

Columbia Democrat.

"I have sworn upon the Altar of God, eternal hostility to every form of Tyranny over the Mind of Man."—Thomas Jefferson

H. WEBB, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

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SOUTH SIDE OF MAIN, A FEW DOORS BELOW MARKET-STREET.

TERMS:

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THE BATTLE OF MONTEREY.

As every thing relating to the battle of Monterey is interesting, we give the following graphic description by Gen. Peyton.

MONTEREY, Sept., 25, 1846.

My dear Sir:—After a most obstinate and sanguinary conflict, which was continued from day to day for five days, Gen. Ampudia capitulated this city on 25th inst. Our loss in killed and wounded, has been extremely severe, not less than 500, amongst whom are some of the most valuable officers of the regular Army; as well as volunteers.

The 1st. Regiment of Tennessee volunteers, commanded by Col. Campbell, suffered more severely, perhaps than any other which was engaged during the siege, having had twenty seven killed on the field, and seventy seven wounded, some of them mortally, and many of them seriously, and this out of a force of only 379 men. Notwithstanding this tremendous loss, the regiment charged under the lead of its gallant colonel and other officers, and was the first regiment which stormed the fort, mounted the breastworks, and unfurled the stars and stripes upon its walls, amidst a perfect hail storm of balls which was pouring upon it.

These Mexicans towns and fortresses are incredibly strong, and few men fight better from house tops and behind stone walls, or are more adroit in the use of stationary artillery than the Mexicans.—In these actions Gen. Taylor had, all told about 4000 men, while Gen. Ampudia's force consisted of 10,500 infantry and cavalry, besides militia, rancheros, &c. Gen. Taylor had 18 pieces of artillery; of which 17 were field pieces of artillery, while Gen. Ampudia had forty four pieces thirty eight of which, with two standards of color, are now in our possession.

Our army arrived before Monterey the morning of Saturday, the 17th inst. and about half past 8 o'clock, while reconnoitering the out works of the city a ball, discharged from a 12 pounder, struck near Gen. Taylor and staff, and bounded with terrible velocity over his head, at which the old hero did not change a muscle or even bat his eye. This day, the 19th, was spent in making reconnoissances of the place and its various outposts, amidst a good deal of firing on the part of the Mexicans, from cannon and a short gun called an escopete, which carries a large ball to the distance of 500 or 600 yards.

On Sunday, the 20th, Gen. Worth was detached by Gen. Taylor, in command of the 2d division of the regular army (about 1500 strong) and Col. Hay's Regiment of Texas Rangers, (consisting of 400 men,) with a view of turning the city and occupying the Saltillo road, for the purpose of cutting off the enemy's supplies and reinforcements, which were daily expected under Gen. Santa Anna. The division performed the march—making a road, filling ditches, &c.—a distance of about six or seven

miles, and reached the vicinity of the enemy in the evening, about 5 o'clock when the Gen. with an escort from Col. Hay's Rangers, was fired upon by the batteries placed on the heights, and also by a corps of the enemy's light troops, who were sent through a corn field to cut off his party.

From this time until the appearance of the white flag, on the evening of the 24th, the division of the army commanded by Gen. Worth was incessantly engaged, and was ever successful—never for one moment hesitating or faltering—putting to rout the enemy's cavalry on the plains, driving his infantry through the chaparral & from the house tops, scaling immense heights, capturing guns, and storming fortresses which were not only deemed impregnable, but which seemed to be almost inaccessible. And, best of all, these brilliant exploits were performed with the loss of fourteen killed and fifty six wounded; and during the four days contest there occurred not the slightest error or mistake on the part of the commanding Gen. nor was there at any time the least faltering or hesitancy on the part of the officers and men—regulars and volunteers—in executing his orders. Indeed, it is difficult to determine which is most worthy of admiration, the wisdom and energy displayed by the able and accomplished commander or gallantry and order with which he was sustained by those under his command.

When the difficulties and insuperable obstacles are considered, I venture the assertion that the series of successes obtained by the division under General Worth's command, in the recent operations against Monterey, will bear a favorable comparison with the proudest achievements of the American arms. He was opposed by a greatly superior force, which was well served with artillery & posted upon the highest peaks of the Sierra Madre. He stormed the heights took three pieces of artillery, turned them upon the enemy, and with these and the aid of one of his own pieces—which he contrived to place on the summit which commands the famous Bishop's Palace, eight hundred feet above the base of the mountain—unit'd with the inestimable services rendered by the fearless and invincible spirits who stormed these heights, he reduced to strong hold of the enemy and drove him into the city, upon which he turned the guns he had captured. He bivouacked his force for the night on the bleak mountain, and the next day, after bombarding the town, he conducted his forces into the streets amidst a shower of balls discharged at his person. He was seen everywhere, directing, driving the enemy from his batteries, forcing them from street to street and house to house, until night ended the conflict. He maintained his position in the city placed a ten-inch mortar in one of the strongly fortified squares, to direct which he placed that gallant and skillful officer, Monroe, with instructions to fire a shell (weighing ninety pounds) every half hour during the night. This duty was performed with terrible effect, every shell falling into the plaza, where the enemy's force was collected to the number of 7000 or 80000 men. He has made every necessary preparation for pursuing his advantages the next day, even to placing some of his artillery on the tops of high buildings, which would command and sweep the house tops from which the enemy fought.

Such was the state of preparation when Gen. Ampudia capitulated the city, reflecting equal honor upon the military skill of the head which conceived, and the indomitable energy of the brilliant spirits who executed the plan of operations.

Our most serious loss occurred on the 23d, when Gen. Taylor only intended to make a diversion in favor of General Worth, who was engaged in the attack on the other side of the town, but owing to the ardor & impetuosity of the troops they very soon became involved in a general engagement, which Gen. Taylor felt bound to sustain. This excess of courage involved melancholy consequences, but it is surely a most excusable weakness, if it be a weakness, to display an excess of ardor in the field of battle.

It is not necessary for me to go into detail in relation to the terms accorded to the Mexican army in the capitulation you will have seen the articles, or the substance thereof, published in the newspapers ere this reaches you. If any one not acquainted with the facts of the case should object that our commanding Gen. has granted terms too favorable to the retiring army, let it be remembered that our invincible little army had already suffered severely in battling the bosoms of our best citizens and bravest officers and soldiers, to the utter annihilation of an unseen foe, that the city was immensely strong in its defenses; that the Mexican army was double that of our own, this army was in possession of a city, each house of which, is a fortress within itself; that each remaining street was barricaded, and most of them defended by cannon; and that when driven from the city, the Mexican army possessed a fortress called the Citadel, of immense capacity and great strength, to which the whole army could have retired. To have this work without a siege train, as we were by assault would have cost us very dearly. Independently of these considerations, our ammunition was quite limited. We were far removed from our supplies and reinforcements, while the enemy might have been reinforced at any moment. And, lastly, the policy avowed by our government does not inculcate the idea that this is to be a vindictive or exterminating war against the people of Mexico, but on the contrary to conquer a peace, or in other words, to whip Mexico to her own satisfaction, obtain our just rights, and conclude a peace upon terms such as would be becoming in a great and magnanimous nation towards a weak & distracted Government.

All this has in my opinion been accomplished, in as full, complete and ample a manner by the course pursued in the capitulation, as if we had stormed the citadel and put their whole army to the sword. This, in my judgment, the last battle which will be fought in the Mexican war. Gen. Ampudia, in urging a pacific course on Gen. Taylor stated repeatedly that he knew that Gen. Santa Anna was disposed to peace; that he was well assured that the course adopted would lead to peace between the two countries; that his object was to save the effusion of blood and the honor of his Government. But if the war is to be prosecuted, we are in possession of one of the strongest, most healthy & beautiful places in Mexico; from which when our reinforcements and supplies arrive, our Army cannot be expelled by any force which Mexico will be able to send against it. We have taken arms and ammunition with which we can act offensively or defensively, according to the course of events and the policy of the Government. If it be the policy of our Government to extend our boundaries beyond the Rio Grande, then the line of the Rinconada, agreed upon is that beyond which the Mexican troops are to retire is the most eligible which can be indicated by the geographical features of the country.

Gen. Ampudia and his army left this morning for Saltillo. He was treated

with courtesy and respect by Gen. Worth whose quarters are in the city, and who accompanied him to the limits of the town. In fact all our troops displayed that forbearance which always marks the conduct of brave and magnanimous men towards those whom the fortune of war has placed in their power. You will observe that in my narration of the events of the battles, I have confined myself to the operations of that division of the army which was commanded by Gen. Worth, I have done so because I was with his command, near his person, saw what occurred, and know that which I have stated to be substantially correct. You are not to infer that I mean to intimate that the main Army, under the command of Gen. Taylor did not perform feats equally worthy of the applause and admiration of the country. Others well informed as to facts and much better qualified for the duty will no doubt give the detailed account of the operations of this portion of the army. Take the army altogether, I doubt whether a superior body of men ever rallied under the flag of our country.

Very truly, yours &c.
BALIE PEYTON.

INCIDENTS OF THE BATTLE.

The Baltimore papers are filled with letters from the army, giving the particulars of the battle at Monterey. Every circumstance connected with a battle so honorable to our arms possess deep interest, and the public mind seizes on every new account and every fresh incident with unabated avidity. We select such portions of them as are new to our readers. One writer, speaking of the Baltimore battalion, says:

We have lost a number of men, but nothing appears so horrible to me as those men who have their arms and legs taken off. I never before imagined what a battle field was—never thought it like this. We have some noble fellows in our battalion—instead of being privates, they should be generals. They charged three forts, and succeeded in taking them but many who were foremen are now numbered with the dead. He passed the forts on Monday and got into the city. I left my tent, determined to surmount every obstacle. I knew we had eyes looking upon us that had jealousy in them, and we determined to lead the lead.

You would not suppose that any one could live in this lane or street where we were fighting. Three batteries were constantly playing upon us. Muskets, rifles and every weapon which could be brought to play was bearing upon us. The lanes became so dense with dead men and horses that we had to tread upon them in passing. The Mexican Lancers, not satisfied with seeing the poor fellows lying wounded upon the ground, must revenge themselves by thrusting their lances into their bodies. Many of these Lancers, however, in turn were made to bite the dust.

Every one thought I was killed. My horse was found with blood upon him and brought to the camp and finally they sent out to find me when I discovered Sergeant Major Day holding my charger near the fort. I called out and told him to tie the horse to a brush and take care of himself. Three forts all the time throwing grape shot at us. I finally managed to get charge of twenty-three prisoners, which our men found had retreated from the fort to the yard. Among them were three officers. You may be sure we had to run for it, regardless of the lives of the prisoners. All the forts opened upon us, and such a dodging of balls you never heard of. I had often heard of getting out of the way of balls but never believed it before. Every time, while we were running up to the camp with our prisoners, as we saw the flash of the old twelve pounder, down all would go upon the road, get up and run onward. At every flash the Mexicans were as flat as flounders.

It is thought that our enemy had some French artillerists amongst them, as they fired with great skill. Yesterday they fired at a single Texas Ranger, struck his horse and broke the poor man's leg, so that it had to be taken off this morning.

On Tuesday General Worth, I understand, wished a suspension of hostilities until he could bury the dead which was actually refused by the Mexicans, although the truce asked for was only two hours. I soon came our time to refuse. They wanted, as they said, to remove the women and children out of the city. This was refused. They were told, if they continued hostilities, we would remove the men. They, however came to terms last night.

The slightest wound here, I might say, is worse than a mortal one, for the wound is soon filled with worms, and in spite of all the physicians can do, the wounds cannot be kept clear of them. They abound in great abundance, and of almost every imaginable species.

I am heartily tired of Mexico, and but for the duty I owe my country, would be the bearer of this letter. You can get nothing without great difficulty.

Our fare here has been extremely bad. The provisions which the Government allows to the soldiers are any thing but good. Contracts are given to political men, and they put such trash upon our troops as neither would not eat in the South. The pork is so fat that lean is considered a delicacy. Flour and crackers without worms are also scarce. In fact the only thing reliable I am able to get is corn, occasionally.

On the march through this country, I sometimes get hold of an old hen, one of which seemed old enough to have been mother to the chicken that crowed in the days of Hamlet's father.

You can tell Mr. Rogers that Seth is well. We left William Hickman at Camargo, with Dr. Miles and about thirty of our men. Hickman was not in the battle owing to his sickness. Tell Mr. Boyd that his son is well, and makes a first-rate soldier.

A Lancer got after Henry Norris—he ran until he came to a fence, and then levelled his musket and dropped the gentleman from his horse. He was struck so hard that he never knew what hurt him. Mr. N. is a great boy. He says he never was more frightened, and that he thought he was "a gener."

Another says—
The enemy were very strongly entrenched: the whole town was a fortress; and, perhaps, the whole annals of history cannot furnish another instance of a less number of men attacking a greater in their fortifications and driving them out. What their loss is it is impossible to ascertain, although it is probably less than ours. I saw the last division of them march out of town to-day. The soldiers all bore evident marks of Azev's generosity, while among the whiter skinned officers there were said to be recognized several deserters from our army.

The names of three of their forts are: Fort Federation, Fort Liberty and Fort Independence. They are all gone; not the forts only, but I fear the things also from which they were named. It is time for Mexico to resort to some desperate remedy or else cut her republican throat. I rejoice, however, at the result of this contest. Our day's more fighting would have humbled Mexico to the dust, and elevated us beyond the endurance of the gods. As it is, our great loss and the terms granted to the Mexican army, will mitigate the asperities of our rampant petulance and pride, and at the same time leave the Mexicans in the attitude of an independent, unconquered people. It will give them a favorable opportunity to accept of our offers of peace, and I sincerely hope that they will embrace it.

Fuente de la Independencia, the Citadel—a bastion work, intended for 34 guns, and requiring a garrison of at least 1500 men. Its walls are very thick, and are surrounded by a deep ditch. This work has probably been commenced and completed since the battles of the Rio Grande. It surrounds a half-finished Cathedral, which, for this quarter of the world, is a wonder. It is nearly a hundred paces long, and half as many wide. Its walls are seven or eight feet thick, and exceedingly well constructed. Towering up into the clouds above and near it is a peak called Mitre Mountain from its summit being exactly of the shape of that head dress. Monterey is on the

San Juan, on a large plain of fertile field nearly surrounded by mountains. Its gardens are filled always with a luxuriant growth of trees, shrubs, oranges, pomgranates, flowers, etc. Several gentlemen have beautiful houses and grounds here. Arista's house is used as a hospital for our wounded. Monterey is the capital of New Leon—it contains probably 8,000 or 10,000 inhabitants.

The following extracts are from a brave officer of the U. S. Army, dated, Camp near Monterey, Sept. 28. The writer attached to Gen. Taylor's division in the plain, gives a graphic description of Gen. Worth's movements on the heights, the whole of which, presenting a grand spectacle, could be seen from below:

Just before day, on the 23d, we heard the firing, and as the mist was dispersed, could distinctly see the whole of General Worth's operations as he stormed and carried the third height, and after that the Bishop's palace. I cannot begin to give you a faint idea of the scene, which was the most magnificent and intensely interesting of anything I ever witnessed. We could plainly see our men were gaining ground from the flank of the muskets, and then finally the enemy retiring to the Bishop's Palace. They made three several attempts to retake the height after they had lost it, and I am told their officers could be seen driving the men on with their swords, and even the lancers came out and pricked them with their lances but to no purpose.

After the height was gained, which is some 800 or 1000 feet above the plain—and the ascent over the most jagged and rugged rocks, whose sides are in many places perpendicular for many feet—Worth rested his men for an hour or so, and then sent forward two companies as skirmishers to attack the Bishop's Palace. These were met by the Mexicans, before whom they slowly retired, yielding as it were inch by inch, until the enemy became encouraged and rushed out with strong reinforcements of cavalry and infantry. Then, so soon as they got near the height, the whole of the American command rose up from where they had been concealed by the height, gave them a volley and rushed at them—the piece of artillery which they had dragged up with ropes opening at the same time. This was too much for Mexican bravery & they turned and fled, our men following so closely that they entered and seized the palace ere they could make a stand. They lowered their flag and hoisted ours in its place. The poor devils retreated into the town, our batteries playing on them the whole time.

All this we could see from our position, Judge of our excitement when we supposed Worth had been driven back—as our success I may safely say, was dependent upon this; and then can you imagine our joy when we saw the stars and stripes floating from both eminences! Never was there a more joyous shout rent the air than the one we gave forth!

(From the Washington Union.)

Volunteers of Tennessee.—We have seen a letter from Nashville that refers to the letters of Col. Wm. B. Campbell and Lieut. Col. Anderson, which have appeared in the papers of that town. They led the gallant corps which seized the first fort that was taken on the eastern side of the city of Monterey. The writer pronounces the whole achievement "the most heroic act that ever was performed by volunteers, and the principal figures in that heroic band were the Colonel and the Lieutenant Colonel, but it is only because they were the highest in command." I know (says the writer) most of the officers and many of the sergeants, corporals and privates, and here is not a man among the whole of them who does not feel his fame indebted to a regiment to which he belonged, and who would not regard unsoldier-like conduct, in the face of the enemy, as a disgrace that he could not wipe out. Helms's account of whom Col. Campbell speaks, is a stone-cutter and a Prussian by birth. I heard him make his speech returning his thanks to the company that elected him—the best speech that was made on the occa-