

29

LANE, WALTER PAYE - Bown February 18, 1817, in County Cork, Ireland, a son of William and Olivia Lane. At an early age he emigrated to the United States and with his parents settled at Fairview, Guernsey County, Ohio. He was living in Wheeling, West Virginia, in the fall of 1835 when he decided to come to Texas to join in the revolution against Mexico. He stopped off at Louisville, Kentucky, to visit his brother Wade Lane and was persuaded by him to give up the idea of going to Texas and to accept a position as clerk for his brother. Some few months, later, however, General Stephen F. Austin and Dr. Branch T. Archer were in Louisville on their mission to raise funds and men for the revolution in Texas and Mr. Lane, after an interview with them definitely decided to resume his journey. With letters of introduction to General Sam Houston and Governor Henry Smith he set out for New Orleans. There he boarded a boat for Natchitoches, Louisiana, from which place he walked to San Augustine, Texas, reaching that place in time to join Captain William Kimbro's Company which was then being organized. On the day after he enlisted he was unanimously elected Second Sergeant. The company marched to Nacogdoches where it remained for a week at the request of the citizens of that place who were expecting an attack from a nearby tribe of Cherokee Indians. At this time Captain Kimbro sent Mr. Lane to General Houston with dispatches and ordered him to impress any horses he could for the army. Arriving at the headquarters of the army at Groce's on the Brazos, Mr. Lane delivered the messages to General Houston, along with the letters of introduction from Austin and Archer. After reading them, General

Houston ordered Mr. Lane to remain with him. On page 17 of the San Jacinto rolls printed in 1836 Mr. Lane is shown as a member of Captain William H. Patton's Company and he is likewise listed as a member of Captain Patton's company on page 47 of the San Jacinto rolls in the General Land Office. For this reason the compiler has shown him as one of Captain Patton's men.

In Service Record No. 7822 it is certified that Mr. Lane enlisted in Captain James Cheshire's Company (instead of Captain Kimbro's Company)

March 23, 1836; was transferred to Captain Karnes' Company, in which he was promoted to be Second Lieutenant, and was discharged May 18, 1836. On June 29, 1838, he was issued Donation Certificate No. 391 for 640 acres of land for having participated in the battle of San Jacinto.

In his autobiography, written in 1887 and published under the title of "Adventures and Recollections of General Walter P. Lane," General Lane tells of how his life was saved on the skirmish of April 20, 1836, by Mirabeau B. Lamar: "- - -My horse - a powerful animal - had got excited and having more zeal than discretion, took the bit in his teeth and ran me headlong into the midst of the enemy, much to my disgust. The order was given to retreat. I was unanimously in favor of it, but my horse wanted to go through. A Mexican officer settled the difficulty by cutting at my head with his sabre. I threw up my gun and warded off the blow. My gun was empty. I drew a holster pistol, aimed at his head and pulled trigger. It missed fire; he tucked his head down to avoid the shot, when I hit him over the head with the pistol, knocking him senseless. Just then a big Mexican lancer charged me in the side, running me through the shoulder with his lance, observing: 'Carajo Americana (d-n the Americans) and knocked me ten feet off my horse. I fell on my head, stunned and senseless. Gen. Lamar rode up to succor me, shot the Mexican, and, thinking I was dead, fell back with the command. My comrades had gone some forty yards, retreating, when I regained consciousness and my feet at the same time. Twenty Mexicans were round me when I rose,

but it so surprised them to see a dead boy rise to his feet and run like a buck, that I got ten steps before they fired on me. Capt. Karns saw me coming, and ordered his company to wheel and fire on my pursuers, which they did, killing a few, when the balance halted. An old man told me, - 'Son, get up behind; I reckon the old mare kin take us both out.' I did. (She was a sorrel mare and thin in flesh; I would know her hide if it was dried on a fence even now, and she had the sharpest backbone it has ever been my fortune to straddle)' - - - Dr. Good(loe), our orderly sergeant, dressed my wound; it was not dangerous, but painful."

General Lane in describing the death of General Manuel Fernandez Castrillon on the 21st, said: "As we charged into them the General commanding the Tampico Battalion (their best troops) tried to rally his men, but could not. He drew himself up, faced us, and said in Spanish: 'I have been in forty battles and never showed my back; I am too old to do it no.' Gen. Rusk halloed to his men: 'don't shoot him,' and knocked up some to their guns; but others ran around and riddled him with balls. I was sorry for him. He was an old Castillian gentleman, Gen. Castrillo."

General Castrillo had been a friend of Lorenzo de Zavala in past years in Mexico and when the Vice President of Texas learned of his death, he had his remains interred in his family cemetery, just across Buffalo Bayou from the battle field. Mr. de Zavala died November 18, 1836, and was buried by the side of his friend of other days.

"We chased the enemy to the laek;" said General Lane, "they took

25

2

to water, like ducks, to swim across, our men firing at their heads. They had gone some fifty yards when some one cried to us to stop firing. We did so. He hailed the Mexicans in Spanish and told them to come back and we would not hurt them. They returned, and, as they neared the shore, he said: 'Now boys, give it to them,' which they did, killing some two hundred. I never fired a shot.

General Lane further said that on April 24th he was elected Second Lieutenant of Captain Karnes' Company. After receiving his discharge from the army he went to Nacogdoches and remained two months. He then spent six months with his parents in Wheeling, Virginia (now West Virginia). Returning by boat to Velasco he there joined the Texas Navy aboard the "Tom Toby," and saw active service. In October, 1838, Mr. Lane was a member of a party of twenty-one that left Franklin, Robertson County, on a land locating expedition. Captain John Neal was in command and William F. Henderson was the surveyor. Near the present town of Dawson, Navarro County, they found about three hundred Kickapoo Indians in camp engaged in killing buffalo for their winter supply. The Indians warned the party not survey their land but no attention was paid to the warning. Shortly after breakfast on the third day, a mile from camp, the Indians ambushed the surveying party from a ravine. A terrific fight ensued, lasting until midnight. Seventeen of the Texans were killed and ten were wounded, Lane being one of the latter, having a leg broken.

Captain Lane commanded Company A, First Texas Cavalry, in the assault upon Monterrey in the Mexican War. His horse was shot from

under him during the engagement. Before the end of the war he had risen to the rank of major in the regiment of Texas Rangers commanded by Colonel John C. Hays.

In his autobiography, General Lane tells how he was responsible for the return to Texas of the bones of sixteen of the seventeen members of the Mier Expedition who were shot at Salado, Mexico, March 25, 1843. A few months before the war ended, General J. E. Wool ordered Captain Lane to take forty of his men and a trusted Mexican guide to make a reconnaissance toward San Luis Potosi with a view of marching there if the route was practicable. Captain John Pope was sent along as topographical engineer. They first marched to Cedrad and left there the next morning. "It was about 10 o'clock," said Lane, "when we left there (Cedral) and from then until dark we kept up a pretty brisk gait, knowing that, in a few hours, a regiment of lancers would be in pursuit of us. After dark the guide told me that we had better take to the mountains, the passes of which he knew, and would thereby avoid pursuit. After travelling eight to ten miles we encamped at a hacienda, where we remained all night, refreshing both man and horse. When we camped next night, after a good day's long march, I asked him (the guide) how far it was to Salado. He replied: 'Dos leagor, senior; other lou el Sierra.' (Two leagues, sir; the other side of the mountain.) I told the sentinel to wake me up and the command at 3 o'clock, as I was going to surprise Salado at daylight and get the bones of the Mier prisoners - who drew the black beans, and were shot there - and send them to Texas to be buried in their native soil.

"Pope, who slept with me, was bitterly opposed to being routed out at that time of night. I told him that it could not be expected that he would have the same feeling on the subject as I had - as a Texan - but those bones I was going to have all the same.

"We got to the town at daylight. I sent a lieutenant and twenty men around to the back gate, and myself, with the remainder, halloed at the front gate for admittance. The Mexicans opened the gate, after looking at us in astonishment. They yelled out: 'Amalgama Dios, los Americanos!' (Almighty God, the Americans). They were terribly alarmed thinking we were going to murder them. I assured the alcalde he need be under no apprehension, that we would do him no harm; that I wished breakfast and forage for man and horse, for which I would apy. He soon had the men billeted at different houses, taking Pope and myself to his, where he gave us an excellent breakfast, a la Mexicana. I asked if he was living there when the Mier prisoners were decimated. He at first denied that he was, but when I assured him that I only wanted their bones to send home to Texas to their relatives, he acknowledged he was. He took me outside of the walls of the town and showed me the ditch where they were buried, side by side. I told him to get some men with spades to exhume them; putting an officer to superintend it, and directing him to see that the bones of each skeleton were tied compactly together. I ordered four large boxes, capable of holding the bones of the sixteen prisoners. As he had government mulesthere he was herding, I pressed two of the finest, with their aparejos, for which I gave them a receipt on my government, paid them in cash for

what my men had received, and struck for Saltillo.

"After arriving at Buena Vista, and reporting to Gen. Wool, I got permission from him to send Capt. John Dusenberry, and a private, to Texas with their remains. They took them to La Grange, on the Colorado, where several of them had relatives, and the people from the surrounding country came in and buried them on a high eminence overlooking the river. I have since learned that a monument has been erected over them."

From the close of the Mexican War until the commencement of the Civil War, Major Lane engaged in the mercantile business in the city of Marshall, Texas. Early in 1861 Major Lane was elected without opposition Lieutenant Colonel of the Third Texas Cavalry of the Confederate States Army, and as such engaged in many battles. He was eventually transferred to the coast of Texas under General Magruder where he rose to the rank of Brigadier General.

General Lane died January 22, 1892, at his home in Marshall and today sleeps in the old cemetery there in a marked grave.

General Lane had eight brothers and sisters. One of his brothers, George Lane, moved to Marshall, Texas, in 1837, and for a time was a law partner of Isaac Van Zandt. He was married to _____. Miss Mary Jane Lane, a daughter, was living in Marshall in 1907. Another daughter, _____, was married to Captain D. B. Deuprees.

(Miss Louise P. Lane died 1834)

(Write to William Lane or Wade Pope Lane, Marshall)