

THE INDIAN TERRITORY EXPEDITION OF 1874.

In 1874, the Kiowas, Comanches and Cheyennes left their reservations in Indian Territory determined to dispute the right of the white buffalo hunters to kill buffalo for their hides -- a practice which bid fair to deprive the Indian of a source of livelihood which he had enjoyed from time immemorial. It was the final struggle of these tribes against the white man.

The scene of these activities was in the Panhandle of Texas. The supply base of the buffalo hunters was at Adobe Walls on the Canadian River in what is now Hutchinson County, Texas. It had been originally built by Bent and St. Vrain in 1830, but abandoned in 1840.

General N. A. Miles in August 1874 was directed to organize at Fort Dodge, Kansas, an Expedition to proceed against the hostiles. His command consisted of 8 Troops of the 6th Cavalry and 4 Companies of the 5th Infantry. Later 4 Troops of the 8th Cavalry from New Mexico were added.

This was a notable campaign of which there are but few survivors, one of whom has turned up -- Lemuel T. Wilson of Jacksonville, Oregon -- who was carried as a Scout on the rolls of the Quartermaster Department. He was one of a company of 39 Scouts and trailers under command of Lieut. Frank D. Baldwin an account of some of whose exploits have recently been published. Wilson has given some of his experiences from which we extract some of the following:

SERVICES OF L. T. WILSON FROM AUGUST 18, 1874 TO OCTOBER 31, 1876.

I had hunted buffalo for about two years so I was familiar with all of that western frontier country. In the Spring of 1874 we had considerable trouble with the Indians. 23 of us buffalo hunters were corraled by Indians at Adobe Walls for about three months. I helped to build the Stockade there for our protection, and was in the battle of Adobe Walls on June 27, 1874.

In August 1874, General Miles heard adverse reports about us, and sent Lieut. Baldwin with a detachment of soldiers down to Adobe Walls to investigate.

Lieut. Baldwin and his command arrived at Adobe Walls in the evening of August 18, and camped about one-half mile west of the Stockade. Next morning the Indians attacked us and one of our hunters Geo. Huffman was killed and scalped. As soon as Baldwin heard the shooting he came to our assistance. He took after the Indians and had a running fight with them for about 10 miles. When he returned we asked permission to leave there under his escort as we could not go by ourselves on account of the Indians. As he needed more scouts he hired Ira Wing, Tobe Robison, and myself as scouts. We left Adobe Walls on the morning of August 20.

Water was very scarce and in the afternoon Lieut. Baldwin came back to where we hunters were and asked if any of us knew where there was water as the men and horses were nearly famished. I said, "I know a place where we have always found water." He sent Chas. Morrow and I to look for it. When we reached "Guyena" or Chicken Creek, we found water, also two Indian scouts camped by a small fire with meat roasting on a stick. When they heard us one got away, the other one I killed.