

The Indianola Bulletin.

VOL. 2.

BROWN & BRADY,

THE SAN ANTONIO AND MEXICAN GULF MAIL ROAD.

Report of the Special Committee on the Letting of the Contract for the Construction of the San Antonio and Mexican Gulf Railroad.

To the President and Directors of the San Antonio and Mexican Gulf Rail Road Company.

The undersigned Committee appointed to report the facts connected with the ratification of the contract between Messrs. Jones and Devine and this Company for the construction of the San Antonio and Mexican Gulf Railroad, would most respectfully submit, for the information of the stockholders, the following statement.

Your committee beg leave to premise a short history of the San Antonio and Mexican Gulf Railroad, from its origin till the date of the letting of the contract.

This road, it is well known, was projected by a few public spirited individuals of San Antonio in the Fall of 1850. A charter was shortly afterwards procured from the Legislature of the State, and the Company duly organized.

All at that time admitted the importance and even necessity of the road;

but many of our most wealthy citizens refused to embark their means in an enterprise which they regarded as extremely doubtful, if not hopeless. Thus the burden of the enterprise, upon the more public spirited of our fellow-citizens, was greatly increased.

At an early day an agent was despatched to the North, to ascertain whether capitalists could be induced to take an interest in the road. His mission was entirely unsuccessful, and resulted in not the slightest good to the Company.

Another serious difficulty was experienced from the fact that the charter did not fix the terminus of the road on the Gulf, but gave to the Directory the power to fit the terminus at any point from Galveston to Corpus Christi.

Thus the advocates of every point became solicitous to secure the terminus, and offered liberal conditional donations and subscriptions. But as these could not be exacted till after the terminus was definitely fixed, of course the whole burden of the reconnoissances and surveys of the different routes, devolved upon the stockholders in Bexar. These expenses were heavy, considering the amount of stock subscribed, and the frequent calls for stock were well calculated to render disconcerted those who are only accustomed to consider immediate results. Many, at the time, refused to pay up their instalments called for, alleging the road could not and would not be built. But under all these adverse circumstances a corps of engineers was organized in the Spring of 1852, under Col. J. E. Johnstone, Chief Engineer, for the purpose of surveying the various routes from San Antonio to Saluria, Powder Horn Bayou, Lavaca and Tres Palacios. These surveys were made with a view to ascertain the best or most practical route, and also as a preliminary to the final fixing of the terminus. The surveys were completed in July, 1852, at the time appointed for defining the terminus, and letting the road, or such part thereof as could be let, was the thirtieth day of December, of the same year.

The estimates of the Engineer then made for the grading, culverts, bridges and superstructure of the road, upon the several routes, were as follows, to wit:

From S. Antonio to Powder Horn Bayou, a distance of 128 3-100 miles, \$1,481,700. To Tres Palacios, 194 miles, \$1,320,800. To Saluria, by Victoria, 146 3-100 miles, \$1,495,000. To Saluria, by way of Clinton, 159 3-100 miles, \$1,400,000. Thus, it will be seen, these estimates average about \$16,000 per mile; but it must be borne in mind, that the equipments of the road are not included; nor were the costs of the stumps, water tanks, engineering, superintending the work, and contingencies estimated. We shall have occasion to refer to these estimates again.

As the President of the Company was about to visit the city of New York, in the Fall of 1852, on private business, he proposed to make an effort to negotiate the bonds of the Company, as also the county and city bonds held by the Company, for a large sum of money, or for iron. He generously offered to charge nothing for his services in case he was not successful. The power to negotiate was refused; but the President was authorized to receive and report to the Board, for future approval, any proposition which he might believe calculated to further the interest of the Company. Under this resolution he declined acting officially.

But left him without power to act definitely. While at the North, Messrs. Green & Co. made a proposition to the President, to contract for the building of the road, and to subscribe 3,000 shares of the capital stock of the Company; 5 per cent of which they offered to pay down. He was without authority to accept this proposition; nor is it believed it would have been wise to have done so, had he possessed the authority.

Messrs. Green & Co. were invited to send an agent to Texas to examine into the affairs of the Company, and to bid for the construction of the road. Up to the date of concluding the terms, this was the only proposition, (the nature of which will hereafter be explained), that was received for the construction of the road, or for furnishing any, the slightest, material therefor.

The terminus was fixed at Saluria, with a branch to touch Lavaca, but not without great dissatisfaction to those interested in other rival points.

On the third day of February, 1853, the Company advertised for sealed proposals to

Devoted to Commerce, Agriculture and the Dissemination of General Information.

INDIANOLA, TEXAS, WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 1853.

NO. 38.

PUBLISHERS.

Read in New York December 1.
WHO KILLED CAPTAIN WALKER?

A Thrilling Episode of the Mexican War.

BY JACK LEWIS.

Few incidents of the campaign in Mexico seem so mixed up and indecisive as that relative to the killing of Huamantla, and the death of that noble and chivalric officer, Capt. Walker.

In glancing over the papers of Major Hammond, of Georgia, which he designated the "Secondary Combat of the Mexican War," we observe that he has given an account of the engagement at Huamantla, and the fall of Walker. We

have no account of the battle, but we have seen what will be required soon

under the head of contingencies. But we do

not know that the Director intended to

build the road instead of letting it to Messrs. Jones

and Devine, by securing the lowest bids for the

excavations, embankments, ditching and levelling.

The probable cost out to the Company each mile

would have been \$1,000 to \$1,200 per mile.

On the basis of paying agencies, contractors, labor and discount, the cost of a first class railroad, I estimate, would have amounted to \$20,000 per mile.

To have reduced these proportions, and to have

to have secured the lowest bids for the

construction, the stockholders could have been satisfied

as a virtual abandonment of the whole enterprise,

and the directory would only have convened in

the future for the purpose of winding up the affairs

of the Company. From the foregoing statement

it will be readily seen that the Director chose the

proposal best calculated to insure the success of

the road, and that which, if successful, would

prove most advantageous to the Company.

But let us suppose that Messrs. Jones and Devine

should procure the embankments, excavations, ballasting, levelling and ditching of a road

the road would cost them \$1,000 to \$2,000 per mile.

If you allow me to say, contractors, and discounts

on five-sixths of the roads to amount to 25 per

cent, they would only net \$21,215.75 per mile.

\$20,000 is less than the cost of the road.

They must therefore find their profit in a further reduction

of the estimated price, a less discount for

the sale of their bonds, or in the profit of the

road to the time to which they are entitled to the

use of it. As the contractors have heretofore expressed a willingness to deliver to the Company

the road as it is completed in sections, upon the payment

of the reserved one-sixth, it is believed

that they do not rely upon the use of the road for

their profit, beyond the interest of the stockholders.

Under all these circumstances, Committee

believe the contract was the best which the Di-

rectors had in their power to make, and should

the road be built according to this contract they

doubt not that it will prove highly advantageous

to the stockholders and to the country at large.

Since the letting of the contract, they have been

acquainted with no proposition more favorable

to the stock-holders and none better calculated

to insure success. They therefore earnestly

recommend to the Directors to let the stock

holders to use every effort in their power to aid

and facilitate the carrying out of the contract and the successful completion of the road.

Before closing this report, your Committee beg leave

to refer to the report of Col. Johnston,

made in July, 1852, from which it will appear that

the estimated cost of grading near 40 miles of the

road was less than \$150 per mile—but showing

it was the intention at that time to construct the

road at the level grade, without embanking or

raising it, and without ballasting, all of which is

respectfully reported.

I. A. PASCUAL,
S. A. HAVENICK,
ROBERT B. CAMPBELL.

MISS CUNNINGHAM.—We have already mentioned that a young Scotch lady, named Cunningham, had been arrested at Lucca, in Tuscany, for giving a peanit to Bibi and Buayan's Pilgrim Progress, in Italian. The report says that the British Minister at Florence had made unsuccessful application for her release, and had communicated the fact to his Government. The penalty of the offence is said to be 5 years imprisonment. The intelligence caused great excitement in England; and the London Times says:

The case of Miss Cunningham has been taken up in the proper quarter. Every effort that can be made by the diplomatic agents of the English Government to obtain the young lady's release will be tried in the first instance, and, if these do not succeed, it will be time enough to consider the most appropriate method of bringing the refractory sovereign to reason.

The very instant the intelligence of the outrage reached England, the cause of the young lady was taken up in high earnest, by the Foreign Minister, who has described the violence of which she has been made to suffer, and that danger and death were alike secondary considerations, and so the command charged into the town. Some 500 lancers met the charge, but with terrible impetuosity the hangers and cavalry dashed forward with such fury, or nearly so, of Huamantla. The orders to Walker were to advance to the right, and sweep the rebels from the town, and if the Mexicans were in force, to wait for the Infantry to come up. Walker

had been sent to Puebla, where it was

understood that Col. Childs required reinforce-

ment. Lane left Jalapa on the 1st of October, and hurried forward with Laflin's command.

At Potosi, Lane learned that Santa Anna

would throw himself upon his muscle,

and give the advancing column

Jay at the pass of Pinal, and there was

every prospect of a very tight time.

Col. Wynkoop was in command at Perote;

the men were anxious to be in" at the fight in

prospective, and Wynkoop obtained per-

mission to join the General with four com-

panies of the Pennsylvania Regiment, under

command of Capt. Taylor, with Captains

of the Texas Rangers, and Lewis

was now swelled to 2,500. They moved

rapidly forward, and upon reaching Tamara

Lane heard that the old fox was off.

Santa Anna had gone to Huamantla.

Lane determined to hunt him up with

the main force of the troops.

The men were forward—advanced by Walker's and Lewis' Cavalry, and others leading out the pick of the captured horses.

"Drop! drop the horses, you —— fool,

and mount! Mount, sir, mount!"

They mounted, fast enough; Lewis

and formed and met the enemy in gallant style,

and though there were ten, ay, twenty to one, possibly, he drove them back!

To quote our friend Maj. Hammond's words,

"Lewis of the Louisiana Cavalry assumed

command, struggled ably to preserve the guns, (captured) and held his position fairly,

until assistance arrived."

One hundred and fifty of the enemy fell,

while the Rangers and Cavalry some 25

were killed and wounded. They were engaged nearly an hour, and the bravery displayed by Walker, Lewis, and their men, was worthy of general admiration, and all honor.

Poor Walker, a ball struck him in the left shoulder, passed over his heart, and came out in his right vest pocket!

Thus fell the gallant leader of one of the

most formidable war parties, of his number,

known to history. Walker was a humane,

impulsive man; a warm friend, a brave,

gallant soldier. His dying words directed

to Capt. Lewis—*"To the General, with four com-*

panies of the 3d Artillery, under command of Capt. Taylor, with Captains

of the Louisiana Cavalry. The column

was now swelled to 2,500. They moved

rapidly forward, and upon reaching Tamara

Lane heard that the old fox was off.

The men were engaged and the battle

was fought at the pass of Pinal, and there was

