

The Dogs of War Unleashed: The Devil Concealed in Men Unchained

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To those who persevere in its verdant recesses, the Texas Hill Country offers retreat and tranquillity. Away from commotion, congestion, and din, west of Austin, north and west of San Antonio, occupying the southeastern corner of the Edwards Plateau, it is a land of pecan and cypress-lined rivulets and streams, rugged breaks and canyons, and high rocky divides, the latter shaded by sumac, wild cherry, walnut, juniper, and Oak. Its primary industry is ranching; its essential is solitude, but rapidly it is changing, becoming the recreational and retirement destination of countless native and want-to-be Texans. While still quiet and salutary for the moment, this pleasant place not always has been so inviting, so peaceful. In the 1860s, the "dogs of war" unleashed here a sanguinary paroxysm of terror and death, a calamity that fostered for decades thereafter bitterness and distrust.

The vicinity just north of San Antonio in the 1860s was the cutting edge of the frontier. Its developers were the usual frontier sort, fiercely independent and infrequently anti-social. A few were avid secessionists; but most were indifferent to such concerns, neither abolitionist nor secessionist. Into their midst, hundreds of immigrant Germans had settled, mostly dislocated victims of the industrial revolution; yet, some were political dissidents, forsaking reactionary home-lands for the privileges of free speech and action. In addition to the normal ethnic suspicions that German dress, language and culture evoked, some of the political refugees were critical of slavery, provoking in many Texans an angst far out of proportion to its inducement. German abolitionist numbers actually were very small, but they had come to Texas at a bad time; unwittingly they fueled rising Know-Nothing passions.

The Hill Country troubles began in the confusing election year, 1860. Know-Nothing inspired xenophobia had driven most Texas Germans into the Democratic Party. The Democrats represented to them Jacksonian nationalism, a Union predilection as opposed to states

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rights. But when the Democrats divided in the presidential election, the German dominated counties supported strongly the candidacy of unionist John Bell. Nevertheless, when Lincoln was elected and Governor Houston issued a call for the legislature to address secessionist demands, the Hill Country, curiously, manifested an ambivalence, and on New Year's Day, **1861**, certain citizens in Fredericksburg by resolution approved the Governor's action and authorized secession and civil war as a last resort to preserve state rights.' Apparently, there was a state rights faction in the Fredericksburg region, and it moved to gain political control. This clique, however, failed. When secession was submitted for popular referendum, the Hill Country returned substantial margins against the ordinance, voting in some communities as much as **20** to 1 against secession. Of greater concern than states rights to the Hill Country was **army** protection, especially at a time when Indian raids were increasing; secession meant the loss of such **safeguard**.²

When Texas formally entered the Confederacy and federal troops were withdrawn, few of the Hill Country men left to join either Confederate or Union forces. Most opted simply to "sit out" the war or to participate only in frontier defense units. But soon, Confederate **sympathizers** in the Blanco, Gillespie, and **Kerr** counties region began to badger the majority, challenging motives and patriotism. When, for example, John S. Sansom of Curry's Creek volunteered to enroll frontier troops in Blanco County, he was mocked by **his** secessionist neighbors who complained to the Governor that Sansom was not loyal; in public he reported to have said that he would "be God-damned if he would fight against the Federal Government,...;" he, moreover, satirized all local secessionists as old fools because they would "fight for the Southern Men's **negroes**."³ The objection to Sansom did thwart **his** plan for frontier defense, but the authorities knew that Sansom's statement did summarize majority opinion in the area; the Civil War was just not the Hill Country's fight. The protest to Sansom also revealed a growing paranoia among the secessionists. Nevertheless, if Hill Country enthusiasm for the Confederacy was suspect or if there were more like Sansom, the Texas government had no time to examine individual motives. Unless there was specific opposition expressed, any help proffered was accepted. Without question, Jacob Kuechler of Fredericksburg, when he volunteered, was authorized to enlist a company of mounted rangers for frontier defense.

The formation of Kuechler's **company** in February, **1862**, aggravated anew Hill Country Confederates. Kuechler was a political

faction leader in opposition to Confederate **sympathizers**. He incensed Fredericksburg state rights adherents by **enlisting** into **his** unit only **pro-Union** men from the Sisterdale-Comfort areas. When efforts failed to get him to open enlistment to men from the Baron's Creek region, where cooperation with the Confederacy was more evident, complainants to the Governor denounced Kuechler for disloyalty, **for** enlisting only those men susceptible to conscription just to keep **them** out of the Army, to remain out of harm's way until the U. S. **Army** returned to Texas, whereupon Keuchler and his men intended, it was said, to lay down their arms. The Governor upon hearing this charge quickly disbanded the **command**.⁴ Keuchler left Texas posthaste.

The **Kuechler faux pas**, however, was an isolated incident. At the same time, a regiment of Texas State Troops was enlisted at Fort Martin Scott near Fredericksburg; Colonel J. M. **Norris** **enrolled** two hundred men, including many Germans, placing in command of Ranger Companies, among others, Engelbert Krauskopf, Charles **Nimitz**, and William **Wahrmund**, all leading Fredericksburg men. Henry T. Davis also at this time established on **White Oak Creek**, north of **Kerrville**, what came to be known as Camp Davis.' Still, the authorities suspected that many of Norris' command had volunteered simply to escape Confederate conscription; included were both Union and Confederate sympathizers. By March, 1862, only fifty-four men from Gillespie County had joined the regular Confederate Army.

From the outbreak of the Civil War, Hill **Country** men were incautious, openly critical of the Confederacy and non-supportive of wartime measures. Leading critics included Philip Braubach, Gillespie County sheriff, William Doebbler and J. R. Ratcliff, Fredericksburg merchants, and August Siemering, the local common school teacher. Others, particularly on the edges of settlement, along the upper reaches of the Guadalupe and Pedernales rivers, were neither circumspect nor interested in Confederate affairs. Leadership at **first** tried to reason with the incautious, warning Braubach, Doebbler, Ratcliff, and Siemering to stop public, pro-Union talk. **Siemering** quickly recognized the danger of free speech and to allay suspicions entered Confederate service. But, from the perspective of Henry E. **McCulloch**, the military commander for South Texas, the warnings were insufficient; he noted that regular army conscription with but few exceptions had failed in the Hill Country and that there also Confederate money was depreciated. Increasingly xenophobic, McCulloch apparently believed Texas Germans were the cause of Confederate disappointments in the Hill Country and warned authorities that Unionist activity in the region

northwest of Austin was serious; he recommended martial law. As proof of the danger, he had translated for higher authorities a bulletin found posted in San Antonio.

German brothers, are your eyes not opened yet? After the rich took every picayune away **from** you, and the paper is worth only one-half of what you so hard earned, now that you have nothing left, now that they go about and sell you, or through [sic] you out of employment for **Dunhauer**, Maverick, Mitchell, and Menger to the last bone. We are always ready. If the ignorant company of Newton fights you, do as you please. You will always stay the God damn Dutchman. Do away with that nuisance, and inform everybody the revolution is broke out.

It is a shame Texas has such a brand. Hang them by their feet and bum them from **below**.⁶

On April **28, 1862**, McCulloch was succeeded as military commandant for South Texas by General Hamilton Bee. Bee apparently decided that McCulloch had correctly assessed the situation and immediately declared martial law, posting to Gillespie and Kerr counties a detachment of Partisan Rangers; Captain James Duff was in command, given authority to do whatever was necessary to end resistance. The **martial** law order, among several provisions, required all males over sixteen to register with regional provost marshals and take an oath of allegiance, and it declared depreciation or refusal to accept Confederate money a hostile act. Captain Duff ordered all men in the Hill **Country** to report to him within six days and take the required oath, but in the rugged territory north of **Kerrville**, many neither heard of Duff nor his instructions and in any event were disinclined to make an arduous trip to comply; accordingly, when approached by Duffs men, they received rough treatment.

In Fredericksburg, finding little to document Unionist activity, Duff bullied leading citizens, forcing them to give affidavits against suspected Unionists. The latter he then arrested and sent for **trial** to San Antonio. Duff next sent detachments into Medina and Blanco counties **and** the newly **formed** Kendall County where more arrests were made. **Finding** no real **threat** to the Confederacy, his **command** **then** returned to San Antonio, having accomplished little more than to antagonize a **few** harmless frontiersmen.'

There followed trial by **Confederate** Military Commission in

Sari Antonio of the men **arrested** by Duff. From Fredericksburg, **Philip Braubach**, F. W. Doebbler, and J. R. **Ratcliff** were charged with disloyalty and sedition. Braubach also was accused of aiding Jacob **Kuechler's** men avoid conscription, and Doebbler was denounced for writing a seditious article for an abolitionist newspaper, the New York Democrat. Friednch Lochte, a merchant, was indicted for **refusal** to accept Confederate money. All were found guilty; Lochte received a short sentence, **Ratcliff** was deported, and the others were sentenced to imprisonment for the duration of the war and then banishment from the Confederacy. Ernest Degener of Sisterdale was accused of hostility toward the Confederacy, sedition, and communication with enemies of the government. Evidence was so **lacking** that he was required only to post a bond guaranteeing good conduct. Julius Schlickum, a Boerne merchant, was convicted of disloyalty and sedition and was sentenced to be imprisoned for the duration of the War. In August, 1862, Braubach, Doebbler, and Schlickum escaped prison and returned to hide out in the Hill Country.⁸

The Duff campaign caused Hill Country citizens to distrust state troops. Accordingly, area leaders petitioned the Adjutant General to remove all partisan rangers from the frontier for service elsewhere; they promised in return that the frontier county men, if exempted from service under the military laws, would assume responsibility as minuteman for protection of the region from **Indians**.⁹ Apparently they believed the authorities would readily accept their proposal; did not the Confederacy need all of its troops?

Injudiciously, without waiting for authorization, eighteen to twenty men set about promoting a defense association, extralegal in the frontier tradition but without calling attention to themselves (an immediate outcome of the Duff affair was an evolving prudence). They founded the Union Loyal League, recruiting quietly known Unionists, pledging not to bear arms against the United States. Then, when sufficient interest had been induced, they called a mass organizational meeting. On July 4, 1862, between four and five hundred men gathered on Bear Creek, midway between Comfort, Fredericksburg, and **Kerrville** and away from the authorities. The "object and purpose" of the alliance "was not to create or encourage strife between Union and Confederate **sympathizers**, but to take such action as might peaceably prevent its members and their families from being disturbed and compelled to bear arms against the Union, and to protect their families against hostile **Indians**."¹⁰

A major was to command the Union Loyal League, and captains **were** to head each county unit. There were secret signs of recognition, and all were sworn to secrecy. Any member who informed was to be shot on sight. Fritz Tegener of western Kerr County was elected major."

Within a very short time, knowledge of the Union Loyal League was common. It was rumored that Basil Stewart, a Scottish emigrant ranch hand who had been at the Bear Creek convocation, informed authorities of the League's existence; lots were drawn; an executioner selected, and Stewart was ambushed and slain. Stewart's employer, stockman Henry **Atrill**, thereupon spent considerable time and money to find the assassin, offering large rewards in area newspapers. He was unsuccessful, but General Bee was provoked, declaring the counties of Gillespie, **Kendall**, and Kerr in open rebellion; he ordered Duff back to the Hill Country "to take such prompt and vigorous measures as in his judgment were **necessary**."¹²

In July, Duff established a command post at Camp Davis, near the Pedernales River and north of Kerrville. An informer was sent to spy in Kerrville, and troops were ordered to arrest anyone suspected of disloyalty, anyone failing within three days to swear allegiance at Camp Davis to the Confederacy. Duff was advised that as many as 1,500 "bushwhackers" roamed the hills, terrorizing Southern loyalists. Bushwhacker was a term used to describe those "who beat the bushes" to avoid conscription. After consulting various informers, Duff's patrols swept the sparsely settled Johnson Creek-Pedernales River divide north of Kerrville and arrested Gus Tegener, Allen and Hiram Nelson, Seabird and Howard Henderson, Frank Scott and their families. Their crime was failure to come in and pledge loyalty within three days. After a rough interrogation at Camp Davis, the men were ordered held at Fort Mason; the women and **children** were sent to a stockade at Fort Martin Scott.

En route to Fort Mason, soldiers and their prisoners camped overnight on Spring Branch, a tributary of the Pedernales **River**. During the night, Howard Henderson, a twenty year-old, observed that the guard was asleep. Quietly, placing his hand over the mouth of the Person sleeping next to him, he aroused Allen Nelson, and the two young men sneaked away and set out for Mexico. The morning after, the guard unit, unable to **find** the escapees, decided not to take the other **four** men on to Fort Mason. They hanged the four on the spot; then, they cut down the bodies, stripped them, and threw them into Spring

Branch. The women and **children** at Fredericksburg also suffered, **some** with measles, all with heat in a suffocating, one-room, windowless hut. When taunted by Duff's returning prisoner detail about the lynching, the women pled with Duff until he released them; taking a pick and shovel, oxen, and a wagon, the women found their men floating in Spring Creek unrecognizable, black and swollen. Selecting a burial site, they worked in shifts, digging a grave; then wading into the water up to their armpits, they rolled the bodies onto the bank in sheets and buried them. Frank Scott was identified; as a youth he accidentally had shot off his big toe."

Meanwhile, the partisan troops despoiled the region. Farm houses were ransacked, movable property stolen, families imprisoned, and houses burned. In a scene described by one of Duff's troopers, first, the wife and children of a suspected Unionist were taken prisoner, then the crops were "trampled and destroyed," the bee-hives in front of the cabin overturned, the living room **furniture** wrecked, and the loom in the kitchen smashed. After burning to the ground the home of Brandon Turknette near Johnson Creek, **Hanna** Turknette was reported to have told Duff that he must have little to do to have deprived her and her children of their only shelter against the weather. Duff responded that he was leaving to her the spring, whereupon she yelled defiantly, "If you had known how to destroy it, you would have done that **too**."¹⁴ Inquisition by Duff often was savage. To obtain information, **his** soldiers infrequently resorted to bullwhips; other times they would hang a person by the neck and then release their victim just before strangulation, repeating the process until either the examination had been completed or the would-be respondent was dead. Duff is credited with killing between twenty and fifty men during his second foray into the Hill Country.¹⁵

Appalled by the viciousness of the Partisan Rangers, the Union Loyal League disbanded. Their stated purpose had been "not to create or encourage strife between Union and Confederate sympathizers," and it was hoped by disbanding they would allay Confederate fears of rebellion. Major Tegener advised all Unionists that Governor Lubbock had ordered all persons who would not take an oath of allegiance to the Confederacy to leave Texas within thirty days. It should be noted here that there is doubt that Governor Lubbock ever issued such an order. Nevertheless, Tegener announced that all unwilling to serve the Confederacy would rendezvous August 1 on Turtle Creek, southwest of **Kerrville**, from whence they would proceed to the border. At the scheduled time and place, sixty-two men left the Hill Country under

Tegener's direction, moving slowly westward toward the Rio Grande, taking few precautions since they were within the **thirty** day time period assumed given by the Governor. They were joined **enroute** by seven others, including Howard Henderson and Allen Nelson. Informed by his **Kerr** County spy of the Tegener party's departure, James Duff ordered **troops** to pursue. On the morning of August 10, on the upper reaches of the West Nueces River, Confederates under Lieutenant C. D. **McRae** surprised the Tegener party, initiating an uneven hour-long battle. Outnumbered substantially and with inferior firearms, approximately **thirty** of Tegener's men were killed in the fighting, and twenty were wounded, captured, and then executed on the spot with a bullet in the back of the head. **McRae's** men later denied an execution took place; the head wounds resulted from remarkable accuracy during the battle. The bodies were left on the field of battle. Seventeen escaped; of these, a few, like the redoubtable Howard Henderson, eventually reached Union lines and served honorably in the U. S. Army; others fled back to the Hill Country where they either served as teamsters or evaded pursuers throughout the duration of the war. According to divers sources, others of the escapees were killed crossing the Rio Grande; a few were captured and executed at Camp Davis. One was taken by Duff, tried by military court in San Antonio, and **hung**.¹⁶

In the wake of the Nueces **River** fight, Hill Country resistance to the Confederacy collapsed. Most of the young men entered service as teamsters; a few joined the frontier regiment. Duffs command was withdrawn in late fall and reassigned to the lower Rio Grande frontier.

Hill Country security was left to trusted "Minutemen," irregulars under the command at Camp Davis of Major James M. Hunter. From Fredericksburg, Hunter proved to be an excellent choice as commandant. He was trusted by the German element, and his knowledge of the land and ability to lead frontiersmen unquestioned; coincidentally, Indian raiding increased across the Hill Country. The young men were satisfied now that they were protecting their families and not making war on the Union. With the Confederate **sympathizers** they made a curious but effective frontier regiment, scattered from the Leona River to the San Saba. Hunter managed to keep his men on task, searching for marauding Indians, occasionally finding a "bushwhacker" dodging conscription."

Throughout the long winter months of 1862 and 1863, the Hill Country pioneers quietly grieved, rebuilt their cabins, and struggled to obtain the basic necessities for life. **Alone** much of the time, those not

in service existed in a **companionless** quiet that modern **man** long **since** has banished and at night in a darkness that sharpened the senses while distorting judgment. They must have thought often about the **lynching** at Spring Branch, the burning cabins and fields, the silent bones bleaching on the Nueces.

When the Confederacy in **1863** began to suffer acute manpower shortages, military authorities in Texas then sought to enforce conscription laws, to do something about those who **refused** to serve in any capacity either the State of Texas or the Confederacy. But they precipitated in the Hill **Country** another crisis of conscience by insisting that the young men of the frontier regiment enlist as regular soldiers in Confederate service. Unwilling still to fight the Union, many again ran away to hide out in the brush country; others made their way to Mexico and eventually to Union service. The remaining frontier troops turned from Indian pursuit to searching for deserters.

First among the "bushwhackers" to be singled out for arrest was Moses Moran Snow, who in **1863** lived in northern Blanco County. An informer disclosed that Snow led a gang of deserters who headquartered in a cave near North Grape Creek. Ordered by Major Hunter to arrest Snow, Captain Cristian Dorbandt and a squad of men from **Burnet** County surprised Snow in late **1863**, arriving at his cabin under the cover of darkness, **finding** him with a deserter from Camp Verde, M. R. Lundy. When Dorbandt read the charges, Snow became defiant, sprang behind his wife, and began firing. Both Snow and Lundy instantly were killed. Then, a day or two later, when a near neighbor came to help Mrs. Snow pack up and move, someone **from** behind shot dead the neighbor, Mike Burcher, who was thought to be the snitch; his assailant was rumored to be William F. Snow, another deserter and a relative of the slain Moses Moran Snow."

Simultaneously, to the northwest in the **Cherry** Spring area, other state troops searched for Karl **Itz**, a survivor of the West Nueces **River** fight who was reported to be in the area. When the troopers failed to locate **Itz**, they took instead from his home his two younger brothers, Jacob and **Heinrich**, carried them to Fredericksburg, and there on the **outskirts** of town murdered them, possibly to intimidate other would be **slackers**. **Descendants** of the Itz brothers blamed Duff for this atrocity, but Texas State Troops from Camp Davis were **responsible**.¹⁹

Soon afterward, informants located more "bushwhackers" near Williams Creek, **bordering** Blanco and Gillespie counties. A squad of Hunters State Troops investigated and found hiding in a thicket near the

Pedernales River a group of men who, when approached, immediately began firing. Before firing ceased, troopers Joe Freece and Zack Whittington were slain as were all the "bushwhackers," who included William Snow and Xavier Neel.

To the authorities, the Snow, Burcher, and Williams Creek incidents indicated anarchy; for greater control, Major Hunter was given command of the entire southwestern frontier sector and was succeeded as commandant at Camp Davis by William Banta. Banta was a Hill Country pioneer who had served either as a militiaman or state trooper since the beginning of the Civil War, but experience in his case was not adequate qualification for command; Banta was excitable and without the general support of his predecessor. Moreover, he was easily persuaded by the more militant of his command that a "bushwhacker" insurrection was at hand, and he subsequently either tolerated or incited another cycle of **atrocities**.²⁰ "Forting up" at Camp Davis were several families from the area who brought with them suspicions about their nonconfederate neighbors. Exacerbating the situation, a squad of men arrived at Camp Davis from William Quantrill's command, fresh from Kansas atrocities. Led by Bill Paul, Quantrill's men were on a horse and cattle buying **assignment**.²¹ They soon made contact with James P. Waltrip, a farmer from northeast Gillespie County, who, emboldened by the Quantrill men, organized his friends and the Quantrill men into what became known locally as the ***hangerbande***.

The loss of Joe Freece and Zack Whittington in the Williams Creek fight and the failure to capture Karl Itz apparently stimulated in Waltrip a blood lust for revenge. He and the ***hangerbande*** determined to do something about the deserters in the area, to counter what they perceived as disloyalty in the region to the Confederacy.

On February 24, 1864, in Fredericksburg, observers noticed near sundown fifteen or twenty men about the home of Louis Schuetze, but before they could react, Schuetze was dragged out of his house and taken away. He was heard to cry out, "Help, help! Think of my wife and children!" Schuetze was the town's common school teacher and had been somewhat open in his criticism of the way authorities had investigated the Snow, Burcher, and Williams Creek incidents. Among those seizing Schuetze, Waltrip and J. M. Gibson were recognized and another Waltrip neighbor, William Nelson, was thought to be in the party. Two days later, three miles northeast of Fredericksburg on the trail to **Palo** Alto Creek, the body of Louis Schuetze was found, hanging

by hemp rope on a live oak ~~tree~~.²²

Meanwhile, Captain Banta at Camp Davis was persuaded that the area north of **Kerrville** was in rebellion. Rumors mongers reported that John Joy, a recent deserter, Philip Brandon **Turknette**, and Warren Cass were raiding and burning along the Llano River and that "jayhawkers" and as many as 1,500 other "bushwhackers" also were in the region, burning Confederate sympathizers homes and taking cattle. Banta also learned from an "interrogated" **Kerrville** tradesman that Minute-Men in **Kendall** County were in rebellion, had refused to hunt deserters, and had pledged to help bum-out all the secessionist men." Failing to investigate, taking the rumors at face value, Banta believed the situation perilous; this was no time for irresolution.

North of Camp Davis, near the headwaters of the James River, Bill Paul and James Waltrip with a squad of Banda's men found two young Joy brothers, William and Richard, gathering livestock. Knowing the Joys were brothers of the recent deserter, John Joy, Waltrip and Paul terrorized the boys, showing them a noose hanging from a white oak tree. The brothers, however, after a rough interrogation, were released without revealing the whereabouts of their brother because their father was an employee of one of the *hangerbande*, leaders, Tom Doss. **Richard** Joy immediately left the country, and with his brother, John, Lafe McDonald, and Ed Jaynes, made his way to Mexico and to eventual service in the U. S. Army. The remaining Joy was thereupon arrested and taken to Camp Davis where he could be watched.²⁴

Banta's troopers next seized Warren Cass at **Cherry Springs**. A long time rival of Tom Doss, Cass and his captors set out for Fredericksburg, but **enroute** they were surrounded, as was reported, by "hundreds of unidentified men" who denounced Cass as a "bushwhacker" and then lynched him.²⁵

A night or so later on March 9, the *hangerbande* relocated to the South Grape Creek community, a few miles east of Fredericksburg. On the northernmost of four neighboring farms, Peter Burg, a widower of four days, was shot in the back and his horse herd taken. Then, neighbors William Feller, John Blank, and Henry **Kirchner** were seized while with their families at dinner. No charges were stated, the men simply were taken, and the home of Kirchner was searched. The next day, Clara Feller received word that her husband and his neighbors had been hung. Others too may have been designated for elimination; however, two children, **Sabine Stalp**, fourteen, and Peter Petsch, ten,

ran throughout the neighborhood and warned the other men to leave their homes and hide. August Hoffmann, a survivor of the "Nueces Massacre" and at the time a teamster for the Confederacy, overheard in Fredericksburg talk about the raid and when he was able rode to warn his friends. He arrived too late to save Blank, Burg, Feller, and Kuchner, but he found and cut down the bodies from a tree near present day Luckenbach Lane.²⁶

When the Grape Creek murders were investigated, motive was never firmly established. It was believed generally that Blank was suspicious because he had received a communication from Mexico. Burg had a horse herd needed by Quantrill. The fact that Kirchner and Feller lived on adjoining tracts and that all four had been involved in a land dispute, victims of questionable land speculation involving Confederate stalwarts, leads to an obvious hypothesis. An informant later revealed that Kirchner was killed because he was known to have money. The informant heard this from a disgruntled participant who complained that Bill Paul was a raider and took all of the money, refusing to share it, one hundred and ninety dollars in silver. During the lynching, William Feller was reported to have looked down from his execution site and to have said to one of his neighbors, "get up here and stand by me and let us go to heaven together." To this, Bill Paul responded dryly, "I will start you up that way a little **piece**."²⁷

Following the Grape Creek lynching, a patrol just out of Camp Davis found John Turknette and his grandfather, Jacob Turknette, north of **Kerrville** looking for lost livestock. Separating the pair, troopers then beat Jacob Turknette to death with bull whips while others alternately hung and questioned John Turknette in an effort to get information about his father, Philip Brandon Turknette. The boy died without revealing the location of his father, who subsequently fled to **Mexico**.²⁸

The Grape Creek outrage and the Turknette and Cass killings apparently were too much for the authorities. Major Hunter investigated and then took action, arresting for robbery and murder William Banta and five others. He also attempted to arrest Waltrip but failed to locate him; the others at Camp Davis scattered. William Paul and his men left the area, but several of the old ***hangerbande***, while attempting escape into Mexico, were seized by Mexican authorities at **Piedras Negras**.²⁹

Before trial and investigation could take place, however, one more round of violence ensued. When attorneys for Banta instituted at

Fredericksburg *habeas* corpus proceedings and attempted to move the trial to **Burnet**, a mob of fifty or more men concluded that Confederate authorities would not punish the *hangerbande*; the mob drove off the Fredericksburg jail guard and attempted to **kill** the prisoners. In the fighting at the jail, one of the prisoners was **killed** and four others were wounded, two critically, before the mob was driven away. For safety, the two other prisoners were moved to **Burnet**.³⁰ None were ever tried.

Associated with the Hill Country horrors, there was yet one more **1864** death. Another effort to arrest **Waltrip** failed again to locate him, but at the farm of his neighbor and accomplice, John **Cadwell**, another member of the *hangerbande*, **Munroe Nixon**, was discovered, shot, and **killed**. Exasperated, state authorities replaced James Hunter with Brigadier General J. D. McAdoo. McAdoo suspended civil law, mustered out the militia, and after assessing the situation carefully advised the state to leave alone the men of the southwest frontier; their Indian threat was real; they were needed at home for defense. He noted that more than twenty men had been killed, that bands of deserters roamed the area at will while moving toward Mexico, that the terrorism associated with the *hangerbande* no longer was a problem, but prejudices and enmities were so intense as a consequence that the area was not likely to be of any help to the Confederate **cause**.³¹ **McAdoo's** good advice was followed, and the region slowly returned to its prewar conditions.

In **1865**, Gillespie County indicted suspected members of the *hangerbande*; few were brought to trial. William Paul, Zachariah McDonald, and in a related crime, Jonas Harrison were sent to prison for murder and served various sentences. In 1867, for reasons still unclear, James Waltrip appeared suddenly in Fredericksburg, apparently thinking that he would not be recognized or that because now the war was over, all was forgiven; he was mistaken. Fredericksburgers quickly gathered and attacked, driving him to the barn behind the **Nimitz** Hotel where he was shot and killed. His last words provide a fitting epitaph for the time that the Devil concealed in men went unchained. As bullets were **fired** in to him, he moaned, "Oh God, please don't shoot any **more**!"³²

NOTES

1. Frank W. Heintzen, "Fredericksburg, Texas, During the Civil War and Reconstruction" (unpublished M. A. Thesis, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas,

1944), 15. Hereinafter cited as Heintzen.

2. Rudolph Leopold Biesele, *The History of the German Settlements in Texas*, (Austin: Von Boeckmann-Jones Co., 1930), 206-208. The citizens were convened by Frank van der Stucken, a merchant from Belgium with Confederate leanings, Henry Ochs, the County Clerk, R. J. Radeleff, a merchant, and addressed by N. M. Dennis, the town lawyer. For the Germans, the address was interpreted by Friedrich Wrede who later exhibited Confederate sympathies.

3. Heintzen, 2; Claude Elliott, "Union Sentiment in Texas, 1861-1865," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, L., 449-477.

4. Alwyn Barr, ed., "Records of the Confederate Military Commission in San Antonio, July 2-October 10, 1862," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* LXX, 93; hereinafter cited as Barr; Ophelia Nielson Weinheimer, "The Early History of Gillespie County, Texas," (unpublished M. A. thesis, Southwest Texas State Teachers College, 1952), 46-48; hereinafter cited as Weinheimer

5. Heintzen, 23; Weinheimer, 49; Barr, LXXI, 260-268

6. Heintzen, 23; Barr, LXX, 93; *War of the Rebellion. Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Series II, Vol. 705-706; hereinafter cited as *official Records*. Dunhauer, Maverick, Mitchell, and W. A. Manger were active in San Antonio Confederacy affairs; Asa Mitchell, a Methodist preacher, was reported to have led local vigilantes.

7. Barr, LXX, 94; Duff to Gray, Official Records, II, IV, 785-787; Captain William Banta and J. W. Caldwell, Jr., *Twenty-Seven Years on the-Texas Frontier* (Council Hill, Oklahoma: L. G. Park, 1893), 187; Caldwell appears in early Gillespie County records as Cadwell. R. H. Williams, *With the Border Ruffians: Memoirs of the Far West, 1852-1868* (London: John Murray, 1907), 229-232. James Duff was a Scottish emigrant and in 1860 a moderately wealthy San Antonio merchant; U. S. Eighth Census, 1860.

8. Barr, LXX, 93-96; LXXI, 253-277; LXXIII, 247-268. Prosecution witnesses included Henry Basse, Frederick Dambach, Frederick Fresenius, Engelbert Krauskopf, Charles Nimitz, William Warhund, William Keidel, M. D., Friedrich Wrede, and James P. Waltrip. Of the witnesses, Fresenius, Krauskopf, Nimitz, and Warhund were staunch Confederates and appear to have been political opponents of Braubach; none indicated any reluctance to testify against the accused. By marriage, the Keidel and Asa Mitchell families became close; Walmp eventually led the *hangerbande*. *Hangerbande* is a Texas-German term meaning hanging band.)

9. Adjutant General's Correspondence, Archives, Texas State Library, May 13, 1862; hereinafter cited as A. G. C.

10. *The Frontier Times*, XX, 12, September, 1923; Guido E. Ransleben, *A Hundred Years of Comfort in Terms* (San Antonio: The Naylor Company, 1954), 105.

11. *Ibid.*; Heintzen, 44.

12. A. G. C., April 20, 1862; Ransleben, 106; *Frontier Times*, XX; Banta and Caldwell,

186, 187.

13. Herbert Oehler, newspaper clipping in the possession of Wanda **Henderson**, Mountain Home, Texas; Centennial Committee, Here's Harper, **1863-1963** (Fredericksburg, Texas: The Radio Post, Inc., **1963**), **1**, 13-, Williams, 236-237.

14. *Official Records*, VI, 49; Williams, 238; **Kerr** County Historical Commission, *Kerr County Album* (Taylor Publishing Company, **1976**), 293.

15. *Freie Presse fur Texas*, June 8, 1923; Banta and Caldwell, 186; Williams, 259.

16. Robert W. Shook, "The Battle of the Nueces, August 10, 1862," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, **LXVI** (July, **1962**), 31-42; Ransleben, 86-118; Robert **Penniger**, *The History of Fredericksburg, New Braunfels, and Other German Settlements in Texas*, (Fredericksburg, **1896**), 122. Howard Henderson returned after the war and began a long career as Hill Country stockman and **farmer**, respected and acclaimed.

17. A. G. C.. 1864. Affidavits of R. **A. Gibson** and **A. J. Nixon**

18. C. Dorbandt to Adj. Gen., A. G. C., January 23, 1864; John Stribling Moursund, *Blanco County History* (Bumet, Texas: Nortex Press, **1979**), 200.

19. Gillespie County Historical Society, *Pioneers in God's Hills, II* (Fredericksburg, Texas, **1974**), 47.

20. A. G. C., Banta to J. Y. Dashiell, Adjutant General, February 6, 1864; David Paul Smith, *Frontier Defense in the Civil War: Texas' Rangers and Rebels*, (College Station, Texas: Texas **A&M** University Press, **1992**), 156-159.

21. Banta and Caldwell, 162, 163, **185-188**, 215; A. G. C., Hunter's report of scout, 1963.

22. A. G. C., February-March, 1864; *Pioneers in God's Hills*. 187, **188**.

23. **A. G. C.**, February-March, 1864. Bill Paul and associates took Fritz Schladoer from his **Kerrville** residence and extracted the information. Schladoer was a former member of the Kendall County militia. Banta reported to his superiors that Unionists were led in Kendall County by August Leak [August Lich?], Sanger [William?], and Wandlere [Carl Wendeler?] of Comfort, Mosure and Edward **Degner** [Degener] of Sisterdale, Captain Jones (James K.?), and Webrecht [Weirich or **Weyrich?**], the county enrolling officer.

24. **A. G. C.**, March, 1864

25. Banta and Caldwell, 189, 190.

26. "Memoirs of August Hoffmann," September 1, 1925. Copy in possession of the author, kindly provided by Rubin Barsch, Fredericksburg, Texas, a descendant of August Hoffmann. Hoffmann was the last living survivor of the "Nueces Massacre."

27. **A. G. C.**, March, 1864. Implicated in the killings in addition to Paul and **Waltrip** were William Glenn and Rob Gibson.

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28. Ibid. Implicated in the killing of John Turknette was William Paul, John Paul, James Glenn, and Joseph Glenn. *Here's Harper, 1863-1963*. Upon his return to the Hill Country, Philip Brandon Turknette was shot and killed from ambush near Goat Creek in the summer of 1864. Testimony, trial of Jonas **Harrison**, 1880, Gillespie County; copy of court record in the possession of a Harrison descendant, Jan Samuels, Parker, Texas.
29. A. G. C., May 13, 1864. Banta and Caldwell, 191-194. Placed in custody with William Banta was Jacob R. Banta, Hans Roberts, William Dickson (Dixon?), William **Isbell**, and William **Cadwell** (Caldwell), who led the detail that arrested Warren Cass. George H. Giddings (Eagle Pass) to James Hunter (Fredericksburg), A. G. C., 1864. James Glenn, Sam **Cowan**, **Shepard** McDonald, W. Williams, J. W. Benson, and Jesse Vaughn were arrested.
30. James Hunter to D. B. Culberson, A. G. C., May 25 and June 3, 1864. Hans Roberts was shot to death. William Banta, William Dickson (Dixon?), William **Isbell**, and R. **Mebus** were wounded.
31. **McAdoo** to Culberson, A. G. C., September and October 20, 1864.
32. Indicted as the *hongerbande* were Tom C. Doss, Sam Doss, Bill Paul, Sam Tanner, ---- Blevins, John Hill, John **Cadwell** [Caldwell?], Bill Williams, J. P. Waltrip, Bill Banta, Mac L. Neal, Jake Banta, Jess Vaughn, Bill Dixon [Dickson?], **Shepard** [Zachary?] McDonald, John [Thomas?] Benson, John Brown, Freeland, Sam Gibson, Bob Gibson, Joe Glenn, ---- **McNeil**. Two *others* of the Doss family had attempted earlier, in 1854, to kill Warren Cass. Sam Doss and Sam Tanner in 1863 killed Peter **Pletz** when he found them at night stealing from his orchard. Don H. Biggers, *German Pioneers in Texas: A Brief History of Their Hardships, Struggles, and Achievements* (Fredericksburg Publishing Company, 1925). 70. Also indicated and tried for associated crimes were Jonas Harrison, William Paul, William **Nabor**, Benjamin Watson, William Nelson, ---- **Bullard**, William Stewart, A. J. **Nixon**, and Sylvester Waldrop [Waltrip?]. Charles Nimitz and Chester B. **Starks** provided bond surety for all members of the *hangerbande* subsequently arrested. By 1869, all charges against everyone except Bill Paul, Jonas Harrison, and Zachary McDonald were dropped for lack of evidence, missing witnesses, etc. District Court Records 1865-1870, 198th District Clerk, Gillespie County, Texas.