

ORIGIN OF THE TROUBLE BETWEEN THE YUMAS AND GLANTON.

DEPOSITION OF JEREMIAH HILL.

This 23rd day of May, A. D. 1850, before me, Abel Stearns, first Alcalde of the district of Los Angeles, and State of California, and Judge of the first instance in the Criminal Law, personally appeared Jeremiah Hill, who being duly sworn, deposeth and saith, that he is one of a party of fourteen American emigrants, who have crossed the Colorado since the massacre of John J. Glanton and his companions by the Yumas. 'About five days before reaching the mouth of the Gila, they met a Creek Indian by the name of John Lewis, who speaks the English, Spanish and Yuma languages, and had come from Tucson previously with Gen. Anderson of Tennessee. This Creek Indian showed them a certificate given to the Yumas by Gen. Anderson, to the effect, that he left them the boat which he had built for the purpose of crossing his company, upon condition that they would cross all Americans at \$1.00 for a horse, \$1.00 for a man, and \$1.00 for the cargo (pack), and that upon a violation of this contract, by any higher charge than this, said boat should be forfeited. As deponent understood, this boat was used at the lower crossing, commonly called "Algodones." The Creek said he and three other men were then up the river, by orders of Glanton, hunting planks to make a raft for the purpose of going down to build another boat, that he (the Creek) was a partner with Glanton, and also owned half of the aforesaid Indian boat. That Glanton had a ferry at the mouth of the Gila, and plenty of provisions. One of the men of deponent's party, by the name of Anderson, an old acquaintance of Glanton's, immediately started ahead to get provisions and animals from Glanton, but on the 23rd of April, about 9 o'clock in the night, he returned, saying that from the signs given by the Mexicans at the mouth of the Gila, not understanding their language, he believed that Glanton's party were all killed. He related that as he approached close to the ferry, signs were made to him, but which he did not understand, and went on, being on horseback, until finally the Mexican women pulled him off his horse, stripped him, gave him the hat and clothes of a Mexican, and hid him, which perhaps was all that saved his

life. This was about 30 miles from the mouth of the Gila. Deponent's party went next day perhaps 20 miles, but saw no Indians, though some Mexicans said that the Indians had followed Anderson to within five miles of our camp of the previous day (23d). Next day the road led us to within 600 yards of Glanton's late ferry where there is a mound; here the road forks, one leading down to Glanton's ferry, the left hand leading about six miles further to the present ferry occupied by the Indians. We stopped only to see that Glanton's ferry was entirely evacuated, and no sign of boat or habitation on either side; three Indians were there, but, as we rode towards them, they ran and hid in the bushes. We went on then towards the Indian ferry, the approach to which, for four miles, is through the thick brush of mesquite, young willow and cottonwood, by a very narrow path, barely sufficient for a single horse, the bushes dragging the packs on each side most of the way. We had stayed all day and night of the 25th, at our camp, about 10 miles beyond Glanton's ferry; on this day, in the afternoon, about 4 o'clock, ten Yumas, unarmed, came up to our camp, by one of whom we sent for the chief, for the purpose, as we assured them, of having a talk with him and making him some presents. The chief came the same night about 7 o'clock; we gave him shirts, handkerchiefs, jewelry, pinole, etc., after which we asked him in reference to the massacre of Glanton. The chief said that Gen. Anderson had left him a boat on the contract as above stated, and that he would comply with it whenever any Americans came to cross, but as yet none had come; since the departure of Gen. Anderson, many Mexicans had come to cross at the Indian ferry, which had made Glanton mad, and that he (the chief) knew of no other offense the Indians had given said Glanton; that one day Glanton sent his men down, and had the Indian boat destroyed, and took an American whom they (the Indians) had with them, engaged in working their boat, up to his (Glanton's) camp, with all said American's money, and that Glanton had shot said American and thrown him into the river. The chief said that he then went up to see Glanton, and made an offer that Glanton should cross all the men and baggage, while the chief should cross the animals of the emigrants, and thus they would get along quietly. Whereupon Glanton kicked him out of the house, and beat him over the head with a stick; the chief said he would have hit him back, but was afraid, as the Americans could shoot too straight. This was before Glanton went to San Diego, according to the

Chief's statement, for the purpose of purchasing whisky and provisions. The chief said he immediately, on receiving this insult, went back and held a council of his people. The result was a determination to kill all the Americans at the ferry, and another chief was sent up to see the position of the Americans, who found that Glanton was gone to San Diego. They then determined to wait until he returned, as their main object, the chief said, was to kill Glanton. The chief who had been sent up as just stated, went up afterwards from day to day, to the American camp, and finally one day came back with the report that Glanton had returned. Then the chief who had been before insulted went up, and found Glanton and his men drinking; they gave him something to drink, and also his dinner. After dinner, five of the Americans laid down and went to sleep in a hut, leaving him sitting there; others were ferrying, and were on the opposite side; three had gone up on this side for some purpose. The chief said he watched till he thought the five were asleep, when he went out to his people on this side, who were all hid in the bushes just below the houses; a portion of them he sent up after the three Americans who were up cutting poles, instructing his men to get possession of their arms; he had previously posted 500 Indians on the other side, instructed to mix among the Americans and Mexicans, and get into the boat without suspicion. He himself then went up on the little mound perhaps as high as his head, but commanding a view of all his Indians, and the whole scene; from this mound he was to give the signal. There he was to beckon to those hid in the bushes to come near the American tents, which they were immediately to enter and give a yell as they killed the Americans, whereupon he was to give the sign with a pole having a scarf on it to the Indians on the other side as well as those who were watching the three above. He gave the signal, when those in the boat and at the houses were all killed. The Indians who had been sent after the three Americans ran, and these three succeeded in getting into a little skiff and escaped by going down the river. His men pursued on the shore, on both sides, but several were killed by the Americans, and many wounded. He showed us two of the wounded, and when asked if "as many as ten" of the tribe were killed, he said, "More." He said one of the Americans would row, while the others fired, and his people hesitated to pursue further. When the chief went up to see Glanton, as above stated, about the ferry, Glanton said that he would kill one Indian for every Mexican they should

cross. He showed us by signs the amount of money in bags which he took from the Americans' camp. It seemed from his description to be about three bags of silver, each about three feet high, and about two feet round, which must have contained at least \$80,000, besides a bag of gold, about a foot high and a foot round. This, he said, he divided amongst his people, then burnt the houses over the bodies of the dead. The six who were killed in the boat were thrown into the river as fast as they were killed, all killed with clubs. The five on shore were killed with clubs, except Glanton, who was killed with a hatchet, which the chief showed to us; their clothes were burnt, and perhaps their flesh somewhat burnt by the burning of the little shed of brush in which they had been killed; their bodies were then thrown into the river. After giving this account of the transaction, the chief said that, upon the death of these Americans, another council was held as to whether they should kill all Americans who might come along, at which it was resolved by every Indian that they would. He said that in two days they could muster four thousand warriors; he said their arms were principally bows and arrows and clubs; and that they had a few guns, including all the arms they got from Glanton's party, but that they intended to collect all they could from every source. We saw them take guns away from the Sonorantians by force. The Sonorantians refused to sell or buy arms of them. They offered deponent two fine Colt's revolvers, one five-shooter, the other a six-shooter (the same, no doubt, worn by Glanton, as the chief said, and deponent had seen it in his belt), for his double-barreled shot gun, saying they knew the use of a gun, but not of the pistols. Deponent refused to trade with them, of course; and the Sonorantians or Mexicans there passed a resolution not to trade any arms of any description with them.

He told us finally that, if we would go to the river next day, he would be there, and keep the Indians from coming into our camp, and secure us an unmolested passage. We went, accordingly, on that day (26th), but he was not on the ground, nor did we ever see him again. On touching the bank, Señor Montenegro, who was on a little island about 30 steps from the shore, called to us to come over, which we did immediately, the water being only belly deep for the mules. A great number of Indians were on the island, including a few women and children. The Indian men said very little to us, but the women and children would come within three feet of us, pointing at us, and using very abusive language, sometimes in Spanish,

and every now and then the boys used the plain English, in such expressions as "God d—m your souls, Americans!" They agreed to cross us that day; and all got over except two, who remained that night amongst the Indians. When they crossed seven of us they refused to take any more, unless they were paid over again for all; and we had to pay; they watched us all night, apparently with the view of getting into our camp, but we had a strong guard, and very few slept. They could be distinctly heard slipping through the bushes. Our animals were nearly all still on the other side. We had already paid them twice for crossing men, animals and baggage.

Next morning (27th) the Indians came down to the river with bottles of whisky in their hands, and pretty well drunk. We had to pay them over \$3.00 apiece for crossing the balance of the animals; they drowned one mule; we gave them a horse, blankets, shirts, jewelry, etc., besides about \$80.00 in cash. The crossing was finally effected the evening of the 27th, but Mr. Sled and Señor Montenegro were told by the Indians that they had better get away from the island or they would kill them; and when asked if they intended to cross the animals the chief replied that he did not know whether he would or not, that he would keep them if he thought proper, but that they had better get away. Consequently these gentlemen crossed ahead of the animals. Another Mexican gentleman who still remained, had to give them a mule belonging to Señor Montenegro, and other presents, before they would cross the animals at all, after being paid three times. On the evening of the 27th, after we had crossed everything, and were preparing to start immediately, the Indians commenced coming over in great numbers, some in boats, and some swimming. After they had got across they went to Señor Montenegro, and told him to separate his men from the Americans, as they were going to fight us, and had come over expressly for that purpose. Señor Montenegro, having no intention of doing so, arranged that our animals should be driven with his advance company of fifty men, that we should keep disengaged from the care of the animals to meet an Indian attack, while he brought up the rear with the rest of his animals and one hundred men. After we had got out some distance from the river, Señor Montenegro remaining behind to see his mules off, was taken prisoner by the Indians, and accused by them of protecting the Americans, and threatened with death. We knew nothing of this. And they would doubtless have killed him, but one of his men with a pack mule happened to be a little

behind. To him Señor Montenegro called, and he got off by giving the Indians a bag of pinole and one of panoche, opening at the same time trunks containing his and his son's clothes, out of which the Indians helped themselves. He overtook us at dark and related these circumstances, and the further promise he had to make the Indians, that when he returned from California, he would bring each of the chiefs a suit of red cloth.

The next day, three of these Indians came through our camp, ten miles this side of the river, near the first well, and when questioned, said they were going to California; we saw two more of the Yumas at New river, who told the Mexicans that they were there looking out for the Americans who might be sent from San Diego, or other part of California, to fight them. Twenty times in our presence they stated that they were at war with all Americans, and the chief himself told us we were the last party that should ever cross there, and that he intended to keep "muchos" Indians scattered along the road, to kill the Americans as they came along and take their animals. Deponent thinks there are between 75 and 100 Americans, men, women and children, whom he supposes now to be about at the Gila, and who will be on the Colorado in less than a month, and are compelled, from the usual way of traveling in that quarter, to come there in very small parties, easily exposed to a successful Indian attack. And further deponent saith not.

JEREMIAH HILL.

State of California, County of Los Angeles, ss:

Be it remembered that on this 23rd day of May, 'A. D. 1850, before me, Abel Stearns, first Alcalde, and Judge of the First Instance, of the Criminal law, of said county, personally appeared Jeremiah Hill and subscribed and made oath to the above statement. Given under my hand.

ABEL STEARNS.