

New Mexico Historical Review

Volume 21 | Number 3

Article 5

7-1-1946

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Recommended Citation

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A DIARY OF KIT CARSON'S NAVAHO CAMPAIGN,
1863-1864

Edited by *RAYMOND E. LINDGREN

THE Navaho campaign, one of Kit Carson's most famous accomplishments, is probably the first introduction of the use of scorched-earth tactics in Southwestern Indian warfare. In pursuit of orders from General James H. Carleton, commanding officer of the Department, Kit Carson with his command of First New Mexico Volunteers during the summer and fall of 1863 ravaged the Navaho country and left the Indians only the defense of the famous Canyon de Chelly.

Kit Carson's strategy consisted of killing as many sheep, horses, mules, and cattle as possible and also to destroy all standing corn. It was proposed to starve the Indians and force them to surrender. Prices as high as twenty dollars per horse was given for the purpose of encouraging Indian groups hostile to the Navahos to join in the quest.

The campaign began in July when Kit Carson established Fort Canby and the base supply at Fort Defiance. In August he moved into the Navaho country by first making a circle in the direction of the Little Colorado and then swinging northward to the Canyon de Chelly, finally to return to Fort Defiance on August 31, 1863. In October a second attempt was made to enter the famous Canyon de Chelly, but Carson did not dare "beard the lion in his den." It was decided then that a winter campaign was necessary and this proved to be the final blow to the Navaho hope of isolation. In January, 1864, a considerable force went to the Canyon de Chelly under the command of Carson and this time a detachment under Captain Albert H. Pfeiffer entered the canyon at the upper end and emerged at the base camp to greet Carson upon his arrival there. During the time that Captain Pfeiffer was in the canyon Carson suf-

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ferred great anxiety and for a while gave up the detachment as lost. He was greatly surprised to find Captain Pfeiffer in the base camp and the whole canyon traversed. Later Major Asa B. Carey asked for, and secured, the permission of Carson to attempt the journey from the mouth of the canyon and again the Navahos were compelled to see their home country invaded. Up to this time the canyon had been considered impregnable, even Colonel Carson stated such in his report of October.

The January campaign was at the end of the Navaho War. Steadily small groups of Navahos surrendered to Carson and orders were given for them to appear at the Bosque Redondo at Fort Sumner which was established as the reservation for the Navaho tribe. Eventually some 8,000 Indians congregated at the Bosque Redondo. The full story of Federal Indian policy¹ here is another report of blundering; eventually a full and complete analysis was given during a Federal investigation of Indian affairs. The Bosque Redondo, an experiment in Indian reservation policy, proved impossible to continue and the Navahos were permitted to return to their former lands after promising to keep the peace.

The diary which follows was written by one of Kit Carson's officers, probably Captain Eben Everett, commanding officer of Company B, First New Mexico Volunteers. It is the only complete story of the first two months of the campaign outside of the reports of Carson in *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Washington, 1880-1901), Series I, Vol. XXVI, Pt. I, which are mere digests of the depredations on Indian property. It adds materially to the historical detail of the war and should be appreciated by those interested in Indian affairs and those attracted by the character and career of Christopher Carson, Colonel of the First New Mexico Volunteers. The diary itself is a posses-

1. For the full record of the Navaho problem during this period see Frank D. Reeve, "The Government and the Navaho, 1846-1858," *NEW MEXICO HISTORICAL REVIEW*, XIV (1939), 82-114; "The Federal Indian Policy in New Mexico, 1858-1880," *ibid.*, XII (1937), 218-269. See also Charles Avery Amsden, "The Navaho Exile at Bosque Redondo," *ibid.*, VIII (1933), 31-50.

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Navaho Campaign as especially refers to
Co. "B" 1st. N. M. Vols.
August 4, 1863

Co. B. 2 officers,² 61 non-com. and Pvt's., including 9 attached, left Defiance³ and marched to Hay Camp.⁴ 6 miles. Got a wetting before reaching camp. Drew 24 Pack Saddles &c. complete. Rained all night, slept in wagon.

August 5

Drew 25 mules, and packed 30 days rations, &c., on them, sent back to the Fort 2 boxes Cartridges, rain in the forenoon, marched about [?] miles came to an Indian farm of large extent, planted with principally corn & fine wheat and some Beans Pumpkins and melons. Our Animals were turned loose & enjoyed themselves. Wheat was pulled for them at night. About 6 miles from our last nights camp came to a Cornfield which was destroyed. A good camp & plenty of wood and good water. Everett⁵ Off. Day and as dark as [?]. Co. Rear guard of Pack Train.

2. These two officers were Captain Eben Everett and Lieutenant David McAllister, *Register of Volunteer Officers, Headquarters Department of New Mexico. General Orders No. 21.* The citations of officers hereafter are all taken from this separate list.

3. For a picture of Fort Defiance in the 1850's see Charles Avery Amsden, *Navaho Weaving Its Technic and History* (Santa Ana, Fine Arts Press, 1934), facing p. 148.

4. Ewell's Hay Camp.

5. Captain Eben Everett, believed by the editor of this diary to be its author, first joined the army at Fort Leavenworth in 1851 with H Company of the 1st Dragoons, Captain Stein commanding officer. He appeared on the frontier shortly thereafter and volunteered with the New Mexican troops. During the campaign of 1863, he served as commanding officer of Company B although he was charged with drunkenness while on duty in July, 1863. At that time he signed a pledge "as an officer and a gentleman, that for one year from this date, I will not drink one single drop of any intoxicating liquid in any manner or shape whatever." In the fall, after returning from the portion of the campaign which is the subject of the diary, he was again found in the condition which he had sworn to avoid, but was excused. Later a third offense, at least the only ones noted, caused his court martial and dishonorable discharge from the army in April, 1864. Later further notes indicate that he was a defaulter in the summer session of the New Mexico court in 1872 but his bondsman made good. From these notes it would indicate that Everett would not

August 6

Left Camp at 6 o'clock. Packs in advance and the troops left to destroy the grain which they did. Sgt. Lippe sick and Pvt. Hernandez Co. M. also. Some little rain—marched thro' a rolling country heavily timbered with Pine, Pinon & Cedar & scrub oak. Co. relieved from Rear Guard on account of Co. M. not being ready to march at the proper time. I being Off. Day. was in charge of the rear Guard. Noted many singular formations of rocks, towers, &c. Lost one mule and Pack flour and blankets. Overtook 11 men out from our last night's camp on a spying party they found nothing. Camped in a large bottom good wood, grass, and water in holes, collected from rain and muddy. Left the Zuni road⁶ about 12 miles from last nights camp. Capt. Pfeiffer⁷ & Co. joined us at this camp with 5 prisoners 100 sheep he had taken. He left the command at the Hay Camp. Mc.⁸ Off. Day.

August 7

Hard rain during last night. Sgt. Lippe & Pvt. Hernandez sent back to Defiance. Left camp about 8 o'clock, marched a long distance down a broad valley, then struck into the hills, rather rough road good grass and plenty of Pinon & Cedar. Comp. on Rear Guard, much trouble in repacking mules. March [?] miles & encamped in a large valley, near some muddy water holes filled by rains, pretty

be a reputable witness to the events of the campaign, but from all checks with the reports of Christopher Carson and Benjamin Cutler, the adjutant of the 1st New Mexico Volunteers, his accuracy cannot be doubted. From internal evidence the choice of Eben Everett as the diarist is doubtful, but he was the commanding officer and the diary indicates it had to be one of the three officers of Company B. McAllister at one point took over command of Company H and Lieutenant Antonio Abeytia was at Fort Defiance so that neither could have written the diary. The only choice, as harmful to the case as it might be, is Eben Everett.

Notes from the Ritch Collection, Huntington Library, Rare Manuscripts Division.

6. For a good map of this territory see A. B. Bender, "Governmental Explorations in the Territory of New Mexico, 1846-1859," *NEW MEXICO HISTORICAL REVIEW*, IX (1934), facing p. 16.

7. Captain Albert H. Pfeiffer. For the story of his record during this campaign see Edwin L. Sabin, *Kit Carson Days (1809-1868)* (Chicago, 1914), p. 435; also appendix, pp. 591-595, 614-617. Cf. his personal story in U. S. Army, Department of New Mexico, General Order Number 21, p. 5.

8. Lieutenant David McAllister.

good grass no wood, but sage brush, heavy rain during the day. Pickets out, during the day discovered a party of Indians which were captured after a lively little run they proved to be five Zunis they were taken along with us. Again during the night [rain] and every thing wet. Trouble about the morning Report.

August 8

Commenced raining, a cold wet rain just as we began saddling up, so that all men & things were double weight, got started through mud and mire, some mules down in mire before we got out of Camp, very hard marching for men & animals through the valley. After striking the hills it was better, most of the days march thro high rolling sandy country with plenty of wood cedar & pinon. Had to descend a precipice to reach another valley after crossing which we encamped at a large hole or spring on the edge of a range of hills. Wood & water plenty, poor grazing, one of my mules shot today having given out. Marched 6 hours it rained incessantly the whole time. Reached camp about 2 o'clock & rec'd order to cook 2 days rations as no fires would be lit except to make Coffee until we overtook the Inds., Discharged firearms. Cleared up in the afternoon but a prospect of more rain tonight. Have passed many old Indian huts & corrals on our march every day.

August 9, 1863

Slight rain during the night. Left camp at day break, without breakfast in order to reach some place where there was grass for the Animals. Reached water with my company, Rear Guard, at 11 o'clock A. M. after a fatiguing march of some 12 miles. Animals began giving out soon after we started. Had to leave 2 Cos. (Murphy⁹ and Deus¹⁰). Mules, all, on the road besides detachments of other Companies, threw away Beans & Vegetables, lightened

9. Probably Lieutenant John Murphy, Company G. It could possibly be Lawrence G. Murphy, although he was attached to Colonel Carson as adjutant and would not have a command.

10. Captain Charles Deis, Company M.

Packs, changed mules and about 2 O'clock the whole command was in camp, except one mule of Lt. Murphys Co. Killed having hurt himself crossing a ravine & unable to travel. Found water Poor, grass poor, wood, sage brush.

At 4 o'clock P. M. Lt. McAlister was detached with 25 men joined by 50 Infy. of Capt. Pfeiffer en route for Moqui, with three days rations. At 5 P. M. 4 Mtd. Cos. H.G.D. & K. left with Hdqrs. for the same destination. Lt. Fitch¹¹ and 26 men of Capt. Pfeiffers Co. were attached to Co. B. Capt. Deus. left in command with Capt. Everett, Lt. Fitch, and total 105 men, 250 hd. of Horses & mules, a Herd of Cattle & Sheep & a lot [of] 8 or 10 Indian prisoners. And all the packs. The first real pleasant day yet.

August 10th 1863

At Daybreak turned our animals out to graze, got breakfast and started from Camp at 8 o'clock making the best disposition we could of our force to guard so many animals. A pleasant day & good road, no trouble with packs. Camped at 12 M. close by some springs in a huge rock issuing from a large cavern, plenty of water but only a few animals can get in at a time. Wood plenty, tolerable good grass. At 3 P. M. a Sentinel posted on a high rock overlooking miles of country gave the signal Indians coming, sure enough, with a Glass we saw at a mile's distance a party coming as hard as possible & by their riding we knew them to be Indians. As they approached we discovered them to be our own Utahs returning from Col. Carsons Command. They brought some 20 or 25 horses with them & state that *they* had a fight with the Navajoes. That the command did not go until they, the Utahs, had whipped the Navajoes, Killed one, took all their stock, that Col. Carson took 8 horses 1000 sheep which they had captured in the fight from them. Kuniatche,¹² the Chief would not stand this, as he wanted all the property captured, and so in high dudgeon he left and is returning home. He says one Co. is coming back from the command, probably the Infantry.

11. Second Lieutenant Charles H. Fitch, Company K.

12. In the Report the Indian chief's name is spelled: Kan-a-at-sa.

August 11th

Left camp at 5½ A. M., proceeded very well for some 22 miles, when our troubles commenced. We were one hour climbing the first rocks. Killed Goats, Sheep, horses & mules. One half mile on came to a still worse rocky ascent about as bad a place as I ever saw a trail made. Two and one half hours hard work accomplished the ascent with the loss of one horse and One Mule and an awful amount of profane language in English Spanish & Dutch. On arriving at the top where were the ruins of an old Indian tower or house, here we met a party sent back from the advance to show us the way to the camp where we arrived (the foremost of the party) about 5 P. M. The Rear arrived about 7 P. M.

The days march was about 30 miles without water except a little for the men some five miles before reaching Camp. Our losses to-day have been two horses, four mules, and some Sheep & Goats, and perhaps a Pack of 2 sacks flour & saddle left by Co. B. some 2 miles from Camp which may be found in the morning and may not.

Some six miles from our last nights Camp, some object was descried moving upon the side of a hill some 12 or 1500 yards to our left. A Glass was called for and after a long and careful observation by the Chiefs of the command it was pronounced to be either a white horse or a white mule. A Consultation was held, but before any decision was arrived at Lieut. Fitch, with that utter disregard of danger for which he is noted, nobly and bravely volunteered his services to discover the truth of the matter. His offer was immediately accepted and calling one man to go with him he dashed off. Our experienced Captain¹³ being better versed in the wiles and strategems of the Navajoe, stopped him and ordered him to take two more men, doing this off he went. With straining eyes and beating hearts we watched his career. He reached the unknown animal, halted and soon we heard the report of a Pistol and a poor broken

13. Captain Charles Deits who was in command

down sore-backed old Navajo pony had gone where his fathers have gone before him. Finis.

We found the advance of the command encamped on a high cedar covered mesa about 12 miles South of East from Moqui plenty of wood poor Grass and not sufficient water for so large a command as ours.

We found Col. Carson Maj. Commings¹⁴ & about 100 men, having heard that there was a large drove of horses and other stock some 10 miles distant had started after them about 2 o'clock today. The command that left us the evening of the 9th marched until 8 o'clock next morning without halting when they discovered near the old ruin previously mentioned a heard of horses and Sheep guarded by a few Navajoes, they charged upon them the Navajoes fled, and about 30 horses and 800 sheep were taken. One Navajo killed by the Utahs, some of the horses were beautiful animals.

The command then marched to this camp and awaited our arrival. Lieut. Hubbell¹⁵ who was with the mounted party got lost from the command some six miles from here, about 8 o'clock on the morning of the 10th with two men and after wandering through the mountains, found Camp this afternoon about 4 o'clock. Parties were out all day in search of him. He reports having taken 75 Sheep but abandoned them.

August 12

Rose later than usual. Sent back and found my Pack of Flour. About 9 A. M. Stragglers from Col. Carsons party began to arrive, their horses having given out in the first 25 miles. They say the Col. is after the Indians at full speed and is determined to overtake them if horseflesh will stand it.

Col. Carson and his command arrived at camp about 10 A. M. did not overtake the Indians and were compelled to return for water. Many horses were completely broken

14. Major Joseph Cummings: see story of his death later in the diary.

15. Lieutenant Charles M. Hubbell, Company H.

down. Lt. McAllister and detachment were ordered to join the company.

About noon received orders to move as our animals were starving where we were and the water had given out. Capts. Deus & Birney¹⁶ also moved. We left Camp at 2 o'clock, Co. B. acting as sheep drovers, the position or a very similar one, that they seem destined to occupy on this trip. Lt. McAllister was assigned to the command of Co. H. Capt Pfeiffer taking command of a mounted party. Left one mule unable to travel to be brought up by the party tomorrow if possible, if not to be given to the Moquis who have treated us very honestly. About four miles from Camp we descended another of those precipices and entered a beautiful Cañon from fifty to 200 yards in width and miles in length, abounding in cool springs and green grass, luxuries that we seldom meet with, and to our poor animals it is indeed a Godsend for from want of water and grass they are growing very weak. Found a small Corn and melon field which was soon packed off for our horses. Left one mule at Camp as it could not be found.

This is the first good pleasant Camp since we left Defiance, everything requisite being found in abundance and good quality. From the appearance of the numerous trails it must be a favorite resort of the Navajoes.¹⁷

Col. Carson with the rest of the command comes up tomorrow.

August 13 Day of Rest.

Laid in Camp all day. Col. Carson with the remainder of the Column joined us about 9 A. M. Found a mule that I lost in our last camp in another company, slightly altered, but not enough to prevent recognition. Animals sent on the hills to graze. Soldiers washing clothing. Officers eating, sleeping, reading & gambling, and so the day passed.

16. Captain Joseph Birney, Company D.

17. Apaches crossed out in the original and Navajoes inserted.

August 14th 1863

Still in Camp in Volunteer Cañon.¹⁸ Guards in and around camp doubled and trebled last night. Co. "B" being encamped between the two Battalions of Majors Morrison & Cummings, and belonging to neither, had the full benefit of a neutral position between to [two] active powers, i. e., to furnish details for Guards and Pickets for both Columns with an extra supply for Herd Guard (Sheep & Cattle) and also an additional force called for directly from Hdqrs. The details were not so heavy as to cause any inconvenience but I was called on six times yesterday evening to furnish guards and every one was altered again & again. As I am my own 1st Sergeant I didn't like it.

One of our men was yesterday at work chiseling in the face of a smooth rock on the side of the Cañon the Legend "1st Regt. N.M. Vols." Aug. 13, 1863" in letters a foot square.¹⁹ Ages hence this may cause as much curiosity among antiquarians, as do now the old names upon the famous Inscription Rock²⁰ near Zuni, where there are hundreds of names and records of events, back to the year 1618.

Found in our camp a rather rare thing in this country, abundance of wild rose bushes. Gathered and prepared some sprigs for home on the Hudson.

Our present Camp is about 50 [miles] South west or west of south from Fort Defiance and on the wagon road from that Post to the seven Moqui villages²¹ which lie some 12 miles south of west from us.

We have had a good many of the Moquis in camp, trading for old clothes and picking up everything thrown away. Their dress is of the most primitive style, consisting simply of a Breech clout of the scantiest dimensions. Some of them had a piece of Blanket or a Buckskin thrown over their shoulders, these I suppose are the quality. Since they have

18. Named thus by the column, today Keam's Canyon, Arizona.

19. For a picture of this inscription see p. 17 in George H. Pettis, *Personal Narrative of the Battles of the Rebellion, Historical Society of New Mexico, No. 12*, Santa Fe, N. M., 1908. Also in Amsden, *op. cit.*, facing p. 148.

20. Inscription Rock is located near Zuni, see picture and description in Charles F. Coan, *A History of New Mexico* (New York, American Historical Society, Inc., 1925), vol. I, pp. 190-1, picture on p. 539.

21. Moqui pueblos are the present day Hopi pueblos.

met us they have traded with the men so that most of them can sport a shirt, an article they seem to value highly. Some have even mounted Pantaloons.

Tomorrow morning we leave this haven of rest, en route, they say for Casa Colorada.²²

August 15, 1863

About one o'clock this morning while all except the Guards were wrapped in the arms of *Murphy*²³ we were aroused by a demoniac yelling and the firing of guns. It needed no explanation—Indians—was perfectly understood and the purpose, a stampede of our animals, but this in the position we occupied was almost an impossibility. As quick as possible the Companies were formed and awaiting orders. Some twenty shots were fired when the yelling ceased and the firing also. The Companies after being under arms some 15 or 20 minutes were dismissed and ordered to lie down with their arms in their hands, hardly had this been done when the whooping and shooting commenced with treble power. The men were roused again but Co. B took the precaution, instead of forming in line, so as to present a broad target, to scatter over their camp, but not so far as to prevent an instant formation. Immediately after the first alarm the Out Pickets had been strengthened, and as the Indians had not succeeded in their first attempt at a surprise, we were little afraid of their success, now that we were ready and waiting for them.

This second edition of firing & yelling lasted perhaps 5 minutes during which nearly a hundred shots were fired, when with an occasional whoop, the Indians retired. We returned to our Blankets taking the precaution however to move them from under the Flies that we had stretched, as they presented most too good a target, and ready at a moment to turn out again, but apparently Mr. Navajoe had become convinced that he was somewhat in the predicament

22. Near Ganado, Arizona, site of Fort Canby which was established by Carson as a supply depot and fort. See picture of probable site of the fort in Amsden, *op. cit.*, facing p. 168.

23. Probable reference to the fact that Lieutenant John Murphy was the officer of the day, hence a pun on Morpheus, God of Sleep.

of the Bull trying to butt off the Locomotive, or perhaps some of the Rifle Balls that were sent [at] him had gone unpleasantly near. At any rate he disturbed us no more during the night.

This morning upon counting up our losses the total amounts to one mule missing, which was tracked out of the cañon and to a point where a party of Navajoes had been waiting for the success of the stampeding party, ready to run the animals as fast as they should emerge from the Cañon. On this they were disappointed. As they have now commenced we shall very likely have nightly visits from them, but "forewarned, forearmed," is our motto. We left Camp this morning at 6 o'clock. Our animals much improved by the two days rest. Co. B guard of Pack train. Before arriving at Camp nearly every pack had been repacked, more packs came off than I have yet seen in any one day. Our route was nearly east over rolling ground, the higher portions covered with Piñon & Cedar. Most of our route was on the old Zuni & Ft. Defiance Road. Camped near noon on a small rise easily guarded. Companies formed an irregular parallelogram within which the animals are to be kept at night. Wood plenty, grass poor, water plenty at the distance of a mile. Thermometer past endurance. Off of Day Capt. Everett.

August 16

Left camp at 5½ A. M. Everything in pretty good order. About 7 or 8 miles from Camp the Animals commenced giving out, and were shot as fast as they became unable to keep up with the Command. After some 12 or 15 miles we found several cornfields part of which were cut down, but we were in a hurry to reach water and could not stay to entirely destroy them. Saw two Indians leaving for the hills as fast as possible, no animals however in a condition to pursue them.

At noon, having travelled about 15 miles, halted and unpacked animals rested two hours and started on. Up to this time today six horses and two mules had been shot. Orders were given not to shoot any more as it was supposed

we were near water, but to leave them, so that they might be sent for tomorrow. During the afternoon we passed several Corn-fields some of which were destroyed. After a fatiguing march of 15 miles from our resting place we reached the creek of the Pueblo Colorado about sundown, having left on the road this afternoon five horses and six mules, and two packs of Flour. 2 Citizen Horses also were killed on the road and it would probably have been better had our horses & mules all been killed for doubtless before we can send for them the Navajoes will have taken them. Our march today could not have been less than 30 miles and no water on the road. Made a very good camp, wood water and grass abundant.

August 17

A party sent back to look for the Animals left yesterday. Six men on foot sent to Defiance for news and to report progress so far. Wrote to Lt. Abeyta,²⁴ by Col. Cs. order, about the equipment of men of B Co. now at Fort Defiance, ordered by the Colonel to join the Company to furnish them with cartridges, shoes, Pack mules &c, &c, and also for other supplies for trip about to be made to Cañon de Chelle.²⁵

It 12 o'clock the command moved up the river about three miles and camped in a broad valley, wood water and grass plenty. Corn fields near which are appropriated for the use of our animals. Party sent back for mules returned, found one horse and two packs, the Indians having taken the others 8 in number.

August 18

Left Camp this morning at 8 O.C. After marching about 4 miles, Co. B in advance, just after entering a large

24. Second Lieutenant Antonio Abeytia, Company B., who had been left at Fort Defiance.

25. The Canyon is fully described in Sabin, *op. cit.*, p. 432; the supposed origin of the name is discussed in George Gwyther, "An Indian Reservation," *Overland Monthly*, X (February, 1878), 130-131. Two pictures are in Dane and Mary Roberts Coolidge, *The Navajo Indians* (Boston, Houghton-Mifflin, 1930), facing p. 14, and a beautiful one in the *Desert Magazine*, VII (January, 1944), p. 18.

bottom where we were to encamp, Indians were discovered just leaving and running into the hills and timber. The Cavalry were immediately called to the front and a pursuit commenced. After about an hour the troops began to return without any success, having seen but two Indians. Some half hour later a man came in with the sad news that Major Cummings was killed by the Indians. We could hardly believe it possible. A party with the Surgeon²⁶ was immediately sent out and found him lying dead about 4 miles from Camp. His body was brought in and tomorrow will be sent to Defiance. The manner of his death as stated by Betts the only one with him at the time is as follows. At the first Alarm the Major, who was commanding the second and rear squadron, as soon as the first had deployed, dashed on alone, after the first, leaving his own command which was ordered in another direction. Being splendidly mounted he soon passed ahead and following the trail through a narrow cañon, (although cautioned by some men he passed not to go farther), and accompanied by one man, Betts, only, and he unarmed, after proceeding at a rapid gait some distance, the report of a Rifle was heard and the Major was seen to fall from his horse. Betts being alone, caught his horse and returned for assistance.

The party sent out found him lying on his face, dead, some ten feet from where he fell. On examination it was found that a Rifle Ball had struck him about one inch below the navel and probably lodged in the spine, cutting the Artery and causing almost instant death. There was no appearance of any struggle or pain. Major Cummings was beloved by all his fellow Officers and has many friends in this country by whom his loss will be felt. He had \$4,200 on his person at the time. His death was the result of rashness, in rushing into a dangerous place without any support, an act that he had been repeatedly warned against.

26. If the command was at full strength it could have been Surgeon Major Allen F. Pick, Assistant Surgeon Lieutenant John H. Shout or Assistant Surgeon Lieutenant George Gwyther, although the diarist would probably not have referred to either of the last two as Surgeon if either were the person who attended Major Cummings. Lieutenant Gwyther does not mention the incident in his article, previously mentioned, from the *Overland Monthly*.

While the party were out for the body of Maj. C. Maj. Morrison and Capt. Deus returned, they had run on to 4 Indians and took from them five horses, but got no scalps.

The other parties returned to camp having accomplished nothing.

A little after noon Capt. Carey²⁷ & Lt. Cook²⁸ with an Escort arrived from Defiance with a large mail of Letters and Papers and the glorious news of the Capture of Vicksburg and the battles on the Potomac and vicinity. The excitement caused by Maj. C's death was almost entirely merged in the greater events of the war in the States. A very few more as decisive victories will close this war. We hear of the death in battle of many of the old Officers who have served in this country.

At dark Capt. Pfeiffer with 50 Foot men and Lt. Fitch with 40, started out for a night march hoping to reach the vicinity of the Indian Pueblos during the night and attack them by surprise in the morning. A few minutes after Pfeiffer left we were startled by firing some half mile from Camp, the result of which was the capture of one squaw by Pfeiffer's Co. probably a spy.

August 19

The remains of Maj. Cummings were this morning sent to Defiance with an escort. Lt. Hubbell took in, with some 50 men, most of the horses of Cos. D & G. to recruit, the broken down mules and extra saddles, &c., were also sent in. Capt. Pfeiffer and Lt. Fitch returned this morning having found no Indians. About 11 A. M. Sergt. Pino with 19 Pvts. of Co. "B" arrived and joined the company. Brought Stockings and Shoes for issue. Five men of Co. "B" (att.) detached to Co. D. which now with Co. G. serves chiefly on foot. Lt. McAllister with 20 men of the Co. and ten from Cos. M. and G. started out this evening for a night walk of 20 miles, Capt. Thompson²⁹ also goes with a party. They

27. Captain Asa B. Carey, quartermaster for the command, later Brigadier-General, see sketch in George H. Pettis, *The California Column, Historical Society of New Mexico*, Santa Fe, N. M., 1908, no. 11, pp. 25-27.

28. Lieutenant Franklin Cook of the California Column.

29. Captain John Thompson, Company K.

go to Canon de Trigo³⁰ where the Indians live and hope to avenge the death of Maj. Cummings. Success to them. Just after dark we were aroused by the firing of one of the Pickets. The companies fell in and went to the support of the outposts. The firing soon ceased and the Companies returned to the Camp. The Alarm was caused by four Indians who apparently were unaware of our vicinity and were coming down for water. One Indian was wounded and dropped his pack containing fragments of Bones, &c., picked up at our old camps. The Indian after being wounded endeavored to shoot the man pursuing him but had not strength to bend his bow and his arrow fell short of its mark.

August 20th, 1863

Started at 6 o'clock enroute for Cañon de Chellé about 8 miles from last Camp found some very fine corn and pumpkin fields which were destroyed, soon after we struck into the hills and for four or five miles had a very rough, rocky road. After about 16 miles travel we encamped on a high barren bluff overhanging the Canon de los Trigos. We passed many very singular, grotesque, formations of rocks. Caves, domes, arches, towers, steeples, &c. &c. and all in their proportions exceeding any artificial work of the Kind. Capt. Thompson and Lt. McAllister with their parties joined us during the afternoon. They had seen some Indians and exchanged shots with them, the only result being that some of their men, eager for a chance, threw off their Great Coats, for pursuit, and while they were after one party, another party of Indians came round and stole them. Just as we reached Camp a man of Capt. Birneys came across an Indian mounted pursued and fired at him wounding him, the Indian left his horse (which the man got) and fled to the mountains of Hepsidam.

Our Animals were loose in a poor Cornfield during the afternoon, and tied up to trees at night.

30. Cañoncito de los Trigos in Šabin, *op. cit.*, appendix, p. 570.

August 20th, 1863³¹

Left Camp at 5 o'clock, without breakfast, to explore the Cañon de los Trigos which Capt. Thompson reports to [be] filled with Corn. Marched a couple of miles when detachments, 30 of Co. B., on the left side and 30 of Co. E. on the right side, were sent over the rocks on each side as flankers while the command marched up the Canon. The flankers had a rough time clambering over the rocks, on the summit of the mountain, on the left hand side, were many huts, corrals, threshing floors, metatas, &c. &c, some three miles up the Canon the command camped. For some three or four miles this Cañon is from 50 to 150 yards in width, a small stream running down it, and enclosed by perpendicular walls of rock 100 to 200 feet high. All the arable land herein was covered with a fine crop of Corn Beans and Pumpkins. The wheat had all been gathered. Most of the Corn we destroyed. There were a number of huts and some built of stone. At 2 P. M. we started to return to our last nights camp, all the animals being packed with as much corn as possible. Capt. Pfeiffer with 30 men of his company was left behind concealed in the bushes to wait for the arrival of Indians who it was supposed would, as usual, visit the place as soon as we left.³² A very short time after we had left some 8 or 10 Indians came down to see what we had done. They were fired on and two of them were killed or badly wounded according to Capt. Pfeiffer's report. He returned to Camp about dark. One man shot in the finger.

August 21st, 1863

Left Camp at 5 o'clock intending to make Cañon de Chelle, passed several Corn fields, and one dead Indian lying by the trail, had been dead a month.

At 8 o'clock after about 8 miles travel came to a large valley, covered as far as could be seen with fields of Corn. As the advance came in, one Indian was discovered making

31. Note the duplication of August 20, 1863. Evidently the diarist made this mistake in dating this entry and did not correct it later.

32. In the reports of Carson this plan was arranged on August 21, when the command left Pueblo Colorado. Cf. *U. S. Army, Department of New Mexico, General Orders #3* (Synopsis of Indian Scouts and their Results for the year 1863), p. 9.

tracks for the mountains.⁸³ He was pursued by Lt. Fitch and a mounted party, overtaken and killed, but not until he had shot one horse through the neck. He fought to the last. As there was water near by the command went into camp and after dinner the whole force set at work to cut down as much as possible of the Corn. The animals were turned loose and destroyed much of it, a large amount was husked out to feed the animals here and also to take along. It seemed a pity to destroy so much fine Corn & Fodder when not 50 miles from here at Fort Defiance it is so much needed. Rifle Pits were dug for our Pickets and care taken to be prepared for a night attack which we confidently expect.

August 22, 1863

The night passed quietly, and at 6 o'clock, after caching the Corn that we could not carry away, we started again for Cañon de Chellé. Passed by the body of the Indian killed yesterday and found the scull bare, every particle of hair having been taken off making at least a dozen scalp locks. This style of proceeding may inaugurate retaliation and a system of warfare in which we may be sufferers. The Navajoes seldom or never scalp their prisoners and the barbarous practice should not have been commenced by us.

Marched, without a halt being ordered, until 2 o'clock, most of the way through deep heavy sand, without any water—and water being so far from our last nights camp, many of the men did not have their canteens filled and suffered from the want of it. Water was found about a half mile from the road some 2 or 3 miles before we encamped where some of the men went for it.

Found a very good camp, tolerable grass, water plenty and good. Packed on our mules Corn to feed to night. Made about 17 or 18 miles according to general opinion 25. Passed without being aware of it, some 7 or 8 miles back from this camp the mouth of Cañon de Chellé, a broad shallow ravine of deep sand.

83. This is reported to have happened on the same day as leaving Pueblo Colorado, i.e., August 21, Cf. *idem*.

August 23d., 1863

Left Camp about 6 o'clock this morning, found hard marching through sand travelled about six miles and camped in the valley near a long pond of standing water, colored by, and tasting of, the soil, tolerable grass, no wood but sage bushes, but "Cuckold" burs to any amount.

What point is now our destination, or what purpose is in view, is unknown to all but the Chief. Off. of Day.

August 24

Started this morning at 6 o'clock. Some three hours travel on a rather sandy trail brought us in sight of "La Ventana," (The Window), a large hole through a large, reddish clay, castle shaped hill or mountain. The surface of the earth in this vicinity was utterly barren, a very few of the hardiest shrubs, cactus & sage weed only thinly scattered over it. The soil was a greyish color light, and apparently there was more of the mineral matter in its composition than usual. It looked as though it might have been formed by the detrition of rocks, ages since. On our path, and near it were lying large numbers of Petrified trees, of all sizes and in all stages of preservation, some were as perfect, with the exception of the limbs as the day they fell, others were crumbling to pieces. One tree was found in a perfect state some 50 feet long and two feet through. Most of the trunks are broken or seamed across in sections of from 2 inches to 4 feet, showing the grain of the wood, &c. The stone is a black flint, very heavy. There is now no timber of this size in any place near here, nor except by the deluge is there any way of accounting for these huge trees in this place, unless the country at some thousands of years since has been, as set forth by a late writer, the Garden of Eden and the original dwelling place of mankind on this Planet.

After arriving at Camp an expedition of 100 men to go through Canon de Chellé was proposed and volunteers were

called for. 26 of Co. B. volunteered but it is not likely to come off.³⁴

August 25. 1863

Left Camp at 6 o'clock, travelled until 11 A. M. making 12 or 14 miles over a rough road. Camped near the foot of high mountains. Wood water & grass abundant. We seem to be passing round the mountains and striking for the upper end of Cañon de Chellé.

August 26th, 1863

5½ A.M. the march commenced some portions of the command leaving camp before the General sounded, followed at irregular intervals by Cavalry. Infantry Pack Mules, &c., until at the time when the advance sounded the command was displayed in admirable confusion along one or two miles of the trail.

Our march today was about 15 miles, the first five through thick sage brush, chaparal, with some rocky hills to clamber up and down and some ugly cañons or arroyos to cross. After this we struck into a smooth high rolling country, covered with green grass and pretty thickly wooded with Piñon, Oak and very heavy Pine timber, crossed some 3 or 4 miles before camping quite a large stream. On our march were some very high and prominent mountains, high masses of Rock with perpendicular sides. Names unknown if they have any. Saw on our route a number of Indian houses built of Logs & Poles, conical shaped, and better than we have heretofore seen. Found one house of respectable size, built, (or piled up), of rough stone. The days march the latter part of it, has been the pleasantest of the trip. Camped a little after noon in a smooth valley, with a beautiful stream running through it, wood & grass plenty.

Several men of the command sick to day and unable to march. Our mules also commencing to fail and will con-

34. The diarist's prognostication was correct for the immediate future, but in January, 1864, the trip was made twice, each being in opposite directions, Captain Pfeiffer down canyon and Captain Carey up canyon.

tinue so to do unless we can find some more of Mr. Navajoe's cornfields.

August 27th

Left Camp this morning at 5½ o'clock and camped in a large valley near a pond of standing water plenty of grass, wood & water, marched about 12 miles and camped at 9½ A.M. The first three or four miles route through thick, low, sage chapparal, then struck into high rolling land, heavily covered with Pine, Pinon and Oak. Pine trees of enormous size, beautiful oak groves of small size.

August 28th

Marched from 6 o'clock A.M. to nearly 10, and camped in the valley of the old grazing camp, making 12 miles. Most of the route was through sage brush chapparal, through which at nearly every step were the residences of the Prairie dogs. The Indians have a way of catching them by leading a stream of water into their holes and so forcing them out. A party of some thirty men were sent off from our route today to go round by way of an Indian village. They joined us at Camp about 3 o'clock bringing with them one scalp of an Indian they had shot. From the appearance of the scalp the original wearer of it must have been an hombre grande.

Some thunder, hail, and rain in the afternoon. A number of the men of the command were engaged in hunting for topazes and rubies in the hills at Camp. Many were found but mostly of small size and no value. Orders were received this afternoon for Capt. Everett with 40 of his men, to start for a days scout after Indians, two hours before daylight tomorrow morning, the party all on foot and to try to intercept the small parties of Indians that are now striking for Canon de Chelle & Cañon de los Trigos.³⁵

[Diary breaks off here abruptly]

35. The endeavor was fruitless and Captain Everett returned without having seen any Indians. Cf. Col. Carson's report in *The War of the Rebellion . . .*, XXVI, Part I, p. 251.