

# LETTER FROM COLONEL HALL, OF THE NICARAGUAN ARMY.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HERALD.

New York, April 14, 1857

Noticing in to day's edition of your paper a copy of an order, signed J. A. Lockridge, Colonel Nicaraguan Army, dismissing me from his command, I feel it my duty, in self defence, to make a statement in detail of my introduction, and the slight connection I had with him recently on the San Juan river.

At the expiration of my furlough I left this city, with a small detachment under Capt. J. E. Farnum, for San Juan del Norte, for the purpose of reaching general headquarters, by the shortest route that offered. Arrived there, I found it impossible at that time to reach Rivas by Parama, and therefore determined to essay the river. Immediately upon our arrival the small steamer Rescue came alongside, and the self styled Colonel Lockridge boarded us. I was introduced to him as our men and stores were being transferred to her, and we immediately proceeded up the river to a point called Camp Titus, and, landing there, joined the forces under General Wheat, Colonel Titus and Colonel Anderson. Whilst there, at the solicitation of Lockridge, and for the better preservation of the stores, which were being wasted, I consented to take temporary charge of the commissary department; and, by the way, this was the only connection I had with the river command. A few days after the battle of Scrapiqui was fought, Captain Farnum being in temporary command of the recruits, whilst I, in attending to the duties of my department, remained in camp, or upon the little steamer, in company with Lockridge, who, during the entire engagement, was not once exposed to any manner of danger. General Wheat, Colonel Anderson and Colonel Titus, having not only decided upon the manner of attack, but commanded without the presence of Lockridge during the day.

After the occupation of Scrapiqui I was upon the boat with Lockridge, when she had proceeded to within about a mile and a half of Castillo, for the purpose of landing the troops under General Wheat and Colonel Titus that were to, and did, attack that place. During the engagement there he, Lockridge, was not under fire, nor exposed, and when General Wheat returned, Lockridge sent a message to Colonel Titus to the effect that he should hold his position for twenty-four hours, in which time he promised to return with reinforcements; he then proceeded to Scrapiqui. Instead of returning, as he promised, he went down to Greytown, and running the boat ashore, failed to keep his engagement. The consequence of this failure is the loss of Castillo; for if he had remained with the reinforcement in twenty four instead of fifty-six hours, as he did, Colonel Titus would not have retired.

I have mentioned these two facts in this connection for the purpose of showing the man's incompetency and great regard for self when any fighting is going on. These are the causes that have led to want of discipline and desertion and all other evils that have delayed the opening of the San Juan river. It is my honest conviction that had Gen. Wheat or any other competent man had the command or position assumed by Col. Lockridge, long ere this a communication would have been effected with Gen. Walker.

After these exploits of Lockridge I took advantage of the boat leaving for Greytown to visit there again, that I might await the arrival of the steamer which was to bring us the reinforcements, without which, Lockridge himself informed me, no further operations could be carried forward. Captain Farnum and Major Ellis (who, with Col. MacDonall—then at Greytown—and myself, were the only commissioned officers on the river,) accompanied me. Arrived there, and discovering that the Tennessee had not brought reinforcements nor provisions, we resolved to await the arrival of the Texas, and out of courtesy, alone informed Lockridge of our intention. Not having any right or authority, he of course made no objections, and, in consequence, we remained, Greytown being more pleasant to officers without commands than up the river would have proved. Lockridge left, and to cap the climax of his overbearing, unmannerly conduct, he had absolutely appropriated to himself all the private property in way of stores, &c., that had been committed to my care, and which were intended to keep us, if it were necessary, free from government expense during our sojourn in Greytown.

Then commenced a series of privations that were enough to disgust any one with a military life by their simple recital; nor were they relieved until Colonel Kinney stepped forward, and by his own exertion and sacrifices made us comfortable.

This, I presume, was the only return Lockridge could make to an officer who had not only written his despatches, which from utter inability he could not write himself, but had, with a delicacy worthy of a better object, corrected his orders and attended to the slightest details, which an ignorant commander may be called upon to issue.

Self respect alone would have induced any gentleman to refuse service under such a man; but when to this be added his conduct towards superiors as well as the fact of his incompetency and vulgarity, is it to be wondered at that, failing to make a connection with the army at Rivas, he should retire? Or is it at all surprising that a man of his character should make such charges, when the absence of those he detests ensures his safety? I think not, and leave allegations so inconsistent with my well known sacrifices and untiring services in the cause to be settled between my friends, the public and the man Lockridge.

GEO. E. HALL, Commissary General N. A.