

I was left with thirteen men, the three volunteers (Lishely and the Childers brothers) and my ten from the service whose names I give: Sergeant McLochlan, Lee R. Davis, David Clark, an elderly man, Empson Thompson, Jacob Gross, Jack Hopson,³ John Fokes, Lewis Moore, Morris Moore, Green McCoy, the three last named were mere boys, two of them not fifteen years old, but expert with the rifle, good woodsmen, good hunters, and they had good rifles. Lee Davis had two good pistols, Lishely had one. They were all expert with the rifle. Jack Hopson was armed with a musket, and John Fokes, also a mere boy, not much used to woods life, carried a shotgun. I had a very good rifle and fine pistol, and with McLochlan was the best mounted. Only four of us had ever been in encounters before.

We went on a few hours longer before we struck the Indian trail. And behold! instead of a dozen the signs showed nearer a hundred, all on foot and going down the country toward the nearest settlements. We followed, and came to where they had camped the whole day before during the rain. Their fires were still there; they had erected eight or ten shelters out of sticks and grass; each could shelter eight or ten men. The trail made a plain road; it was no trouble to follow. An Indian, or an old hunter, could have told by the cut of the moccasin soles to what tribe they belonged; but we did not have the art, and were perplexed on the subject. It was agreed that if they were wild Indians we could manage them; but if Caddos, or the like, we might find our hands full.

At nightfall, about twenty-three miles from the fort and about eight from where Cameron now stands, we lost the trail, but soon heard the Indians call to each other in the bottom not half a mile away. I fell back a half mile, and sent McLochlan and Robert Childers on again to reconnoitre. They returned before midnight, reporting that they could not find the camp. About four o'clock in the morning we saddled our horses and tied them to trees, and went on foot to where we had lost the trail, and at dawn found it again, going into a ravine. We followed the ravine which ran parallel with a creek several hundred yards to another ravine at right angles, and here the Indians had turned square down to the creek. Following toward the creek, we heard the Indians coughing, and going up a bank across a bend came in full view of them less than a hundred yards away, all dressed, a number of them with hats on, and busy breaking brush and gathering wood to make fires. We dodged back to the low ground, but advanced toward them, it not yet being broad daylight. Our sight of them revealed the fact that we had to deal with the formidable kind, about a hundred strong. There