursuing them. In less than ten minutes my camp was surrounded by U.S. troops, numbering about 190. None of the ordinary ceremonies of attack were performed. There being no misunderstanding, we at once commenced business. The firing commenced at 7 o'clock and ended at 11 a.m. The enemy began to retreat before 11, and about that hour fled from the field. I lost 2 men killed, and had 2 severely wounded, each in the arm, besides 6 others slightly wounded, all of which will more fully appear from the list hereto annexed. The enemy removed their dead and wounded as they retreated, so as to evade a discovery of their losses; but, from the number of horses led away with bodies lashed across them, there were 12 or 13 killed, but the number of their wounded could not be ascertain.

The principal portion of the battle was fought with the enemy's force formed in two lines, forming the angle of a square, and my forces formed the same way as theirs, my lines being much shorter. One of my lines was composed of the detachment from Captain Pyron's company and a portion of the detachment from Captain Stafford's company, under the immediate command of Lieutenant Poore, Sergeant O'Grady and Sergeant Browne. My left line was composed of the detachment from my company and a part of the detachment from Captain Stafford's company. This line was under the immediate command of Lieutenant Sutherland, being divided into two platoons, one led by Sergeant Coulter, and the other by Private Tevis, who was named for the special occasion.

I remained upon the field till 10 o'clock a.m. the next day, but was prepared to receive another attack should the enemy return re- enforced. In relation to the men and officers under me I would say to you sir, that I witnessed such a display of manly courage and perfect order during my experience in the wars. Each officer and man conducted himself as though he thought the destinies of himself and his country were depending upon his action on that occasion. The wounded would not even utter a cry, lest it would be injurious to the cause. A remarkable instance of this was displayed in the case of Sergeant O' Grady. After being severely wounded, and after having fallen to the ground from loss of blood, he continued to cheer his men and encourage them to fight, telling them not to cease firing until they had avenged his blood. This kind of courage was also displayed by others whose wounds were not so severe. Sergeant Quinn, Sergeant Robinson, and Antonio Lambert, after having each received a wound, continued to fight, if possible, with more courage and determination. The officers and men paid strict attention to every order, and acted more like veteran troops than volunteers. I cannot with words express the esteem I have for all who were with me. Nothing short of witnessing a similar occasion can impress you with an idea of the value of such troops and the credit due them for what they have already done. I herewith

annex a list of the names of all who were with me, that you may know that number of men by name who did not flinch under the most trying circumstances.

Regretting much that some of my esteemed fellow soldiers have suffered the fate of war on this scout, I most respectfully submit to you this report of the same.

I am, sir, your most obedient servant,

BETHEL COOPWOOD, Capt., Commanding Scout
Lieut. Col JOHN R. BAYLOR.