

SOME UNWRITTEN INCIDENTS OF THE GERONIMO CAMPAIGN

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In 1885, I was in command of my company of the 10th Infantry, at the Supply Camp at Langs Ranch, New Mexico; while there I was taken seriously ill with dysentery, and General Crook had me ordered back to my station, Fort Union, New Mexico, for treatment. As soon as I was able to travel, I was given a sick leave, and went home to Kentucky where I remained for several months before I reported back for duty.

I had not fully regained my health, but volunteered for duty with Lawton's command, then somewhere in Mexico. I was ordered to report to General Miles at Willcox, Arizona, and went with him to Nogales, Arizona, where he had a conference with Governor Torres, then governor of Sonora, Mexico. The governor gave me letters to the Prefecto's of several districts through which we might have to pass.

General Miles ordered me to proceed to Fort Huachuca, and there take command of a detachment of infantry, under command of Lieut. Smiley, and several wagons with supplies for Lawton's command, which was supposed to be in the Yaqui River Country in southern Sonora. If the command was in that section, I was ordered to enlist twenty Teremari Indians as scouts, and scout through the Yaqui River Canyon and try to locate the hostiles. After passing the town of Baucuachi I met a courier with dispatches from Lawton, who told me that the Indians had turned north with Lawton in close pursuit; so I cut across country to intercept him.

I carried one thousand dollars in gold for Lawton's command. I joined Lawton in camp south of Cachuta Ranch and was appointed Battalion Adjutant. I told Lawton of the letters I had received from Governor Torres, and he, Dr. Wood and I, with a detachment of cavalry, rode into Fronteras and had a conference with Prefecto of Arispe. After the conference we went to a small Mexican restaurant, where we had dinner consisting of Tortillas, Frijoles and Mexican wine.

I rode back to camp alone, over a trail I had only been over once before. The distance was about twenty miles, and the hostiles were supposed to be very near the town, but in what direction was not known. The night was one of the darkest I ever saw. I reached camp about one o'clock a. m.

Hearing that Lieut. C. B. Gatewood, 6th Cavalry, was holding the Indians, over a range of the Sierra Madre Mountains to the east of Fronteras, we crossed this range and went into camp on a small river several hundred yards from where the hostiles were camped. During the day Gatewood prevailed upon Geronimo, Natchez and several others of the band to come to our camp and have a talk about going up to the line, and there have a talk with General Miles about surrendering. They consented to do so.

Next morning the hostiles broke camp and started for Skeleton Canon. After giving orders to Lieut. Smith to follow on our trail with the command, Lawton, Gatewood, Dr. Wood, George Wratten, the Interpreter, and I followed the Indians.

Late that afternoon they made camp, and after waiting for some time in vain for Smith to put in an appearance, and Lawton, thinking that he must have taken a trail to the West, with George Wratten left us and cut across country to intercept him and bring him back on the right trail.

Gatewood, Dr. Wood and I stayed with the hostiles that night and remained with them till the next night, when Lawton and the command got in.

The order of march of the Indians the day we were with them was as follows: Natchez with the main band started out first, with his men deployed in a skirmish line about a mile in length. After he had been gone about half an hour, Geronimo, with the old men, women, children and pack horses, followed in the rear of the center of the line. This order of march was kept up all day.

Natchez, a son of the great Apache Chief Cochise, was really in command of the fighting men while Geronimo was only the adviser. During the march from where we first came in contact with the hostiles till we reached Skeleton Canon, Lawton was very nervous and apprehensive that the Indians might make a break and get away, and I and all the