The Reconstruction Period

Duties, Assignments and Experiences—During Appointments in the Freedman's Bureau:

Sept. 14, 1865. Order by Brev. Maj. Gen. Alvin P. Hovey, Commanding District of Indiana, (having been detailed for duty in the Freedman's Bureau) "to proceed to Madison, Indiana, and report to Maj. Gen. O. O. Howard, of Freedman's Bureau, Washington, D. C., for orders". This I did and was appointed by Gen. Howard as Assistant Commissioner of said Bureau for Southern Indiana, with headquarters at Madison. Large numbers of ex slaves (freedmen) had crossed the Ohio River from Kentucky and were scattered about the river towns and villages. My instructions were to ascertain their numbers, locality, condition, and report; I was, meantime, to look after their welfare and keep the Commissioner of the Bureau posted as to them. I found very considerable numbers of them. I gathered information from reliable citizens, ministers, etc., in different localities, found them orderly, disposed to find employment and take care of themselves; that the reports to the Commissioner had been probably exaggerated and so reported.

Later, in November, feeling that my labors and duties scarcely justified my being kept there, I again reported to Gen. Howard that in my judgment there was little need for an agent longer in Southern Indiana, and asked to be put upon more active and useful duty. When later,—

Dec. 29, 1865. Received orders from Brig. General T. C. Pitcher, Commanding Department of Indiana, as per order to him of Gen. O. O. Howard, Commissioner at Washington, D. C., relieving me from duty at Madison, Indiana and ordering me to repair to my residence and there await further orders; this order I cheerfully and instantly obeyed and had a very pleasant trip home, at Government expense.
March 30, 1866. Received orders from Maj. Gen. O. O. Howard, Commissioner, to proceed to Galveston, Texas and there report to General Gregory, Assistant Commissioner for the State of Texas, which order I obeyed by taking a delightful trip by Mississippi Steamer, down that river to New Orleans, thence by rail to Opelousis Bay, thence by Gulf of Mexico, to Galveston. From the snowy, stormy blasts of March at Brookville, by gradual progressive steps, milder and milder, to the peach blossoms of Louisiana and magnolia flowers and balmy breezes along the shores, bayous and gulf, landed in beautiful warm and sunny days in Galveston. Assigned to the charge of Washington County, Texas, headquarters at its county seat, Brenham, with a scarcely understandable and imposing title of “Sub Assistant Commissioner of the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen and Abandoned Lands.” The ex-slaves or negroes called me the “Boo-ro man”, for short. The Booro being a donkey, their pronunciation was considered a joke. I boarded at first at the hotel, had an office in the Court House, over which I raised the U. S. flag, knowing it was distasteful to the ex-reb citizenship generally. Texas was yet much unreconstructed and very bitter, and hated the sight of a Yankee officer, especially a “boo-ro” one, whose duties pertained to the negroes. The “Bureau” had here a school teacher for the freedmen, named Whan—his wife an associate teacher—who were very much despised by the inhabitants (so far as I could learn, only because of their position). I learned soon that my standing in the community was little better. A few of the citizens spoke in an apparently friendly manner at first, until I supposed, they would get my attitude towards them as to their ways on the negro attitude, by them and me. No doubt among the slave-holders the rule had been fairly kind treatment, with numerous exceptions, but the negro, changed to the position of a free, ignorant man, was different from a negro slave and there was the difficulty;—on the part of the former master, to bear with the negro, with his ignorant, foolish ideas of a free man’s rights and privileges and to handle him with patience and forbearance under the changed conditions. I found many tried to handle them, now, when free, as laborers under contract to work, very much as they did when they were slaves. Often if a negro
did not go to his work early, or went away for a day to some negro gathering, the now white employer would pick up a hoe, whip or a strap and belabor and beat his workman into submission and work. On the other hand, the negro employee would sometimes disregard his contract and fool away his time, when working was necessary to the salvation of the cotton or other crop, which was hard to bear by the employer or former owner or master. So I had to hold a sort of Justice of the Peace position and hear complaints which were chiefly brought by the abused, clubbed or strapped blacks, fix a day and send notice of a hearing to both parties, hear their witnesses, their own statements and decide between them. Many of these hearings were the showing of swollen backs, cut with some implement, or a whipping with a strap that brought blood and bruises, and the cause would be found to be aggravated assault, because often it could not be denied, but explanations to the whites (employers) that quitting or neglect of work did not justify one man, even if white, to so beat another man, even if black (with a fine of ten or twenty dollars) would make them hot and feel that my judgment was "prejudiced" "outrageous", etc., etc., looking at it from their standpoint. I had many cases of this lighter kind. Meantime, even before any news of my hearings and results got around, in all social ways I was utterly tabooed; at church no one would come into the seat I took; even at an entertainment where the Court House seats were occupied, they avoided the seat I sat in—my uniform seemed to be sufficient notice. I had no acquaintances that could be considered friendly, except the post master, who had been known as a "union" man, during the war. I roomed later with him over the Post Office. For over three months I, with a Northern friend (there for health's sake) boarded with a widow and her two quite pretty daughters. All five ate together three meals a day. The mother (perhaps because of her necessities) waited upon us with just enough talk to be businessly polite, but no more; but the daughters were never introduced, never spoke to us or in any way joined in our constant conversation, only between my friend and me. We could see they were curious enough to be interested in our friendly talk together but beyond an occasional low word between themselves, sat quietly and
ate their meals. They had social friends, going and coming; we two roomed in the house. (Just think of it!)

One day I received a request to come up to Independence, 15 miles or so, from prominent white citizens, a preacher, one a professor in college, stating that the negroes were training as soldiers and many people were anxious and afraid. They would have a meeting for me to address the negroes. One of my duties, I had published for the information of the ranchers, was that I should go to their ranches, where the negroes were failing in keeping their contracts of working the crops, call them together and help explain their duties, etc., and so I accepted this invitation. On the morning of the day, I started on horseback; it seemed a lonely road—for miles I met or saw no one. I had been cautioned about going alone, as many were unfriendly; thinking perhaps I had made a mistake in not taking a soldier or two along, I watched cautiously the sharp turns, dense chapperal thickets, but rode on not fearing (thought) such an unlikely thing as an enemy. But I heard a noisy racket, ahead, so unaccountable that I again became nervous. There was swearing, loud scolding tones, loud talk and noises like striking! It sounded very strange in that lonely thick forest, otherwise so quiet, but I rode on, it getting louder as I came near, until at a turn in the road I discovered what it was—a poor old raw boned mule and horse team, a little old man, rather ragged, with shaggy long hair and beard, sitting on the bottom of the front end of a small old shackly wagon, among a few bundles! He was yelling at the top of his voice at that old horse and mule and pounding with a stick the front end board, with every blow,—"You, Bill! Jim! gelang! gelang! hep! hep! there!" (bang) "You damned lazy, good for nothing critters, you git up, git-up-there"! (bang) "Damn yer, don't yer hear?" (bang) "Git-away? damn yer!" (bang) pounding on the end board hard, continually. He sat still but swung his arm vigorously and jerked the lines with the other; tried to spit over his shoulder occasionally but kept up his yelling and pounding! Meantime, all the while that horse and mule slowly poked-along-step-by-step, heads low, never a movement of an ear, or slightest change in gait or any sign of attention to his noisy yells or pounding! I watched him for a few moments, wondering at so much energy and whether he was drunk or it was merely his usual habit.
At Independence was entertained at dinner by the Professor of a small college; then the church, crowded full with the blacks, men and women of all ages. What a sight, those kinky heads, whites of eyes, strange dressing—gazing in thickly at doors and windows, and even jamming the aisles full! Around the edge of the pulpit platform were seated leading white men! I suppose I was stage struck—slight preparation—never before—no—this my maiden attempt at a speech! I believe I was more afraid of those dozen or so white citizens. The "what" to say! That mass, so ignorant of what I should try to say! The whites, so curious and critical as to what I would say! My points were "how to become good citizens"; what they could and ought to do and what they should not do; I fired along these lines, quite at length. Touched upon their contracts, explaining them, their duty to be faithful and honest in fulfilling them; what their employer's duties were and that they should be patient and kind, if they (you) did as you had agreed to do in that contract or agreement. Talked of what the U. S. Government (Uncle Sam) wanted them to do and become. "Uncle Sam" was their friend; I, the "Bureau man" was their friend; their employers would be friends if they would do right. Talked about their drilling as a company; what their purpose might be, mere play, merely for playing soldier, would be no harm, but if for a wrong purpose it would be wrong and I advised them that their intentions or purposes might be misunderstood; it might make people who would be friendly if they did right become unfriendly, if they tried to become soldiers, when there was no need, no war, all peace and friends, both white and black! The Brenham "Banner" edited by one McGarey, a weekly, came out with miserable misrepresentations of my official acts, calling me names and trying in every way to take the "popular side" against me; he boldly said, "Captain Craig, the 'Boo-ro' man hath an itching palm (that I took bribes)—refuses to take greenbacks but demands gold coin in payment of fines", "looks like a halfway-cross between a peacock and a jay bird" and used other attempts at abusive epithets. I cared very little or nothing for his cheap squibs, personal to myself, but when he began his abuse of Mrs. Whan, the government school teacher, insinuating low and degrading things done by her and using scurrilous language and names invested to bring
her into disgrace, I sent copies of his paper to the General commanding and Commissioner at Galveston, and in reply was directed to notify McGarey to cease, that his course was interfering with operating the schools under charge of the Bureau. But he continued with more abusive stuff, altogether untruthful. I sent one of my soldiers asking him to please call at my office. He came and I explained the harm he was doing, as I had also stated in the notice, as per order of the Commissioner. He made no defense or excuse whatever but simply asked me what I was going to do about it. I said he had received my notice asking him to cease such publications and giving the reason why he should do so. He admitted that he had. I said, "Do you want any further hearing to make defense?" "Well, he replied, "what are you going to do about it?" I said, "Here is the evidence and copies of the articles—you do not deny nor make excuse nor defense! I judge you wilfully guilty and impose a fine of twenty-five dollars upon you". Again his answer was, "Well, what are you going to do about it?" I said, "I'll give you until four o'clock to make up your mind what you are going to do about the fine", and he left the office. At the time, 4 P. M., I sent word again; my reply was the same, which was a practical defiance. Then I sent a guard to arrest him, which they did. Texas being under martial law, the Bureau and its teachers under protection of the military authority of the Government, I saw no other course open to me to enforce my notice to cease his efforts to destroy the good being done in teaching the Freedmen and their children. Of course, McGarey expected to make a hero of himself, as he viewed his "Liberty of the Press" views. And to the extent of having the support of a large part of the Press of Texas in his defense, he succeeded, in the Press of the State, in very generally making hot references to that irresponsible Craig.

A cotton planter, with large money investments, came one day to the hotel, explaining to me that on his ranch the negroes were neglecting their work; cotton was in the weeds at a vital stage in its growth, which meant the loss of thousands and begged me to take a few soldiers and go with him to his hands and try to do something for him. I had some other engagements and thought I couldn't drop everything to go. He offered me a carriage, good enter-
tainment and liberal pay; I of course told him I couldn't take his money, go or not go, but he insisted upon placing a bunch of $15 gold coins on my knee, which dropped as I jumped up. He gathered them up and tried to force them into my pocket, until I told him it was offensive to me for him to do so, but finally told him (as I saw he was so urgent) that I would go the next morning with out more than his free conveyance and sure return that evening or the next morning. I took two soldiers with their muskets (for impression); made his men a talk of the character of the one I have given the points of at Independence.

Near here, a Lieutenant had been beaten badly; in the county below a captain had been killed the year before; quite a number of cases of killing negroes had occurred in this county. A bad case of killing a man and his wife came before me. It was claimed that Jim Holt, the same man who had beaten the Lieutenant, had been the principal in this case. I took the names of witnesses and the locality from my informant, reported the case and was ordered to investigate. This I did, going fifteen miles in the night time in citizen's clothes, visiting the huts of the colored witnesses, making the proper notes and returning. A Court Martial was convened below at Houston. Informing Capt. Smith of the case, he went with me with about seventeen men. We went on horseback, by devious ways, so as to arrive near the place where the accused was stopping, about a little before daylight. I knew Holt was a desperate man, had escaped before, was said to have "killed his man" and through his daring, succeeded in escaping. We arrived near our quarry before daylight and consequently rested near, and at the first peep of day, were in our agreed positions. Capt. Smith was to take about half of the men and take charge of the road and front. I was to have the other half and approach at the same time from back cornfields and close in upon the back of the house. As I came close to the back of the house, I saw a young black girl at an upper raised window. Instantly I made motion indicating silence and as low as I thought my voice would carry, asked to point me to where Jim Holt slept. She pointed down to a window in a one story ell to my right. It wasn't fifteen feet from where I stood and I was on a block and raised myself till my arms were at the sill, my
head looking in, and my right hand with a cocked Colt's Navy revolver in it, pointing in the face of two men lying just close inside the window. One, Jim Holt, was not five feet from me, as I covered him with the revolver and said— “Not a motion, or I fire!” He looked at me and said, “Well, that's a damn cold thing to look into before breakfast”, but he did not move. Without turning my eyes from those men, I called to my sergeant to leave me some men and take the others around to the door on the opposite side. The sergeant came in by the door and they were searched and ordered to dress. However, only Holt was our game here and we went on to another house to find another, but he was absent. We soon started for Brenham, Capt. Smith with two or three men taking the lead, disposing of the others on each side of our prisoner on his horse and I with three others having the rear. The sixteen miles, I rode constantly at the heels of Jim Holt's horse, with a ready cocked six shooter in my hand, ready always with my eye watching for any effort to glide right or left from his horse at any place where chapparal bushes were thick and close beside the road. I knew, also, that the butt of his riding whip might be loaded so that he could disarm with a blow the guard riding immediately on his right. About five miles from our start, the road forked and we could see that about three rods ahead it came together again, leaving a few saplings just ahead, like an island. As we approached these saplings some one called, “There's a squirrel!” We saw it run up one of the pretty tall saplings, as Capt. Smith commanded “Halt!” Our cavalcade instantly halted in our tracks. Capt. Smith raised his pistol, took aim and fired—the squirrel fell dead! “Gad!” said Holt, “you Yankees can shoot!” “Forward!” commanded Capt. Smith and the guards rode on. We landed Holt in the same jail with McGarey. Sent for the witnesses. Holt was convicted and sentenced, but how or why or at whose instance I never knew, President Johnson reprieved or pardoned him! We supposed it was because Johnson had turned, leaning southward by this time!

Such was the feeling in this community towards me that the few union men in the neighborhood warned my room mate, Allen, the Post Master, so he told me, to be watchful and careful, especially at night, as they were
afraid that in some way, under some excuse, I might be killed. One of the lawyers, not at all supposed to be friendly, had also warned Allen. He told him that I had gone alone just lately to my former room upstairs in the hotel; that while upstairs there had been some talk among some of the reckless ones and that when I came down through a large room full of men, in the crowd I had to dodge about some, finding room to pass through; that at least one man in that crowd tried to get in front of me to tramp on my feet that I might so demean myself as to give him an excuse for a shooting match and Allen’s friend said—“Craig wouldn’t have been given a ghost of a chance in that crowd!” Well, I told Allen I would be careful, but were they not just trying to scare me off? Later an incident occurred that made me feel that they that had warned me were not much mistaken. On my return from my usual trip of inspection of the guards at the jail in the evening two rather rough looking men stopped me and tried to argue and accuse me of ill treating McGarey by keeping him in jail. I tried to excuse myself and hurry past, but they got around in front of me, again in my path trying to talk, and repeated this performance as often as I stepped aside and around and went my way to the steps of my room. Finally in front of the steps they got me between them and I again argued that I wanted and needed to go about my business, and asked them to kindly let me pass. One of them pretending, I believe, he saw my hand go to my hip pocket (for it didn’t) jumped back before me, barring his breast by pulling his shirt open with both hands saying, “Shoot, damn you, shoot! if you want to! I saw you reaching for your gun!” Again I urged I wanted no quarrel but must go about my business and quietly stepped around them and upon the stair step and went up to my room. These men were both armed. I felt they were silly drunk, more than they looked, or really were seeking a quarrel. Of course, if I had given occasion or excuse, the two were backing each other and I would have had no chance against two.

Another night, a crowd howled under the porch and in front of it (an upper porch in front of Allen’s room and mine over the Post Office). They acted like rowdies, calling me out under the name of “Booro” man, and I could
hear McGarey's name used as accusing me of something. Allen was in the room and very much afraid they would come up the stairs at the west end of this outside porch. We had a sixteen shooter and two six barreled revolvers and got them ready; if they had come up they would have gotten a warm reception, but they didn't venture.

Another evening there was a dance of the young bloods of the town, across an open space about 125 feet from this porch and in sight of it. Allen and I were sitting on the porch enjoying the cool night breeze and talking; the music and dancing receiving no attention from us. Suddenly three or four shots rang out from this end of the dance hall. In a few moments all the lights over there went out; we could hear the crowd scattering away from the hall, but some persons talking pretty excitedly still near it. I ran down stairs and over among those about the hall to learn what it was all about and learned that two of Smith's soldiers had been wounded, shot by some men at the door of the dance. I found these wounded men in the elder bushes at the mouth of the road leading towards camp, several soldiers with them; I urged them to report to their Captain Smith and went with them to their camp. Captain Smith was much excited and quite angry. He soon had his company in line and he and I on horseback, rode ahead of them up town. I remained with the Captain, so didn't see, but hear that his men tried to make an arrest of a saloon keeper who it was in evidence had been one of those who had done the shooting and he having escaped, they gutted his saloon and emptied his stock of liquor. Then they went after another who had done the shooting who slept in a store, which they surrounded, broke into, but again failed to find their man or make any arrest. Captain Smith then formed his company and marched to Camp; I, riding with him thinking it prudent, although all seemed very quiet in town. About midnight, we were awakened by much noise and confusion in the town (about a quarter of a mile west of camp) and could see that there was a fire in the town. Before daylight, Freedmen came to camp, telling us that the half block, including the hotel, McGarey's printing establishment and the store which the soldiers had broken open, had burned and the citizens claimed that the soldiers had set that store on fire. They told
us the people were in a rage; were arming themselves. Later the Deputy Sheriff came with warrants for the arrest of two named soldiers of Capt. Smith's company; he refused under any circumstances to allow the arrest of any of his men, to be tried before any civil tribunal or jury they could summon. The sheriff and other informants reported great excitement and indignation; of telegraphing to surrounding towns for men and arms; of the citizens moulding bullets; preparing ammunition for an attack; the Sheriff saying no doubt they would offer sufficient posse to support his demand for these men. This was the second trip the Sheriff made with his demand. Captain Smith persisted in his refusal to give up any of his men and commenced preparations for defense; set men to work digging trenches about his camp; sent out men to kill and bring in cattle for siege food. This was kept up all that day and indeed for several days. Meanwhile at the call of citizens of Brenham, the Governor appointed a Commission of Members of the Legislature to convene at Brenham, to investigate or try the soldiers as to their guilt or upon whom the responsibility should be placed. (I surmise that back of the request of citizens to the Governor, was the attempt to follow it with claims against the United States for damages.) The Commission came, held their sitting in the Court House, took testimony offered by citizens; Capt. Smith and I told what he did and what we saw and denied any claims as to its having been any of his men that had started the fire. I didn't see their finding but it was stated that they found it had been started by one or two of his men.

Gen. Phil. Sheridan, Commanding Department, Head Quarters at New Orleans, but including Texas, convened a Court Martial at Brenham, composed of Officers from different points in his Department. They sat in the Court House, heard fully the testimony of both sides. Capt. Smith and I were called again and gave our testimony. Their finding was to the effect that the evidence showed that the fire had been started that night by one or two men, dressed in part, in United States soldiers' clothing, but unknown from the evidence. It might be said that it was a very common thing to see men dress in that way, long after the war.

I never knew what became of Editor McGarey. He
continued printing his paper with quite a few screeds against me for false arrest and imprisonment, making Maj. General J. B. Kiddoo a co-defendant with me. I have the summons and statement of claim for damages, $50,000, which was served me by the Sheriff. I afterwards learned that judgment was entered against me for that sum!

May I give a memorandum from my diary, rather unmilitary? It was a Tournament, a trial of skill; the arrangements were two high posts, erected and planted about eight feet apart; above the height of a man's head on horseback was a cross firmly fastened, upon which was firmly tied by the feet, a goose with neck picked and greased and head hanging down, alive! If, as they swiftly passed under, they could seize and pull off its head, the prize was won. The Deputy Sheriff, who served the warrant on Capt. Smith and the summons in McGarey's suit against me, won that prize! I asked him how he had won, when many tried and failed of catching and holding that head. He said, " Didn't you notice that just as I was starting for it, my hat fell off and I got off to get it? Well, I got the hat and with it I grabbed a handful of sand!"

After that fire and consequent excitement, trials, etc., I received a letter from Maj. Gen. J. B. Kiddoo, saying that from information received, he believed my life was not safe at Brenham. That the excitement was so high, along with prejudice, that it would be safer for me and perhaps would be as well for the people, to have a change of location, but that if I preferred to remain they would stand by me. I replied that I was willing to remain at Brenham, but that if they thought best I would go to Galveston for consultation and orders.

September 19, 1866. Ordered to duty at Seguin, Guadalupe County, away out within thirty-five miles of San Antonio. Traveled by boat, up a deep narrow winding stream to Houston; thence by railroad to Columbus (end then of the railroad); thence by four horse stage coach, 150 to 175 miles overland to Seguin! At Columbus, standing in citizen's dress near my baggage on the platform, I overheard a gentleman, looking at my name on the end of my trunk, Captain S. A. Craig, say—"Why, that's the name of the Brenham Burner!"
Here I found a rather pleasantly located town with a public square in the center, with stores, saloons and adobe and stone and wood dwelling houses about the sides, and the Court House and County offices in the square. My guard was ten cavalry soldiers and a sergeant. I took the place of Lt. Moore, my predecessor, who although relieved from duty, was still in town, because he was under bail for his appearance at the coming session of the Civil Court of the county, under charge and indictment for gambling. Therefore he couldn't leave to go home, without sticking his two bail. I inquired into the situation and found Lt. Moore had been imprudently playing cards, probably for small sums for "anty" in the game, and some one or more, hating a "Yankee Officer" or for spite, had made information against him and had him arrested. The truth was there was an old statute in the Texas laws, under which he could properly be indicted, but it was practically a dead letter; gambling was common and public in the town and county, without anybody for many years thinking of such a thing as informing or seeking to enforce the said law, and this case, the citizens told me, was mere spite work and because they wanted to humble or annoy or because they hated a Yankee or a "Booro Man". I, like any Union Officer would not, didn't like the situation or animus of the thing. I was young and inexperienced in civil procedure, though somewhat familiar with Courts Martial, and I may have blundered, but it struck me as an outrage, their not having informed on or arrested their own citizens! They were certainly guilty, if Moore was. So the Court being in session I arranged with him to be about the Court House and call his bail men, and I also had spoken to the sergeant of my guard, whose quarters were in sight across at the other side of the square; then asked Lt. Moore to call his bail with the Sheriff and there, being together wondering, I asked the bail men to deliver Moore over to the Sheriff, to be so relieved of further responsibility, which they did; then I asked the Sheriff if he had charge of Lt. Moore and he replied, "Yes, he's in my hands". Then upon a signal to the sergeant of the guard, he came with a couple of guards and I ordered him to take charge, saying to the Sheriff, "I'll be responsible for Lt. Moore, Sheriff", and walked off with him. I suggested to Moore to take
the stage soon and if needed he could have a guard to get far enough out of town on his way, so that the Sheriff could not catch him! Moore left for the North and home.

Previous to this I had received an order from the Commissioner, Gen. Kiddoo, to look after, protect and prevent the persecution of a certain local citizen, named Judge Longwell. This man had been a Union man during the war, was said to have been a man of unusual courage who had, when taken under arrest for his Union sentiments by some citizens of his neighborhood who were about to string him up, a rope in their hands (whether they would have strung him up or not, I didn't know) boldly denounced the whole crowd, daring them to undertake such a thing and boldly walked right from among his captors; that, taken by surprise and rather admiring his audacity and courage and no one moving to prevent his going, he continued on to his home! The protection, spoken of in the order, from persecution? How was I to do that? I learned that while he had been a Sub-Assistant Commissioner of the Freedmen's Bureau before Lt. Moore, Longwell had, under orders from Head Quarters, gathered such horses and mules as were marked or branded U. S. and turned them over to Government authorities; that for this he was under bonds for his appearance at the coming term of the local Court. He lived and I suppose his Bail lived forty or fifty miles from Seguin, the County seat. The Court was about to convene. The reader will remember this was a State at the outer edge of the former Confederacy, with much of its population scattered, obstreperous, unreconstructed and not subdued by either or both armies having been among them, and for these reasons and perhaps some others, was yet under Martial Law; its civil authorities keeping up their organizations, from governor down to constable, but with no jurisdiction (at least I believe) over U. S. military matters, and the Freedmen's Bureau was directly under the Military, and very closely allied to it. How to protect Judge Longwell, I couldn't see, nor how to prevent prosecution! Well, I was ignorant of much law or practice in Courts, being but a school boy, outside of some experience as a Judge Advocate of several Courts Martial, so I took several of the few soldier guards I had, went to the Court House and into the Prothonotary's Office and asked him to
let me see the papers in the Longwell prosecutions. He demurred and I then demanded them! He refused; I then went into the back room where the Court papers were in hundreds of pigeon holes and tried to find the papers. Not making much headway, I called the Prothonotary and some of my guards into that back room—told him he could take his choice—either give me the papers I demanded or I'd turn in my men and we'd soon have a mess of confusion of his records scattered upon the floor! Meantime a crowd had gathered in the other room, a lawyer had mounted a table and was haranguing the crowd, using epithets uncomplimentary to me and denouncing in most vigorous and eloquent terms and language “this most outrageous interference with the law, the Courts and the authorities”. I ordered him to be quiet and get off his pedestal as he was creating a disturbance and inciting what might become a riot or a fight! He continued and I directed the guards to take him down and put him out forcibly, which they started to obey but he got away to avoid arrest. Meantime, the Prothonotary, not liking my proposition and prospective manner of searching for the papers, gave them to me. I took them and later burned them in the back yard of my boarding house!

The morning of the convening of the Court, towards noon, I walked into the Court room, learning Court was in session. I walked down to the railing about the Bar; the Judge was on the bench, the Grand Jury in their seats and the Judge seemed to be talking to them. After he had spoken I noticed my name was mentioned “a certain man, named Craig, had in violation of law and orderly proceedings taken a prisoner at the bar from the officer in charge of him” and “that they should take notice of the offense”! (This was Judge Ireland, later a Governor of the State.) I then noticed the Sheriff start from his place to the right of the Judge and rather slowly move carelessly down the aisle towards the door and his deputy, also, down the other side aisle, and concluded perhaps my interest in the proceedings was at an end and I took the centre aisle and went out! Result was that later the Sheriff had a warrant in his pocket for my arrest!

Meantime the regular business of the Bureau was needing attention. A Freedman from a distant ranch called
and made a complaint against his employer, showed me his back which was still a great deal swollen with great welts, red and blue, which he said had been made by his employer using a heavy strap upon him. Another showed cuts on his back, arm and head, made by his employer beating him with a hoe! I asked why? He admitted it was because he had absented himself at a barbecue for half a day. In the last case the employer, after an investigation, was fined; the one in the former case could not be found when sent for. At another time a Freedwoman from a distance of forty miles, which she had been walking, gave an account of her husband’s pony coming home riderless, with saddle and blanket covered with blood! She said there was evidence he had been killed by two young white men and thrown into a well. This case I concluded I should at least make an effort to investigate and if possible have the guilty punished. Dressing in citizen’s clothes, I started with a guard on horseback, with some rations, taking the precaution of having horses without the U. S. brand. We traveled a full day and found on inquiry for directions, that it was still six miles and over to where we expected to go and the further journey would be through a country without roads and hard to find without a guide. Knowing that Judge Longwell lived somewhere in that locality, from the best information and directions available, we started on the four mile distance; no inhabitants, no roads, not even a trail one could follow. It was from description, wild prairie with occasional bunches of wood growth. Our best directions were to go westward through prairie land for two or three miles, then turn to the left around a “point of woods”; and go a mile or two farther and there’s Longwell’s place! Think of that inadequate description, our inexperience in prairie wilds! Yet what could we do! Go back, giving it up, or risk it further? We decided to try. Traveling, wandering, guessing at that “point of woods” among many, turning and hunting for possibly six miles, we found it growing dark, raining vigorously and came to a long strip of woods, bordering quite a large stream. Dinnerless, supperless, wringing wet. I left my man to try to make a fire and went with nothing but a Navy revolver out in the darkness to try to shoot some one of some wild cattle seen half a mile back. Yes, I found them, but get
near them? When I tried it there was a snort or bellow and a scamper in the darkness before I could get within pistol range! Tried again and again and had to give it up. Back? How in that darkness? But I found the trees, then the stream and finally the big tree where I had left my man and he, at its root, rolled in his wet blanket trying to sleep! Matches all wet, no fire! Didn't need that chunk of beef I had hoped to cut out of a young beef and roast! Nothing left but to try the wet ground and wet covering, so tethering the horses, tried snoozing till daylight! Heard the wolfish coyotes through the night frequently. Listened among few night sounds for a possible rooster or dog, but no such sound. Couldn't sleep much—went to that stream, tried with anything, light wood or bit of paper to find which way it ran and in the first streaks of day, started down hoping to find some habitation. As near as we could tell, traveled some three miles, we finally found an old man, but he had nothing to satisfy our hunger, but gave directions how to find Longwell's some six miles off and in two or three hours we found it. He knew all about the murder, had a good guess that the wife named the right parties, but would have to say that, knowing as he did, that not a negro had seen anything but the dead man's pony, saddle and the blood, nor had any of them seen any body handle him or put him in the well; and he said, "There's not a white man within twenty miles of here that would tell on a neighbor if they knew he had killed him". It would be impossible to convict these murderers without witnesses that would be able and willing to tell what they saw! I asked if there was any motive on the part of the young men. He said, "None whatever in the sense you mean or understand that, but if you knew the kind of men hereabouts, slave-owners or imbued with their feelings and ideas of value, or lack of value of an ex-slave's life and could understand their feeling when they see a couple of young buck niggers just free, each with a pony of his own, riding about the country, idle, wearing big buckskin gauntlet gloves, a red handkerchief about their necks; their independent, proud saucy airs, flirting and fooling around by or in the presence of these young southern bloods, their former masters who never worked, why, they just think they can't stand or bear it! And fairly itch to kill that nig-
I believe this negro was shot by some such men in their anger and mortification!" Longwell's wife fed us on corn dodgers, fat pork and molasses, profusely apologizing for our having caught them with so little in the house. And with these experiences, worth little beyond the picture given by Longwell of the difficulties of justice for the negro ex-slave in a wild western locality in Texas, during the reconstruction period, we returned.

The Sheriff and I had a talk, I telling him I well knew he had the warrant for my arrest, he telling me his situation with his friends and voters, that if some day there were a lot of them in town, hot bloods, and they came as he feared they would and offered to be a posse for the arrest, he was dependent upon the people and would just have to execute his warrant. In return I told him, of course, my view, that he had no right over me to arrest; that I had ten men, each with 16 shooters; they were quartered in a stone wall house, with plenty of provisions to stand a siege; that I didn't propose to be arrested and we would fight and kill, if any attempt were made. I saw him frequently and in a semi-friendly way.

Meantime I made a visit to San Antonio, an old and oldfashioned, foreign looking city, totally unlike any city I had ever seen. Situated on the banks of the clear flowing San Antonio River. There were few either frame or brick houses; most of them were grout, lime and gravel, even some of the finer business houses many plastered upon the outside. At the largest and finest hotel, I sat in the large sitting room connected with the office and heard conversation in French, Spanish, German, English and Mexican. Hardly could tell which predominated except that my friends chiefly spoke the English. I saw what is supposed to be a common sight—quite a heavy load of silver dollars being wheeled from one bank to another on a kind of wheel-barrow. An army officer acquaintance took me in his carriage down the river some miles to see some very ancient and peculiarly built "Mission" buildings, built by Jesuits hundreds of years ago. Saw also, pointed out to me, the remains of the Alamo, where the historic fight of Col. Davis and the Mexican Army in Texas Independence, began its history.
Another "Tournament" may be briefly described, held by the young chivalrous youths among the amusements of this part of Texas. Two posts about 8 or 9 feet apart are erected with a stout cross piece above or about the height of the head of a man on horseback, in the center of which cross piece a two inch ring hangs. The participants in the "Tournament" are named "Knights"; their ladies and friends usually seated upon raised seats on each side of the two posts and cross bar. The Knight of the "Golden Circle" or of the "Bleeding Heart" or "The Black Knight", etc., etc., is dressed in the style of the days of ancient chivalry and on horseback starts from a distance, approaching that ring with a sword or lance poised in his hand ready to catch the point in the ring, as he passed under, and with a quick, skillful turn of the sword or lance, throws or drops it back over his head—the nearest to the center spot between the posts, within a certain circle, wins the prize! Each "Knight's" lady becomes intensely interested in his graceful riding, management of his horse, dress and success! I was told that the negroes were very imitative and held their barbecues, "Tournaments" and had their Knights (and queens) all gaudily dressed go through the same, riding their ponies amid the applause of their superb queens!

Things went on in the usual routine of duties. I frequently met the Sheriff with his warrant in his pocket, perhaps for a month after my talk with him about any attempt to make the arrest. I had also told him my men were instructed as to my course should he make the attempt. But my soldiers, on account of Indian troubles and disturbances beyond San Antonio, were ordered thither and I was alone. One day in the morning, Dr. Marsh, who boarded with me, as a Northern man and friend, and I were playing billiards in the back end of a large room in a restaurant. I noticed the Sheriff with another citizen walk leisurely in: soon another and another. Although they came thus, I believed it unusual and meant my arrest. At a chance I quietly asked Dr. Marsh if his horses were in the barn, that I was going to try to hustle for San Antonio, 35 miles away. He intimated it was all right. Between plays, I sidled slowly back with my que in my hand and back against the back door I tried it to see if it was open. It was closed—locked! Perhaps I couldn't have got off on a
horse anyway, but saw it was my only chance. The sheriff, after that came leisurely, apparently to watch the game, but I knew better and told Marsh so, but remarked that those fellows were all loaded with six shooters and I had but one six, would I be foolish to resist arrest? I said, "I believe he intends it." Marsh said, "Yes, those fellows are expert—don't think of it!" I knew he was right and made up my mind to keep cool, it wasn't worth while to try any opposition, while we were playing on as usual. By this time some half dozen men had gathered leisurely about, looking on. The Sheriff in an easy slow way pulled out his warrant and began to read it. I waved him off, telling him it was no use, he "had no right to arrest an officer, when I was on duty in his bailiwick, and it was under Martial Law!" This was loud enough for the crowd to hear. The Sheriff then said some of his friends had gotten up a bail bond, would bail me. I replied, "Sheriff, I don't ask it, I will not sign any bail bond! I say again you may be able to arrest me, alone here now, but I go on no bond". Marsh thought I had better sign. I persisted in refusing although the bond was in my hand and I saw names enough. I find that I have that bond now among my papers. The Sheriff then said, "There is no help for it, I will have to take you to the jail". And thus protesting, I went with him.

When I found myself locked in the jail, I proceeded to examine my "surroundings". It was an 18 by 22 live oak plank walls and bare plank floor, two narrow windows, about 5 inches by four feet high, with iron frame and lights. The only other occupant was a horse thief, in same room. It didn't smell good and looked rather dirty. Dr. Marsh came at noon and poked my dinner through one of these windows for I was "on the first floor". I had the Doctor telegraph to Gen. Kiddoo at Galveston. In the night it got quite cool, too cool for any kind of sleep, and with my companion's consent we built a fire on the floor with the straw contents of a very dirty tick. By not making it large, we didn't think it would burn the floor very much or be very dangerous! There was no kind of furniture in this room whatever, not even a chair. There was one good thing about the fire; if we didn't have a tick to sleep on, we cremated the bugs! The smoke was rather trouble-
some but slowly passed out the windows. Next day, Dr. Marsh kindly furnished my meals, and quite good ones, too. But I passed a dull day, some times sitting on the floor with back against the wall reading, sometimes promenading the floor. At last, night again, tired of promenading, not able to sleep on the dirty floor fearing lice and bugs, yes, and fleas. Towards morning, heard the tramp of horses’ feet, and the familiar rattle and clank of sabres; then soon a tap, tap of sabre on one of the little narrow windows and a voice—“Is Capt. Craig here?” Yes, here!” I said. Then—“How thick is this wall? I have powder enough to blow the thing to hell!” I explained, “It might not be necessary, go across the hog wallow just below the jail, take the Sheriff (he lives there), bring him along willing or unwilling, but don’t let him hide or throw away the key!! Likely he’ll give it up, or come over along—if not, take it from him! It was an officer, with a company of cavalry from San Antonio! Soon, returning with the Sheriff, I was out and lively greetings they were and thanks of appreciation and a social time at the breakfast with the officers at the hotel and my friend, Dr. Marsh with us. The cavalry-men, with their horses, were taken care of in that public square! Later in the day a company of Infantry came marching into town and encamped in same place (the cavalry having to return). Dr. Marsh told me some of the citizens were saying one to another—‘I told you so—see by your arresting him you have brought a troop of the Yankee army to be quartered upon us right in our public street!’ We knew they would not like it. I don’t believe they disapproved of my course at Head Quarters. I had a good friend, Col. W. H. Sinclair, on Gen. J. B. Kiddoo’s Staff as Adjutant. When, at the seige of Yorktown, one day I had the 63rd Pennsylvania Regiment report to me as an Assistant Engineer on Gen. Heintzelman’s staff, for work. That was the day Capt. J. B. Reed of Clarion had me to dinner. He called up a red-headed corporal of that working force and introduced him to me as a school teacher from that county. This was my first introduction to him who afterwards became Brev. Maj. Gen. J. B. Kiddoo, Assistant Commissioner! He was then in the 63rd and in my Brigade, and the 63rd towards the close of the War became merged and a part of the 105th Penna. Regiment. Well, my friend Sinclair, on
his staff, wrote me about this time, asking if I would accept a Captain’s commission in the regular army, under Colonel Kiddoo, who wanted me for one of his captains. I did not know whether the General knew or remembered all this above, but think not, but Sinclair’s letter didn’t look much as though my recent record in the “Boo-ro” had been disapproved of at Head Quarters.

I continued on duty until Dec. 25th, 1866, when I resigned. I realize that the foregoing may seem rather dull in at least some of its details and may never be read, but the purpose is not a history in any sense of any part of the war, but just as I said in the preface, my record of personal experiences, things seen and done by me, to keep them from fading, as they have been doing in my note books, and growing dim these later years in my memory.