

could easily see where the enemy's fire was the heaviest, and with great coolness and skill he dropped his shell among them, the center in the meantime moving steadily up until they came right onto the brink of a deep side ravine in which the enemy had his main force, and opened on him with the revolvers. This was too much for him; he could not stand such close quarters. When it came to meeting the cool but piercing eye of the white men in deadly conflict, face to face, the redskins quailed, and they began to give way. Then the "forward" and "charge" were sounded and the fight became a running one, the Indians taking advantage of every little outlet from the main cañon, as they retreated up it, to make their escape. At 11 a. m., after chasing the enemy with cavalry fourteen miles up the cañon, scattering him like quails, and finding that my horses were giving out, and knowing that I had a long road to retrace through a dangerous cañon, I ordered the "recall" and "assembly" sounded.

The result of the expedition and battle is that although the Indians were in possession and expecting us later in the day we surprised them as to the time of our coming. We killed about 30 warriors, their chief among the number, and wounded many more who made their escape for the time, but who will undoubtedly die; recaptured 3 [mules] and 1 horse, with saddles, bridles, &c., that had been stolen from Lieutenant Honeyman, and 18 horses, saddles, bridles, quite a number of good rifles, and other plunder of the Indians; losing on our side 1 killed—Lieut. F. A. Peel, regimental quartermaster, Second California Volunteer Cavalry—and 2 wounded—Regimental Quartermaster Sergeant Brown and Sergeant Booth, of Company M, Second California Volunteer Cavalry. By the accompanying rough draft\* of the cañon, and taking into consideration the fact that it is twenty-five miles long, you will see that it is an exceedingly strong hold, and will not be surprised at its being called by the Mormons and heretofore believed by the Indians to be the impenetrable and impregnable cañon; one such as none but California troops could drive a superior or even an equal number of Indians from. The enemy's force, from the best information I can get, was about 200 warriors. To Lieutenant Honeyman, and his coolness and skill in using his howitzer, is in a great measure due the credit of the battle being won with so slight a loss on our side. As for the Second Cavalry, both officers and men behaved as soldiers should, and it would be unfair to make any invidious distinctions. Suffice it to say that they sustained their well-earned fame as the "Fighting Second."

All of which is respectfully submitted.

GEO. S. EVANS,

*Colonel Second California Vol. Cav., Commanding Expedition.*

Lieut. W. L. USTICK,

*Acting Assistant Adjutant-General, District of Utah.*

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**APRIL 12-24, 1863.**—Expedition from Camp Babbitt to Keysville, Cal.

*Report of Capt. Moses A. McLaughlin, Second California Cavalry.*

CAMP INDEPENDENCE,

*Owen's River Valley, April 24, 1863.*

COLONEL: I have the honor to report that in obedience to instructions dated Camp Babbitt, near Visalia, Cal., April 10, 1863, and signed

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\* Not found.

Lieut. Col. William Jones, Second Cavalry California Volunteers, I left Camp Babbitt on Sunday, the 12th instant, in command of twenty-four men of Company D and eighteen men of Company E, accompanied by Lieutenants French and Daley, one 12-pounder howitzer, and four six-mule Government teams, used for the transportation of rations, company property, ammunition, and forage, all of which arrived in good condition at Camp Independence, Owen's Valley, on the 24th of the same month. Distance traveled I suppose to be 250 or 275 miles. I had been instructed by Colonel Jones to investigate the Indian troubles on Kern River. On arriving at Keysville I was waited upon by several of the residents of the place, who represented that there was a large body of Indians encamped upon the North Fork of Kern River; that many of these Indians had doubtless been engaged in the war and in the depredations committed in Kern River Valley; that one man had been murdered in Kelsey Cañon; that Roberts and Waldron had lost about 150 head of stock; that many other citizens had lost cattle, horses, and other property; that the roads were unsafe, and finally, that the Indians there congregated were for the most part strangers in the valley, and were thought to be Tehachapie and Owen's River Indians, who after seeing so many troops pass had endeavored to shield themselves from punishment by seeking the more immediate vicinity of the white settlements. After having the above statements, and learning that José Chico was in the neighborhood, I sent for him and two other chiefs who were known to have been friendly. José Chico is an Owen's River Indian, but resides on Kern River, where he cultivates a farm. He speaks but little English. In Spanish he, however, makes himself well understood. From him I learned that the Tehachapies had endeavored to have him go to the war with them; that many of his own Indians had gone; that some had returned and were now in the valley, sleeping in the camps at night and hiding in the daytime; that there were many Indians there whom he did not know, either Owen's or Tehachapies. I told him to remain in camp with me and dismissed the others. I informed Doctor George, Mr. Herman, and others, citizens, that I would visit the camps early in the morning, and that they might accompany me and vouch for such Indians as they might know. Accordingly at 2 a. m. on the 19th, accompanied by a detail of twenty men of my command and Lieutenant Daley, with José Chico as guide, I left camp, and at dawn surrounded the camp of the Indians, which was situated about ten miles from Keysville, upon the right bank of Kern River. I had the bucks collected together, and informed José Chico and the citizens who had arrived that they might choose out those whom they knew to have been friendly. This was soon done. The boys and old men I sent back to their camps, and the others, to the number of thirty-five, for whom no one could vouch, were either shot or sabered. Their only chance for life being their fleetness, but none escaped, though many of them fought well with knives, sticks, stones, and clubs. This extreme punishment, though I regret it, was necessary, and I feel certain that a few such examples will soon crush the Indians and finish the war in this and adjacent valleys. It is now a well-established fact that no treaty can be entered into with these Indians. They care nothing for pledges given, and have imagined that they could live better by war than peace. They will soon learn that they have been mistaken, as with the forces here they will soon either be killed off, or pushed so far in the surrounding deserts that they will perish by famine. A Tejon prisoner says the Tejon and Tehachapie Indians (those for whom the Government has done so much) have been engaged in both these

wars, and as soon as they are tired return to the reservation. The Indian agents should be notified of this fact. If I have to send down there I will leave them very little to do, and save the Government some treasure. The route from Visalia by way of Walker's Pass is far preferable to the Los Angeles route, as upon the former there is wood, water, and grass at easy marches. Forage can be purchased in Tulare Valley and forwarded to Keysville, from which point the Government teams can bring it to Camp Independence, having water and grass at intervals upon the road, of not more than fifteen or twenty miles, while upon the Los Angeles road from Tehachapie Cañon by Walker's Pass, a distance of over fifty miles, there is not a blade of grass and the water unfit to be used.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully, your obedient servant,  
M. A. McLAUGHLIN,

*Capt., Second Cav. California Vols., Comdg. Camp Independence.*

Col. R. C. DRUM.

*Assistant Adjutant-General, San Francisco, Cal.*

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**APRIL 24—MAY 26, 1863.—Operations in Owen's River and adjacent valleys, Cal.**

*Report of Capt. Moses A. McLaughlin, Second California Cavalry.*

CAMP INDEPENDENCE,  
*Owen's River Valley, May 26, 1863.*

COLONEL: In conjunction with the accompanying report, dated May 26, 1863, I would most respectfully beg leave to make the following statement in relation to the operations against the Indians in this and the adjacent valleys since April 24, 1863: My almost continued absence in the mountains and the uncertainty of a speedy termination of the difficulties have rendered it heretofore very unsafe to make any statements which could be relied upon. I hope, therefore, colonel, that this will be a partial excuse for the brief and unsatisfactory reports that I have been very unwillingly obliged to forward to your office. On my arrival at Camp Independence April 24, 1863, I found that the Indians were following the same mode of warfare which they had adopted against Colonel Evans in 1862—that of drawing the troops into deep cañons and ravines, up the sides of precipitous mountains, where, hidden behind the rocks, they could with safety use their arms against the exhausted soldiers as they endeavored to follow them. In almost every skirmish the Indians were thus enabled to kill or wound some of the men. I abandoned this course and directed the troops to be conducted during the night up the mountains, where they were easiest of ascent, and where the Indians were not thought to be, and as soon as daylight would permit, to search for Indians in the ravines and cañons as they descended to the base of the mountains, where mounted parties were stationed to cut them off should they be forced into the valley. This plan did not suit the Indians, and consequently they abandoned range after range, spring after spring, so closely followed by the troops that they were obliged to throw away even their water jars and seek refuge in the deserts near Death Valley, where they were forced to subsist upon cactus and carry water at least a day's march. In the meantime scouting parties were employed in searching for any smaller