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The Battle of Brazito: Reappraising a Lost and Forgotten Episode in the Mexican–American War

NEIL C. MANGUM

Christmas Day 1996 marked the sesquicentennial observance of the Battle of Brazito, one of only a few pitched battles fought on New Mexico soil during the Mexican–American War.¹ Brazito is certainly one of the lesser-known engagements in a war that possesses a reputation for anonymity, at least in the United States. Each day thousands of motorists hurry along the busy I–10 corridor between El Paso, Texas and Las Cruces, New Mexico, unaware that the first engagement of the war in New Mexico was fought in the Rio Grande valley near the community of Mesquite. A weathered New Mexico State Historical Marker on the north side of the town of Vado along New Mexico Highway 478 stands as the only reminder of the Battle of Brazito. The current location of the marker suggests that the site is near Vado, a conclusion based largely on the findings and interpretations of long-time scholars of the battle, George Ruhlen and Andrew Armstrong.² The historical writings of Ruhlen and Armstrong focused on arguing the battlefield's location but devoted scant attention to Brazito's military and historical significance. The battlefield, like the battle itself, has become lost, relegated to nothing more than a passing footnote in history. A closer examination of this conflict, however, and its significance indicates the engagement played a more pivotal role in the Mexican–American War than previously considered.

When the Mexican–American War was declared in May 1846, President James K. Polk focused on achieving two objectives—establishing the Rio Grande as the boundary between Texas and Mexico, and acquiring the Mexican provinces of New Mexico and California. With Zachary

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Taylor's Army of Occupation already entrenched at Fort Brown, Texas, Polk ordered Colonel Stephen W. Kearny to seize New Mexico and to protect the interest of United States traders en route to Santa Fe. Polk envisioned a larger plan than just an overland campaign to conquer New Mexico. In California, a bubbling caldron of rebellion was brewing. In a 30 May cabinet meeting, Polk and his advisers decided that once New Mexico fell under the control of the United States, Kearny would proceed to California to establish a civil government there.³

By the end of June 1846 American troops stood poised at Fort Leavenworth, Missouri, for the conquest and annexation of New Mexico and California. Colonel Kearny, a tough thirty-year career army officer and commander of the army's elite First Dragoons, assembled a sixteen hundred-man invasion force comprised of troops from his First Dragoons, artillery, and the First Regiment Missouri Mounted Volunteers.⁴ The First Missouri Mounted Volunteers, commanded by Colonel Alexander Doniphan, constituted the major portion of Kearny's Army of the West. A graduate of Augusta College in Kentucky, Doniphan established a law practice in Liberty, Missouri, where he became a brigadier general in the Missouri militia and participated in the expulsion of the Mormons from Missouri. He served three terms in the Missouri legislature.⁵ Doniphan was a towering man for his period. One observer who saw the victorious soldier in New Orleans after the Missourians completed their campaign described him as standing six foot four inches tall and weighing between 240 and 260 pounds with fingers nine inches long and feet of equal proportions. The awed writer went on, "His hair is a sort of sandy red and sticking out something like porcupine quills and his men say that he is not afraid of the Devil or the God that made him."⁶

The First Missouri Volunteers were fun-loving civilians and frontiersmen who did not always observe a strict code of military discipline. By war's end, however, they had earned the same respect as their commander. Many donned fringed hunting shirts and pantaloons, and the long campaign bronzed their faces. Most wore full beards that resembled a bearskin stretched over the face, "with nothing but eye holes cut in it."⁷

By the end of June, Kearny's entire force had marched from Fort Leavenworth to New Mexico. Following the Santa Fe Trail, his column reached Santa Fe on 18 August, taking formal possession of New Mexico the next day. Promoted to brigadier general, Kearny drafted a new constitution for New Mexico known as the Kearny Code which guaranteed religious freedom, personal property rights, and the annexation of New Mexico to the United States.⁸

On 11 October, Kearny postponed the Missourians' departure for Chihuahua, Mexico. Navajo raiders endangered New Mexico communities and threatened to invalidate Kearny's lofty promise to protect the citizens of New Mexico from Indian attacks.⁹ Kearny ordered Doniphan

to quell the incursions and restore peace and tranquility in New Mexico. With his departure now on hold, Doniphan organized a campaign to treat with the Navajos by ordering three columns into the field in mid-autumn. Consequently, the Navajos agreed to meet at *Ojo del Oso* (Bear Spring) near present-day Gallup. Doniphan hurried to Bear Spring where he successfully negotiated a peace treaty with about five hundred Navajos on 22 November. Doniphan then concluded peace with the Zunis, a traditional enemy of the Navajo.¹⁰ In mid-December, Doniphan rejoined his regiment on the Rio Grande near Valverde, where they had been protecting a large merchant caravan. A rumor that more than seven hundred Mexicans were advancing upstream to capture their wagons had stalled the merchants.¹¹

With the exception of artillery en route from Santa Fe, Doniphan consolidated his forces. He led his eight hundred and fifty mounted Missourians, sometimes referred to as Yaeger riflemen, toward Paseo del Norte (present-day Juarez, Mexico). Doniphan divided his regiment into three sections and staggered each section's departure two days apart, commencing on 14 December.¹² Doniphan's Missourians and their seventy-five military wagons escorted over three hundred and seventy-five civilian wagons belonging to traders James Magoffin, James Glasgow, and others.¹³ To save time, Doniphan took the Jornada del Muerto cutoff from the Rio Grande. This trackless ninety-five-mile shortcut across the desert lacked water and suitable forage for livestock. Doniphan reunited the three sections sixty-five miles south of Valverde at the tiny village of Doña Ana.¹⁴

While encamped at Doña Ana, Captain John Reid led his company downriver on a scouting mission. On 23 December, Reid's men tangled with Mexican skirmishers, killing two—the first “true casualties” between the warring nations in New Mexico.¹⁵ On the twenty-fourth the column hit the road again, more or less in close marching order. The day's march covered fourteen or fifteen miles. Camp talk swirled amid rumors of a seven hundred-man army of Mexicans marching from El Paso. Extra ammunition boxes were brought forward and their contents distributed.¹⁶

Christmas Day dawned mild, sunny, and bright. Before the sun emerged over the craggy peaks of the Organ Mountains, Doniphan's advance guard was already plodding down the Chihuahua Trail. The command straggled badly this day, however, partly because of wandering livestock from the night before and perhaps because it was Christmas Day. A march of eighteen miles brought the van to an arm of the Rio Grande, which the locals called Brazito. The Missourians made camp in an open and level prairie on the east bank of the Rio Grande around 3 P.M. Heavy stands of mesquite and thick chaparral hugged the sandy terrain to the north and south. To the east, the open ground yielded to a sandy rise punctuated with small, irregular hillocks. Referring to

these dome-shaped hills, the Mexicans named the battle "La batalla de los Temascalitos."¹⁷

Because of lax discipline and straggling, no more than four hundred of Doniphan's men filed into camp. The remaining Missouriians and wagons were strung out for several miles. Of those four hundred men in camp, many were scattered a mile up and down the river searching for wood to build cooking fires.¹⁸ A knot of officers including Doniphan were passing the time playing a game of cards with a captured Mexican horse as the stakes.¹⁹

Doniphan's close approach to Paseo del Norte, unchecked to this point, finally forced the Mexicans into action. On 23 December the local commander, Colonel Gauno Cuyti, had contracted "brain fever" and returned to Chihuahua City. Under orders from the Governor of Chihuahua, the second in command, Lieutenant Colonel Luis Vidal, directed Lieutenant Colonel Antonio Ponce de León to intercept the Missouriians before they reached Paseo del Norte.²⁰ Vidal had instructed Ponce de León to engage the enemy (reported to number between three hundred and four hundred). "until put to flight." After achieving victory, he should escort the caravan "of Mexicans and foreigners of nationality friendly to our Republic." Vidal further admonished his subordinate that, should the strength of the foreigners exceed his numbers, he should "fall back, with the object of holding the line of defense established at this camp [near the present-day El Paso smelter], so as to be able to protect the retreat."²¹

Though Ponce de León reported on 26 December that his command barely exceeded five hundred men, the exact size of his force remains a matter of dispute.²² Doniphan's Missouriians estimated the Mexican army at between twelve and thirteen hundred men. The discrepancy in Mexican numbers may never be satisfactorily resolved. It seems probable that the Missouriians exaggerated Mexican military strength. A force of thirteen hundred men should have easily overlapped both flanks of the Missouri line. (As they did not, the Mexican forces probably numbered between seven hundred and one thousand.) By the afternoon of Christmas Day, Ponce de León's long lines kicked up a column of dust visible for miles. The cloud on the horizon appeared to Doniphan to be nothing more than a disturbance created by the wind. Nevertheless, he dispatched Lieutenant James A. DeCoursey to investigate. The reconnaissance proved the dust cloud to be no wind gust but a formidable Mexican army advancing slowly and in good marching order. Doniphan threw down his cards, uttering something to the effect of "we must stop this game long enough to whip the Mexicans but remember that I am way ahead in the score and cannot be beaten, and we will play it out as soon as the battle is over." With that, bugles blew assembly and the scattered Missouriians scurried to find their horses, guns, and company lines.²³

That Ponce de León did not attack when first within sight of the Missourians ranks as a major missed opportunity. The disorganized Missourians were vulnerable to a quick assault, considering the men were strung out for several miles on the road and in camp. Their horses were grazing, and very few men, including Doniphan, anticipated an attack. Instead of unleashing his troops, Ponce de León sent a messenger toward Doniphan's rapidly forming skirmish line. The Mexican emissary bore a black flag emblazoned on one side with double skulls and crossbones while the opposite side held the lofty inscription, "Libertad O Muerto." Doniphan sent Lieutenant Colonel David Mitchell and an interpreter, Thomas Caldwell, to parley with the Mexican messenger. Between the two lines the adversaries exchanged stiff greetings. The Mexican officer requested that the American commander accompany him to Lieutenant Colonel Ponce de León. Caldwell responded that if the Mexicans desired peace, then let the Mexican commander come to Doniphan. The dialogue disintegrated into mutual threats, and both sides returned to their respective lines. This episode, however brief, gave Doniphan valuable minutes to mobilize his defenses.²⁴

Doniphan's thin skirmish line consisted of a single row and no artillery support. Owing to the sudden approach of the Mexican army, Captain John W. Reid could muster no more than sixteen mounted men, and everyone else was afoot. The skirmishers dispersed in a wide arc with both ends thrown back toward the banks of the Rio Grande. Companies B, C, and E formed the right wing; Companies D, H, and G held the center, and Companies A and F occupied the left, giving what support they could to the approaching baggage train.²⁵

The Veracruz Dragoons formed the extreme right flank of Ponce de León's army. The lone howitzer brought to the battlefield anchored the center. Squads of seventy-five infantrymen each, probably militiamen from Paseo del Norte, flanked the small cannon, which was probably a 3-pounder that fired primarily solid shot or pieces of scrap metal. The Actevo Battalion of Dragoons from Chihuahua and the remaining militiamen bolstered the Mexican left flank.²⁶ One fifteen-year-old Chihuahuan, Francisco Polanco, was among the militiamen supporting the center and left. His story is typical of the rank and file that filled the Mexican army. Polanco had been working the cornfields in his village near Chihuahua when the Mexican army passed through. Conscripted into the army, Polanco was brought north to fight an enemy he did not know. "It was the same all the way up the trail . . . The Mexican army with its pobre voluntarios, without uniforms, just old clothes from the fields, marched to the rear." Although he was full of fear, Polanco said he tried to fight well.²⁷

The Mexican line closed to within four hundred yards before launching a general assault from left to right. Doniphan cautioned his men to wait until the Mexicans were within one hundred yards to maximize the shock of their firepower. He urged them to "Remember Okeechobee," a reference to the 1837 Christmas Day encounter with Seminole Indians in Florida, where some Missouri troops broke and ran under fire. The Mexican left comprised of the Chihuahua cavalry interspersed with the militiamen advanced toward the right flank commanded by Major William Gilpin. With difficulty, Gilpin's troops saw the Mexicans. Thick chaparral and a slough provided broken cover for the advancing Mexicans. Gilpin ordered his men to lie down in the grass. Fooled by the ruse, the advancing Mexicans were suddenly jolted by "a lurid sheet of fire" poured into them by the rising Missourians. The riddled Mexicans "fled howling," reported Gilpin.²⁸

Just as the Mexican left melted away under Gilpin's withering counterfire, so did the Mexican center and right. Men of Companies D, G, and H were ordered to divide themselves into two groups and kneel down. When the Mexican center approached within one hundred yards, the first group rose, fired, and then reloaded while the second rose and fired into the Mexicans. Private Thomas Edwards, a member of Company D, wrote of the charging Mexicans: "I can tell you the balls whistled close about my head. I would dodge my head from one side to the other until I concluded it was useless and I quit the job as a bad one."²⁹ The Mexicans recoiled under the attack with the Missourians in pursuit. Soldiers of Company G from Howard County, commanded by Lieutenant Nicholas B. Wright, captured the diminutive cannon, which was drawn by a solitary mule. One soldier fighting on the right sarcastically remarked that the cannon seemed "as near of no account as anything could be."³⁰ The cannon was relinquished to Lieutenant C.H. Kribben and a few artillerymen who hoped to direct its fire toward the distant Mexicans, but they were out of range.³¹

The most severe fighting emerged on the Mexican right where the Veracruz dragoons were positioned. These Mexican regulars, numbering about five hundred in strength, made a memorable impression on the Missouri backwoodsmen. The dragoons were dressed in scarlet-trimmed green coats and blue pantaloons. A tall cap crested with brass and horsehair crowned their uniforms. Each rider carried a sword and lance. Additional weapons may have included an *escopeta*, which was a sawed-off Brown-Bess musket, and a muzzle loading pistol, probably of British manufacture. Many of the dragoons brandished a small, half-black and half-red pennant that fluttered from the end of an eight-foot lance.³² Doniphan watched as the dragoons formed to charge against his left wing under the command of Lieutenant Colonel David Mitchell. Compa-

nies A and F waited for the lancers to get within range. To check their advance, Doniphan transferred his own Chihuahua Rangers to the left.³³ Reid's mounted Missouriians, numbering less than twenty, also shifted to the left from their central position.

The charge of the Veracruz Dragoons pounded toward the American left. Private William H. Richardson of the Chihuahua Rangers remembered the thundering dragoons who poured "volley after volley" into their ranks until "the sound of bullets over our heads reminded me of a hail-storm." When Richardson and the other Missouriians were finally permitted to return the fire it sounded like "one loud peal of thunder was heard from our Missouri rifles."³⁴ The Veracruz charge crumbled under the massed firepower of the Missouriians, and part of the dragoons veered off farther to their right, as if intending to strike the baggage wagons. But the baggage and commissary trains, hastily formed into two provisional companies under Quartermaster Sergeant Frank S. Edwards and Sergeant Hart, proved to be no easy mark. On command from the regimental surgeon, Edwards corralled the twenty wagons on hand. As he watched the Mexican dragoons recede from the left flank where they had been repulsed by Reid, Edwards ordered his fifteen to twenty men to hold their fire until the Mexicans were within ten yards. Edwards continued: "then we each stepped out and gave them our fire. This caused them again to swerve, and to disappear over a rising ground, whither they were hotly pursued by our little band of fifteen horsemen." Other teamsters and traders, including merchant Edward James Glasgow of St. Louis, gave a good account of themselves in the defense of the wagons.³⁵

The action on the Mexican right lasted more than twenty minutes before the Veracruz dragoons were routed and sent fleeing towards Paseo del Norte by Reid's mounted Missouriians. Captain Reid, joined by a few more mounted soldiers under Captain William P. Walton, pursued the Mexicans for nearly four miles and last observed them heading for a gap in the mountains ten miles away.³⁶

The entire battle lasted no more than thirty minutes. Ponce, wounded in his left side during the fighting, relinquished command to Captain Rafael Carajal. Ponce reported eleven killed and seventeen wounded, the capture of the howitzer, and the general scattering of his command.³⁷ Obviously, the Missouri figures on battle casualties differ significantly from the Mexicans'. Doniphan's official dispatch, written from Chihuahua City on 4 March 1847, claimed forty-three Mexicans died in the battle with more than 150 wounded, but he probably inflated the figures. American casualties amounted to seven wounded.³⁸ The lowest estimate by an American of Mexican casualties was that by Lieutenant C.H. Kribben, who placed the Mexican losses at thirty killed, a few wounded, and eight taken prisoner, six of whom died.³⁹

The post-battle scene from the Missourians' perspective took on the character of a glorious picnic. In their hasty retreat, the Mexicans abandoned a vast array of guns, souvenirs, and food. The enterprising Missourians found bottles of wine, loaves of bread, and cakes of cheese, which supplied a Christmas feast never to be forgotten.⁴⁰

On 26 December, Doniphan's men buried the dead in a common grave before proceeding to Paseo del Norte, which they reached on the twenty-seventh.⁴¹ Rather than finding a large army secure behind defensive fortifications, a small party of Mexican officials met the volunteers and announced their city's surrender to the Americans.

Doniphan's victory at Brazito led to the capture of Paseo del Norte and the occupation of Chihuahua City, three hundred miles south of the Brazito Battlefield. Doniphan's triumph at Brazito secured southern New Mexico for the United States. Brazito also contradicted Kearny's lofty claims of a peaceful conquest of New Mexico. New Mexicans fought the foreign invasion force. Just three weeks after Brazito, northern New Mexicans killed Governor Charles Bent and briefly regained control of their homeland. Colonel Sterling Price needed his entire Second Missouri Volunteer Infantry and additional army regulars to quash the resistance. New Mexicans fought stubbornly at La Cañada, Embudo Pass, Taos Pueblo, and Mora before being subdued. It is highly plausible that, had Doniphan been defeated or his supplies destroyed at Brazito, Price would have committed reinforcements to Doniphan thereby weakening the American grip on northern New Mexico. With a Mexican victory at Brazito, Price and what might have remained of Doniphan's forces would have found themselves between the jaws of a pincer, facing enemies to the north and south. It is quite possible that General Stephen W. Kearny would have been recalled from his California mission. Still more probable would have been the redirection of General John Wool's column, which was supposed to unite with Doniphan in Chihuahua City. Wool's forces were ultimately diverted from Chihuahua and used to thwart General Santa Ana's army at the battle of Buena Vista.

The end result of a United States failure at Brazito would have dictated prolonging the war. Had the Mexican army retained possession of lower New Mexico through the cessation of hostilities, the lower half of New Mexico would not have been annexed by the United States under the terms of the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. There can be little argument that Colonel Doniphan's victory at Brazito gave the United States its legal claim to New Mexico. A battle that substantially changed the borders of nations should hold a more prominent place in American history. So much for a small but significant thirty-minute battle.

NOTES

1. The other key engagements were at La Cañada, Embudo Pass, Taos, and Mora, which pitted U.S. troops against mixed forces of Pueblo Indians and New Mexicans. For treatment of the New Mexico campaign see Ralph Emerson Twitchell, *The History of the Military Occupation of the Territory of New Mexico from 1846 to 1851 by the Government of the United States, Together with Biographical Sketches of Men Prominent in the Conduct of the Government During that Period* (Denver, Colorado: The Smith-Brooks Company, 1909) and Larry Durwood Ball, "The United States Army on the Indian War Frontier, 1848-1861," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of New Mexico, 1994), Chapter 2.

2. George Ruhlen, "The Battle of Brazito—Where Was It Fought?" *Pass-Word*, 2 (May 1957), 53-60. See also Andrew Armstrong, "The Brazito Battlefield," *New Mexico Historical Review* 35 (January 1960), 63-74. Armstrong's account examines at least eleven possible locations for the battlefield before ultimately settling on a location east of present-day Vado (p. 72). It appears, based on Armstrong's research and analysis, that the state historical marker for the Brazito battlefield has been moved from its location opposite the Brazito schoolhouse (map, p. 73) to its current position.

3. Bernard DeVoto, *The Year of Decision: 1846* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1943), 229-230; K. Jack Bauer, *The Mexican War, 1846-1848* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1974), 169.

4. John T. Hughes, *Doniphan's Expedition* (Cincinnati, Ohio: J.A. and U.P. James, 1848), 15.

5. Howard L. Lamar, ed., *The Reader's Encyclopedia of the American West* (New York: Thomas Y. Cromwell Co., 1977), 315.

6. Keesan McClanahan to John McClanahan, 14 June 1847, letter fragment in the McClanahan-Taylor Family Papers, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

7. *Ibid.*

8. Bauer, *The Mexican War, 1846-1848*, 134.

9. Hughes, *Doniphan's Expedition*, 56; DeVoto, *The Year of Decision: 1846*, 411-12.

10. Bauer, *The Mexican War, 1846-1848*, 137; Hughes, *Doniphan's Expedition*, 56-76.

11. Hughes, *Doniphan's Expedition*, 58; DeVoto, *The Year of Decision: 1846*, 415.

12. Bauer, *The Mexican War, 1846-1848*, 151. John S.D. Eisenhower, *So Far From God: The U.S. War With Mexico, 1846-1848* (New York: Doubleday, 1989), 234, states that the Missourians were in two sections and that the vanguard with Doniphan did not depart Valverde until 16 December. Hughes wrote that Col. Doniphan departed on the nineteenth with the last section, which is probably more accurate since we know that Doniphan was not with the vanguard. See Hughes, *Doniphan's Expedition*, 95.

13. Col. M.L. Crimmins, "Doniphan's Expedition," *El Paso Tourist Guide* (January 1931), 15.

14. Bauer, *The Mexican War, 1846-1848*, 152; Hughes, *Doniphan's Expedition*, 95.

15. Hughes, *Doniphan's Expedition*, 95.

16. Ruhlen, "Brazito—The Only Battle in the Southwest Between American and Foreign Troops," *Pass-Word* 2 (February 1957), 6.

17. In attempting to fix the precise location of the Brazito Battlefield, Ruhlen, "The Battle of Brazito," 53-60, plots the distance from the 24 December camp to the 25 December camp by using mileage provided by participants. Of the partici-

pants who noted mileage, Robert Hughes put it at 18 miles, Major William Gilpin 19 miles, and Marcellus B. Edwards 12 miles. See Hughes, *Doniphan's Expedition*, 96; see also John T. Hughes' diary (hereafter "Hughes Diary"), 60–111, in William E. Connelley, ed., *Doniphan's Expedition and the Conquest of New Mexico and California* (Kansas City, Missouri: Bryant & Douglas Book and Stationery Co., 1907), 87; and finally, Marcellus Ball Edwards, "Journal of Marcellus Ball Edwards," (hereafter "Edwards Journal") in Ralph P. Bieber ed., *Marching with the Army of the West, 1846–1848*, Vol. 4 of *The Southwest Historical Series* (Glendale, California: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1936), 4: 228.

18. "Edwards Journal," 228–29; "Richardson' account," 372n 91, to Connelley's republication of Hughes, *Doniphan's Expedition*, 1848, under the chapter title "Hughes Reprint," 112–524 in Connelly, *Doniphan's Expedition and Conquest*.

19. James Peacock's account of the Brazito battle, 371n 90, "Hughes Reprint," in Connelley, *Doniphan's Expedition and Conquest*.

20. Bauer, *The Mexican War, 1846–1848*, 152.

21. Ruhlén, "Brazito—The Only Battle," 8–9; Luis Vidal, "Instructions under which Squadron Commander Antonio Ponce de León is to proceed in the military Movement" in "Parte Oficial de la Acción de Armas de Temascalitos," F.M. Gallaher, trans. in *New Mexico Historical Review* 3 (October 1928), 381–89.

22. Ruhlén, "Brazito—The Only Battle," 9.

23. Peacock account in Hughes Reprint, Connelley, *Doniphan's Expedition and Conquest*, 371n 90. More or less agree with Peacock's, nearly all the available accounts attempt to capture the flavor of Doniphan's remarks at having to halt his game of cards to fight the Mexicans.

24. There are several versions of the dialogue between Caldwell and the Mexican officer. Suffice it to say that neither side expected to surrender to the other, nor were they on peaceful missions. See Connelley, *Doniphan's Expedition*, 371–77, which contains the various accounts of the "Black Flag." The flag survived the Battle of Brazito only to be captured as a Mexican trophy of war at the Battle of Sacramento. The Black Flag is now in the possession of the Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis. Telephone interview with staff of the Missouri Historical Society, 1995. No record of Caldwell's account of the incident has been found. The content of the dialogue is a reconstruction taken from various battle participants.

25. Alexander W. Doniphan, City of Chihuahua, to Brigadier General R. Jones, Adjutant General, U.S.A., 4 March 1847, Hughes Reprint, in Connelley, *Doniphan's Expedition and Conquest*, 377–78n 94.

26. Ponce de León, "Parte Oficial," 386–87; Doniphan to Jones, 4 March 1847, Connelley, *Doniphan's Expedition and Conquest*, 377–78.

27. "A Veteran Tells His Story After Battle Forgotten," *Las Cruces Citizen* (New Mexico), 24 December 1953.

28. "Remarks of Major Gilpin at the Barbeque Given the Cole Infantry, at Jefferson City, 10 August 1847," Appendix B in Connelley, *Doniphan's Expedition and Conquest*, 592–99.

29. George R. Gibson, *Journal of a Soldier Under Kearny and Doniphan, 1846–1847*, Ralph P. Bieber ed., vol. 3 of *The Southwest Historical Series* (Glendale, California: The Arthur H. Clark Co., 1935), 3:305; "Edwards Journal," 4:235, fn 167.

30. Edwards Journal, 4:233.

31. C.H. Kribben's report to an unidentified officer, written at Camp Below Brazito, Rio Grandé, 26 December 1846 in James M. Cutts, *The Conquest of California and New Mexico, By the Forces of the United States in the Years 1846 & 1847* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Carey & Hart, 1847), 77–79; see also Hughes Reprint, Connelley, *Doniphan's Expedition*, 375.

32. Hughes, *Doniphan's Expedition*, 96; Philip R.N. Katcher, *The Mexican-American War, 1846–1848*, (London, England: Osprey Publishing Ltd. 1976), 29.

33. Richardson's account, in Hughes Reprint, Connelley, *Doniphan's Expedition and Conquest*, 372;

34. *Ibid.*

35. Frank S. Edwards, *A Campaign in New Mexico with Colonel Doniphan* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Carey & Hart, 1847), 83–85; see also Frank S. Edwards, *A Campaign in New Mexico with Colonel Doniphan* (1847; Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1996); Valentine M. Porter, "A History of Battery 'A' of St. Louis, with an Account of the Early Artillery Companies from Which it is Descended," *Missouri Historical Society* 2 (March 1905), 10.

36. Connelley, *Doniphan's Expedition*, 375.

37. Ruhlen, "Brazito—The Only Battle," 11; also see Antonio Ponce de León to Luis Vidal, 26 December 1846," in "Parte Oficial," 388.

38. Doniphan to Jones, 4 March 1847, in Connelley, *Doniphan's Expedition and Conquest*, 377–78.

39. C.H. Kribben's report to an unidentified officer, written at Camp Below Brazito, Rio Grande, *The Conquest of California and New Mexico*; see also "Old Newspaper Tells of New Mexico Battle," *El Paso Herald-Post*, 4 June 1943, p.7. Both contain Lt. C.H. Kribben's account of the Battle of Brazito.

40. T.P. Edwards to J.D. Edwards, 21 January 1847, Mexican War, Missouri Historical Society, Jefferson City; "Edwards Journal," 234; and Gibson, *Journal of a Soldier*, 308.

41. Edwards, *A Campaign in New Mexico with Colonel Doniphan*, 89.