

FACTORS INFLUENCING THE IMPACTS ON SECURITY OF MANNING  
MILITARY POSTS ON THE UNITED STATES-MEXICO BORDER  
FROM 1865 TO 1916

A thesis presented to the Faculty of the U.S. Army  
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The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are those of the student author and do not necessarily represent the views of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College or any other governmental agency. (References to this study should include the foregoing statement.)

## ABSTRACT

FACTORS INFLUENCING THE IMPACTS ON SECURITY OF MANNING  
MILITARY POSTS ON THE UNITED STATES-MEXICO BORDER FROM 1865 TO  
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Colonel Edward Hatch, Commander 9th Cavalry Regiment, following the resolution of a 1877 uprising in San Elizario, Texas, submitted a report to the Secretary of War. His concluding statement suggested that the existence of Fort Bliss, as a permanent installation with from 200 to 400 soldiers, would have prevented the riot in San Elizario, about 30 miles southeast of El Paso, Texas, which housed the post. This thesis identifies factors counter to Colonel Hatch's statement. That is, while a strong military presence helped remove revolutionaries from the Lower Río Grande Valley, the deliberate use of the frontier forces available, installing experienced negotiators as commanders in out posts near border towns, maintaining a reduced military presence in border towns, notably in Texas, and, an emphasis on local governments controlling domestic troubles secured and stabilized the frontier border.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

On 11 January 1878, following the resolution of a U.S.-Mexico border incident in San Elizario, Texas, a small town on the Río Grande about 30 miles southeast of El Paso, Colonel Edward Hatch, the 9th Cavalry Commander, wrote a report for George W. McCrary, the Secretary of War. The incident involved a judge's claim to the rights of a salt field that Mexicans had used freely for over two hundred years. With an escort a posse raised by Texas Rangers, the judge sought to force the residence of San Elizario to pay for salt retrieved from the flat. The general population rebelled and a small seven-day war involving residents from both sides of the Río Grande ensued. "The insurgents were all of Mexican descent and were assisted by citizens of Mexico," stated Hatch. "Anywhere from 500 to 1,500 men could have been present."<sup>1</sup> Upon receiving word of the ongoing battle, the governor requested that the Army assist in restoring order. In his report, Hatch wrote: "The arrival of the United States troops just then, no doubt, prevented further robberies and depredations at Ysleta, Socorro, and even El Paso."<sup>2</sup> He added, "Had there been a garrison of even 100 men at Fort Bliss it is not likely that present trouble would ever have occurred."<sup>3</sup> Colonel Hatch's statement formed the research question for this thesis.

From 1862 to 1882 the Army built, manned, and maintained an average of 33 outposts in the U.S.-Mexico border region. What impacts would additional permanent border posts, or increasing the military presence on the border, have had on the security and stability of the region?

The U.S.-Mexico border is, as it was in the 1800s, a very deadly and troublesome region. In May 2001, only 12 of 26 Mexicans attempting to walk across the desert from Sonora, Mexico, into Arizona survived the journey. The guide for the travelers seeking illegal entry into the United States became dehydrated and disoriented. In a matter of 72 hours, 14 would-be illegal immigrants died of exposure and thirst.<sup>4</sup> On 15 May 2006, U.S. President George W. Bush, facing an illegal immigration situation which involved “intense emotions” along the border, called for a 50 percent increase in the number of Border Patrol Agents and the short-term deployment of up to 6,000 National Guard soldiers to the area.<sup>5</sup> In other words, he increased the military presence on the border.

In 1821, Americans began to move westward from Louisiana into the province of *Tejas*, New Spain. Following the 1846-1848 Mexican War, and the 1853 Gadsden Purchase, the number of settlers moving into the harsh region continually increased. Personnel legitimately authorized to protect these settlers, such as sheriffs, state special forces (Texas Rangers), U.S. Marshalls, and the U.S. Army, were spread out over the 1,700-mile border. At some locations, 100 miles separated the next legitimate law. Lawlessness, violence, and theft from the Apache, the Comanche, Mexicans, and men of low character formed the primary threat. The omnipresent threat of American, Mexican, Apache, and Comanche thieves, murderers, and rebel rousers existed in every state north and south of the border. Threats also included the environment such as extreme temperatures, limited water resources, limited food, and thin air. Also, from 1867 to 1916, citizens and the police in Texas border towns harassed and threatened black soldiers charged to protect them.<sup>6</sup>

Once word of the varied threats in the U.S.-Mexico border region reached territorial governors and officials in Washington D.C., the Secretary of War suggested, and Congress approved, the establishment of barracks, camps, cantonments, and forts along the more heavily traveled routes. From 1846 to 1879, the U.S. established some 36 installations in the border region.<sup>7</sup> The Army manned many of these posts only temporarily, and then often by only one company, or one detachment, commanded by a lieutenant. Acts of retaliation following violent raids by Apache led the tribes to war against the U.S. Army. Mexico's slow economy and ineffective, constantly-changing, central government left northern Mexicans free from legal consequences for their actions. Mexicans, who made up better than 90 percent of the population of Texas border towns, retained anti-American sentiments toward white, Protestant, English speaking Americans. Negroes transition from slave to soldier, and Mexican-Americans' desire to retain a social status above the Negro, further complicated the social make up on the border. The posts on the U.S.-Mexico border, and the soldiers that manned them, represented a military presence that local populations did not always welcome. Due to the nature of having many people from varying cultures with different interests, languages, religions, and skin colors merging on the U.S.-Mexico border from 1865 to 1916, and considering the political flux of the United States, Texas, and Mexico, an increased military presence would not have had a significant impact on national security.

Exploring these posts and when, where, how, and why they were established and closed, in addition to exploring the measures that led to a moderately secure and stable border may provide some insight into how the U.S. can better secure borders as part of the Global War on Terrorism. This paper will explore the impact, or affect, these posts had

on security of the U.S.-Mexico border, primarily focusing on Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas from 1865 to 1916. In other words, was Colonel Hatch correct? Would “a garrison of even 100 men” have significantly contributed to a safer border in 1877? Would 100 additional men at Fort Bliss have sufficed? Is it possible to secure the U.S.-Mexico border? What outside factors influence the impact of troops or posts?

Attempting to find definitive answers to the questions above escaped any expectations. Rather, examining the region, its climate and terrain, its people, their past, cultures, politics, and their raids, riots, and skirmishes in hopes of identifying and analyzing trends, patterns, and causal relationships, composed the intended objective. To do that, this paper will briefly explore each of the topics above.

The Army does not operate in a vacuum. Therefore, the paper begins, not unlike an operations order, with the situation. It explores the development of Mexico and the United States, the people that became the soldiers and threats within the countries, and their cultures and religions. Chapter 1 also attempts to define the problem. The second chapter explores the affect that climate and terrain, the environment, had on the troops as they tried to make the region a safe place for homesteaders, miners, and travelers. Chapter 3 examines the strategic level, the politics and economics of Mexico, the United States, and the indigenous peoples. The fourth chapter analyzes the many conflicts that resulted in death on the border. It discusses the causes of peaks in activity and reflects on the impact of the U.S. Civil War. Each chapter ends with a summary of the key points that pertain to the research question. Finally, the conclusion summarizes the findings and comments on Colonel Hatch’s statement.

The American southwest is, as it was, a culturally diverse and physically challenging region. Movies, television, and publications oftentimes glorify the period between 1845 and 1916. Names such as Santa Anna, Stephen F. Austin, Benito Juárez, Billy the Kid, Cochise, Victorio, Geronimo, Lieutenant Charles B. Gatewood, Mickey Free, and Poncho Villa evoke visions of exotic bravery, heroism, and valor. While many find the border from 1845 to 1916 a romantically rugged location and period, this paper describes it as a dangerous and deadly place and time. Some of the people involved in the history are U.S. Army officers that became Civil War heroes and presidents; slaves that became Medal of Honor winning buffalo soldiers; neighbors who woke to find they lived in different countries; and indigenous peoples who woke to realize they could no longer freely plunder the land.

The primary sources used in collecting data for this thesis included: Gregory F. Michno, *Encyclopedia of Indian Wars: Western Battles and Skirmishes, 1850 -1890*, 2005, a compilation of 675 fights listed by day, month, and year with the units involved, skirmish location, and number of warriors and soldiers killed and wounded; Robert W. Frazer, *Forts of the West: Military Forts and Presidios and Posts Commonly Called Forts West of the Mississippi River to 1898*, 1972, an alphabetical list of western camps and posts from Arizona to Wyoming which includes the posts' locations, why and when the Army established them, and if, or why, and when the government abandoned them; James Leiker, *Racial Borders: Black Soldiers Along The Río Grande*, an exhaustive look into the impact of race and culture on the border and their affect on the Negro soldiers who operated there; William H. Leckie, *The Buffalo Soldiers: A Narrative of the Negro Cavalry in the West*, 1967, which follows the 9th Cavalry battle by battle from fighting

Comanche in Texas beginning in 1867 to the Victorio War in Arizona and New Mexico in the 1880s; and, annual reports of the Secretary of War from 1850 -1900 which provided information on the focus of the military year to year, the various posts, as well as the units assigned to them and the number of troops, for Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas.

In exploring the Army's mission on the U.S.-Mexico border from 1865 to 1916, stopping depredations by nomadic indigenous raiders consumed the largest portion of time and effort. Therefore, many of the findings were derived from analyzing these skirmishes. Over 200 battles took place between 1850 and 1886 in Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, Sonora, Chihuahua, and Coahuila that involved U.S. soldiers and Apache or Comanche warriors. Many of the battles followed reports of depredations by Apache or Comanche on the civilian populace.

The "U.S.-Mexico border region" limited the location of battles and skirmishes considered for study (see figure 1). The defined region included: in Arizona, the area in the immediate vicinity, or south, of the Bill Williams, Santa Maria, Verde, Tonto, and Salt Rivers; in New Mexico, the lower one-third of the state; and in Texas, the vicinity, or south, of the Concho and Colorado Rivers. Additionally, the study included battles in northern Sonora, Chihuahua, and Coahuila, Mexico, when the U.S. cavalry clearly pursued raiders there following depredations that occurred in the United States. The degree of influence by Mexico or Mexicans formed the basis for the northern limit of the area of study. Research found almost no connections to Mexico, or the tribes that frequently traveled there, north of the selected area of study. The study also only analyzed battles or skirmishes that took place in the described region that resulted in the

death of a soldier or warrior. An armed conflict involving a U.S. soldier or militia man against an indigenous warrior constituted a battle, clash, or skirmish. Research identified 183 such battles in the study area and time. Better than 85 percent of the battles studied included the Apache or the Comanche. The terms “indigenous” or “native” refer to the Apache, Comanche, or other people from North America’s original tribes. Several narrative case studies cover domestic incidents, notably Mexican raids or Mexican-American riots, that resulted in the death of a soldier by a civilian or the death of a civilian by a soldier.

The study explored the validity of Colonel Hatch’s statement regarding the relationship between an increased military presence and the security and stability of the U.S.-Mexico border between 1865 and 1916. Due to the nature of having many people from varying cultures with different interests, languages, religions, and skin colors merging on the U.S.-Mexico border from 1865 to 1916, and considering the political flux of the United States, Texas, and Mexico, an increased military presence would not have had a significant impact on national security.

## U.S.-Mexico Border



Figure 1. Area of Operations

Source: Adapted from Frazer, and World Atlas available from [www.worldatlas.com](http://www.worldatlas.com) accessed May 7, 2007.

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<sup>1</sup>War Department, "Report from Colonel Hatch on the subject of El Paso Troubles," in *Annual Report of the Secretary of War* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1878).

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Luis Alberto Urrea, *The Devil's Highway* (New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2004), 31.

<sup>5</sup>George W. Bush, U.S. President, Address to the Nation on Immigration Reform, 15 May 2006; available from WhiteHouse.gov; Internet; accessed 12 December 2006.

<sup>6</sup>James N. Leiker, *Racial Borders* (College Station, Texas A&M Press, 1962), 119.

<sup>7</sup>Robert W. Frazer, *Forts of the West: Military Forts and Presidios and Posts Commonly Called Forts West of the Mississippi River to 1898* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1972); Rod Timanus, *An Illustrated History of Texas Forts* (Plano, TX: Republic of Texas Press, 2001); and Texas State Historical Association (TSHA) and University of Texas; available from <http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/>; Internet; accessed 1 November 2006.

## CHAPTER 2

### BACKGROUND: THE PEOPLE

In 1850, Secretary of War Charles M. Conrad, in his annual report to the President of the United States, wrote: “The most important duty which at present devolves on the department; is the protection of Texas and New Mexico against the Indian tribes in their vicinity.” The secretary added, “By pursuing these to their homes and retaliating severely upon them, they would soon be taught that it is their interest to respect the property of the whites.”<sup>1</sup>

In 1850, the Secretary of War reported protecting settlers on the frontier border as his key concern. He called Americans “whites,” and referred to the Apache and Comanche simply as “Indians.” By 1866, Brigadier General John S. Mason, Commander of the Volunteers of the Arizona District wrote, “The Apache . . . are the most expert thieves in the world, having stolen from the people of Sonora, [Mexico] for generations.”<sup>2</sup> Mason’s words, referring to the natives as “Apache,” noting that “generations” had raided for years, and including Sonora, Mexico as an area frequently victimized by Apache raids, suggested an understanding of the complexity in regards to time and space of the mission to protect the property and lives of Americans on the border. Mason’s words reflected a respect for the skills of the Apache absent in Conrad’s. Conrad’s words reflected the national or strategic level in 1850 while Mason’s reflected the military or operational level in 1866.

The U.S. Army did not then, as it does not today, operate in a vacuum. External forces heavily affected operations. This chapter will examine the element of culture in the border area of operations. Other chapters will explore politics, economics, and the

environment (see figure 2). The cultural aspect of the problem heavily weighs on whether Colonel Hatch’s statement reflected a full understanding of the factors involved with securing the border.

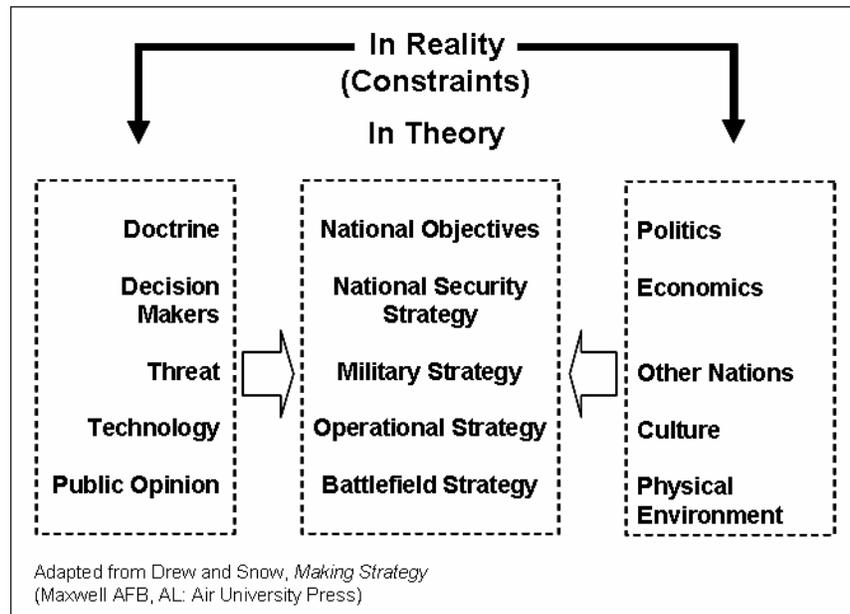


Figure 2. The Strategy Process

Colonel Hatch’s statement followed a clash resulting from Mexicans in the United States and Mexico, riled up by a Mexican Catholic priest, rebelling against land use rules imposed by a white American politician. The colonel dispatched forces from the closest posts to restore order. Black soldiers from the 9th and 10th Cavalries arrived. The 10th Cavalrymen arrived from Fort Huachuca. In Arizona, the soldiers quelled Apache raids caused by the encroachment of the land by American. Each border skirmish involved a clash of cultures. The different interests, languages, religions, cultures, and skin colors, of the Mexican, Apache, and Americans did not mix well. The meeting of the distinct ethnic

groups from 1865-1916 contributed greatly to border conflicts and resulted in hundreds of missions for the Army. This chapter, like the situation paragraph of an operations order, first looks at the threat, the Apache, Comanche, and Mexicans, and is followed by friendly forces, Americans: white and black.

### The Indigenous Tribes

By the 1820s, the Spanish withdrew from their presidios and the Comanche, along with the Kiowa, traveled south into *Tejas*, to raid, a euphemism for robbing and murdering, the unsuspecting settlers led by Stephen F. Austin. After establishing the Republic of Texas in 1835, unofficial rangers pursued the Comanche vehemently with little success. Texans held strong attitudes toward the Comanche, like all indigenous tribes. “The Texans demanded that the United States should muster the Rangers into federal service, pay them with federal money, and let them run all the Mexicans into the Río Grande and all the Indians into the Red River.”<sup>3</sup> Such attitudes toward native warriors had persisted since the American Revolutionary War.

The American Revolution, like the French and Indian War before it, found many tribes, notably the Iroquois, fighting with the British. The alliance with the British increased the status of native warriors as the enemy of the Continentals. The way the natives fought, scalping for example, added a “frightfulness” to the way the Continentals perceived them.<sup>4</sup> The Iroquois’ actions resulted in colonists adding “enemy” to the label of “savage.”

In the Proclamation of 1763, the British declared lands west of the Appalachian Mountains reserved for the indigenous tribes. Imported diseases such as small pox, war, and encroachment on lands, decreased the number of tribes’ peoples significantly.

Americans pushed the indigenous tribes' people that survived in three directions: west of the Appalachian Mountains as far as the Mississippi River; north into Michigan, Wisconsin, and Canada; and south into Georgia and Florida. Years later, settlers expressed an interest in the land west of the Appalachians and "west" became west of the Mississippi River. From 1830, following President Andrew Jackson's signing of the Indian Removal Act, indigenous tribes relocated north of the Red River, the border of Mexico, in Indian Territory to the border with New Spain. In 1846, the Comanche signed the Treaty of Council Springs securing a home in the Indian Territory. Texans harassed the Comanche and the Comanche in return raided Texans. In 1858, Texas, as a state in the union, established a reservation for the Comanche on the Brazos River (see Texas Posts and Rivers map in Chapter 2).

The Comanche, like the Apache, rode horses, rejected the agrarian life style, made a custom of raiding, and epitomized the hostile, "savage Indian" in the mind of whites.<sup>5</sup> Horses, introduced by Spain in the sixteenth century, became the center of gravity for the warrior's culture as they operated in the vast plains of east Texas. Males became warriors and masters of horses early. "A Comanche on his feet is out of his element," observed western artist George Catlin, "but the moment he lays his hands upon his horse, his face even becomes handsome, and he gracefully flies away like a different being."<sup>6</sup> The Army realized the native raiders' dependence on the horse. In 1850, Secretary of War Conrad wrote: "Indians that occupy the vast and open plains from the southern extremity of Texas to Oregon, . . . whether for war or for chase, are invariably mounted, and well skilled in the management of the horse." The Army also realized that a love of horses and raiding blended the Comanche and Apache customs. In the 1500s, the Spanish

and Comanche drove the Apache out of what is today central Texas. The Apache and Comanche inspired better than 85 percent of the Native American skirmishes in Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas, but of those hundreds of raids, the Comanche did not command the majority. The Apache did.

In 1884, Brigadier General George Crook placed Lieutenant Briton Davis, 3rd Cavalry, in charge of the Apache reservation on Turkey Creek. Davis became enamored with the Apache. Of them, in his 1929 book, *The Truth About Geronimo*, he suggested that the Spanish, or Spanish-speaking Mexicans, gave the name “Apache” to the native people. “The Apache had a distinct method of torture for the wounded who fell into their hands,” Davis wrote. “They were turned over to the women and children who amused themselves by crushing the bones of the unfortunates with rocks.”<sup>7</sup> The old Spanish word, *apachurar*, means “to crush.” *Apachureros de huesos* - means crushers of bones. Shortened with time, Davis speculated, it became Apache.

The Apache lived further west in the desolate arid and mountainous New Spain provinces of Sonora, Chihuahua, and New Mexico where a fatigued horse became food and the natives valued the life of a mule over that of an American adult. Because the desert terrain did not support large concentrations of people, the Apache dispersed into several sub-tribes or affiliations.<sup>8</sup> The numerous tribes, Chiricahua, Mimbreno, and Mescalero, to name a few, are noted in greater detail in Chapter 3. Davis, in one long sentence referring to the campaign to bring in Geronimo, established the essence of what became the Apache Wars: “In this campaign thirty-five men and eight half-grown or older boys, encumbered with the care and sustenance of 101 women and children, with no base of supplies and no means of waging war or of obtaining food or transportation

other than what they could take from their enemies, maintained themselves for eighteen months, in a country two hundred by four hundred miles in extent, against five thousand troops, regulars and irregulars, five hundred Indian auxiliaries of these troops, and an unknown number of civilians.”<sup>9</sup> The Apache numbered from 5,500 to 6,100 at the start of the Army’s campaign against them.<sup>10</sup>

As stated by Brigadier General Mason, the Apache frequently made victims of Mexicans in Sonora and Chihuahua. The Apache killed some 5,000 Mexicans on the road from El Paso to Santa Fe by 1830.<sup>11</sup> On 1 July 1852, upon concluding a treaty with several Apache, Major John Greiner asked Mimbreno Chief Mangas Coloradas why he hated Mexicans. The chief replied: “Some time ago my people were invited to a feast; aguardiente, or whiskey, was there; my people drank and became intoxicated, and were lying asleep when a party of Mexicans came in and beat out their brains with clubs. At another time, a trader was sent among us from Chihuahua. While innocently engaged in trading . . . a cannon concealed behind the goods was fired upon my people, and quite a number were killed. . . . How can we make peace with such people?”<sup>12</sup> The Mexican and Apache waged war against one another for 60 years. However, as chapter 3 will further illuminate, the Apache were not the only people to battle the Mexicans. Mexicans had their hands full with the United States, the French, and their own *caudillos*.

### The Mexicans

The U.S. Army pursued Pancho Villa into Mexico in 1916, transported troops for President Carranza in 1915, and seized Veracruz in 1913. From 1850 to the 1880s, Texans struggled to remove the influence of Juan Cortina. From 1846 to 1848 the United States waged war against Mexico. In the 1830s, hundreds of Americans fought and bled

beside “Texans” in their war for the independence of Mexico. Many of the roots to the problems that surfaced on the border, such as religious and language differences, a lack of rights for the peasantry, a lack of control of the northernmost states by the Mexican central government, and poverty, began more than 300 years before the Mexicans rose to claim their independence from Spain.<sup>13</sup>

In May 1492, King Ferdinand of Aragon and Queen Isabella of Castile posted a letter ordering the town of Palos, Spain to contribute two shallow-drafted ships to enter her majesty’s service for three months. Due to the Ottoman Empire’s restrictions on European trade with Asian through the Mediterranean Sea, the Spanish wanted new trade routes to the east. An Italian businessman named Christopher Columbus read the order at the port city. The town provided the *Nina* and the *Pinta*. Columbus provided the *Santa Maria* and in 1492 sailed her to present day Haiti and the Dominican Republic. His men found gold, the native people, and endless possibilities in a vast “New World” claimed by Spain. Ferdinand and Isabella, strongly devoted to the Holy Roman Catholic Church, the state religion of the Latin world, encouraged conquistadors to explore “New Spain” and convert of their new subjects to Catholicism.<sup>14</sup>

On 8 November 1519, Hernán Cortés Pizarro invaded Tenochtitlan, the Aztec capital ruled by Moctezuma Xocoyotl of the Mexica people. Once completed, the war established Spanish control, along with their language and Catholicism, over what became “New Spain.” Explorers’ trades with natives led to the realization that copper and silver lay in the mountain regions to the north. Expeditions ventured across the massive desert, negotiated the Río Grande, and navigated across the Continental Divide. Historians credit Don Juan de Oñate for establishing *El Paso del Rio del Norte* and Santa

Fe. Oñate is also credited for claiming New Mexico, which included all of Arizona, in 1598 for the Spanish crown and becoming her first governor. In 1690, Alonso de León crossed the Río Grande and established the mission San Francisco de los Tejas. De León's route, the Old San Antonio road, became el Camino Real, a route U.S. troops patrolled in the nineteenth century.<sup>15</sup>

In 1700, the actions of the Spanish king, Phillip V, founded political and economic conditions that left Mexico unstable and largely impoverished throughout the 1800s. Phillip, a Frenchman, chose to reform and modernize Spain. Making his "Bourbon Reforms" reality required compliance from all Spanish subjects and a lot of national treasure. Spain raised colonial New Spain taxes and increased control over the colonists by removing much of the established autonomy and viceregal representation in the government. The people referred to viceroys born in New Spain as *criollos* or *creoles*. The *creolo* viceroys had positioned themselves as the top of the Mexican social class. Many of these men, called *caudillos*, held military commissions, controlled forces in their regions, held political aspirations, and many became Mexican presidents.<sup>16</sup>

Spanish reforms reduced the influence of, and funds to, the Holy Roman Catholic Church and the Jesuit Order. The Society of Jesuits had mapped the region, educated the indigenous peoples, and spread Catholicism. In short, they had helped turn the Aztecs into Spanish-speaking, practicing Catholics Mexicans. In another measure to maintain control over the colonists, Spain improved her military presence by increasing the number of *presidios* in New Spain. Spaniards built several *presidios* north of the Río Grande in the provinces of New Mexico, Coahuila, and *Tejas*. The crown established *El*

*Presidio de los Tejas* in 1716 and *El Presidio de San Antonio de Bejar*, present day San Antonio, in 1718.<sup>17</sup>

While Spain became wealthy, Mexican representatives, whether Spanish born, *peninsulars*, or New Spain born, *creoles*, became increasingly intolerant of the reforms. To make matters worse, Napoleon Bonaparte jailed Spain's King Charles IV and on July 6, 1808 conferred his brother Joseph with the Spanish throne. Napoleon's actions resulted in resistance by Spaniards in Spain and Mexico equally. Ironically, the Spanish insurrection against French rule became the model for the Mexican insurrection against Spanish rule. Home rule in both Spain and Mexico became the cry of the insurgent.<sup>18</sup>

#### 1810, The Mexican Struggle for Independence

Throughout New Spain, local governments, had thirst for greater sovereignty since before the implementation of the Bourbon Reforms and the placement of Joseph Napoleon on the Spanish throne. However, they still would not tolerate talk of Mexican home rule. *Creoles* wanting self rule and a return of the Church; land owners and businessmen tired of the increased taxes due to the reforms; peasants looking for more rights and privileges; and natives who had for years paid tributes to the crown, all found themselves unified under a common cause--independence from Spanish rule.<sup>19</sup> In September 1810, insurgents learned of the regime's plans to arrest their leaders.<sup>20</sup>

When the *peninsulars* began arresting rebel leaders, Padre Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla, knew the crown would arrest he and his support's next. For years Hidalgo rallied his congregation against the increased taxes, Spanish rule, the increased military presence, tributes by natives, Negro slavery, and the increased control of the Mexican governmental. He also rallied the populace for the return of Catholic Church, greater

local representation in the government, and better opportunities for the natives and peasants. On September 16, 1810, through his *Grito de Dolores*, shout from the village of Dolores, the priest called his congregation to arms and began the Mexican revolution. Hidalgo, the champion of the peasants, indigenous tribes, and black slaves, did not live to see an independent Mexico. On July 30, 1811, while still holding onto control of New Spain, the crown captured him, executed him by firing squad, and placed his head in a cage at the corner of the granary in Guanajuato. Others led the way to Mexican independence.<sup>21</sup>

Agustín Cosme Damián de Iturbide y Arámburu, a royal who fought for Spain met rebel General Vicente Guerrero in Iguala. Iturbide and Guerrero, both *creole caudillos*, realized they had very common interests: independence from Spanish rule, return of the Church, and equality for the populace. Iturbide used his connections to convince national leaders tired of the war to accept the Iturbide-Guerrero *Plan de Iguala*. On August 24, 1821, Iturbide signed the Treaty of Córdoba recognizing Mexico's independence from Spain. He also saw to it that Hidalgo received a proper burial.<sup>22</sup>

Hidalgo's ideals and actions which made him the champion of the poor, peasants, and the indigenous people inspired future events. Many decades later, future president and full-blooded Zapotec, Benito Juárez, and revolutionaries such as Francisco Villa, honored his call for land reform, and equality of all classes and better opportunities for peasants and laborers. Catholicism, the official state-mandated religion of the Latin world, commanded enormous loyalty, respect, and power. Not unlike Padre Hidalgo, a future priest would rally Mexicans to war against the Americans in the United States resulting in the call for a response from soldiers on the border. *Caudillos* continued to

dominate and over turn the Mexican government leaving it weak and unable to control the outer regions of the northern states resulting in soldiers receiving the call to assist with the border's lawlessness. Mexicans on both sides of the Río Grande grew to resent the presence of the military and the French continued to intervene in Mexican affairs. From 1810 to 1821, as Mexican rebels fought for independence and Spain fought to maintain her hold on the huge colony, both parties added to the destruction of the potential nation. As the economy grew weaker arms became scarce. Soldiers on both sides resorted to hand to hand combat with lances, knives, slings, and clubs. Both sides razed cultivated fields and burned down towns and haciendas. The economy of the colony previously drained by the Bourbon Reforms eroded further due to the expense of funding the destructive war. Similar happenings, with similar results, would occur 100 years later. In all, the events leading to Mexico's independence foreshadowed her history, and kept soldiers on the border vigilant, throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries.<sup>23</sup>

The above sections on the Comanche, Apache, and Mexicans provided a look at events that impacted future enemies of the American people prior to the establishment of a military presence on the border in 1846. Americans attitudes and interests also contributed to instability in the region. The 1803 Louisiana Purchase resulted in the largely Protestant, English-speaking, slave-owning United States sharing a western border with the Catholic-by-law, Spanish-speaking "New Spain" which prohibited slavery. The issue of slavery surfaced as a destructive theme in three wars resulting in strong anti-American attitudes, especially toward American soldiers. In 1821, as Mexicans concluded their struggle for independence an entrepreneur from Missouri made a deal with Spain that continues to affect the border to this day.<sup>24</sup>

1821, Austin colony, Coahuila y Tejas, Mexico

Moses Austin, a Missouri resident, submitted a request for a 300-family colony to the province of *Tejas*, New Spain. His concession was approved on January 17, 1821. The crown allotted Austin 640 acres or one square mile. Moses Austin died that year leaving his son Stephen F. Austin to carry out his father's plans. As Austin began his entrepreneurial pursuit, he learned of the requirements of the Spanish for emigration into the province. The requirements included Holy Roman Catholic Church membership, the prohibition of slavery, the freedom of all slaves brought into the colony, and the ability to speak Spanish. All four requirements factored into the colonists' later request for independence.<sup>25</sup>

Many Texans, like Stephen F. Austin, came from Louisiana which permitted slavery. Slavery had all but ended in Mexico by 1810 when Padre Hidalgo called for its abolition.<sup>26</sup> The Texans had also enjoyed the freedom of religion observed in America for 200 years. They resented having a religion thrust upon them. For the Latinos the American concerns meant little. Roman Catholicism went back some 1,300 years after Constantine's vision of the cross prior to winning the battle at the Milvian Bridge. In 1492, when the Spanish arrived, the Crown wanted to make the New World Spanish and Catholic. Their desires conflicted with the people forming the growing Austin Colony who knew the Spanish position prior to moving west. That conflict eventually led to war.<sup>27</sup>

Mexico did not intend to allow Stephen F. Austin and his flow of Protestant, English-speaking, slave-owners to overtake and control *Tejas*. In 1813, when claiming her independence, the Congress of Mexico, included the abolition of slavery in her

constitution. Mexico, however, did not make her position on slavery entirely clear. She never fully adopted the 1813 constitution. On June 28, 1821, the Spanish *Cortes* issued a new colonial law. Article 28 prohibited the introduction of slavery and declared free all slaves brought into Spanish territory. Inturbide and Juan de O'Donojú signed the Treaty of Córdoba a month later on 30 July 1821. The colonization committee of the first Mexican Congress prohibited slavery and required Catholicism in order to receive a land concession. In 1824, in order to avoid the issues of slavery, Catholicism, and the requirement to speak Spanish, Austin attempted statehood. Mexico responded in kind by making *Tejas* part of Coahuila and creating the state of *Coahuila y Tejas*. Austin countered by lobbying for the state to settle the issue of slavery. Mexico capitulated. The 1824 constitution also failed to resolve the issue partly in order to appease Jared E. Groce, a wealthy citizen of Austin Colony who had 100 slaves. Foreshadowing events that would take place in the United States many years later, Mexico balked on whether the right to freedom for Africans superseded the right to property for statesman. A 13 July 1824 decree did, however, prevent the introduction of slaves. Austin ultimately got around that issue by contracting Negroes into indentured servitude. In 1824, the Mexican government adopted the same requirements for colonists that the Spanish had established, adding the condition that colonists become Mexican citizens. The 1824 constitution also declared Roman Catholicism the only official and tolerated religion. Still, Austin lobbied for, but failed to secure, the change for the “Catholic” requirement to read “Christian.” From 1821 to 1828, Austin, by winning political favor, negotiated the bringing of 1,500 families into his colony.<sup>28</sup>

The issue of slavery and to a lesser extent Catholicism aggravated the differences between the colonists and Mexicans. The *Coahuila y Tejas* 1827 constitution read: “No one is born a slave in the state from the time this Constitution is published in the seat of each district; and after six months, the introduction of slaves is prohibited under any pretext.” On September 15, 1829, Vicente Guerrero, the nation’s second president, abolished slavery in Mexico in its entirety. By that time Austin had led close to 9,000 Americans, through both legal and illegal avenues, into Mexico. Austin found that slave-owning, cotton-growing residents of the southern United States happily moved to *Tejas* and enjoyed purchasing the relatively cheap land. The colonists formed militias to protect themselves from Comanche raiders and to preserve their way of life. The colonists also bought goods from, and sold their harvests to, merchants in Louisiana. Mexico not benefited little from the transplanted Americans’ labors. In retaliation, in 1830, Mexican President Antonio de López de Santa Anna closed Mexico to emigration from the United States and assessed duties on all imports and exports. Americans began to illegally cross the Sabine River to immigrate into Mexico. Tensions increased. Santa Anna, who had his hands full with uprisings in other Mexican districts, responded by sending troops to *Tejas*. Foreshadowing an American future, Santa Anna’s patrols failed to control the flow of illegal immigrants from Louisiana. By 1834, more than 20,000 Americans had immigrated into *Tejas*. They outnumbered the roughly 4,000 Spanish-speaking Mexicans five to one. For all intents and purposes, Mexico had lost the area that the American immigrants began calling Texas.<sup>29</sup>

The inevitable armed conflict ended in 1836 with Santa Anna a captive of Texas General Sam Houston. The Texans, who enjoyed strong ties to the United States, brought

their President made prisoner to Washington, D.C. David Burnet, President of the Republic of Texas, and Santa Anna, met with President Andrew Jackson in order to sort out the terms of the Treaty of Velasco. Burnet and Santa Anna signed the brief and poorly written agreement which recognized the independent Republic of Texas on May 14, 1836.<sup>30</sup> The quickly drafted document neither established the border between the republics nor addressed the future diplomatic and trade relationship between the countries. While in Washington, Presidents Jackson and Burnet also made plans for the future annexation of Texas by the United States.<sup>31</sup>

Slavery, and the fact that Mexico City did not recognize Texas' independence, made annexation a contested issue in the United States. The Republic of Texas prepared to join the United States in 1845; Mexico clearly stated her objection to the United States plan to annex Texas and readied for war against her neighbor to the north if annexation took place; and the United States, with a growing expansionist movement, made plans to establish a military presence on the as-yet-undetermined Texas border with Mexico. The American takeover of *Tejas*, socially, economically, and militarily, led to strong anti-American feelings by Mexicans on the border. The Texas example epitomizes the left column of the Strategy Process chart (figure 2). Mexicans negative opinions of Americans multiplied due to the war for Texas independence and the subsequent defeat of Santa Anna's forces by American soldiers.

### Africans in America

Africans in the New World, not unlike the indigenous people, did not receive status as men equal to Europeans. White, or Anglo-Americans perceived African servants as property, a dark-skinned work force. The Portuguese began importing West Africans

servants into the Americas as early as 1441. By 1619, the first African servants arrived in the English colony of Virginia. As the colony grew so did the requirement for non-Christian labor that could not easily blend into the environment and that owners could punish or discipline with impunity. By 1640, Virginia courts had ordered a captured runaway black servant to serve his master for the entirety of his natural life. In 1661, Virginia legally recognized slavery and the industry boomed. As the number of Africans in America increased, the African-Americans adopted the language and religion of the colonists. Ministers baptized slaves but that did not change their status. The laws defining slavery as an inherited condition essentially told colonist to think of Africans and their descendents for generations to come as little more than conquered property and a workforce without rights.<sup>32</sup>

The Constitution of the United States recognized slaves as members of the union due to the insistence of Georgia and South Carolina but only as 60 percent, or three fifths, of a free person due to the insistence of Pennsylvania. By 1790, the first census revealed African slaves, at near 700,000 persons, made up a third of the country's population. Anglos had strong feelings about living with the increasing number of Negroes. The 1857 Dred Scott case legally classified blacks as beings inferior to whites and undeserving of United States citizenship. Black people living in America, as well as the abolitionist that supported them, struggled long and hard for the recognition of Negroes as whole men deserving of U.S. citizenship, and a people eligible to pursue happiness through education, free work opportunities, and land ownership. The United States Army constituted one path to recognition. Some 5,000 slaves and freemen fought with George Washington in the Continental Army during the American Revolution. Many, like those

from Rhode Island, gained freedom through their service. Others had to wait for the U.S. Civil War, some 85 years later, for the same opportunity.<sup>33</sup>

### Conditions in 1846

With Mexico and the United States poised to fight over the annexation of Texas; Texans transplanting slavery into their new republic; Comanche raiding in Texas; Apache raiding year round in Sonora, Chihuahua, and New Mexico; and the U.S.-Mexico borders' distance from Washington D.C. and Mexico City, as well as more than a couple of days travel from the capitals of Austin, Texas, or Santa Fe, New Mexico, instability and violence quickly came to the border. The United States deployed its Army to the frontier in order to make it safe by providing a deterrence to raids and invasions, an offense, a defense, security, law, order, and when necessary, exact punishment.

### Tactical Problem

The factors of terrain and climate receive attention in the next chapter. The government gave a vague, yet simple, mission: protect Americans and their property on the frontier border. Washington specified no time frame. As Chapters 3 and 4 will discuss, troops available changed considerably following the U.S. Civil War. Generals tasked to defend the border faced the following tactical problem:

Within the vicinity of all lands north of, and immediately affecting, the U.S.-Mexico border, the U.S. Army will deploy forces along primary transportation routes and within key ports of commerce to protect American citizens from attack from indigenous tribes and Mexicans, additionally, the Army will establish and provide the law and facilitate order where it is otherwise absent.

The factors impacting the problem changed significantly after the Mexican War, the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, the U.S. Civil War, and the increased migration and encroachment of settlers upon the land by Americans.

### Key Points

Americans had viewed indigenous warriors as a savage enemy since the 1700s. Up to the 1850s, the Comanche, and Apache raided one another, Mexicans, and Americans as a way of life not necessarily as a hostile act of aggression toward a nation or its people. The Spanish, devout Catholics, had abolished slavery in Mexico by the 1800s. Mexicans continued to prohibit slavery, the speaking of Spanish, and the practice of Catholicism. The Catholic Church held significant power in Mexico allowing Priests to easily influence the masses, even call them to arms. *Caudillos* controlled Mexico's government. Austin colony extended American culture, interests, and values into Mexico to include the use of English, a freedom of religion, and slavery. By 1836, Mexico had lost Texas socially, politically, and militarily. The loss created strong anti-American attitudes. Slavery formed the foundation of Americans attitudes toward Negroes.

Chapter 3 will further explore the unsettling influence Mexican politics, and the other factors listed above, had on the Mexican border with the United States.

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<sup>1</sup>War Department, 1850.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 1866.

<sup>3</sup>Walter Prescott Webb, *The Texas Rangers: A Century of Frontier Defense* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, Austin, 1965), 20, 23-24.

<sup>4</sup>Wayne E. Lee, "From Gentility to Atrocity: The Continental Army's Ways of War," *Advanced Operations and Warfighting Course, H300: Roots of the COE Parallel Block* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: U.S. Command and General Staff College, 2007), 43-53.

<sup>5</sup>James L. Roark, Michael Johnson, Patricia Cline Cohen, Sarah Stage, Alan Lawson, and Susan M. Hartman, *The American Promise* (Boston, MA: Bedford/St. Martins Publishing, 2007), 287.

<sup>6</sup>Francis S. Drake, *Indian History* (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1919), 434-435.

<sup>7</sup>Britton Davis, *The Truth About Geronimo* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1929), 1.

<sup>8</sup>Kendall D. Gott, *In Search of an Elusive Enemy: The Victorio Campaign* (Fort Leavenworth, Kansas: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2004), 3.

<sup>9</sup>Davis, B., xxvii.

<sup>10</sup>James Mooney, *The Aboriginal Population of America North of Mexico*, (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1928); Davis, B., 32; and Francis A. Walker, *The Statistics of the Population of the United States: Ninth Census* (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 1872).

<sup>11</sup>R. David Edmunds, Frederick E. Hoxie, and Neal Salisbury, *The People: A History of Native America* (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2007), 280.

<sup>12</sup>Dan L. Thrapp, *The Conquest of the Apache* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1967), 9-11, and William H. Leckie, *The Buffalo Soldiers: A Narrative of the Negro Cavalry in the West* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1967), 13.

<sup>13</sup>Michael C. Meyer and William H. Beezley, *The Oxford History of Mexico* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2000), 275-287; Robert Ryal Miller, *Mexico: A History* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1985), 163-194; and Jackson J. Spielvogel, *Western Civilization* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing, 2006), 423.

<sup>14</sup>Meyer and Beezley, 11-45, 342; Miller, 210-211; and Spielvogel, 168, 380-386, and TSHA, "San Antonio."

<sup>15</sup>Edmunds, Hoxie, and Salisbury, and TSHA, "Don Juan de Oñate" and "Alonso de León."

<sup>16</sup>Meyer and Beezley, 11-45, 342; Miller, 210-211; and Spielvogel, 168, 380-386.

<sup>17</sup>TSHA, "Presidio de los Tejas" and "Presidio de San Antonio de Bejar."

<sup>18</sup>Meyer and Beezley, 11-45, 342; Miller, 210-211; and Spielvogel, 168, 380-386.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid.

- <sup>20</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>21</sup>Meyer and Beezley, 277-299, and Miller, 163-194.
- <sup>22</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>23</sup>Meyer and Beezley, 277-299; Miller, 163-194; and Spielvogel, 594.
- <sup>24</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>25</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>26</sup>Meyer and Beezley, 147, and Miller, 186.
- <sup>27</sup>Spielvogel, 168, 175.
- <sup>28</sup>Meyer and Beezley, 342-348.
- <sup>29</sup>Meyer and Beezley, 303, 344-355, and Miller 190, 206-214.
- <sup>30</sup>“Articles of an Agreement,” (14 May 1836). Common name Treat of Velasco.
- <sup>31</sup>Meyer and Beezley, 303, 344-355, and Miller, 190, 206-214.
- <sup>32</sup>Hope, Franklin John, and Moss, Alfred, A., Jr., *From Slavery to Freedom: A History of African Americans*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf Publishing, 2000), 65-67, 98.
- <sup>33</sup>Franklin, 65-67, 98; U.S. Census, 1790; Constitution of the United States, Article I, Section 2, 1787; and U.S. Supreme Court, *Dred Scott v. Sanford*, 60 U.S. 393 (How.), 1856.

## CHAPTER 3

### THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT: CLIMATE AND TERRAIN

A ragged, amateur Continental Army survived the freezing rains and snow of Valley Forge from December 1777 to June 1778 to emerge as the professional fighting force that ultimately defeated the British. From the 1840s to the 1850s, the U.S. Army proved it could adapt to operating in the everglades and swamps of Florida to defeat the Seminole. The U.S. Army had succeeded in cold and wet, and hot, wet, and humid conditions. In 1845, the Army began its operations on the border with Mexico. This chapter explores the physical environment along the border and describes the challenges of operating within that climate and terrain. From 1850 to 1886 the tasks of the cavalry and infantrymen included deterring, fighting, tracking, and punishing the perpetrators of depredations against settlers. Apache and Comanche raiders, as well as Mexican bandits, frequently committed acts of thievery and violence then used their knowledge of the terrain to escape. They fled into the mountains or across the Río Grande.

By 1870, U.S. troops had operated on the border for 25 years. The Apache still had the advantage of knowing the terrain better than the Americans, but the soldiers proved that they could hold their own against the tough indigenous enemy. By the mid-1860s, the United States had stabilized the number of posts in the border area at 33 (see figure 9). At the height of the war against the Apache in 1871-1874, posts along the border held about 5,800 troops with half, about 2,900, serving in Texas.<sup>1</sup> In 1845, the United States had no soldiers operating on the U.S.-Mexico border. Later that year troops

arrived unfamiliar with the environment of the New Mexico territory and the newly annexed state of Texas.

### Texas

Of the three states, Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas which form the majority of the border with Mexico, Arizona and Texas have the most diverse climate and terrain. The Texas-Mexico border follows the Río Grande for 1,254 miles from Brownsville in the east to El Paso in the west. From east to west the soldiers patrolling the Texas-Mexico border ran across three major climate and vegetation types.

The Brownsville area, on the eastern edge of Texas about 25 miles from the Gulf of Mexico, is 32 feet above sea level, presents a semi-tropical climate and receives close to 30 inches of rainfall annually. Across the Río Grande from Brownsville is Matamoros, Tamaulipas.<sup>2</sup> The U.S. Army located six posts in the Brownsville region between 1845 and 1900: Forts Ewell, Merrill, McIntosh, Ringgold, Polk, and Brown (see figure 3).

More centrally located along the Texas-Mexico border about 330 miles northwest of Brownsville with an elevation of 1,080 feet is Eagle Pass, Texas. From 1867 to 1900 the Army constructed 13 posts in this semi-arid grassy region of Texas south of Fort Worth. The Army built Forts Lancaster, Concho, McKavett, Terrett, Mason, Clark, Martin Scott, Sam Houston, Clark, Inge, Lincoln, and Duncan in the center of the Texas-Mexico border (see figure 3).



Figure 3. Texas Rivers and Posts 1845-1900  
 Source: Adapted from Frazer, 140-141; Michno, xxviii, xxx; and World Atlas, Texas Rivers available from [www.worldatlas.com](http://www.worldatlas.com) accessed May 7, 2007.

Further to the northwest along the Río Grande is the west Texas town of El Paso. Some 480 miles from Eagle Pass, El Paso rests in the Chihuahuan Desert at an elevation of 4,000 feet above sea level. El Paso, once called Franklin, and its neighbor from the across the Río Grande Paso del Norte, are split by the Continental Divide and receive about eight-and-a-half inches of rain annually.<sup>3</sup> The barren mountain ranges reach heights of around 7,000 feet. From late spring to early fall, the Chihuahua desert can reach 100 degrees Fahrenheit by mid-afternoon and stay hot until well past sunset. The days from July through September make up the “rainy” season where the region receives from one to two inches of rain per month. The other nine months, where 100 days without rain is common, receive from two to five inches of rain.

There is little-to-no agriculture past irrigation distance from the Río Grande. The vegetation in the El Paso area away from the Río Grande is largely drought-resistant cacti, shrubs, and small trees. They are, however, misleading. While only three or four feet high, millions of shrubs and brushes atop a million mounds covering hundreds of miles are enough to obscure the view of an approach or an escape.

Located some 330 miles from Santa Fe; 550 miles from San Antonio; with a high-desert climate; passage through the Continental Divide; Mexico to the south across the Río Grande and New Mexico to the north and west across the Río Grande, El Paso became a hub for activity in west Texas and south-central New Mexico. The government established five Army posts in this desert region of Texas along routes to San Antonio and along the Río Grande: Forts Bliss, Quitman, Davis, Cibolo, and Stockton.<sup>4</sup>

The terrain had a variety of affects on operations. The Apache learned to “disappear” in the Guadalupe Mountains partially because the warriors knew the area

well, partly because the Rocky Mountains allowed raiders to not leave a trail, and partially because the soldiers reluctantly to dismounted, partially because the experienced soldiers knew they faced possible ambush in the mountains.<sup>5</sup>

Scarce quantities of wildlife lived in the desert areas. Both natives and soldiers ate horse when nothing else was readily available.<sup>6</sup> Also few waterholes lay in the vast region. Colonel Benjamin Grierson and the 10th Cavalry almost caught Chiricahua Chief Victorio in 1880 by leaving a team of soldiers near each water hole from Van Horn to Lubbock. Victorio, however, disappeared in the Guadalupe Mountains.<sup>7</sup> An example of the variations of terrain in Texas are the Van Horn area where a Ranger once had to use a horse for cover and the area near the Concho river north of Fort McKavett where a report stated, “the Kickapoos had a good defensive position, protected by thick brush and timber, with the dry branches along the creek making fine rifle pits.”<sup>8</sup> Finally, there is the escape that became a cliché, that being the typical Apache and Mexican act of fleeing across the Río Grande into Mexico.<sup>9</sup>

#### New Mexico and Arizona

North of Fort Bliss in New Mexico, the Army established numerous posts along the route to Santa Fe. Soldiers built Forts Stanton, Fillmore, Selden, Thorn, McRae, Craig, Conrad, Cummings, Webster, West, Tularosa, McLane, and Bayard (see figure 4). Sierra Vista, some 300 miles to the west, is located within the transition between the Chihuahuan and Sonoran Deserts (see figure 6). The Chihuahuan Desert stretches from west Texas across New Mexico into eastern Arizona and covers the top half of Chihuahua, Mexico. It is about 800 miles long and 250 miles wide. At an elevation near 4,700 feet, Sierra Vista, on the Chihuahuan Desert’s western border, receives about 14

inches per year. The area, where the Apache frequently hid from both the United States and Mexican forces, is relatively green and sport trees near 30 feet tall. In the Sierra Vista area, the military established Forts Huachuca, Lowell, Bowie, Buchanan, and Camp Grant. The Sierra Vista area is significantly different than Fort McDowell some 206 miles to the north in Arizona.

In the hottest portion of the Sonoran Desert, at about 1,100 feet above sea level, sits Fort McDowell. The Sonoran Desert, however, does not sit alone. A mountain range with peaks averaging 7,000 feet runs the length of the Sonoran from north to south well into Mexico. Mountain winters produce cold temperatures with lows in the teens and highs in the mid-40s. For 120 days of the year temperatures reach, and sometime sustain for 24 hours, 100 degrees or greater. The Army manned six posts in this region between 1845 and 1900: Forts Apache, Breckinridge, Goodwin, McDowell, Whipple, and Camp Verde (see figure 5).

The elevation along the border changes significantly (see figure 7). Moving from west to east the rise increases from sea level to around 8,000 feet due to the Sierra Nevada Mountain range. The terrain remains mountainous with flat valleys between Tucson, Arizona and El Paso, Texas. Around the El Paso area the Franklin Mountains, part of the Continental Divide, produce an incredible rise in elevation resulting in peaks around 7,000 feet. The Río Grande creates one of the few passages through the Continental Divide. North of the border in northwest Texas, just about 30 miles southeast from the New Mexico border, the Guadalupe Mountains continue the affect of flat basins broken by impressive mountains. From the Guadalupe Mountains east to Brownsville, the terrain remains flat, eases in elevation, and it settles into the sea.

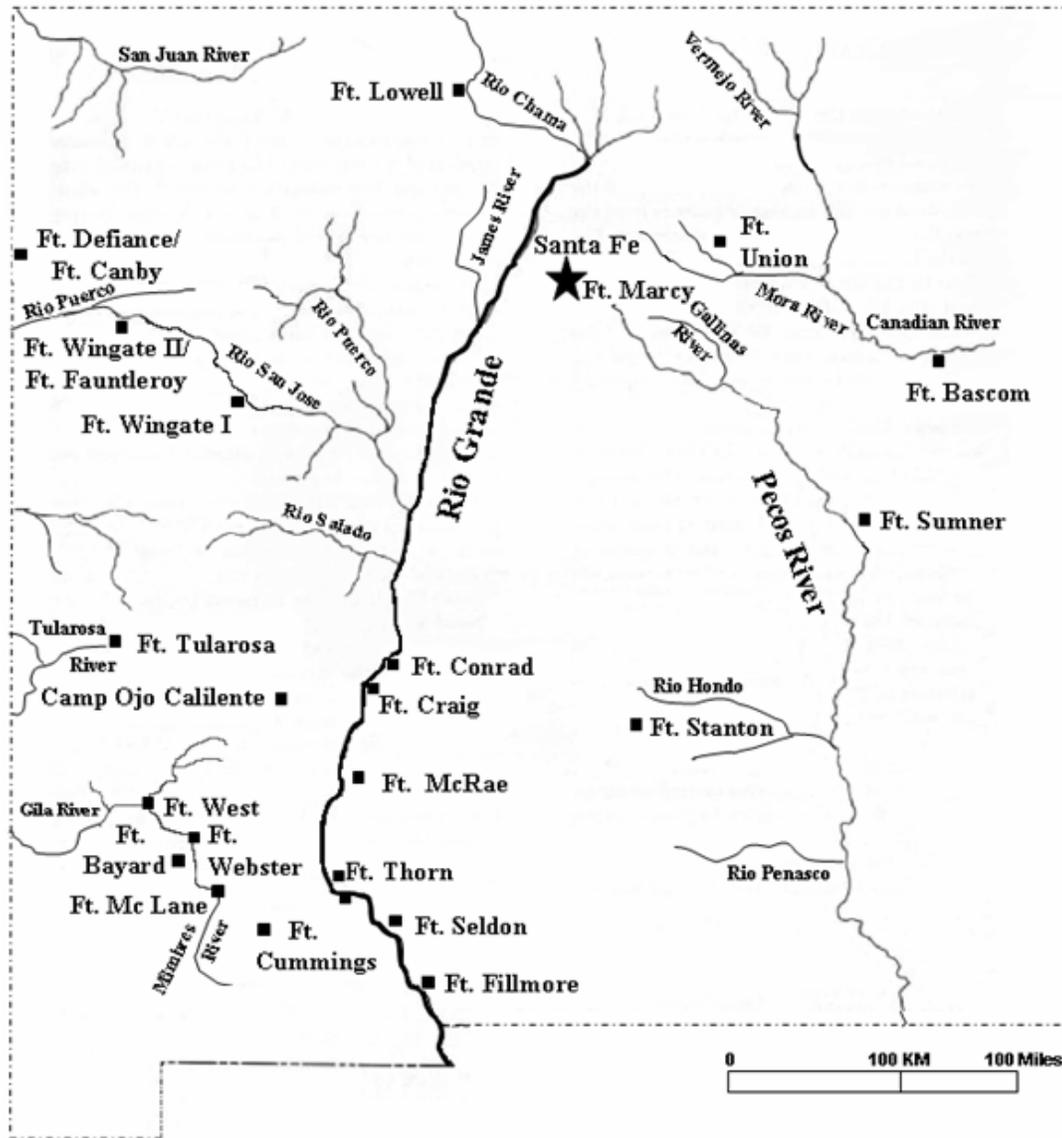


Figure 4. New Mexico Rivers and Posts 1845-1890

Source: New Mexico Rivers and Posts map adapted from the Historical Atlas of New Mexico, by Beck and Haase, and U.S. Geological Survey available from <http://geology.com/state-map/new-mexico.shtml>, New Mexico Map Collection accessed 9 May 2007.

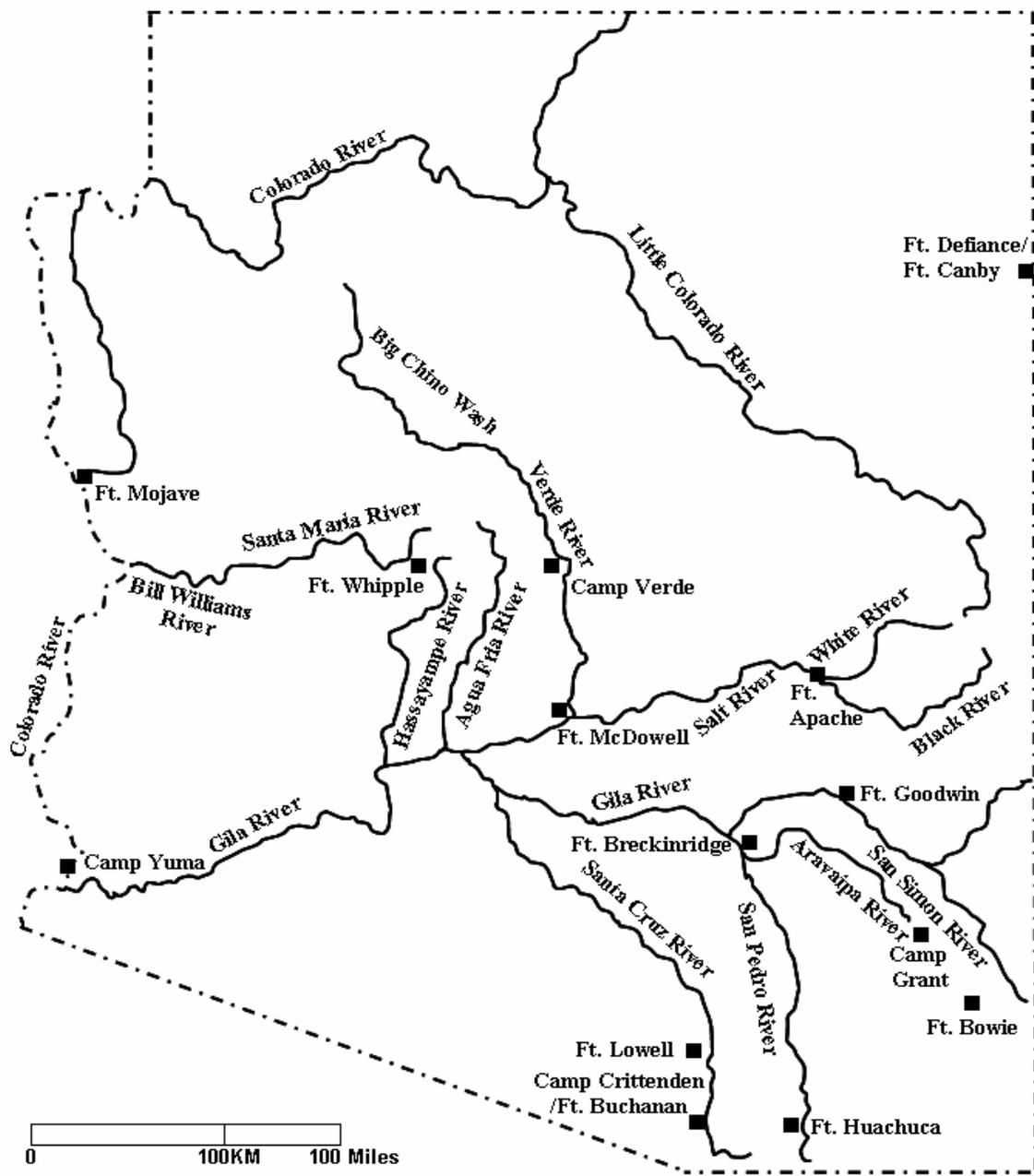


Figure 5. Arizona Rivers and Posts 1845-1890

Source: Adapted from Michno, v, vii; Frazer, 5; and U.S. Geological Survey available from <http://geology.com/state-map/new-mexico.shtml>, Arizona Map Collection accessed 9 May 2007.



Figure 6. The Sonoran and Chihuahuan Deserts  
 Source: Adapted from the U.S. Geological Survey available from <http://geology.com/sonorandesert/new-mexico.shtml>, Sonoran and Chihuahuan Maps Collection; accessed 9 May 2007.

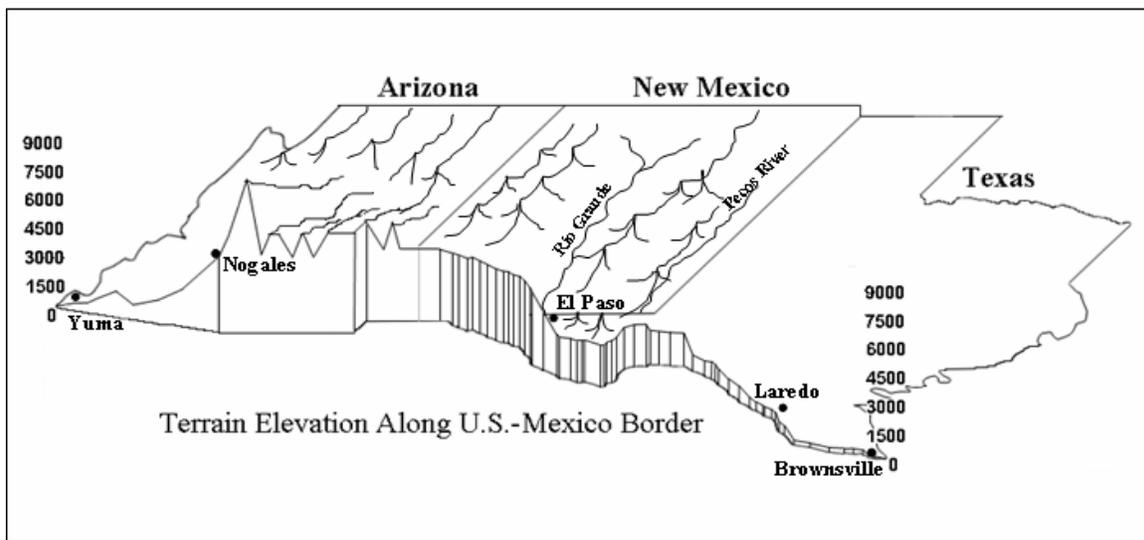


Figure 7. U.S.-Mexico Border Elevation  
 Source: Created from the U.S. Geological Survey available from <http://geology.com/state-map/.shtml>, Arizona, New Mexico and Texas Maps Collection accessed 9 May 2007.

### Impact on Operations

Like American soldiers operating in the swamps of Florida, the cavalry and infantry operating in the desert southwest adapted to and overcame the environment, and secured numerous tactical successes. The climate and terrain did, however, have an impact. While the area is known for its heat, soldiers mentioned it in only two reports.<sup>10</sup> Rather, they commented on the mountains and the cold winter weather more than any other climatic or physical condition. Several reports drafted during the winters of 1872-1873 and 1873-1874 commented on the effect of the cold conditions: “The men spent the night without fires or food as more snow fell, and they stomped around in a circle to keep from freezing.”<sup>11</sup> In January of 1874, two scouts became wet and subsequently drowned when crossing an icy and swollen Verde River. The mountains equally debilitated the soldiers. There are dozens of reports with comments on the Apache disappearing into the mountains.<sup>12</sup> Pursuing the Apache into the mountains proved unwise. It meant dismounting and risking an ambush.<sup>13</sup> The low depth of the Río Grande also hampered soldiers’ efforts. The frequently low water level failed to serve as an impassable natural border and gave the enemy the advantage. Both Apache and Mexican raiders quickly crossed the river to escape their American pursuers. The lack of drinking water affected soldiers and warriors equally.

### Key Points

The study of the terrain and climate revealed that knowledge of both, but especially the terrain, contributed to improved tactical success. When Colonel Grierson emplaced sentries near each water hole from Van Horn to Lubbock, Texas, Victorio and his band fled into the mountains thirsty. Mountains became a refuge for the Apache

because the soldiers rarely to pursued them there. Knowing the warriors had the advantage in the mountains, the soldiers reluctantly abandoned the chase. In all, knowledge of the terrain, like Grierson's, provided a combat multiplier for the border Army.

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<sup>1</sup>War Department, 1872-1874.

<sup>2</sup>National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Weather Service, available from <http://www.nws.noaa.gov>. Internet; accessed 18 March 2007.

<sup>3</sup>NOAA.

<sup>4</sup>Frazer, 140-141.

<sup>5</sup>Michno, 214, 239, and 335.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., 42.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., 8, 334-335.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., 162, 281.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., 232,293.

<sup>10</sup>Michno, 320, 338.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., 263, 272, 274, 275, 303.

<sup>12</sup>Michno, 118, 200, 214, 238, 257, 298, 334-335.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., 222, 256.

## CHAPTER 4

### THE POLITICAL TERRAIN

“Had there been a garrison of even 100 men . . . it is unlikely that present trouble would have occurred,” Colonel Edward Hatch, Commander 9th Cavalry Regiment in 1878 regarding the San Elizario Salt War. Colonel Hatch’s statement transcends the strategic, operational, and tactical levels. On the strategic level, would the United States have allowed soldiers to get involved in the San Elizario border conflict if only Mexican and American citizens, not soldiers, were involved? On the operational level, the movement of, or request for, 100 troops, or one company, is made by regiment commanders such as Hatch. On the tactical level, would the troops, after pursuing Apache and Comanche for years, have responded appropriately to a domestic incident? This chapter and Chapter 4 explore these issues.

Chapter 3 focuses on policies, politics, and governance on the border highlighting the United States dominating policies with Mexico to include the Mexican War, the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, and the Gadsden Purchase; Mexican politics focusing on the governments and actions of Santa Anna, Benito Juárez, Porfirio Díaz, and Pancho Villa; Apache and Comanche activities as policy, and the United States policies with the tribes; and the transition from slave to soldier for Negroes in America.

Mexico simply could not maintain a government. When it had a strong central government, its control rarely extended to northern Sonora, Chihuahua, and Coahuila. An expansion-minded United States succeeded at fully taking advantage of the weak Mexico. When Mexico had a stable central government its policies usually established the

foundation for the next revolution. The native tribes did not have a form of government that issued written policy. The eight-or-more various tribes achieved neither universal nor consistent policies although some customs, such as the defense of a Medicine Man, proved uniform to all tribes. Further, both the United States and the Apache abused the policies they managed to establish.<sup>1</sup> Both parties did, however, agree on the pursuit of other warriors. In Texas, east of Van Horn, border towns practiced attitude-driven policies that limited the effectiveness of the Army. The following chapter chronicles these issues.

### United States Policy Toward Mexico

By 1846, a potential war with Mexico led to the establishment of Forts Polk and Brown in Texas, and Fort Marcy, and the occupation of the presidio in Santa Fe, in New Mexico. The construction of the posts on the Río Grande, and the occupation of Santa Fe, became the self-fulfilling prophecy of the Mexican War. The United States had leaned toward expansionism politics. Texas, with undefined borders, prepared to join the Union. Mexico remained overwhelmed with running the 25-year-old country and was simply not prepared for the United States to use the military arm of its national power to secure its interests.

Expansionistic policies grew in the United States, particularly after the 1803 purchase of French Louisiana. In 1825, President James Monroe sent Joel Poinsett, minister plenipotenciary, to Mexico City to push the *Tejas* border to the Río Grande and purchase the area.<sup>2</sup> In Mexico, *Tejas* had no western border. The former Spanish province was simply the eastern half of the State of *Coahuila y Tejas*. Mexican President Antonio López de Santa Anna and Republic of Texas President David Burnet signed the

public Treaty of Velasco in 1836 which ceased hostilities against the Texan separatists and recognized the independence of the Republic. The brief agreement failed to establish the western border of the un-mapped republic. In some ways the treaty reflected the quality of Mexican and Texas politics over the next few decades as the thoroughness of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo reflected the quality of, and issues embedded within, the United States government.

On 19 December 1836, the First Texas Congress met in West Columbia, and set the southern border of Texas as the Río Grande.<sup>3</sup> That act all but guaranteed Mexico's refusal to recognize the Republic. The United States, and probably a few key Texans at the assembly, knew all too well that the western and southern border of the Province of *Tejas* was not the Río Grande.<sup>4</sup> Spain established the border above the Nueces River since its earliest days. An 1807 map of New Spain by Captain Zebulon Pike clearly shows the southern border of the province as the Guadalupe River, which is north of the Nueces.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, the 1824 Mexico Constitution map established the border between *Tejas* and Tamaulipas border as approximately the Nueces River.<sup>6</sup>

Texans, did not occupy the area they claimed. "Texas," for all intents and purposes, was an arch stretching from about Nacogdoches on Sabine River around San Antonio to the west and returning east at Corpus Christi on the Gulf of Mexico. Mexico, anticipating trouble, built garrisons in the region in the 1830s, after General Manuel Rafael Simeón de Mier y Terán completed a survey of the area and filed a report on 15 September 1829 that noted an increased American presence.<sup>7</sup> Mexico established Fort Tenoxtitlan on the Brazos in 1830, Fort Teran on the Neches River and Fort Lipantitlan

on the Nueces River in 1831, and Fort Velasco at the mouth of the Brazos in 1832.<sup>8</sup> The Mexican Army abandoned all four posts during the Texans struggle for independence.

U.S. President Andrew Jackson expressed interest in Texas, with the Río Grande as the southern boundary, but he did not officially recognize the independent Republic of Texas until near the last minute of 3 March 1837, his last day in office.<sup>9</sup> He did not want to agitate Mexico which did not recognize the independence of Texas, or rather the *Tejas* half of their State of *Coahuila y Tejas*. The U.S. knew that if it annexed Texas, Mexico would consider the action as a seizure of Mexican property. With recognition also came the question of annexation, and with annexation came the question of slavery. Texas would add almost 262,000 square miles of slave-holding property to the U.S.

At the time, slavery increasingly grew in prominence as the defining issue in United States politics. While the Republic of Texas, through an overwhelming vote of its congress, poised to join the United States, United States political wisdom at the time realized that issues of Texas annexation and the subsequent concern over the expansion of slavery were too controversial to address. The United States therefore deferred the annexation of Texas.

Journalist John L. O’Sullivan riled up Americans by advocating expansionism through his 1839 and 1845 opinion pieces about the “great nation of futurity” and its “manifest destiny to overspread the continent allotted by Providence.”<sup>10</sup> The 1844 Presidential race secured the Texas-statehood position for the United States when pro-annexation candidate James K. Polk won the election. Moving quickly, lame-duck President John Tyler presented Congress an offer for the United States to annex Texas.<sup>11</sup> Meanwhile in Mexico City, the British and French, wanting to limit the size and

influence of the United States, recommended to Santa Anna that he recognize Texas independence. Mexico, however, remained involved in its own domestic troubles, including a revolt that led to the exile of Santa Anna to Cuba.

Mexico recognized the Republic of Texas in the Cuevas-Smith Treaty.<sup>12</sup> In 1844, the people of Texas elected Anson Jones as President of the Republic. Jones took no position on annexation. While the United States, Britain, and France developed their positions regarding Texas, Jones sent his Secretary of State, Ashbel Smith, and British *chargé d'affaires*, Charles Elliot, to Mexico to negotiate the recognition of an independent Texas. Smith and Elliot met with Lois Guerrero Cuevas and succeeded in allowing Jones to give Texans the option of independence recognized by Mexico and guaranteed by France and Britain or annexation to the United States. However, by the summer of 1845, the majority of Texans and Americans sided with annexation. The terms of the Smith-Cuevas treaty prohibited the future annexation by the United States, conserved *California Alta* for Mexico, and guaranteed the recognition of the Republic by allies England and France.<sup>13</sup> Texans disliked the terms of the treaty and the actions of Jones in delaying annexation to the degree that they burned the President and his Secretary in effigy. Elliot returned to Great Britain. As the government of Mexican President José Joaquín de Herrera prepared to recognize the independence of the Lone Star Republic, the United States Congress voted on President Tyler's proposal to bring Texas into the Union. On February 28, 1845, the United States Congress approved the annexation of Texas by one vote.<sup>14</sup>

Mexico City quickly cut diplomatic relations with Washington in July of 1845 and General Zachary Taylor received orders to march an observation force to the Nueces

River. Colonel Stephen Kearny received orders to march 1,500 men from Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, to Santa Fe, New Mexico.<sup>15</sup> Texans formed volunteer irregular cavalries of “rangers” who enthusiastically awaited the forthcoming war. According to historians Charles H. Harris III and Louis R. Sadler, “From the ‘rangers’ point of view, the war provided a splendid opportunity to kill Mexicans and get paid for it. They remembered the Alamo and Goliad with a vengeance.”<sup>16</sup>

General Taylor’s observation forces became occupation forces on March 26, 1846, after they crossed the Nueces River and marched south to where the Río Grande flows into the Gulf of Mexico. There they established Forts Polk and Brown and the initial U.S. military presence on the border with Mexico.<sup>17</sup> Colonel Kearny and his troops occupied the Presidio at Santa Fe on 18 August 1846 and began construction of Fort Marcy on a hill overlooking the city five days later. Mexico perceived the construction of the forts as an invasion by the United States, a provocation, and an aggressive attempt to occupy its country.

### The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo

The war with Mexico ended with U.S. troops occupying San Francisco, Monterey, Santa Barbara, Santa Fe, Taos, Albuquerque, El Paso, and Matamoros to the north and Veracruz and Mexico City in central Mexico. The total defeat showcased how Mexico failed to come together. During the two year war, insurrections continued, several men served as president, no unity of command existed, no one general served as the lead commander throughout, and only seven of the 19 states contributed men or money to the national defense. As a result, the “Treaty of Peace” signed on 2 February 1848, largely favored the United States’ interests. Mexico lost about two-fifths of its land,

though less than one percent of its population. The real damage, however, was socio-political. The country never found its footing, seemed to suffer governmental retardation, and it developed a perception of being a lesser nation than the United States.

Through the war and the terms of the Guadalupe Hidalgo Treaty of Peace, the United States gained more than 800,000 square miles of territory at a cost to Mexico of \$15 million. Article V of the treaty set the southern border of Texas at the Río Grande.<sup>18</sup> The treaty reflected how little both nations knew of the sparsely populated New Mexico and western Texas lands. Neither the United States nor Mexico provided accurate maps at the time of the treaty's signing. The treaty states that the border between the United States and Mexico follows the Río Grande from its mouth at the Gulf of Mexico northwest to its intersection with the Gila River. The Río Grande comes nowhere near the Gila River. The treaty, highlighting its authors' ignorance of the described area, reads: "(or if it should not intersect any branch of that river, than to the point on the said line nearest to such branch, and thence in a direct line to the same)."<sup>19</sup> Regardless of knowledge of the land the expansion-minded United States knew it wanted more. The first articles focused on land boundaries and funds paid to the Mexican Republic by the United States. The issue resurfaced in 1853 at the time of the Mesilla Valley purchase (see figure 8). Another issue that resurfaced dealt with the more aggressive residents of the territory.



Figure 8. Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and the Gadsden Purchase  
*Source:* Adapted from Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo Map accessed on May 21, 2007 from <http://www.historicaldocuments.com/TreatyofGuadalupeHidalgoMap.gif>.

The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo side stepped the issue of slavery, but Article XI specifically addressed the issue of the native residents of New Mexico: “A great part of the territories [are] . . . now occupied by savage tribes.”<sup>20</sup> It continued to explain that each country would control the indigenous tribes on its half of the border. This clause became key later in wars against the Apache and the Comanche. Regarding slavery the

agreement addressed the issue of owning a Mexican, “It shall not be lawful . . . for any inhabitant of the United States to purchase or acquire any Mexican.”<sup>21</sup> It did not, however, address the issue of Negro slavery. The treaty only referred to “all property” or “property of any kind.” The poorly written Treaty of Velasco, foreshadowing Texas’ interest in preserving slavery, specifically addressed the restoration of “all private property including cattle, horses, negro slaves, or indentured persons.”<sup>22</sup> The United States further deferred the issue of slavery.

The war with Mexico and its subsequent peace treaty highlighted the vast difference in the efficiency and effectiveness of the United States and the Mexican governments. Still, the United States became politically divided when slavery rose to the forefront of the issue of states’ rights. The Civil War ensued and the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln followed. Even with that high a level of disturbance, the government of the United States continued to function.

Texas, accounting for more than half of the U.S.-Mexico border, found itself caught in the middle of the Mexican and American governmental flux. The majority of citizens that formed the state had left the United States for Mexico in order to secure inexpensive land. Within 14 years, the “Texans” broke away from Mexico, partially due to the issue of slavery, to create an independent republic that had plans to join the United States. After 10 years of independence, the republic became a state in the same union it left and that had deferred its annexation to avoid the issue of bringing another slave state into the country. As a slave state, Texas seceded from the United States after the 1860 election of anti-slavery candidate Abraham Lincoln. Texans left their former countrymen for a second time and fought against them in the Civil War. Texas, not unlike the country

of Mexico, remained in a state of flux from 1810 to 1865. Although the United States fared better than Mexico, all of North America experienced a period of internal turmoil.

### Mexican Politics

From the time the Mexican Congress crowned Agustín de Iturbide “Emperor Agustín I” without a quorum, Mexican politics remained troublesome. Then a young military commander from Veracruz named Antonio López de Santa Anna assisted in a revolt that removed Iturbide. The revolutionaries subsequently killed the emperor by firing squad.<sup>23</sup>

Guadalupe Victoria, the first Mexican president, replaced the executed Iturbide and remained in office for a full, four-year term. Due to public protest, the *caudillo*, General Vicente Guerrero replaced second president Manuel Gómez Pedraza in 1829, before Pedraza assumed the office. Guerrero made the significant contributions of abolishing slavery and expelling Spaniards. His Vice President Anastasio Bustamante overthrew Guerrero and subsequently had Guerrero killed by firing squad.<sup>24</sup> Bustamante, facing another rebellion led by Santa Anna, left the country. The instability continued.

### Santa Anna

Arguably Antonio López de Santa Anna earned the title one of Mexico’s most colorful caudillos and presidents. In 1846, during the Mexican war, an American agent contacted the Cuban exile. The two crafted a plan where Santa Anna would return to Mexico and negotiate a peace in exchange for the United States returning him to Veracruz. Once in Mexico, the caudillo fully engaged himself in the business of defending and once again leading his country. Santa Anna trained an army of 20,000 in

San Luis Potosí and marched north to Buena Vista where General Zachary Taylor's forces defeated his forces in a hard fought battle. The fighting produced numerous casualties on both sides and possibly offered the best chance for Santa Anna to turn back Taylor.

In Mexico City, recently elected President Valentín Gómez Farías signed a decree which authorized the sale of church property while the Church contributed significantly to the Mexico's war effort. Political moderates ran Farías out of town. Additionally, the Yucatan Peninsula declared itself independent and neutral in regards to the war. Following the loss at Buena Vista Santa Anna returned to Mexico City. There, he used his influence to complete the removal of Farías and the emplacement of himself as the Mexican President for the ninth time -- the fifth time following Farías.

In charge of the Mexican republic at the end of the disastrous war with the United States. Santa Anna resigned the presidency on 15 September 1847, with the American flag flying over Mexico City. When summoned to a court martial for failing to defend his Mexico, Santa Anna, knowing the fate of Hidalgo, Iturbide, and others, left Mexico and found exile in Jamaica. He returned to the presidency in 1852 partly due to the request of former executive branch committeeman Lucas Alamán and partly through a military coup d'état.

Mexico had not recovered from the effects of the war and she required a strong central leader. Santa Anna, however, returned as a tyrant that demanded his countrymen call him "His Most Serene Highness."<sup>25</sup> To fund recovery operations he sold the Mesilla Valley to James Gadsden, an aggressive buyer representing the United States.<sup>26</sup> Gadsden, a railroad promoter, aspired to lay a coast-to-coast train track across the southern states.

The Mesilla Valley sale, commonly known as Gadsden Purchase, ended the acquisition of Mexican land by the United States and allowed Gadsden to complete his rail line. The \$10 million land-purchase added nearly 30,000 square miles of territory to the bottom of the New Mexico territory thus establishing a new border. The sale also ended the career of “His Most Serene Highness.” Mexican insurgents, to include Benito Juárez , forced Santa Anna to leave Mexico. He found exile in Cuba and the United States.<sup>27</sup>

### Benito Juárez

The Mexican city across the Río Grande from El Paso, Texas, is *Ciudad Juárez*, or the City of Juárez. From 1863 until 1867, Mexican President Benito Juárez governed Mexico from *Paso del Norte*, present day Juárez, because the French seized Mexico and conferred Archduke Ferdinand Maximilian von Hapsburg as emperor. Demonstrating the strategic importance of the *El Paso del Norte* area, Juárez remained in *Paso del Norte* until forces led by Porfirio Díaz defeated the French and retook Mexico City. El Paso, at the time called Franklin, served as the Union capital of Texas throughout the U.S. Civil War.<sup>28</sup>

From the time Victoria completed his term as Mexico’s first president in April 1829 to the time Benito Juárez was sworn into office in January 1858, no president had completed a four year term. Juárez was a full-blooded indigenous Zapotec and a simple man. He earned the support of President Abraham Lincoln who stood by him through both their countries’ troubles in the early 1860s. Lincoln never recognized the rule of the archduke.<sup>29</sup>

After the French abandoned the emperor in 1867, Juárez’ forces led by Díaz captured the Austrian. Juárez allowed three days for the reception of pleas to spare the

former emperor's life. The pleas, however, had no effect. On 19 June 1867, Maximilian met the same fate as Mexico's first emperor. On 15 July 1867, the full-blooded Zapotec president returned to Mexico City in a simple black coach which fully represented the difference between his administration and the regime of Maximilian who would never again ride in his fully-gilded coach.<sup>30</sup>

United States cavalry and infantry units had built and occupied the 33 outposts by 1867. The posts served as the bases for their patrols for the next 50 years. Following the Mesilla Valley purchase, more settlers trekked to the western frontier. The Comanche and Apache increasingly obliged themselves to the livestock, provisions, and lives of the settlers. In order to focus on the increased depredations, the Army needed a calmer Mexico. President Juárez' led his country through eight stable years, but for the most significant progress and stability in Mexico's nineteenth century, Historians credit General Porfirio Díaz.<sup>31</sup>

### The Indispensable *Caudillo*

In addition to the three consecutive terms of Benito Juárez, Porfirio Díaz also brought presidential consistency to Mexico. Although he assumed office through force, the years of his presidency, the *Porfiriato*, helped modernize the politically troubled country. Historian Robert Miller opened his chapter on Díaz with: "The coup d'état that brought Porfirio Díaz to the presidency in 1876 ended a long period of governmental instability and ushered in a generation of political peace."<sup>32</sup> Historians Charles Harris and Louis Sadler agreed with Harris' assessment: "with the rise to power of the dictator General Porfirio Díaz, the Mexican side of the border was gradually brought under control."<sup>33</sup>

Díaz, a hero of the 1862 *Cinco de Mayo* battle that postponed the successful French invasion of Mexico, led the republic for the larger part of 34 years; from 17 February 1877 to 25 May 1911, with a four-year break after the completion of his second term. The *caudillo* transformed Mexico from a bankrupted, stalemated country into an industrialized competitor within, and contributor to, the world market. From the outside, Mexico looked like a stable nation which allowed border troops to concentrate on Apache and Comanche raiders.

Díaz set “Order and Progress” as his motto.<sup>34</sup> During his reign, businessmen and government officials transferred the land of the natives into the control of wealthy individuals and companies. The regime made education mandatory. The army shrank but Díaz’ national police, *Los Rurales*, grew. Mining and manufacturing increased considerably. The nation’s population increased from 9.5 to 15.2 million and the once bankrupt nation built a \$62 million surplus by 1910.<sup>35</sup> Railroad lines connected Mexico’s state capitals to key land ports in the United States. In 1910, at age 80, Díaz threw grand parades which drew thousands and erected statues in celebration of the *Porfiriato*.

Prior to being silenced, editors of the day saw in Mexico “an illusion of stability” in a land of “social inequality” led with the “heavy hand” of the “Indispensable *Caudillo*.”<sup>36</sup> Under the stable surface depredations by natives, and labor unrest, became increasingly disruptive. Some of the laborers in the Sonoran area complained that Americans, paid in dollars, earned higher wages than Mexicans paid in pesos. *Los Rurales* removed natives, sold them into labor, or killed them, along with strikers and their family members.<sup>37</sup> While the thirty-odd years of Díaz authoritarian regime brought

some “order and progress” to Mexico, it also served as the catalyst for far more than its army or the country in general could handle.

The years following the *Porfiriato* cost Mexico over a million lives and the blood shed from the revolutionary chaos crossed into the United States border towns.

### The Tiger and the Revolutionaries

Charles Harris and Louis Sadler called the decade from 1910 to 1920 “the bloodiest decade.”<sup>38</sup> Robert Ryal Miller stated that “Of the many revolutions in their national history, Mexicans spell only one with a capital “R” - the Revolution that began in 1910.”<sup>39</sup> By 1920, due to the Revolution, the Mexican population decreased from an estimated 14 million. The U.S. Navy and Army attacked and invaded Mexico twice and anti-American sentiment increased and took a bloody turn.

General Victoriano Huerta and Francisco “the Apostle” Madero led the events that started the Revolution. While exiled in San Antonio, Texas, by Díaz for leading in the 1910 presidential election, Madero wrote the *Plan de San Luis Potosi*. The plan declared the elections null and void and recommended a revolt by the general population with the author assuming the presidency. By the spring of 1911, revolutionaries Pascual Orozco, Jr., and Francisco “Pancho” Villa took control of Chihuahua. In Veracruz, Emiliano Zapata and his guerrilla forces assumed control. General Huerta volunteered his forces as Madero’s federal army. The combined forces of Huerta, Orozco, and Villa rapidly advanced toward Mexico City. President Díaz fully understood the gravity of the situation and exiled himself to France. Departing Mexico, he proclaimed, “Madero has unleashed a tiger; now let us see if he can control it.”<sup>40</sup> The tiger description fit Huerta.

Huerta double-crossed Madero, Orozco, and Villa. He muscled his way into the president's office and then had Madero, his vice president, Madero's father, the Governor of Chihuahua, an outspoken senator, and Orozco's father killed. He also jailed 84 legislators and dissolved Congress.<sup>41</sup>

Villa, Orozco, Zapata, and a country hungry for a revolution resulting in land redistribution, collective bargaining, and educational opportunities for all, returned to their bases, built their forces, and waited for the right moment to remove Huerta. Additionally, United States President Woodrow Wilson refused to recognize the Huerta regime. In a movement to avenge the death of 'the Apostle,' Venustiano Carranza and Alvaro Obregón became Constitutional rebel party leaders. Wilson chose to assist Carranza and Obregón with enough arms from the United States to make their eventual victories decisive. The plan worked. Huerta's army fell to the U.S.-supplied Constitutional forces. Carranza and Obregón's barbed wire, machine guns, and artillery defeated Huerta's best. In July 1914, Huerta resigned the presidency and fled to Spain.

#### Francisco "Pancho" Villa

Carranza assumed the presidency shortly after Huerta's departure. However, Villa, Orozco, Zapata, and the hungry natives, peasants, and laborers remained unsatisfied. Mexico had suffered from political upheaval and internal wars for four years. Still supporting Carranza, Wilson wanted to remove the power and influence of Villa who was "hated by thousands . . . but loved by millions."<sup>42</sup> Villa took anti-Americanism, supported by his peasant army, to new heights. By the spring of 1914, he had a cavalry force of fast-moving, raiding men and woman that numbered an estimated 20,000.<sup>43</sup> Historian John Mason Hart likened Villa's forces to the, "masses that had followed Padre

Hidalgo during the Independence Revolution of 210.”<sup>44</sup> None the less, President Wilson assisted General Obregón in the defeat of the revolutionaries.

On 21 April 1814, the U.S. Navy sailed 15 ships into Veracruz and the U.S. Army seized the city for seven months. During the seizure, the joint forces killed over 200 Mexican civilians. Their deaths intensified an anti-Americanism which remained from the Mexican War and the sale of the Mesilla Valley. The ill feelings toward the United States also increased during the *Porfiriato* which resulted in wage discrepancies, and left one-fourth of Mexico’s land under the control of American interests.<sup>45</sup> Further measures taken by Wilson to aid Carranza included stopping the sale of arms to Villa and transporting Carranza’s forces across the southern United States by railroad to *Agua Prieta* to rout some 6,500 forces of Villa’s feared *División del Norte*. Once again Wilson’s support worked. The *Agua Prieta* battle ended Villa’s ability to mass forces.

His ability to influence Mexicans, however, had yet to peak. Fed up with the United States intervening in Mexican affairs, Villa chose to take the battle directly to Americans and America. In January 1916, Villistas stopped a train and checked 15 American mine employees for permits from Villa to travel in Chihuahua. When they only produced passes from Carranza’s administration the Villistas killed them. On 9 March 1916, in the darkness of the early morning hours, Villistas attacked a military camp in Columbus, New Mexico. The attack caught the 13th Cavalry, with its tents and vehicles positioned dress-right-dress, off guard. The battle that followed lasted for about two-and-a-half hours and ended with 80 Villistas dead or dying, five taken as prisoners, 10 Columbus residents killed, eight soldiers killed, and a combined eight Americans wounded.<sup>46</sup> Through the Columbus raid, Villa provoked the Wilson administration into

pursuing him into Mexico which gave Villa a home-field advantage. It also embarrassed, and took attention away from, Carranza who then had American forces in Mexico focused on Villa.

Prior to 9 March 1916 attack, Villistas, Mexican revolutionaries, murders, and thieves frequently raided the United States. In his 1916 annual report, Major General Frederick Funston, commander of the Southern Department headquartered in San Antonio, stated that from July 1915 to June 1916, 38 raids had resulted in 37 deaths, including 26 U.S. soldiers.<sup>47</sup> The Columbus raid led to the Punitive Expedition that failed to capture Villa but succeeded in making him into a David-against-Goliath-type Mexican folk hero who outwitted the giant imperialistic power to north.

#### Apache and Comanche Politics

Unlike Mexico and the United States which had several newspapers and countless administrative records that recorded their politics and political motives, the indigenous tribes produced neither. It is more difficult to ascertain tribal politics. The Apache and Comanche demonstrated their policies or politics, for example, the move from raiding to warring. Additionally, due primarily to encounters with soldiers and militia and the spread of diseases, the natives' populations decreased annually up to 1885 the year when engagements against them ended. The wars and diseases left fewer natives to carry oral histories. Additional factors also affected oral histories. By the mid-1880s the Chiricahua, Mescalero, and Mimbreno became almost indistinguishable. Whether on or off reservations these Apache banded together in order to survive. That may have confused their oral histories.

In southeast Texas, near the Nueces River, between Forts McIntosh, Merrill, Inge, Duncan, and Ewell, “rangers” had their hands full with Comanche. These men volunteered to serve in militias that took it upon themselves to combat depredations by natives, or in other words, hunt Comanche.<sup>48</sup> The U.S. Army also conducted operations in southeast Texas. Oftentimes the men conducted combined operations or the Rangers based out of an established Army post. Tonkawas, tribesmen friendly with Americans, assisted the Texas Republic in its expeditions against the Comanche.<sup>49</sup> In 1846, after Texas gained statehood, the Comanche signed the Treaty of Council Springs which established a reserve for the tribe between the Canadian and Brazos Rivers.<sup>50</sup> Texas retained control of its public lands, therefore the natives did not receive federal protection. Texans regularly harassed the Comanche and rangers pursued them. Active offensive against the Comanche resulted in the death of no less than 43 warriors and five “rangers” or soldiers from 1850 to 1852.

Many Comanche, the Penateka for example, withdrew to Oklahoma west of Indian Territory. In 1867, the Comanche agreed to occupy the southwest corner of Indian Territory and draw rations from Fort Sill.<sup>51</sup> In the spring and summer, Comanche warriors arranged to leave the reservation to “hunt buffalo.” While some hunted buffalo, others traveled to Texas to raid settlers of their livestock, largely horses and mules. Although Texas rangers skirmished with the warriors that they happened upon, by 1870, the Comanche had secured a successful business selling stolen horses to livestock traders.<sup>52</sup> By the end of the decade, however, the Comanche settled down, remained on the reservation and ceased attacks on Texans. The Apache saga provided an entirely different story.

Most historians agree that the Spanish and the various Apache tribes maintained largely agreeable relations.<sup>53</sup> Eight Apache tribes, the Chiricahua, Coyotero, Jicarilla, Lipan, Mescalero, Mimbreno, Tonto, and Yavapai dominated the mountainous desert southwest. They did not relocate from the east and short of battles with the Spanish and Comanche, the Apache enjoyed a free reign over the enormous desert southwest. Spaniards called the road from El Paso to Santa Fe, the *Camino Real*, Mexicans and others like the U.S. Secretary of War, called it *el Jornada de Muerto*, the journey of the dead, due to the high number of Apache attacks along the route.<sup>54</sup> Violent raids occurred daily. From 1820 to 1830, Mexican officials reported 5,000 settlers killed from Sonora to Coahuila.<sup>55</sup> In the mid-1930s, in order to deter Apache attacks, the northern Mexican states began offering 100 pesos for an Apache warrior scalp, 50 pesos for a woman, and 25 pesos for a child.<sup>56</sup> Through the payment of Apache scalps and other inhuman acts, the Apache grew to hate and declared war against the Mexicans.

In 1837, scalp hunter, James Johnson, after receiving an invitation by Mimbreno tribesmen near Santa Rita del Cobre, New Mexico, entered the Apache *rancheria* and killed or wounded his host, allegedly with a small hidden canon, while they ate dinner.<sup>57</sup> Johnson shot and killed Juan José Compa, the Mimbreno Chief, for the high price of his scalp. Apache activity turned from raids into a retaliatory war led by Mimbreno Chief Mangas Coloradas.

### Mangas Coloradas

Chief Coloradas led attacks on miner villages so vicious that they resulted in the abandonment of mines. During the Mexican War, the United States Army negotiated with the Apache for safe passage through their lands. The Apache hated the Mexicans and

were happy to cooperate with the Americans. Mangas Coloradas signed such a treaty. Immediately following the war, relations between the Americans and Apache were amicable. In 1850, officers in Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas reported no significant trouble from the Apache. The peace ended in the fall of 1851 when Chief Coloradas approached a mining camp after a friendly, white flag, invitation given under false pretenses.<sup>58</sup>

Both the Apache and the Americans knew the significance of a white flag and both sides abused the symbology. The miners captured the chief, secured him to a tree and beat him with bullwhips. Following the assault on Mangas Coloradas, Mimbreno and Chiricahua increased their raids on wagon trains, stage coaches, settlers, and soldiers. California entered the United States in 1850 prompting more settlers to move west. As settlers moved, soldiers escorted, and otherwise tried to protect them. The Mimbres, also called eastern Chiricahua, united through marriage. In order to better unit the Apache tribes, Mangas Coloradas offered one of his daughters to wed Cochise a Chiricahua Chief.<sup>59</sup>

Representing the United States, Indian Agent M. William Steck negotiated with Cochise to end the violence against Americans and the Apache complied . . . temporarily. After the United States purchased the Mesilla Valley from Mexico in 1853, American encroachment on Apache lands increased once more. The United States had 21 posts on the border in 1853 and built 15 more before settling at around 33 by 1862. Protecting the movement of settlers along travel routes near the border from Mexican bandits and revolutionaries, and marauding Apache and Comanche constituted the primary mission of the posts and their troops. John Butterfield organized a stage route from the El Paso,

Texas, through New Mexico's Mesilla to Tucson, Arizona. With increased activity in their area, the Apache increased depredations against travelers. The increased attacks, however, did not represent a war with the United States. The acts of one U.S. Army lieutenant started a war that continued until Geronimo surrendered.<sup>60</sup>

### The Cochise Policy

In October of 1860, the Coyotero in southeast Arizona kidnapped Felix Ward an American boy setting off a series of events that led to 25 years of war between the Apache and the United States. On 4 February 1861, months after the kidnapping, Lieutenant George Bascom, from C Company, 7th Infantry from Fort Buchanan, approached Cochise who, with member of his tribal family, met the lieutenant at his Army camp. The lieutenant asked Cochise for the boy. Cochise told him that the Coyotero had the boy but given 10 days he may be able to return him. Bascom arrested Cochise and his family. The Chief escaped but the lieutenant held his family hostage. The next day the chief returned to negotiate with the lieutenant. Diplomacy failed so Cochise secured several hostages from the Butterfield Stage Line, shooting two employees and burning eight Mexicans to death in the process. He returned to negotiate with Bascom. On February 6th, Cochise opened negotiations offering one hostage and 16 stolen mules for his six tribal family members. The lieutenant insisted on the boy which Cochise did not have. Negotiations ended again, Chiricahua raids increased, and the lieutenant requested additional forces.<sup>61</sup>

On February 10th, troops arrived from Forts Buchanan and Breckinridge. The former brought three captured Coyotero. The later found the body of the boy's father and the remains of the Butterfield massacre. On February 19th, the lieutenant hanged three

captured male Chiricahua and the three captured Coyotero from trees near the location of Cochise Butterfield Stage raid. The lieutenant released the women and children. The incident, however, did not set well with the Cochise, the Chiricahua Chief, or his father-in-law Mangas Coloradas, the Mimbreno Chief. Their trust of Americans ended Steck's negotiated truce and the Apache declared war on all Americans. The Apache raised Felix, who spoke English, learned to speak Spanish and Apache, and became "Mickey Free," a legendary scout for the United States through the 1870's and 1880's.<sup>62</sup>

While the Mexicans and Americans produced decrees, declarations, proclamations, and treaties, the Apache introduced their policies through their actions. On 28 March 1861, Cochise and the Chiricahua attacked a Butterfield stage. The coach included William Oury, a Butterfield Stage line affiliate from Tucson, and Michael Neiss, a passenger in the coach who claimed to share a friendship with Cochise. Regardless, the Chiricahua killed the conductor, the driver, and the three passengers.<sup>63</sup> Only Oury survived. Through the attack, Cochise and Mangas Coloradas declared a new Apache policy. Within 60 days, the Apache killed 150 Americans. Historian Dan L. Thrapp wrote: "No trader, no settler, no miner, no small party of soldiers, no small community was safe from the avenging warrior."<sup>64</sup> Mangas Coloradas and Cochise cleared out the population of the Mesilla Valley.

Following the confederate state of Texas' invasion of New Mexico, the California Column, led by Brigadier General James H. Carleton, marched into the Land of Enchantment. From 15-16 July 1862, near Fort Bowie, Arizona, the Chiricahua and Mimbreno exercised their new policy by massing "several hundred" warriors in an ambush against Carleton's forces. As the Apache fired from the rocks above, Carleton's

1st California Infantry led by Captain Thomas Roberts, responded with their two howitzers. Battle ensued and lasted for two days. Besides exercising the new Apache policy on U.S. forces, another incident made this attack noteworthy. A Private John Teal shot a tall Mimbreno in the chest while trying to escape capture by a group of Apache. With the big warrior shot, the others stopped their advance. Unbeknownst to Teal, he had shot Chief Mangas Coloradas who survived the incident.<sup>65</sup>

Attacks by the Apache intensified. Determined to stop their attacks, Carleton solicited the aid of Brigadier Joseph R. West, 1st Cavalry Regiment. Carlton gave the orders: “there is to be no council held with the Indians nor any talks. The men are to be slain whenever and wherever they can be found,” the United States had established its new policy.<sup>66</sup> On 18 January 1863, near what became Fort West in New Mexico, General West’s soldiers created a ruse that led Mangas Coloradas into their camp. Once the general captured the chief he clearly stated his intentions to his soldiers: “Men, that old murderer has got away from every soldier command and has left a trail of blood for five hundred miles on the old stage line. . . . I want him dead.”<sup>67</sup> The general allowed his troops to torture the Mimbreno chief with heated bayonets prior to shooting the 70-year-old Mimbres six times; one shot each with muskets and two shots each with pistols.<sup>68</sup> The general claimed that Mangas Coloradas tried to escape. General West’s act of vengeance only intensified the Apache war on Americans.

Ulysses S. Grant, elected President of the United States in 1868, initiated a “conquest by kindness” reconciliation policy regarding the Native Americans. Believing in the moral character of Quakers, he sought the puritans to replace many Indian Agents. The president dispatched a civilian, Vincent Colyer a member of Friends of the Indians, a

Quaker organization, and Brigadier General Oliver Howard, to persuade the Apache to remain on one of the many designated reservations.<sup>69</sup> The United States unfortunately had neither a clear nor a consistent reservation plan. Colyer and Howard intended to remove the Apache from areas where they could make contact with American settlers, miners, ranchers, and relocate them in areas where they could peacefully farm and practice animal husbandry.<sup>70</sup> Apaches wise to the numerous broken treaties remained leery of any promises made by the American government. The White Mountain Apache leaders Miguel and Pedro, however, took another approach.

In July 1869, Colonel John Green, 1st Cavalry, led an expedition with troops from Camps Goodwin and Grant into north-central Arizona in pursuit of hostile Apache. At his camp, Apache Chief, Escapa, also known as Miguel, met the colonel and invited him to visit his village. The colonel sent Captain John Barry. Barry reported that upon arriving at the *rancheria* he found, 100 acres of corn along the White River and white “flags flying from every hut and from every prominent point.” Continuing, he reported that, “the men, women, and children came out to meet them and went to work at once to cut corn for their horses.” Barry and his officers, under orders from Green to “exterminate the whole village,” felt that an offensive against Escapa’s village would have equated to “cold-blooded murder.”<sup>71</sup> Green returned to the White Mountains, introduced Colyer to Escapa, who began the positive relationship between the White Mountain Apache and the United States.

While many Apache leaders met with Colyer and Howard, Cochise and the Chiricahua he led refused. The United States did move the Apache from one reservation to next thus reinforcing the convictions of those who resisted the reservations. The Army

collocated reservations with posts such as Camp Grant located with the Tonto; Camp Verde located with the Yavapai and Tonto; Fort McDowell located with the Yavapai; Camp Ojo Caliente which oversaw Mimbreno and Mescalero, and Fort Apache between the San Carlos and White Mountain reservations home of the Chiricahua, Jicarilla, Lipan, Mescalero, and Mimbreno.<sup>72</sup>

Arizonans held strong attitudes toward the Apache. On 30 April 1871, angry townspeople from Tucson attacked the Camp Grant reservation killing 144 Tonto Apache farmers to include women and children.<sup>73</sup> When federal troops brought charges against those involved, the citizens acquitted everyone. President Grant, however, relieved General George Stoneman, the territory commander.

In June 1871, General George Crook assumed command of the Department of Arizona. He proved himself the best man for the job. By August he had elicited the assistance of Al Sieber as his Chief of Scouts and White Mountain Apache warriors as scouts.<sup>74</sup> Because Cochise refused to allow his Chiricahua to, “set their feet on the white man’s road.”<sup>75</sup> Depredations continued in the desert southwest as did the pursuit and slaughter of Apache. General Crook initiated a policy of year-round pursuit. Crook led effective five-column campaigns in Arizona and New Mexico.<sup>76</sup> On the border, the Chiricahua continued their war against Mexicans in Sonora and Chihuahua. Cochise passed in 1874. That same year, in a move for some to profit while saving the United States money, the Interior Department consolidated all Apache on the San Carlos reservation east of present day Phoenix, Arizona. On the reservation, the Apache practiced farming and self-sufficient skills. Poor conditions, however, greeted the new arrivals. The conditions included overcrowding, limited food, starvation, communicable

diseases, and very restricted movement. The relocation to San Carlos, and death of Cochise, led to the rise of new Apache leadership.

### New Leadership for a United People

Prior to establishing reservations in Arizona, Colyer established the Warm Springs Apache Reserve in New Mexico.<sup>77</sup> The Chiricahua, Mescalero, and Mimbres Apache from the Warm Springs reserve, familiar with the San Carlos area, rejected it for the cooler New Mexico climate. Additionally, the Apache, which included Victorio and Geronimo, detested the western Chiricahua. In 1877, bands of Warm Springs Apache led by Victorio fled the reservation with who ever would follow into the Sierra Madre Mountains in Chihuahua, Mexico.<sup>78</sup> For six years the United States had practiced the effective policy of recruiting Apache scouts who then pursued Victorio's band.<sup>79</sup>

The Apache had mixed feelings about their role in essentially hunting other Apache. "Our own people went against us, that is why we lost," said Anna Palmer, an 80-year-old White Mountain woman to Helge Ingsstad in the 1930s.<sup>80</sup> However, Taipa, a man from the same tribe, an octogenarian and a former scout said, "It was the Apache scouts who straightened everything out. We made good peace with the whites."<sup>81</sup>

While Crook recruited White Mountain, Chiricahua, and Tonto scouts; Victorio, Chihuahua, Josanie, Loco, Nana, and Geronimo developed into the new leaders of the Apache people. By the late 1870s, tribal affiliation decreased significantly largely due to the relocation of all Apache tribes to the San Carlos reservation. When the warriors led parties off of the reservation all were invited to join. As a result, the importance of affiliation to Chiricahua, Mimbreno, or Mescalero tribes decreased significantly.<sup>82</sup>

From 1874 to 1876, poor Indian Bureau policies attempted to place all Chiricahua, including those from the Warm Springs, New Mexico reservation, onto the despised San Carlos reservation. Juh, Geronimo, and the 400 Apache they led, refused to go. The Bureau eventually allowed the Warm Springs Apache to return to their reservation, but the lack of confidence the Bureau instilled in the Apache regarding the reservation system and the United States remained. In April 1876, with food rations in short supply, Bureau agent Tom Jeffords advised the Chiricahua to hunt in order to supplement the insufficient offerings of the Agency. A band of Chiricahua chose to “hunt” horses, mules, blankets, and food from the well-stocked settlements in Arizona, New Mexico, and Sonora and Chihuahua.<sup>83</sup>

On 4 September 1879, Victorio attacked Captain Ambrose Hooker’s, E Company, 9th Cavalry, and his men at Camp Ojo Caliente, New Mexico, killing five soldiers, and stealing 50 horses and 18 mules. While Mangas Coloradas and Cochise declared war on Americans in February 1861 after the Bascom affair, after Victorio’s attack on Hooker’s Ojo Caliente, the United State declared war on Victorio. Colonel Grierson executed his previously mentioned occupation of each water hole which left the Mimbres Chief no alternative other than to flee to Mexico. The following month, Tarahumara warriors serving with the Mexican army killed Victorio along with 86 warriors in Chihuahua. The Mexicans captured 89 women and children.<sup>84</sup>

Old Medicine Man, Nana, another Mimbreno, had joined forces with Victorio in April 1880. After Mexican soldiers killed Victorio, Nana continued the fight. Apache raided from Arizona to Texas and Sonora to Coahuila. An incident on 30 August 1881 broke the policy of cooperation from the loyal White Mountain Chiricahua Apache

scouts. The White Mountain Apaches had faithfully scouted for General Crook for 10 years when he sent Colonel Eugene Carr and Captain Helig to apprehend the Medicine Man Nochaydelklinne. Old Nochaydelklinne, a prophet, chanted incantations to raise the dead chiefs, and he spoke of a resurgence of the Apache and the disappearance of the white man.<sup>85</sup> After securing Nochaydelklinne, the Apache troops grew agitated. One scout hollered whoop as a signal and the others began firing at the white soldiers killing six including Captain Helig. A soldier killed Nochaydelklinne but all other Apache survived. Following the Nochaydelklinne affair, the U.S. Army hanged three White Mountain Apache scouts for treason and Crook began to question their loyalty.<sup>86</sup> The war between the Apache and the United States did not let up. Many Apache, to include Loco and Geronimo, left their reservations and joined Nana in Mexico's relatively green Sierra Madres.

With the exception of the winter months, skirmishes between the Apache warriors and U.S. soldiers took place on nearly a daily basis. On 15 May 1883, General Crook, 42 soldiers, and 193 Apache scouts, to include many White Mountain Apache, surrounded the renegade Apache camp. Crook negotiated with the Nana, Loco, and Geronimo. Following an agreement, 374 Apache, two thirds of which were women and children, returned to San Carlos.<sup>87</sup> Two years later, on 17 May 1885, Nana, Geronimo, and about 130 Apache left San Carlos. The Army pursued but never found the band which led Crook to once again question the loyalty of his scouts. Crook did, however, negotiate the return of several Apache. Chief Nana, Loco, and about 60 others complied but Geronimo and 33 of his followers remained in the mountains. Arizona businessmen and politicians

vehemently questioned the judgment of Crook who had met with Geronimo during the negotiations but did not apprehend him. The General resigned on 1 April 1886.<sup>88</sup>

General Nelson Miles received the mission of bringing in Geronimo and his small band of marauding Apache. United States and Mexican troops searched in vain for the Apache. Miles shipped all Chiricahua, to include scouts on active duty, and affiliated Mescalero and Mimbreno Apache, to Florida in boxcars. On 24 August 1886, Geronimo, not knowing the fate of the Warm Spring Apache, surrendered to Miles and agreed to join his tribe in Florida thus ending the Apache war against the United States.<sup>89</sup>

The Comanche stopped raiding Texas by May 1881; hostilities ceased in Arizona in March of 1883, and depredations ended in New Mexico by December 1885.<sup>90</sup> By the time the Apache and Comanche capitulated, American encroachment reduced hunting lands and raiding Americans for horses grew progressively more dangerous. With few desirable places to hide and fewer in which to relocate, the tribes accepted the new order of the west. Their retirement to reservations reflected a sign of the times that included Interior Department policies as much as military operational art and science.

One other group of people and the policies regarding them, became the center of divergence along the border. These people went from slaves without rights to the federal authority patrolling in a state that seceded from the United States over the issue of slavery in as little as four years.

#### Politics regarding the Negro

As Arizonians held strong attitudes toward the Apache, Texans held strong attitudes regarding the Negro. Texan's attitudes about free blacks originated from the attitudes concerning slaves. In *Tejas*, Stephen Austin lobbied to allow slaves in his

colony and created contracts of servitude after the Mexican Congress defeated his measures. Texans shed blood in two wars in which the peculiar institution of slavery played a major role. Texas had a vested interest in preserving the expansion of slavery. The Missouri Compromise of 1820 banned all slavery north of 36 degrees and 30 minutes north latitude. Slavery could only extend west. Louisiana, which bordered the Spanish province of *Tejas*, held the position of the state furthest west in the United States. After Mexicans outlawed slavery in 1829, Texans fought Mexico in 1835, and seceding from the union in 1861, Texas fought the United States, until 1865.

As the U.S. Civil War ensued, Union forces quickly learned that they had a problem with the number of fugitive runaway slaves. When Union General Benjamin Butler learned that Confederate slaves built Confederate defenses, he labeled them “contraband of war” that should not be returned to their owners.<sup>91</sup> In 6 August 1861, Congress passed the Confiscation Act which freed confiscated slaves that were “aiding or abetting insurrection against the United States.” As thousands of slaves found their way behind Union lines, inevitably the United States would train and arm them as Union soldiers.

In the south, Union commanders General Butler, in Louisiana, and General David Hunter, in South Carolina, had formed fugitives into *Corps d’Afrique* regiments and awaited word to use them, and it came.<sup>92</sup> On 5 November 1862, Brigadier General R. Saxon drafted a letter for Hunter authorizing him to activate his regiment.<sup>93</sup> President Lincoln proclaimed the emancipation of slaves in the United States on 1 January 1863. Freedmen became eligible for enlistment and subsequently more than 186,000 Negro men enlisted into the Army and served during the Civil War.<sup>94</sup> Additionally, no less than

21 Negroes held commissions during the Civil War as line officers, surgeons, and chaplains. Legislation signed on 28 July 1866 allowed African-Americans to serve in the regular peacetime Army. At the time nine companies from the 125th U.S. Colored Troops served in New Mexico.<sup>95</sup> The Army received authorization to form six regiments composed of black enlisted men and filled four regiments, the 9th and 10th Cavalries, and the 24th and 25th Infantries. The 9th Cavalry reported to Texas in 1867 only four years after President Lincoln ended slavery and only six years after the former slave state seceded from its second country.<sup>96</sup>

In Texas, the real question was whether anyone would respect the authority of a black soldier. After nearly 250 years of slavery and shedding blood in two wars over the issue, Texans' had pretty well established their attitudes toward Negroes. The 9th Cavalry, as well as the other Negro regiments, had difficulty winning the respect of the locals. Most Texas border towns consisted of Mexican-American, *Tejano*, populations greater than 90 percent. Historian James Leiker wrote, "In Brackettville, Laredo, El Paso, Río Grande City, and Brownsville, black troops and Hispanic civilians engaged in what can accurately be called a blood feud."<sup>97</sup>

Texans, coming from the American south, distanced themselves from Mexicans during the Republic's war for independence. Rifts between Mexicans and Comanche formed in blood, as did rifts between the Comanche and Texans. Slavery formed the rift between the Anglo-Texans and African-Americans, but what caused the rift between *Tejanos* and Negroes?

Race, although factor in a man's measure on the border, did not define the man as much as class. From 1820 to 1870, wealthy, powerful Americans, Spaniards, and

Mexicans formed business and political alliances, married, and formed an upper class.<sup>98</sup> Mexicans, Native-Americans, and Negros, people dark, due to genetics and a lifetime of working outside, and often stooped, due to a lifetime of working bent over, formed the lower working class. “Lighter is better” attitudes persisted. While black and white, English-speaking, Protestant Christian, Americans shared similar customs, the status of blacks as inferior required that whites maintain a social distance from blacks, and that whites treat blacks with a level of disrespect. Working class *Tejanos*, all too familiar with the importance of status, although not sharing Anglo customs and coming from a country with no religious freedom, adopted Anglo attitudes toward Negros.<sup>99</sup> *Tejanos* disliked Anglos, but perceived Negros as an inferior race conquered by whites who shared, yet failed to master, their foreign culture. Therefore, no non-white alliance formed, following the Anglo lead, *Tejanos* largely despised blacks and found it necessary to distance themselves from, and disrespect, Negros. Serving as a black soldier, in an area with a strong resentment toward the military, only compounded the situation. Local blacks fared better than the uniformed buffalo soldier.<sup>100</sup> Due partly to Mexican revolutionary *caudillos* controlling the Lower Río Grande Valley, *Tejanos* could literally get away with the murder of a black soldier.<sup>101</sup>

A court acquitted John Jackson who murdered Corporal Albert Marshall and Privates Boston Henry and Charles Murray.<sup>102</sup> Sadly for all, the verdict was not merely a race issue. It applied to everyone who raided and committed crimes on the frontier. Historian William H. Leckie noted that, “When raiders were caught, there was no guarantee of punishment, for local juries showed a decided preference for a verdict of “not guilty.””<sup>103</sup> Another incident occurred on 26 January 1875, when a sergeant and four

soldiers patrolled from Fort Ringgold. After setting camp for the night, they received fire. The soldiers immediately investigated the shooting which led them to a ranch house with a few armed *Tejano* men. Following an inquiry, the soldiers rode off toward their camp. Before they traveled far the *Tejanos* ambushed them and killed two privates. The sergeant and the two surviving privates returned to Fort Ringgold and reported the incident stating that they may have killed one, and wounded another, of the men. The following day Colonel Hatch with 60 soldiers along with a deputy sheriff investigated. They found the bodies of the two privates mutilated and some of their belongings in the ranch house. Additionally, two of the ranch hands suffered from gunshot wounds. Hatch arrested the lot of nine men. When the case went to trial in Río Grande City, Texas, the judge set all but one free. Then the situation departed from all possible rational thought. Following the acquittal, the judge had three soldiers arrested at the trial for the murder of one of the shooters and when Colonel Hatch and one of his lieutenants arrived to defend their soldiers, the Sheriff arrested them for burglary because they did not have the proper permits to search the ranch house. After securing legal counsel the judge released all of the soldiers, but the story serves as an excellent example of attitudes and the law in Texas border towns in 1875.<sup>104</sup> Of interest, the 1875 official Army reports on the killing of the two soldiers did not identify them as black, colored, or Negro troops, only as “soldiers.”

The last three United States policies, restrictive in nature, frustrated commanders on the border as they hindered their inability to cross the Río Grande in pursuit of Apache raiders or Mexican bandits; freely restore domestic law and order; and act on tribal reservations. The restrictive policies greatly tied the hands of units.<sup>105</sup>

Historian William Leckie described the cliché of crossing the Río Grande as follows: “The pattern seldom changed. Raider’s struck, and his troopers pursued with the trail taking the most direct route to the Río Grande, and here pursuit had to stop.” Although the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo did not directly allow for it, units did at times gain permission to pursue raiders into Mexico. At other times, they simply violated the regulation.<sup>106</sup>

During Reconstruction, the U.S. Army gradually became a police force wielded by state governors to supplement the limited number of civil law enforcement authorities. The *Posse Comitatus* Act of 1878 ended to such practices. Governors could no longer call upon Army troops at will, and the Army could no longer practice law enforcement without the consent of Congress.<sup>107</sup> Representatives from both sides expressed frustrations.

In regards to the government restricting the Army’s ability to enter reservations in order to intervene on behalf of Americans, on 30 November 1870, William T. Sherman, while serving as General of the Army, summarized the soldiers frustrations well:

In other words, the Indians on the reservation may hold council after council, devising means and determining plans for raids upon the settlements north and south, may accumulate everything needed for them, and may march off from their encampments on hostile expeditions, and yet military authorities at hand in the neighborhood, fully possessed of all the facts, and knowing well the active persons concerned in organizing the raid, can neither arrest the parties nor in any manner interfere with the expedition until it shall have passed beyond the limits of the reservation.<sup>108</sup>

### Key Points

From the day of its independence, Mexico failed to establish and consistently maintain a stable, strong central government which could secure and satisfy the populace, quell domestic uprising, defend itself, and control its furthest-most provinces. The Unites

States fully established itself as the dominate power in North America during the Mexican War. After establishing its dominance, the United States secured nearly one-half of Mexico's territory. The newly acquired territory included some rather aggressive residents. The Comanche excelled at raiding Texans. The Apache generally practiced a policy of retaliation against American settlers and the U.S. Army. The final capitulation, of the Apache much like that of the Comanche, reflected the times as much as the skill of the U.S. Army. The Negro and *Tejanos* shared a tenuous relationship. Policies which prohibited U.S. troops from crossing the Río Grande in pursuit of raiders, intervening on tribal land, and restoring domestic order greatly restricted the ability of the U.S. Army to settle the frontier.

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<sup>1</sup>Michno, 56,57, Thrapp, 20-23.

<sup>2</sup>Meyer and Beezley, 346.

<sup>3</sup>Joseph Milton Nance, TSHA, "Republic of Texas."

<sup>4</sup>Miller, 218, and, Donald E. Chipman, TSHA, "Spanish Texas,".

<sup>5</sup>A Map of The Internal Provinces of New Spain by Captain Zebulon M. Pike, 1807.

<sup>6</sup>Political Division of the Mexico Republic Federal Constitution of 1824, University of Texas Maps, available from <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/> and Coahuila and Tamaulipas from the Mexico Republic Federal Constitution of 1824, available from <http://www.tamu.edu/ccbn/dewitt/co&tex1836.htm>. Internet; accessed 1 April 2007.

<sup>7</sup>Meyer and Beezley, 348.

<sup>8</sup>Frazer, 153-154, 163.

<sup>9</sup>Ethel Zivley Ratiler, "Recognition of the Republic of Texas by the United States," 13, Number 3, *Southwestern Historical Quarterly Online*, 155 - 256, available from <http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/publications/journals/shq/online/v013/n3/article1.html> Internet; accessed 17 May 2007.

<sup>10</sup>John O’Sullivan, “The Great Nation of Futurity,” *The United States and Democratic Review*, November 1839, and “Annexation,” *The United States and Democratic Review*, 17 July 1845.

<sup>11</sup>TSHA, “Annexation.”

<sup>12</sup>Luis G. Caves, “The Chancellors of Mexico through its History,” available at <http://www.sre.gob.mx/acerca/secretarios/default.htm>. Internet; accessed 21 May 2007 and TSHA, “Anson Jones,” “Ashbel Smith,” and “Elliot Charles.”

<sup>13</sup>John O’Sullivan, 1839, 1845.

<sup>14</sup>Miller, 218.

<sup>15</sup>Meyer and Beezley, 360, and Miller, 220.

<sup>16</sup>Charles H.Harris III and Louis R. Sadler, *The Texas Rangers and the Mexico Revolution: The Bloodiest Decade, 1910-1920*, (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 2004), 15.

<sup>17</sup>Frazer, 144, 157, Meyer and Beezley, 360, and Harris and Sadler, 220.

<sup>18</sup>“Treaty of Peace, Friendship, Limits, and Settlement Between the United States of America and the Mexican Republic,” (2 February 1848), Article V. Common name Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.

<sup>19</sup>Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.

<sup>20</sup>Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, Article XI.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid.

<sup>22</sup>Treaty of Velasco.

<sup>23</sup>Meyer and Beezley, 322 and Miller, 202.

<sup>24</sup>Meyer and Beezley, 327, and Miller, 207.

<sup>25</sup>Meyer and Beezley, 372, and Miller, 230.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid.

<sup>28</sup>Meyer and Beezley, 372 - 375; Miller, 245-252; and War Department 1865.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid.

- <sup>30</sup>Meyer and Beezley, 375-391, and Miller, 231-249.
- <sup>31</sup>Miller, 257, and Harris and Sadler, 17.
- <sup>32</sup>Miller, 257.
- <sup>33</sup>Harris and Sadler, 17.
- <sup>34</sup>Meyer and Beezley, 411.
- <sup>35</sup>Miller, 263, 267.
- <sup>36</sup>Meyer and Beezley, 399, 400, 403, and 407.
- <sup>37</sup>Miller, 267 and 278.
- <sup>38</sup>Harris and Sadler, title.
- <sup>39</sup>Miller, 283.
- <sup>40</sup>Ibid., 291.
- <sup>41</sup>Miller, 294-297, and Meyer and Beezley, 444 - 447.
- <sup>42</sup>Miller, 301.
- <sup>43</sup>Meyer and Beezley, 448, 449, and Miller, 303.
- <sup>44</sup>John Mason Hart, *Empire and Revolution: The Americans in Mexico since the Civil War*, (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2002), xi, 677.
- <sup>45</sup>Meyer and Beezley, 450, 453, and Miller, 278, 301.
- <sup>46</sup>James Finley, "Villa's Raid on Columbus, New Mexico," *Huachuca Illustrated*, Vol. 1, 1993.
- <sup>47</sup>War Department, 1916.
- <sup>48</sup>Webb, 127, 307.
- <sup>49</sup>Edmunds, Hoxie, and Salisbury, 250-252.
- <sup>50</sup>"Treaty With The Comanche, Aionai, Anadarko, Caddo, Etc.," (15 May 1846).
- <sup>51</sup>Edmunds, Hoxie, and Salisbury, 250-252, 292.
- <sup>52</sup>Edmunds, Hoxie, and Salisbury, 296.

<sup>53</sup>Edmunds, Hoxie, and Salisbury, 280, and Helge Ingstad, *The Apache Indians: In Search of the Missing Tribes*, (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1945), xxxiv.

<sup>54</sup>Edmunds, Hoxie, and Salisbury, 281; Thrapp, 192; A. Joachim McGraw, John W. Clark, Jr., and Elizabeth A. Robbins, *A Texas Legacy: The Old San Antonio Road and the Caminos Reales*, (Austin, TX: Texas State Department of Highways and Public Transportation, 1991); and War Department, 1870.

<sup>55</sup>Edmunds, Hoxie, and Salisbury, 281.

<sup>56</sup>Edmunds, Hoxie, and Salisbury, 281, and Thrapp, 9.

<sup>57</sup>Edmunds, Hoxie, and Salisbury, 281, and Thrapp, 10-12.

<sup>58</sup>Edmunds, Hoxie, and Salisbury, 281, and Michno, 87.

<sup>59</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>60</sup>Michno, 84-85; Edmunds, Hoxie, and Salisbury, 282; and Thrapp 16-18.

<sup>61</sup>Thrapp, 16-17.

<sup>62</sup>Thrapp, 16, Michno, 84, 302.

<sup>63</sup>Michno, 85, and Thrapp, 19, 40. Oury orchestrates Camp Grant Massacre 10 years later on April 30, 1871.

<sup>64</sup>Thrapp, 18.

<sup>65</sup>Michno, 93-94.

<sup>66</sup>Edmunds, Hoxie, and Salisbury, 282.

<sup>67</sup>Michno, 108-109.

<sup>68</sup>*Ibid.*, 108-109.

<sup>69</sup>Thrapp, 107, Joseph E. Illick, "Some of Our Best Indians Are Friends: Quaker Attitudes and Actions regarding the Western Indians during the Grant Administration," *The Western Historical Quarterly*, 2, no. 3, (July 1971), 283-294.

<sup>70</sup>David Burch, "Victorio and the Reservation System: A Prescription for Disaster," *Southern New Mexico Journal*, 18 July 2003, available from <http://www.southernnewmexico.com/articles/people/victorioandthereservtion.html> Internet; accessed 27 May 2007.

<sup>71</sup>Thrapp, 103.

- <sup>72</sup>Frazer, 3, 6, 9, 11, 14, and 105.
- <sup>73</sup>Edmunds, Hoxie, and Salisbury, 316, and Thrapp, 89-90.
- <sup>74</sup>Thrapp, 97.
- <sup>75</sup>Edmunds, Hoxie, and Salisbury, 316.
- <sup>76</sup>Michno, 259-276.
- <sup>77</sup>Thrapp, 103.
- <sup>78</sup>Gott, 14-17.
- <sup>79</sup>Helge Ingstad, *The Apache Indians: In Search of the Missing Tribe*, (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1945), 33, and Michno, 346,
- <sup>80</sup>*Ibid.*, 31.
- <sup>81</sup>*Ibid.*, 33.
- <sup>82</sup>Michno, 334.
- <sup>83</sup>Leckie, 172-177, and Thrapp, 168-170.
- <sup>84</sup>Edmunds, Hoxie, and Salisbury, 317, and Gott, 42.
- <sup>85</sup>Michno, 340-341; Edmunds, Hoxie, and Salisbury, 317; Leckie, 172-177; and Thrapp, 220-225.
- <sup>86</sup>Michno, 340-341.
- <sup>87</sup>*Ibid.*, 346.
- <sup>88</sup>Thrapp, 349.
- <sup>89</sup>*Ibid.*, 353.
- <sup>90</sup>Michno, vi and xxx.
- <sup>91</sup>Franklin, 222.
- <sup>92</sup>*Ibid.*, 227.
- <sup>93</sup>Thomas Wentworth Higginson, *Army Life in a Black Regiment* (Whitefish, Montana: Kessinger Publishing, 2004), 2.
- <sup>94</sup>Franklin and Moss, 240.

<sup>95</sup>Chauncey McKeever, "Distribution of Troops in the Department of Missouri on 31st of December 1866," War Department, 1866.

<sup>96</sup>Leckie, 7.

<sup>97</sup>Leiker, 119.

<sup>98</sup>Ibid., 22.

<sup>99</sup>Ibid., 119.

<sup>100</sup>Ibid., 99-121.

<sup>101</sup>Leckie, 109-110.

<sup>102</sup>Leiker, 99.

<sup>103</sup>Ibid., 107.

<sup>104</sup>Ibid., 109, 110.

<sup>105</sup>Leckie., 112; and Harris and Sadler, 255.

<sup>106</sup>Leckie, 102, 112.

<sup>107</sup>Leiker, 67, and Harris and Sadler, 254.

<sup>108</sup>War Department, 1870.

## CHAPTER 5

### RAIDS, REBELS, AND RIOTS: THE U.S. RESPONSE TO BORDER THREATS

Colonel's Hatch's statement: "Had there been a garrison of even 100 men," inspired the research and this chapter will explore the U.S. Army's response to the mission of protecting settlers and their property along the U.S.-Mexico border. It looks at the number of posts constructed on the border, when the Army built them, the number of troops that patrolled the area, and the overall impact the troops and number of posts had on border security. Because the Army does not operate in a vacuum, Chapter 4 analyzes when the skirmishes took place and why they happened. The chapter accounts for the number of deaths which occurred with each skirmish. Chapter 4 identifies trends and explains the two significant peaks in activity, and addresses the question of whether the U.S. Civil War impacted the number of depredations committed by indigenous warriors. Additionally, the chapter presents factors that led to riots and small wars in border towns. Chapter 4 provides numbers and vignettes that support the argument that a "garrison of 100 men" may not have contributed significantly to the prevention of raids and riots resulting in death on the U.S. Mexico border.

Hundreds of attacks, battles, and clashes took place on the border from 1865 to 1916. The Apache bashed in the heads of children with stones, secured Mexicans, Americans, and soldiers to trees and wagons, cut out their hearts, burned them, and desecrated their graves.<sup>1</sup> U.S. troops destroyed *rancherías*, Apache homes, along with food supplies and blankets in the dead of winter.<sup>2</sup> Additionally, U.S. soldiers, American citizens, Mexicans, and native warriors destroyed families and massacred villages.<sup>3</sup> Historians that have attempted to take the wild out of the west should read the reports

filed by the 1st, 3rd, 4th, 6th, 8th, 9th, and 10th Cavalry as well as the 12th, 15th, 20th, 24th, and 25th Infantry regiments that patrolled the desert southwest. This chapter provides an analysis of those reports and also looks at the U.S. Army's response to the various missions and threats on the border.

### Border Out Posts

Texans' battle cry for independence in 1835 began a conflict which forced the United States to carefully monitor activities on its border with Mexico for many years to come. The resulting war for independence followed 10 years later by the Mexican War led to years of unrest in Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona. Upon completion of the Mexican War in early 1848, depredations by Comanche, Apache, and Mexicans forced the U.S. federal government to continue to pay attention to her southwest frontier. The Army responded by building a string of out posts from Fort Brown on the Texas Gulf to Fort Yuma on the California border.

By 1850, the United States had built 10 posts on the border, nine in Texas plus Fort Yuma on the New Mexico territory-California border. That year, Secretary of War, C.M. Conrad reported: "The most important duty which at present devolves on the department is the protection of Texas and New Mexico against the Indian tribes in their vicinity."<sup>4</sup> He proved correct.

In 1850, California received admittance into the United States. The following year, Royse and Mary Ann Oatman, along with their seven children, traveled amongst a train of wagons bringing about 80 people to the new frontier. As the wagons moved toward California, some families stopped in Tucson. Other families plodded on to Maricopa and Pima villages and then stopped. After stocking up on provisions, the

Oatmans pressed on toward the coast. Short of Yuma, they encountered Yavapais Apache. The Apache demanded food in exchange of goods. Royse Oatman denied their demands. The Yavapais killed Royse Oatman, his wife, and four children. As was their custom, the warriors took two girls, one aged seven and another 14, and left 16-year-old boy, Lorenzo, for dead. In 1856, Americans recovered Olive, the 14 year old girl, from a Mojave tribe in the north which had received her through trade. The seven-year-old passed. Many years later Olive and Lorenzo reunited.<sup>5</sup> More significantly, Lorenzo's harrowing tale alerted all to the dangers of the vast desert southwest frontier.

Following incidents like the one above, the Army stationed 2,150 of the total force of 12, 927 in Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona; petitioned Congress to raise additional Cavalry forces; and established its string of posts along the Río Grande.<sup>6</sup> The Army had established Forts Santa Fe and Marcy in New Mexico, in 1846 with Forts Polk and Brown. Following the 1853 acquisition of the Mesilla Valley settlers made their way west. The number of posts increased accordingly. To secure the route west, the United States added about three posts to the area each year until 1863 when the number of posts, that is barracks, camps, cantonments, and forts, leveled off at around 33 (see figure 9). The collection of posts served as both depots and operational bases for soldiers. The collection grew in number, fluctuated, moved, peaked at 36, stabilized at 33 for about 20 years, and in by 1916 had dwindled down to 14, less than half its peak (see figure 9).

Texas maintained the majority of posts with an average of 15 from the 1850s to the 1880s. The Army built 11 installations on the route between El Paso and Brownsville all within 10 miles of the Río Grande. Posts off the border such as Forts Davis and Stockton and the post at San Antonio served as headquarters and supply depots. The

posts formed a militarized line along the Texas-Mexico border. Forts Bliss, Duncan, and McIntosh, all established in 1849; Fort Clark established in 1852, Fort Cibolo established in 1857, Fort Quitman established in 1858; Forts Hudson established in 1868; Peña Colorado established in 1879, and Hancock established in 1882, formed a link in a virtual security fence designed to protect settlers and west-bound travelers. The posts also protected the southern route to California.

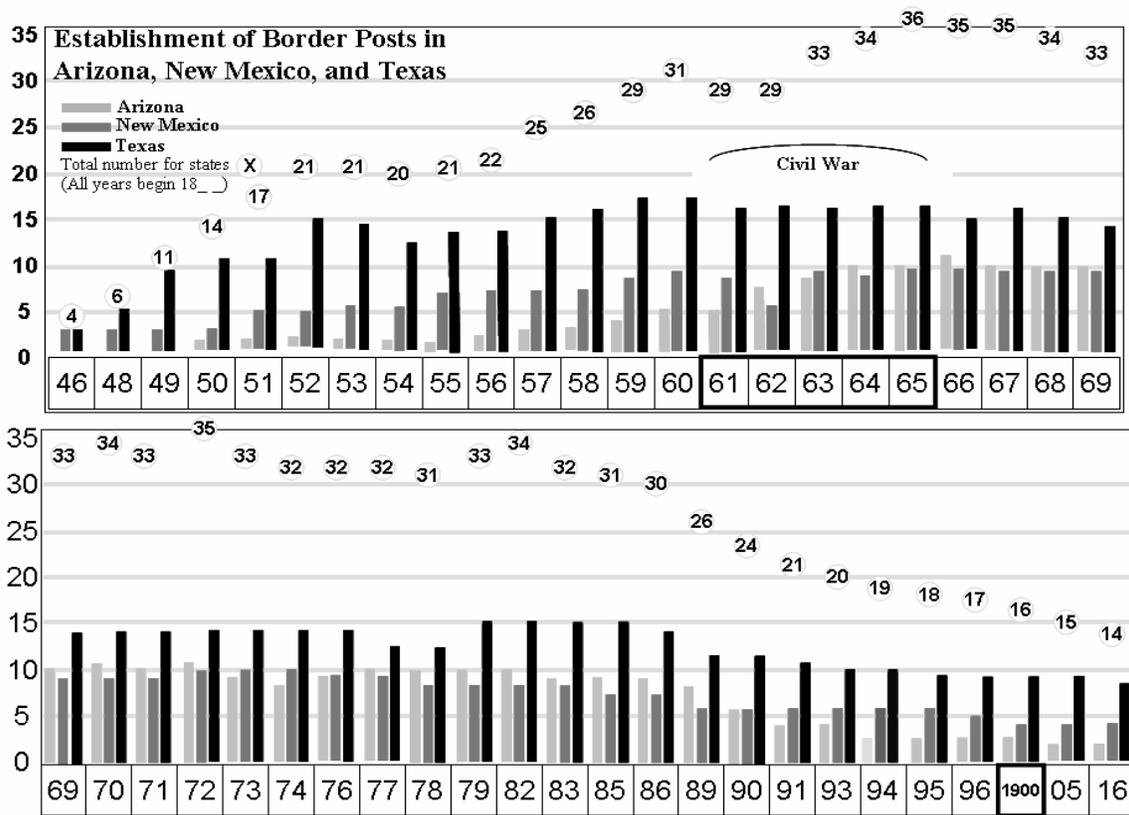


Figure 9. Establishment of Border Posts: Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas  
 Source: Created from information in Robert W. Frazer, *Forts of the West: Military Forts and Presidios and Posts Commonly call Forts West of the Mississippi River to 1898*, University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, 1872 and Rod Timanus, *An Illustrated History of Texas Forts*, Republic of Texas Press, Plano, 2001.

The number and location of posts along the border constantly changed. No two years in Arizona or New Mexico shared the same number or location of posts. Economic, political and environmental factors affected the changes in the number and location of posts. Texas posts also suffered from economic, political, and environmental factors. The Army established Fort Duncan, in 1849 with Fort Bliss, and strategically located it opposite Piedras Negras, Coahuila, on the Río Grande. The Army abandoned Fort Duncan in 1883 after the U.S. Government could not secure the purchase of the land on which the post lay.<sup>7</sup> Fort Bliss shared five separate addresses prior to securing its permanent location.<sup>8</sup> Soldiers manned Fort Ewell for only two years. Following its establishment in 1852, the inhabitants found the post's surrounding made for unbearable living conditions. One captain stated, "A less inviting spot for occupation by troops cannot well be conceived."<sup>9</sup>

In the New Mexico territory, following the 1850 establishment of Fort Yuma, 10 years passed before the next five posts appeared. New Mexico added Forts Conrad and Fillmore to the department in 1851 and Fort Thorn in 1853. The Army abandoned all three within nine years. Army Inspector General, Colonel Joseph K.F. Mansfield, provided the recommendation that closed Fort Conrad.<sup>10</sup> Once removed, the land gave way to a farm which sustained the troops at Fort Craig which replaced it.<sup>11</sup> The government abandoned Fort Fillmore at the onset of the Civil War. Confederate forces briefly occupied the post. The United States took her back in 1862 but did little more than raise the stars and stripes before letting her go. The Army closed Fort Thorn, not unlike Fort Ewell, for environmental reasons: "The post occupied an unhealthful site on the edge of an extensive marsh."<sup>12</sup> The Army abandoned the post in 1859.

Following the Civil War and Apache Wars, Secretaries of War paid significantly more attention to the budget. By 1870, maintaining the outposts costs the U.S. more than \$1,000,000.00 annually.<sup>13</sup> By 1880, the General of the Army explained that the arrival of the Southern Pacific Railroad “completely revolutionized” the country and allowed for the closure of “many of the smaller posts hitherto necessary.”<sup>14</sup>

Smaller military units occupied multiple locations or established camps for multiple days, but left nary a permanent record. The Adjutant General oftentimes referred to a, “camp on the Río Grande,” with locations provided.<sup>15</sup> Furthermore, Gregory Michno and William Leckie refer to soldiers patrolling from posts such as Drum and Peña Colorado in Texas. However, neither Robert Frazer nor Rod Timanus mentioned the posts in their books. Soldiers only occupied Drum for one year, 1853 - 1854, Peña Colorado, however, served troops from 1879 to 1893.<sup>16</sup>

The posts served more as logistics stops for military detachments rather than as permanent garrisons for specific units. More than one company of 100 men rarely occupied most posts. Due to the nomadic nature of the Apache and Comanche, troops traveled frequently as they responded to the latest news of depredations. When in pursuit of the raiders, soldiers temporarily occupied the closest outpost. The posts served as crucial logistics support platforms Within the camps or forts, the soldiers rested, rearmed, re-supplied, and readied themselves for the next mission.

Possibly due to following the Apache and Comanche, no individual post stood out as having a more significant impact on stabilizing the region than any other. Each one did its part. The complete network allowed cavalymen freedom of movement as they pursued their elusive enemy.

Although the number and location of posts changed constantly, trends occurred such as the stability in the number of post in Texas during the Civil War and the consistency of 33 posts overall from 1862 to 1882. These trends, however, mean little without comparing them to their affect on troop activities, that is, their ability to secure the border area. Depredations by Comanche, Kickapoo, and Kiowa began in Texas in the 1850s.<sup>17</sup> At that time incidents in Texas doubled the number committed by indigenous tribes in the New Mexico department which included Arizona. However, after 1860 the situation changed significantly. Incidents west of the Río Grande tripled the number of incidents in Texas (see figure 10). As the number of border posts settled depredations in Arizona and New Mexico increased. Arizona locals sought vengeance against local Apache, and the Apache retaliated.

### Conflict and Death

In 1871, eight years after the number of posts reached a plateau of 33, one officer found the fortitude to use the border outposts to as launch platforms for a three-year, deliberate, Apache-hunting campaign. The posts performed the crucial role of serving as support bases. The Apache campaigns that started in 1871 and continued throughout the winters of 1872-1873 and 1873-1874 placed large numbers of Apache on reservations and significantly reduced attacks by warriors stabilized the west. The campaign, the second peak in activities in the region, followed a string of events that resulted in an Apache-U.S. Army war. The first peak took place during the Civil War years of 1861 to 1865 and reflected a series of events that led to the Apache to declare war on the United States.

The first peak occurred in New Mexico. While it took place during the Civil War, the battle for states' rights had little-to-nothing to do with the peak (see figure 10). Trouble began as Mimbreno Apache, let miners know that they were not welcomed on the Pinos Altos mountains.

The Pinos Altos spike in violence began in 1857 when Colonel Benjamin L. E. Bonneville, 3rd Infantry, led a punitive expedition that killed 40 Coyotero Apache warriors and captured 45 women and children.<sup>18</sup> Bonneville's raid began a small-scale war with the Apache. The second event occurred in 1860 when some 28 disgruntled and unsuccessful prospectors working in New Mexico's Pinos Altos mines took their aggressions out on a Mimbreno Apache *rancheria* on 21 December 1860. The miners attacked the Mimbreno killing four men and capturing 15 women and children. The incident only led the Apache to further distrust Americans.<sup>19</sup>

Relations between New Mexicans and the Apache continued to deteriorate. In February 1861, Cochise sought vengeance following the hanging of six Apache by Lieutenant George Bascom, C Company, 7th Infantry, after the kidnapping of Felix Ward<sup>20</sup> Colonel Bonneville and the miners set the conditions for a small-scale war and the lieutenant's actions intensified the combat. On 15 July 1862, in response to the Confederate Texas invasion of the New Mexico territory, the un-initiated Brigadier General James Carleton marched his 1st California regiment east between the Chiricahua and Dos Cebezas Mountains entering a combat zone long before he ever reached a Confederate front. Unbeknownst to the general, the Mimbres and Chiricahua Apache had declared war on all Americans, especially those wearing blue.<sup>21</sup> Carleton's troops repelled the combined forces of Mangas Coloradas and Cochise.

Activity in the Pinos Altos mountains area of New Mexico increased in activity in 1863. Three Apache tribes, the Coyotero, Mimbreno, and Chiricahua had for years actively sought American targets when on 18 January 1863, Brigadier General Joseph R. West ordered soldiers to murder the Mimbres Apache Chief Mangas Coloradas.<sup>22</sup> West's actions further intensified the war. Four separate incidents of Apache raids and the retaliation by soldiers that followed resulted in 32 Apache killed. These numbers led 1863 to tally the most activity and death of any year during the Pinos Altos era (see figures 10 and 11). Of note is the limited connection between the Pinos Altos peak and the U.S. Civil War. Due to the war, Texans marched west, Californians marched east, and miners continued to seek silver in New Mexico's mountains. The Apache received more potential victims. Carleton's California column, along with Kit Carson and the New Mexico volunteers, completed pushing the Confederate Texans east of the Río Grande by July 1862.<sup>23</sup> Removing the Confederates freed the 19 companies of the California Column to pursue the raiders led by angry eastern Chiricahua Chiefs Mangas Coloradas and Cochise. The Civil War brought Carleton and his 1,800 troops into the Apache war (see figure 12).<sup>24</sup>

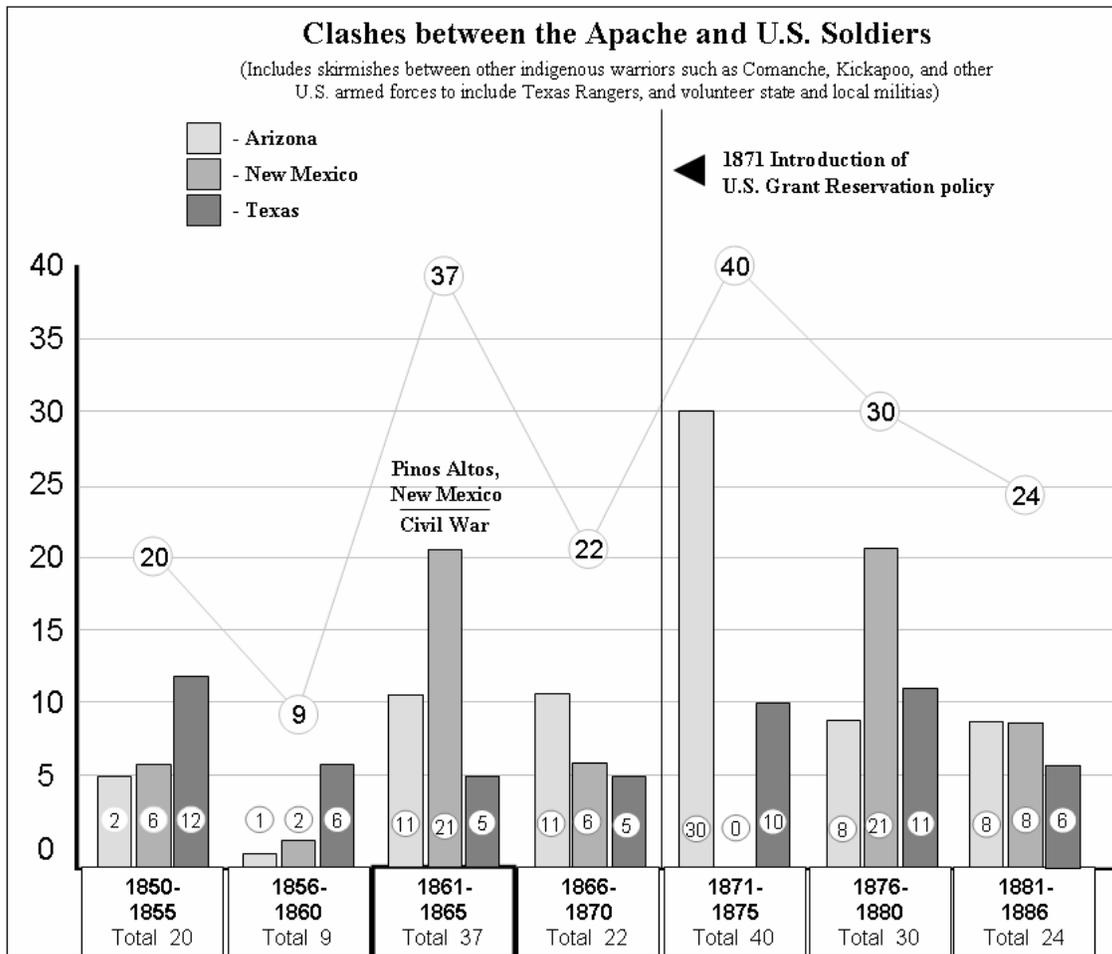


Figure 10. Number of Attacks, Battles, and Clashes between U.S Soldiers and State and Local Militia against Indigenous Tribes, such as the Apache, Comanche, Kickapoo, and Kiowa

Source: Created from Gregory F. Michno, *Encyclopedia of Indian Wars; Western Battles and Skirmishes 1850-1890*, Mountain Press Publishing, Missoula, Montana, 2003.

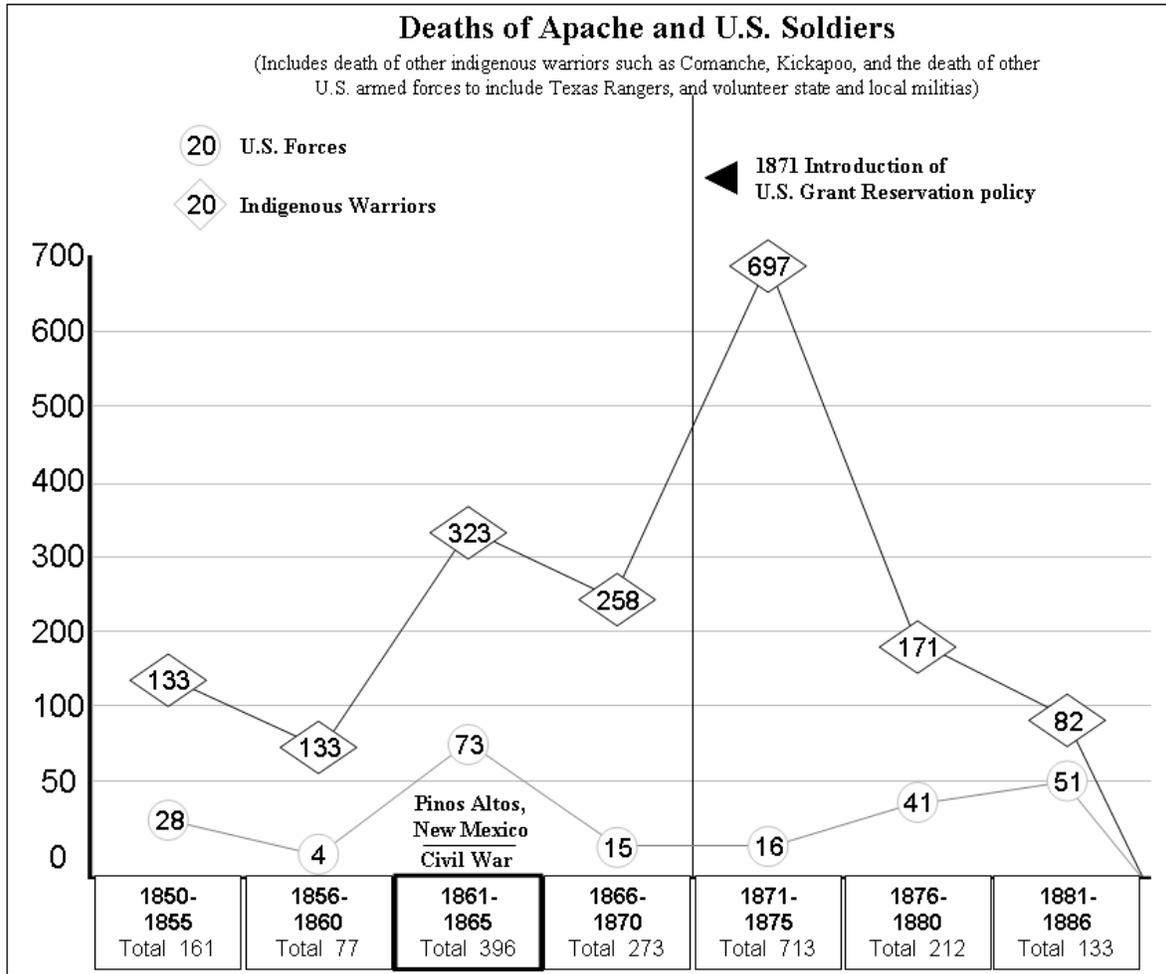


Figure 11. Deaths of Apache and U.S. Soldiers including deaths of other tribal natives such as the Comanche, Kickapoo and Kiowa in Texas, and the death of other armed Americans such as Texas Rangers and local militia.  
*Source:* Created from data in Gregory F. Michno, *Encyclopedia of Indian Wars: Western Battles and Skirmishes 1850-1900*. Mountain Press Publishing, Missoula, Montana, 2005.

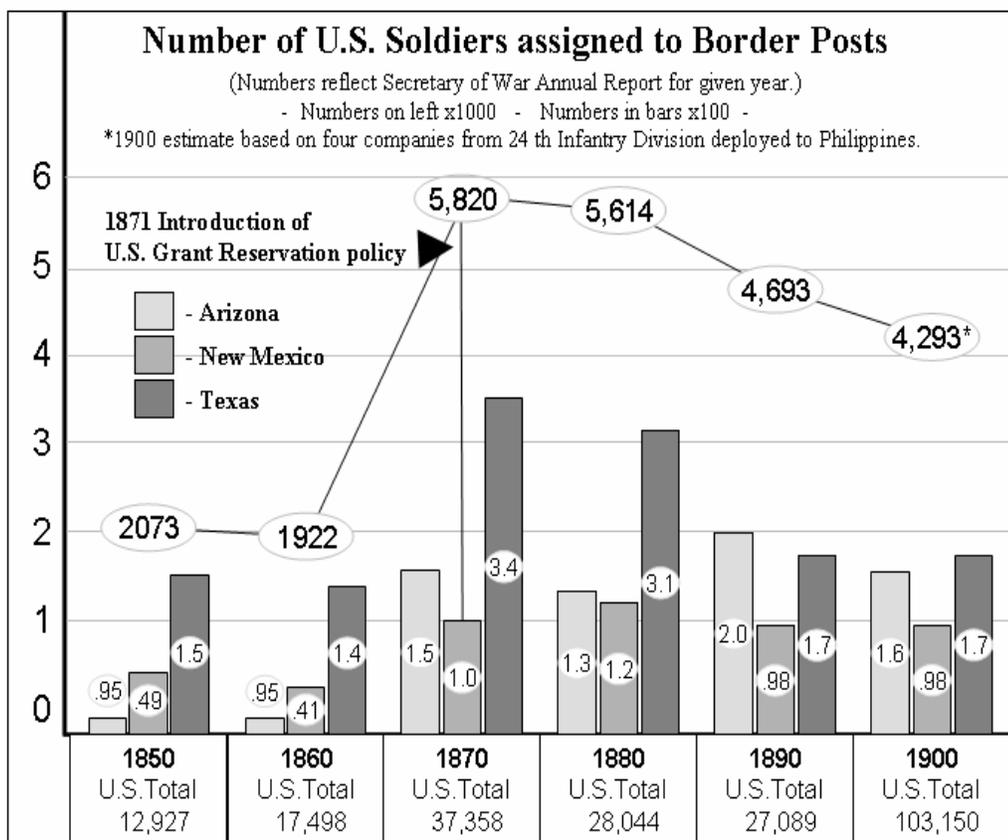


Figure 12. Number of Soldiers Assigned to Border Posts 1850 to 1900.<sup>25</sup>

Source: Created from Secretary of War Annual Reports 1850, 1860, 1870, 1880, 1890, and 1900.

The number of regular Army soldiers almost doubled in the New Mexico territory throughout the 1860s which allowed Carleton to campaign against the Apache. His efforts reduced the number of depredations in the territory. Following the Pinos Altos wars, and Carleton's return to California in 1866, the border region returned to the pre-war level of depredations. The second peak took place after President Ulysses S. Grant announced his 1871 Quaker "conquest by kindness" peace policy.<sup>26</sup> It began like the first peak, with an act of vengeance.

Angry due to the Bascom affair and the murder of Mangas Coloradas, the Mimbreno and Chiricahua Apache, incessantly raided in Arizona and New Mexico from 1860. Grant's new policy did little to pacify the people of Tucson who continued to suffer from the Apache depredations. On 28 April 1871, town's people, largely Papago tribesman and Mexicans, under the leadership of William Oury, a victim of the Cochise raid on a Butterfield Stage in 1861, attacked the Aravaipa and Pinal Apache living on the Camp Grant Reservation. The attackers killed 136 women and children and eight Tonto men. The tribe had had successfully transitioned to peaceful farming.<sup>27</sup> The Camp Grant massacre represented about one-fourth of the 1871 to 1875 spike in deaths. In addition to the 173 Apache killed in 1871, 155 perished in 1872, followed by 110 in 1873 and 163 in 1874. Armed soldiers, largely led by General George Crook, killed nearly 700 Apache the first five years following the announcement of Grant's new policy. Crook's year-round operations to place the Apache on reservations resulted in the highest number of Apache deaths per year.

The Apache entered a no win situation. The San Carlos Reservation offered deplorable conditions; the mountains of the Sonoran and Chihuahua deserts could not sustain life of the tribe; and raiding resulted in possible death or injury and retribution by the citizens and armies of the United States and Mexico. The United States also entered a dilemma. Officers with a respect for the Apache struggled with the four-tier mission of enforcing reservation policy, stopping depredations against Americans, pursuing raiders that had committed depredations, and protecting the Apache from vengeful Americans.<sup>28</sup>

Even with their dilemma, General Crook's officers and non-commissioned officers proved highly effective. Major George M. Randall, 24th Infantry, Lieutenant

Walter S. Schuyler, 5th Cavalry, and Sergeant William L. Day, 5th Cavalry, contributed significantly to Crook's success. Randall, who began the campaign as a captain in 1872, reported 117 Apache deaths from the winter of 1872 through spring of 1874.<sup>29</sup> During the same period Lieutenant Schuyler recorded 115 Apache deaths, and the Sergeant Day counted 11. Sergeant Day led his squad which bravely attacked a *rancheria* all the while knowing the warriors knew of his approach.<sup>30</sup> His actions earned him the Medal of Honor. By 1874, Crook's five-column campaign had captured about 210 women and children and all but ended the battle with the Apache war.<sup>31</sup> The general, however, experienced much difficulty defeating the holdouts.

The Apache holdouts defeated people, exceeded the Americans in combat effectiveness. The Victorio campaign began in September 1879. In the first nine encounters of the Victorio war, the Mimbreno chief lost two warriors while killing 22 Americans to include five militia men. In an August 1881 battle in New Mexico, the 9th Cavalry attacked Mimbreno Chief Nana. His warriors defeated the soldiers killing 11, plus six American and six Mexican civilians at the loss of one warrior. The Apache war against Americans intensified following Nochaydelklinne's visions and his subsequent murder at Cibique Creek on 30 August 1881. The word of Victorio and Nana campaigns and Nochaydelklinne's murder spread across the three states and resulted in the deaths of 27 armed Americans that pursued Apache leaders. Chihuahua and his older brother Josanie, added to Victorio's and Nana's successes. In 1885, in a series of three skirmishes with soldiers, the brothers killed 11 troops with no loss to their bands. In 1866, Geronimo killed three soldiers but lost two warriors before retiring the fight.

In March, Chihuahua and Nana had surrendered earlier the previous March.<sup>32</sup> On 24 August 1886, Geronimo and Josanie negotiated the surrender of their band. The Chiricahua Apache capitulation resulted from relentless pursuit by, and honest diplomacy with, the U.S. Army. No further Apache led raids occurred in the border region. The end of the Apache wars only brought the desert southwest one step closer to a state of stability.

### Mexican Raids before and after the *Porfiriato*

In 1916, prior to the World War I, the Army's mission on the frontier ended as it began, that is, focusing on Mexico. Mexicans loyal to President Juárez, men who helped oust the French and Emperor Maximilian in the 1860s, transformed their nationalism into anti-Americanism and supported bandit leaders like Juan Cortina. Cortina orchestrated a rebellion in Brownsville, Texas, from 1858-1859. He took over the town, murdered citizens who resisted, and committed other outrages, desolating 120 of Lower Río Grande Valley, and continued with occasional intermissions into the 1870s.<sup>33</sup> In the early 1870s, his followers plundered Texas to a degree that the towns' people and ranchers some 200 miles from the mouth of the Río Grande and 40 miles back abandoned the area to include their crops and herds.<sup>34</sup> The *Tejano* residents, better than 90 percent of the population, conveniently moved into the family homes of their relatives in Matamoros, Tamaulipas. Texas lost control of the Lower Rio Grand Valley due to the boldness of Mexican raiders that openly killed soldiers and public officials. The murder of the two privates near Ringgold Barracks on 26 January 1875, occurred during Cortina's reign.

Cortina contracted to sell 3,500 head of cattle to Cuba in 1875 of which more than two-thirds, if not all, came from Texas ranches in the Lower Río Grande Valley.<sup>35</sup> Not

only could the bandits profit from raiding Americans, they could feel good that about striking back at the United States. For the Army, tracking and isolating bandits, raiders, and revolutionaries that could easily meld into the population proved extremely difficult.<sup>36</sup> Residents identified with Mexican values and supported, or out of fear of death complied with, insurgent bands more than the black-skinned, blue-coated American authority of the 9th Cavalry.<sup>37</sup> None the less, the U.S. Navy as well as the Army worked with the governors of Texas and the Ranger forces to restore control of the region. Ultimately, the arrest of Cortina by the Mexican authorities, triggered by a Naval presence in the Río Grande, and the *Porfiriato*, quieted the region.<sup>38</sup>

On the surface of the *Porfiriato*, the reign of Mexican President Porfirio Díaz, from 1876 to 1911, brought about calm in Mexico.<sup>39</sup> However, under the surface trouble brewed. While Padre Hidalgo had championed peasant rights in 1810, Díaz championed foreign and domestic investment. Many peasants and indigenous Mexicans lost their land during the *Porfiriato* as the president centralized the control of property. Other factors such as low wages, low food production, and high food costs also contributed to the Mexican Revolution that lasted from 1910-1920.<sup>40</sup> The Revolution, however, did not remain south of the border. Mexican rebels exiled in the United States and planned their revolts. The *Plan de San Diego*, an orchestrated revolt, surfaced in 1915.

Texas Rangers intercepted the plan signed by the revolutionary Agustin S. Garza.<sup>41</sup> Ultimately the plan, released south of the border in spite of its interception, led to blood shed in the United States as revolutionaries raided Texas, and Texans. When trouble grew beyond the Ranger's limited scope, they asked the U.S. Army for assistance.<sup>42</sup> The U. S. cavalry led the Rangers and locals in pursuit of the revolutionary

raiders. The Army and the Rangers, however, experienced much difficulty constructing the joint operation. A limited number of forces, as well as federal regulations, hampered the Army's ability to respond to request for the assistance.

While the Army waited for permission to help resolve the Ranger's crisis, on 9 July 1915, a ranch foreman killed a Mexican raider near the southeast border of Texas. Two days later two raiders shot and killed two *Tejano* lawmen during an outdoor dance near Brownsville. The assassins crossed the river into Matamoros, Tamaulipas. Guerrilla-warfare-type tactics, such as starting fires, cutting phone lines, and sniping civilians, led Texas officials to once again request assistance from the U.S. Army. Initially General Frederick Funston, the Texas Department Commander, refused.<sup>43</sup> However, some leads linked the raiders to Mexican General Emiliano Nafarrate of the administration of Venustiano Carranza. In 1815, U.S. President Woodrow Wilson, who armed Carranza and Obregon's Constitutional party in order to defeat the Huerta regime, had not yet recognized Carranza as the legitimate president of Mexico. Carranza allegedly thought that he could earn recognition through extortion. That is, he sent an unofficial message to President Wilson: "If you recognize me as the legitimate president of Mexico, I will gain the power to stop the raids."<sup>44</sup>

General Funston wanted to assist, but as he explained in his reply to the Texas authorities asking for help; he had two "great handicaps:" U.S. operations in the Philippines, Hawaii, and the Panama Canal which greatly reduced the number of available forces, and the 1878 *Posse Comitatus* Act.<sup>45</sup> Simply put, the U.S. military could not operate in domestic affairs without the declaration of martial law. Texas officially requested help three times. Governor James Ferguson wrote President Wilson who passed

the request to the Secretary of War Lindley Garrison. Garrison informed Funston that the matter was a local domestic concern and not to get involved. Political pressure from Texas' Congressional representatives resulted in 2,500 soldiers from the Department of the South's cavalry and infantry regiments deploying to the Lower Río Grande Valley. On 10 August 1915, Nafarrate's men killed a private during a skirmish on the border. The Army responded by aiming two batteries of artillery at Naffarate's barracks in Matamoros and flying over with two aircraft from the 1st Aero Squadron to provide observers. The 12th Cavalry responded to the cry for help from locals when rancher Jeff Scrivner reported that *Plan de San Diego* revolutionary Aniceto Pizaña was holed up at his ranch. During a fire fight at the ranch that lasted from the 16-17 August 1915, Pizaña killed one private.<sup>46</sup> Two additional soldiers passed on September 13th from wounds suffered during a skirmish and on September 24th, rebels killed two more soldiers. Mexican raiders continued to harass the cavalry detachment through the use of sniper fire. The revolutionaries, however, did not skirmish against the Army for long. By the end of October, the rebels and raiders found that U.S. Customs had disallowed Mexican males large enough to bare arms entry into the United States, the cavalry defended the border, and the infantry and angry Texans defended the towns. Incidents of trouble due to border crossings waned.

The Army contributed significantly to the security of the border's return of relative calm. By taking control of the area, it provided needed tactical leadership for the reinforced Rangers. The presence of soldiers, however, did little-to-nothing to stop an invasion half a year later in New Mexico.

The 9 March 1916, Pancho Villa raid on Columbus, New Mexico, far mirrored the trouble in Texas. Villa killed 18 Americans, to include eight soldiers. The Army killed 79 Mexicans during the attack. General Funston stated that the revolutionary raids had killed 37 Americans to include 26 soldiers, in the year from July 1915 to June 1916.<sup>47</sup> Typically spread thin along the border, the large concentration of troops from the 13th Cavalry did not discourage Villa's raid. The inviting dressed-right-dress, white, canvas tents may have very well prompted it. Villa's raid provoked the United States into an unsuccessful invasion into Mexico which rose Villa to a Padre Hidalgo-level hero and embarrassed the Carranza regime.<sup>48</sup> Whether Villa had calculated that his raid would have such impacts is unknown. Columbus provided multiple targets to include the presence of the Army and an arms salesman who allegedly double-crossed the revolutionary. None-the-less, the mere presence of troops had attracted local conflict prior to March 1916.

#### Negro Soldier and Texas Rangers in the Lower Río Grande Valley

By the end of the 1800s fewer border incidents required intervention by the U.S. Army. In Texas, trouble, in the way of racial tensions leading to armed violence, found the Army. The military, a representation of American authority, sometimes attracted trouble especially when that military presence had a Negro face.

Historians agree that the residents of Texas border towns did not welcome black soldiers. Charles Harris and Louis Sadler wrote, "Although the Anglo and Hispanic residents might dislike each other, both groups were agreed on one thing -- they despised the black soldiers." Historian James Leiker suggested that, "Border Hispanics adopted the anti-black attitudes of white southerners and discriminated against African-American

soldiers in ways that reflected violence.”<sup>49</sup> In short, the people of Lower Río Grande Valley felt insulted by the United States and the Army placed Negro soldiers in their communities.<sup>50</sup>

In 1877, the El Paso-San Elizario area, shared a better-than-90-percent *Tejano* population. When the white, non-Spanish-speaking Judge Charles Howard chose to legally own, and charge money for the collection of the previously public domain salt, Louis Cardis, the Spanish-speaking El Paso official respected by the Hispanic community allied with him. A close friend of Cardis, Padre Antonio Borajo, carried much influential in the area. Bitter due to the Roman Catholic Church removing him from San Elizario for a mission on the Mexican side of river, the priest turned his congregation against Howard and his entrepreneurial plan. On 3 October 1877, Howard visited San Elizario to collect funds for salt and found himself facing a mob that not only clearly stated that they would not pay Howard for collected salt that their families had accessed freely for better than 200 years, they wanted to punish Howard for his crime of greed. Cardis, through Borajo, rescued the judge from certain death and Howard pledged to leave El Paso County never to return.<sup>51</sup>

A week later, Howard, feeling that Cardis had turned the *Tejano* population against him, found Cardis in Samuel Schultz and Brother’s store in El Paso, aimed his double barrel shotgun at him, and murdered his former friend and business ally. The slaying outraged the locals who took to the streets voicing their plans to avenge the murder. Word of the murder reached Austin and the Texas Rangers dispatched their Major John B. Jones to El Paso to investigate the happenings. Jones assembled a force of 20 men led by Ranger Lieutenant John B. Tays to settle the matter and then returned to

Austin. Instead of arresting Howard or running him out of Texas, Tays fell into service with Howard. On Wednesday, 12 December 1877, after establishing quarters in San Elizario, Tays escorted the judge to San Elizario to collect fees for gathered salt. In San Elizario, the judge and his posse found an annual fair with a large gathering and an angry mob of 600 riled up by Borajos. In imminent danger, Howard and the Rangers sought shelter in the Ranger quarters.<sup>52</sup>

Word of the events reached Captain Thomas Blair, 15th Infantry, who with 13 to 19 soldiers marched from Fort Bliss to San Elizario. Enroute, a large *Tejano* force stopped them, informed them that Howard was a local matter, and Blair and his men retreated. At the same time, Howard and Tays fortified the Ranger quarters for battle. On the streets of San Elizario, Charles Ellis, a local merchant tried to dissuade the mob. The mob roped Ellis, shot him, slit his throat, and tossed his mutilated body into a pool of water. The next morning battle ensued and continued for seven days.<sup>53</sup>

Across the river, Borajos spread the word of his plans for Mexicans to loot American businesses from San Elizario to El Paso. The Mexican police, although powerless, warned the residents not to enter the United States. After receiving word of trouble in the El Paso area, on Saturday, December 15th, Colonel Hatch received orders to respond. On Wednesday the 19th, with three rangers dead and two wounded, Tays parlayed. Knowing the terms, basically deliver Howard, Tays and Howard left the fortified quarters and faced the mob. Others holed up in the quarters also surrendered. A firing squad executed Howard and two merchants named John G. Atkinson and John McBride. The mob mutilated the bodies, noticeably Howard's, and then began the systematic looting of the shops and homes in San Elizario and the nearby towns of Ysleta

and Socorro.<sup>54</sup> Colonel Hatch reached El Paso from San Antonio on Friday, December 21st, more than a week after Howard and Tays entered San Elizario. With his force of 60 men, he quickly took control of the situation and ordered all forces, to include the Texas Rangers, in the area under his control. Howard quickly learned that the “ranger’s” hired by Jones for Tays had executed two bound Mexican prisoners.

The U.S. Army bought order to a Texas border town after the local law, represented by Judge Howard; the Dona Ana County, New Mexico, and the El Paso, County, Texas, sheriffs; and the Texas Ranger force, failed. Another failure, that of Captain Blair and his small force deserves note. It is unlikely that Mexicans or *Tejanos*, not supported by the Mexican government, possessed the willingness to assault the troops. Had he pressed on to San Elizario, Blair’s presence may have prevented further blood shed. While the troops from Hatch’s 9th Cavalry in New Mexico, and the forces from the 10th Cavalry in Texas met a community that appreciated their presence, the “buffalo soldiers” quickly learned that San Elizario served as the exception to the rule.<sup>55</sup>

Like San Elizario, Laredo, Texas, had a 90-percent-or-better *Tejano* population, when in mid-March 1899, a small pox outbreak of an estimated 150 cases occurred.<sup>56</sup> Texas state medical official Dr. W. T. Blunt ordered the relocation of all infected persons, Mexicans and *Tejanos* comprising the majority of exposed personnel, relocate to a quarantined field hospital. Additionally, health department officials required residents to burn any items that they could not fumigate. State health officials traveled from house-to-house inoculating anyone without proof of prior vaccination. Additionally, because the outbreak originated from Mexico, U.S. Customs officials did not allow Mexicans without proof of vaccination into the United States. Blunt, upon realizing the gravity of the

situation and the intensity of the resistance from the large Mexican and *Tejano* community, solicited the assistance of the Rangers in the establishment of his authority. The presence of white Rangers, exercising their authority increased tensions. Worst, the Rangers broke down doors and forcefully removed occupants from their homes for transport to the hospital quarantine.<sup>57</sup> A riot ensued that quickly grew to include hundreds of angry Latinos. On 19 March 1899, rioters threw stones at Rangers and someone in the crowd allegedly shot a firearm at a Ranger who returned fire. A Ranger shot one protester in the leg. The next day, following a tip about increased armed resistance, Rangers shot and killed Apapito Herrera, a former Laredo police officer during a search for ammunition on his property. During the shooting, other locals in Herrera's house returned. A gun fight ensued leaving one Ranger and two civilians with bullet wounds. An armed riot quickly grew at Herrera's house. Citizens shot fire arms again, this time the Rangers return fire killed one protester and wounded eight. The rioting in Laredo grew to exceed the Rangers' capability as armed civilians marched the streets and fired guns into the air throughout the night. Reviewing the bleak situation, Governor Joseph Sayers, requested assistance from the United States who authorized the soldiers at Fort McIntosh to assist.<sup>58</sup> The 10th Cavalry arrived the following day, 21 March 1899.

The 10th Cavalry, an all-black regiment, arrived in Laredo with racial tensions high. The soldiers used the presence of their Gatling gun as a show of force to facilitate returning order to Laredo. Although the soldiers restored order, citizens loudly expressed their distain for the "nigger soldiers."<sup>59</sup> While the racial epitaph stood out, Laredo's Latinos did not like the presence of soldiers in general, much less the presence of Negro soldiers. In 1886, white soldiers quelled a riot there and received nearly the same

reception. Of the resentment the 10th Cavalry received, half targeted their race, the other half targeted the uniform. The 25th Infantry Division, also composed of black soldiers, replaced the 10th Cavalry at Fort McIntosh after the “buffalo soldiers” departed for Cuba in April 1899. The 25th did not receive a warm welcome to Laredo.<sup>60</sup>

The Laredo Latino community, still upset over the smallpox affair, did not separate the actions of the Rangers from those of the soldiers. The citizenry perceived both the soldiers and the Rangers as outsiders and authoritarians that forced their will onto the people. At the time, *Tejanos*, a more direct representation of the population, comprised a majority within the Laredo Police Department. The Laredo police frequently harassed and arrested the soldiers usually after a night on the town of drinking and gambling. The soldiers almost encouraged the behavior by promptly paying their fines. The situation became far more serious than harassment and fines in October when a police officer gave a soldier a head laceration that cut to the skull for allegedly consorting with a *Tejano* woman. Following that incident, soldiers began to travel in groups and carry weapons. On October 18th, a police officer named Willie Stoner tried to arrest a soldier for carrying a knife. Soldiers from the 25th stopped the arrest. At the time, Lieutenant John M. Campbell, Company D, 25th Infantry, commanded Fort McIntosh. The following day, more than 40 soldiers assaulted Stoner, beat him with the butts of their rifles, dispersed, and allegedly returned to Laredo after dark shooting their weapons. The gun fire wounded a Mexican man.<sup>61</sup>

The Sheriff arrested three privates. A judge allowed their trial to take place outside of Laredo on the grounds that racial impartiality did not favor a fair trial. Lieutenant Colonel Chambers McKibbin, head of the Department of Texas, blamed the

October Laredo incidents on the youth, immaturity, lack of discipline, of the soldiers and lack of experience on the part of the lieutenant in charge. McKibbin then closed the post. He did not reopen it until January 1900 and then only for F Troop, 10th Cavalry.<sup>62</sup>

In Texas, violence between black soldiers and border communities continued. Incidents occurred in Río Grande City with troops stationed at Ringgold Barracks and later in Brownsville between citizens and troops at Fort Brown. Both cities, as with Laredo, had majority *Tejano* populations. Río Grande City's history of violence against black troops dated to the 1875 murders and the arrest of Colonel Hatch. Events in Río Grande City in 1900 mirrored those in Laredo in 1899. Lieutenant Erubian H. Rubottom, 26-years-old, commanded Ringgold Barracks and he subsequently responded inappropriately when he thought local citizen had surrounded the post with plans to attack.

*Tejano* police harassed the soldiers who, as in Laredo, paid their fines largely for drinking and carrying weapons. On 17 October 1900, the situation grew far more violent. During a pay-day trip to the town's gambling hall, soldiers drew their weapons dispersing the occupants. Outside of the bar, five *Tejanos* beat and shot two privates and stabbed two other privates. All four privates survived. The sheriff's deputy only arrested the soldiers. Tensions continued to rise, and a month later, responding to rumors of an attack by the towns people, the inexperienced lieutenant fired a Gatling gun toward the city. The resulting investigation found the press largely responsible. Sensational opinion editorials which appeared regularly in Laredo, Río Grande City, and Brownsville news papers continuously instigated trouble. The culprits profited from their polarization of the races.<sup>63</sup>

Seven years later, incidents in Brownsville proved that little had changed. The 25th Infantry regiment, returning from the Philippines, once again faced racial discrimination instead of a warm welcome from a Texas border town. Fed up with the ill treatment, on the night of 12 August 1906, soldiers allegedly killed a bartender and caused the ultimate amputation of a police officer's arm during a late night shooting spree. Soldiers denied knowledge of the shooting. None-the-less, a Ranger tried to arrest 12 soldiers. In court, the county failed to indict the soldiers, however, the Army transferred the 25th Infantry out of Brownsville and amidst organized public pressure, President Theodore Roosevelt discharged 167 infantrymen from companies B, C, and D without honor.<sup>64</sup>

Anglo Rangers and Negro soldiers, always a minority in Texas border towns, at times had to protect themselves from the very people they pledged to defend. The Army manned many border-town out posts, like Fort McIntosh in Laredo, Ringgold Barracks in Río Grande City, and Fort Brown in Brownsville, with one company led by a lieutenant. With newspapers instigating trouble and lieutenants over reacting to the threat, the Army ultimately closed a post in order to return calm to the region.

### Key Points

Would a garrison of 100 men made an impact in securing the frontier? Chapter 4 covered the Army's response to various threats in the border region. In order to prevent an invasion from Mexico, and protect frontier settlers, the Army built a string of about 33 posts. From 1862 to 1882, the posts served as critical support platforms for border and frontier operations. In the mid-1860s, reprisals by the Apache and soldiers in New Mexico began the Apache campaign. In the mid-1870s, General Crook's five-column

pursuit of the Apache resulted in most of the tribes relocating to reservations. In the early 1880s, the holdouts led by legendary Apache leaders such as Victorio, Nana, Chihuahua, and Geronimo, capitulated ending the campaigns against the Apache.

In Texas, revolutionaries and anti-American bandits, operating both before and after the *Porfiriato* stole large numbers of cattle and killed soldiers, public officials, and resisters. The Army, operating from out posts and border towns; the Navy, operating in the Río Grande; and the establishment of the Juárez, Díaz, and Carranza governments resulted in order on the border. Anglo, rough-handed, Texas Rangers, undisciplined Negro soldiers, and inexperienced lieutenants in command of out posts faced raids and riots which culminated in the closure of Fort McIntosh from November 1899 to January 1900 and the discharge of 167 infantrymen by the President Roosevelt.

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<sup>1</sup>Davis, 1; Leckie, 101; and Michno, 31, 119, 242-243, and 256.

<sup>2</sup>Michno, 248, 260; and 273, and War Department, 1866.

<sup>3</sup>Davis, B.; 7, Leckie, 93; Michno, 246, 248-249, 260; and 267-268.

<sup>4</sup>War Department, 1850.

<sup>5</sup>Michno, 10.

<sup>6</sup>Frazer, 3-14, 95-108, 139-166, and War Department Reports 1850, 3-5, 58-61.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid, 148.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., 143.

<sup>9</sup>Captain William Grigsby Freeman, "Inspection of Fort Ewell," 1853.

<sup>10</sup>War Department, 1856.

<sup>11</sup>Frazer, 98.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., 104.

- <sup>13</sup>War Department, 1870, 1.
- <sup>14</sup>Ibid., 1880, 4.
- <sup>15</sup>Ibid., 1860, 222.
- <sup>16</sup>Michno, 14; Leckie, 238; and TSHA, “Peña Colorado.”
- <sup>17</sup>War Department, 1850, and Michno, 14.
- <sup>18</sup>Michno, 55.
- <sup>19</sup>Ibid., 82.
- <sup>20</sup>Ibid., 84.
- <sup>21</sup>Ibid., 93-94
- <sup>22</sup>Ibid., 108
- <sup>23</sup>William C. Davis, *The American Frontier: Pioneers, Settlers, and Cowboys 1800-1899* (Norman, OK:University of Oklahoma Press, 2002), 94-95.
- <sup>24</sup>Michno, 93.
- <sup>26</sup>Edmunds, Hoxie, and Salisbury, 299.
- <sup>27</sup>Michno, 248 - 249. William Oury suffered the Cochise Butterfield Stage attack on March 28, 2861.
- <sup>28</sup>War Department, 1850, 5; War Department, 1866, 17; and War Department, 1870, 9, 50-51.
- <sup>29</sup>Michno, 262-289.
- <sup>30</sup>Ibid., 262-289.
- <sup>31</sup>Ibid., 259-289.
- <sup>32</sup>Edmunds, Hoxie, and Salisbury, 319.
- <sup>33</sup>War Department, 1875, 94-101.
- <sup>34</sup>Ibid., 1875, 95.
- <sup>35</sup>Harris and Sadler, 15-16, and War Department, 1875, 94-101.

- <sup>36</sup>Leckie 107, War Department, 1875, 95-97.
- <sup>37</sup>Leckie, 107; Leiker, 36; War Department, 1856; and War Department, 1875, 20, 58, and 95.
- <sup>38</sup>War Department, 1878; Harris and Sadler, 33; and Leckie, 152.
- <sup>39</sup>Harris and Sadler, 27.
- <sup>40</sup>Meyer and Beezley, 432.
- <sup>41</sup>Harris and Sadler, 210.
- <sup>42</sup>Ibid., 210.
- <sup>43</sup>Ibid., 254.
- <sup>44</sup>Ibid., 248 - 277.
- <sup>45</sup>Ibid., 254.
- <sup>46</sup>Ibid., 261.
- <sup>47</sup>War Department, 1816.
- <sup>48</sup>Meyer and Beezley, 460.
- <sup>49</sup>Leiker, 118-119.
- <sup>50</sup>Ibid., 139.
- <sup>51</sup>War Department, 1878; Jack Shipman, *The El Paso Morning Times*, "The Salt War Of San Elizario," (El Paso, TX: January 1888), 198-215; Leckie, 186-190; and Leiker, 64-66.
- <sup>52</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>53</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>54</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>55</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>56</sup>Leiker, 118-119, and Harris and Sadler, 196.
- <sup>57</sup>Leiker, 118-119.
- <sup>58</sup>Leiker, 118, and Carlos E. Cuellar, TSHA, "Laredo Smallpox Riot."

<sup>59</sup>Lieker, 118, and Cuellar, 2.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid., 121.

<sup>61</sup>Ibid., 122.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid., 122-124.

<sup>63</sup>Ibid., 124-127.

<sup>64</sup>Leiker, 132-145; Franklin and Moss, 347-348; and Garna L. Christian, TSHA, “Brownsville Raid.”

## CHAPTER 6

### CONCLUSION

Colonel Hatch's statement inspired the research for this paper: "The remedy for the disturbance in this region is the establishment of a military post. Had there been a garrison of even 100 men at Fort Bliss it is not likely the present trouble would ever have occurred." Would a permanent post, Fort Bliss, with a garrison of 100 soldiers have prevented the San Elizario Salt War? The Colonel's statement reflected a focus on the military tool of national power. However, the Army, however, does not operate in a vacuum. In his comment, Hatch failed to recognize the influence of culture, religion, different languages, different interests, and even race, on border operations. San Elizario is a colorful example of a border town conflict. It involved a bitter Mexican Priest, a greedy white American judge, Texas Rangers, betrayal, cold-blooded murder, a U.S.-Mexico border conflict, and buffalo soldiers. Putting aside the old west romantic appeal of the incident, had Judge Howard simply kept his word, left El Paso County and never returned, no mob would have killed him, or any others, and looted of San Elizario. Had Ranger Jones, or the county sheriff, arrested Howard, the San Elizario Salt War would not have occurred. However, the local and state authorities failed to act and failed to maintain order in San Elizario, and other Texas towns, resulting in the federal government having to intervene. Maintaining order at the local level, however, is not, and was not, the job of the United States Army. While it loosely fell within the mandate of protecting Americans and their property, the mission of resolving domestic disturbances belonged to the local authorities.

While the *El Paso del Norte* region proved its strategic significance in the 1860s when El Paso, Texas, maintained the flag of the union, and Paso del Norte, Chihuahua, maintained the headquarters of President Benito Juárez during the French invasion and reign of Maximilian, the study of the factors that preceded and followed the San Elizario Salt War led to the conclusion that does not support Hatch's 1878 comment.

By 1877, when the Salt War occurred, the Army had for 14 years settled the number of posts along the U.S.-Mexico border around 33 to include Fort Bliss. Records did not suggest that an increased number of posts would significantly affect security or stability. The number of personnel reached its post-Civil War peak of about 5,820, at the time Colonel Hatch made his statement. As a regimental commander, the colonel could move troops at will. He had five companies assigned to Fort Bayard in New Mexico's Pinos Altos Mountains after that area had settled down significantly at the end of the 1860s. Additionally, he had four companies at Fort Union and four at Fort Craig. He could have distributed his men to better protect the El Paso area. In 1877, the Texas state Ranger force strove for legitimacy and greater numbers that could handle domestic stability and support requirements. An Army rescue at San Elizario, while bringing to light the need for more men, may have hampered that progress. The state may have deemed the increased their own forces necessary because it could always call upon the U.S. Army. If Congress, or the War Department, granted Hatch 200 additional troops and he assigned 50 to San Elizario, he would have assigned a lieutenant to command any post established at San Elizario. History suggests that a lieutenant commanding troops an outpost near a Texas border town oftentimes proved problematic. Lastly, Hatch commanded the 9th Cavalry which consisted of Negro troops, like the lieutenants

commanding outposts, Negro troops, while relatively trouble-free in El Paso, may have also proved problematic in San Elizario as they did in Laredo, Río Grande City, and Brownsville.

Due to the nature of having many people from varying cultures with different interests, languages, religions, and skin colors merging on the U.S.-Mexico border from 1865 to 1916, and considering the political flux of the United States, Texas, and Mexico, an increased military presence would not have had a significant impact on national security.

Interventions aimed at preventing the escalation of hostilities proved effective, and required, in stabilizing the area. In the Texas Lower Río Grande Valley a strong military presence, in the form of a temporary show of force, stopped bandits supported by organized militaries from crossing the Río Grande and raiding Texas. Leadership with the ability to de-escalate or prevent hostilities could have prevented the troubles in San Elizario in 1877, Laredo in 1899, Río Grande City in 1900, and Brownsville in 1906.

In the examination of the impact of frontier outposts and the number of soldiers that manned them, the paper first looked at the problem. It reviewed the backgrounds, interests, and values of the people involved: The indigenous tribes wished to roam the land freely. The Spanish wanted to make the world Catholic. The Catholic Church proved a powerful force that allowed priest the ability to motivate the Mexican masses. The Americans wanted to expand their country from coast to coast and beyond. Generally, the interests, language, religious, cultural, and color differences.

Chapter 1 reviewed the terrain and found that knowledge of the mountains in the Sonoran and Chihuahua deserts greatly benefited the Apache. The shallow Río Grande

enabled the raider pursued by the Army to easily escape in Mexico. Chapter 2 explored the politics involving the groups and found the instability of the Mexican government highly problematic. In 1845, minister plenipotentiary John Slidell, in Mexico representing President Polk and the United States, failed to find the appropriate authority with whom to negotiate a peaceful solution to the Texas and California issues. A more stable Mexican government, like the British government that peacefully settled the Oregon issue with the United States, may have avoided the 1846 war. Instability in the Mexico government led to a country that progressed slower than the United States in areas of education, national defense, industrialization and the development of the rail road, and rights for laborers. As a result, social injustice led to social unrest which led to even greater instability in the government, and increased criminal and revolutionary activity on the U.S.-Mexico border.

Apache politics focused on retaliatory warfare. American politics focused on safe westward expansion, stopping depredations by indigenous warriors and Mexican bandits, and preventing invasions from Mexico. Lastly, Chapter 3 highlighted how attitudes toward black soldiers led to intervention by the Army.

Chapter 4 analyzed the Army's response to the various threats. The study found that most incidents involved either indigenous tribes or Mexican rebels sponsored by an organized army, or fell under the label of domestic disturbance. Research revealed that from 1862 to 1882, 33 Army posts served the southwest desert frontier and that with the exception of the Civil War, the number of troops peaked at near 6,000. While an increase in forces helped in the Apache campaigns of the 1860s, the smart use of the forces available resulted in the Apache campaigns of the 1870s. The Lower Río Grande Valley

Cortina and Bandit wars of the 1850s and 1870s an increased military presence.

However, the people in the Lower Valley near the Texas border towns of Laredo, Río Grande City, and Brownsville did not welcome the Army when commanded by lieutenants and manned by black soldiers.

Overall, the paper reviewed the diversity and troublesome nature of the U.S.-Mexico border. While Texans worked to establish a national identity, Mexico had two emperors, 49 presidential terms, and 29 different men serving as president. Successive leaders to both emperors, and no less than the first and third presidents, ordered their predecessors deaths by firing squad. While Mexico City politicians killed one another, *caudillos* profited from the chaos by raiding the Texas Lower Río Grande Valley where the *Tejanos* identified more with their Catholic, Spanish-speaking, family members in Mexico than the black and white, English-speaking, Protestants in the United States. In addition to the turbulent Mexican and Texas governments, eight Apache tribes, and the Comanche, roamed the vast territory killing families for their horses, mules, and children. To quell the social-political instability and secure the traveling families the Army placed companies from 12 regiments on the border, among them, four regiments of slaves turned soldiers.

The study began with a consideration of Colonel Hatch's statement regarding the San Elizario Salt War. It led to researching the question of whether an increase in the number of Army posts, and soldiers that manned them, on the U.S.-Mexico border from 1865 to 1916 would have significantly affected the U.S. Army's ability to secure and stabilize to the region?

## The Findings

1. The Army first established posts on the border in 1846. Expansionist American policies led to the first four posts. America went to war with Mexico in order to seize an expanded Texas, the New Mexico territory, and California. Manning and establishing the 1846 posts provoked war. The posts had nothing to do with maintaining security or stability.

2. Colonel Hatch's 1878 comment reflected a military solution for a domestic problem. Three decades later, General Funston clearly explained that in accordance with the 1878 *Posse Comitatus* Act, domestic disturbances did not fall into the Army's mandate and that short of proof of a Mexican government-sponsored invasion or the declaration of martial law, he could not, and would not, get involved in Texas' "Bandit War" with Mexican revolutionaries. In 1877, Colonel Hatch, well adept on Texas politics, knew to hesitate to before become involved in the San Elizario disturbance even in the name of protecting American lives and property. Furthermore, in Full Spectrum Operations, the endstate is the transfer of authority to the appropriate agency to ensure security and stability emphasizing the temporary nature of the U.S. Army intervention. Hatch advocated a permanent post and additional troops to prevent future domestic uprisings.

3. Army posts, as representations of American authority and power, antagonized the *Tejano* population and inadvertently provoked domestic disturbances which led to violent riots. Furthermore, soldiers, the embodiment of American authority, became the targets of those who resented their presence especially Negro soldiers. Outposts such as Forts Brown and McIntosh and Ringgold Barracks near Texas border towns with well

developed racial attitudes, when commanded by inexperienced lieutenants, and manned by black enlisted men, provoked violent domestic incidents. They did not prevent them.

4. In the wars against the Apache and Comanche, inhuman acts of depredation and bloody retaliatory massacres on the part of local town's people, indigenous tribes, scalp hunters, and the Army promoted increased instability and deaths from 1850 to 1885. The permanent manning of outposts had little-to-no impact on reducing depredations. Following spiraling acts of retaliation, depredations increased. The five columns of General George Crook, led by Apache scouts, in aggressive pursuit of off-reservation Apaches ended the attacks. Neither the number of posts, nor the number of troops, changed. Available troops executing a solid plan decreased depredations. Additionally, careful negotiations and restraint resulted in an increased calm.

5. To win the Apache wars General George Crook placed his men in the field, out of the posts, for nearly three straight years. Their constant pressure plus the White Mountain and other Apache scouts' knowledge of the terrain resulted in an American win. The out posts contributed to the Army win not by the number of soldiers garrisoned at each, but rather by their service as critical logistics bases where soldiers could regroup, rearm, re-supply, and rest.

6. The Army and the Secretary of War realized the impossibility perfectly securing an area as vast as the desert southwest border region with a country as turbulent as Mexico below it. In 1915, General Frederick Funston suggested that securing just the Texas border with Mexico would require 50,000 troops. At that time, the Western Department reported 8,670 soldiers. The total Army force was about 108,000. When Colonel Hatch drafted his 1878 report, his regiment at 18 companies, sported the greatest

personnel numbers since the unit's first days. Requesting more troops may have supported an on-going War Department and Army agenda.

7. American expansionism brought four major groups of people from different cultures, with different interests, languages, religions, and skin colors together in a relatively short span of time. Careful informed diplomacy aimed at de-escalating conflicts assisted in establishing security and stability.

8. Governors learned to call upon the readily available professional Army to settle domestic disputes. The United States, through the 1878 *Posse Comitatus Act*, all but forced the states to raise forces necessary to secure and police their own people. The presence of the Army enabled the states to delay accepting responsibility for their own security affairs. Additional troops, and the permanent manning of Fort Bliss, or any other post along the border, may have further facilitated the states' slow pace at fulfilling their own security requirements.

Due to the nature of having many people from varying cultures with different interests, languages, religions, and skin colors merging on the U.S.-Mexico border from 1865 to 1916, and considering the political flux of the United States, Texas, and Mexico, an increased military presence would not have had a significant impact on national security. The Army received the mission to protect settlers from threats as they traveled and settled the frontier. Two major threats emerged, indigenous warriors and Mexican revolutionaries. Domestic quarrels constituted a third threat.

The retaliation for raids and a lack of respect for Apache and Comanche non-combatants caused the Apache and Comanche to turn raiding into warring. In order to stop depredations by indigenous warriors, conducting the relentless pursuit of Apache

and Comanche raiders, using indigenous scouts with expert knowledge of the terrain, proved effective. Leaders or planners should have also incorporated the prevention of further attacks into their operations by instilling, and emphasizing restraint, respect, professionalism and discipline into officers of all ranks, as well as soldiers. Examples such as the Lieutenant Bascom hanging of his Apache captives, General West's murder for Mangas Coloradas, Captain Blair not confronting the *Tejano* guard in San Elizario, Lieutenant Campbell not controlling his troops at Fort McIntosh, and Lieutenant Rubottom at Ringgold Barracks firing a Gatling gun toward Río Grande City, Texas, suggest that more professional officers, and soldiers, defined the solution to the question of stabilizing the border. Maintaining order in border towns, when part of the mandate, required experienced officers with strong negotiation and leadership skills, that is, officers who could de-escalate domestic disputes and control of their troops. Highly professional, well trained, and disciplined soldiers constituted an additional requirement. In domestic disputes, like the 1877 San Elizario Salt War and the 1898 Laredo Small Pox Riot, the Army's response helped restore order, however, the Army's mission, protecting citizens and their property, did not include a permanent presence in the name of preserving domestic order. As General Funston exemplified, distinguishing between a domestic affair and an Army mission proved difficult as well as important. Given the time and resources, to include a motivated attentive pool, Army leaders may have considered training, or assisting local forces in the training of professional, security operations, and tactics. Regarding general lawlessness, again, the Army could have instructed locals on early warning, and passive and active protective measures that deter crime and make people and places less vulnerable.

Only in the expulsion of sponsored Mexican raiders like Cortina's forces did a stronger and more prominent military presence result in increased security and stability on the border. Emphasizing the complete problem on the border, in the border towns of the Lower Río Grande Valley, the presence of black soldiers resulted in race-related incidents. Using the forces available to create light highly-mobile detachments that incessantly pursued a light mobile enemy worked, and the 33 established outposts supported their logistics' requirements. Finally, in the area of domestic disturbances, arriving in a timely manner, establishing order, and turning the mission over to the appropriate local agency was, as it is today, the key to security and stability.

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