



The Battle Of Orange Walk

by Ángel Cal

Acknowledgements

This book is a collective achievement, made possible by the passion and dedication of various partners and stakeholders.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the ImagiNation Factri and Mr. Yasser Musa, whose creative vision and commitment to educational projects have been foundational.

Similarly, we offer our sincere gratitude to the 501 Academy and Mr. Carlos Quiroz, for making the book available on their platform and opening opportunities for it to be in the digital space.

We are also grateful to the National Institute of Culture and History, the Institute for Social and Cultural Research, and Mr. Rolando Cocom, for always supporting research, academic projects, and community engagements.

We thank the Belize Archives and Records Service and Mr. Kevin Montero, whose resources and guidance were essential to the completion of this work.

We would like to acknowledge the outstanding contributions of Ms. Melissa Espat-Castellanos and Mr. Giovanni Pinelo, whose editorial dedication and hard work were instrumental in completing this book.

Additionally, we thank the Intercultural Indigenous Language Institute, coordinated by Mr. Delmer Tzib, for its invaluable role in enriching this project through its commitment to cultural preservation.



co-published by

Imagination Factri
(Image Factory Art Foundation)
91 North Front Street, Belize City, Belize
and
The Intercultural Indigenous Language Institute,
University of Belize, Belmopan

1st edition November 2024

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ISBN: 978-976-97177-3-2

EAN: 9789769717732

cover design: lito + yasser musa

With support from and in collaboration with:



ENGLISH REPORTS ON
THE BATTLE OF ORANGE WALK,
1st. SEPTEMBER 1872:

THE ICAICHÉ MAYA AGAINST
A DETACHMENT OF THE ENGLISH FIRST WEST INDIA REGIMENT

PALEOGRAPHY OF MANUSCRIPTS
FROM THE BELIZE ARCHIVES AND RECORDS SERVICE

BY ÁNGEL CAL
October 2024

Foreword

Dr. Angel Cal is one of Belize's foremost historians and educators. He has interrogated, investigated, and published various works on the impact of the Caste War on Belize. Dr. Cal has also analysed other topics in Belizean history to inform Belizean consciousness and open more arenas for research. In this book, "English Reports on the Battle of Orange Walk, 1st September 1872: The Icaiché Maya Against a Detachment of the English First West India Regiment," Dr. Cal presents a significant collection of historical documents.

After offering a thought-provoking contextual analysis and introduction, Dr. Cal presents a palaeography of documents. The impact of this work is threefold. It allows the Belizean population to access transcribed primary sources, an important opportunity for the general public, students, and researchers to evaluate records on the Battle of Orange Walk event. The paleography also revives discussions on the legacy of Indigenous resistance in Northern Belize. It allows the readers to interpret this critical moment of indigenous resistance against European expansion and encroachment on their territories. Lastly, the records show the different perspectives of the English on the event. This is an important opportunity for Belizeans to interrogate, research, contextualize, and be critical of how the different parties presented the battle. The palaeography offers valuable insights into the socio-political nature of British Honduras during the 19th century. It also provides data on the interactions and conflicts among groups in British Honduras.

In this compilation, Dr. Cal illuminates the varied perspectives and tensions between the British colonizers and the Maya (Icaiche and Santa Cruz) population. This work is essential reading for anyone seeking to understand the Indigenous struggle against British colonialism in Northern Belize. It also invites Belizeans to engage with Belizean history and the primary sources that our institutions offer.

Delmer Tzib

San Antonio, Cayo
October 22nd 2024

Introduction

When Christopher Columbus bumped into the Americas in 1492, the Spanish Crown claimed sovereignty over this hemisphere under the rights of discovery; the fact that the indigenous peoples of the Americas were not truly “discovered” was inconsequential to the Europeans. At the time, there was no established international law; the Roman Catholic Church served as the international arbitrator. To ensure their claim, the Spanish queen sought the endorsement of the Roman Catholic Church’s Pope (who happened to be a Spaniard) for Spain’s dominion over the Americas. The Inter-Caetera decree of Pope Alexander VI granted Spain in 1493 the right to “colonize, convert and enslave” the natives. This papal document also impacted millions of enslaved Africans brought to the Americas. The following year, Portugal and Spain agreed to divide between themselves North and South America in the Treaty of Tordesillas, a testament to the chaotic nature of the time.

The English never recognized the Pope’s rights to grant Spain and Portugal the right to claim the Americas solely on the principle of discovery. The English championed the principle of sovereignty based on effective occupation, such as colonization “legalized” through treaty. Sovereignty based on rights of conquest followed by treaty was another principle the English accepted.

As for Belize, the English made a significant move into this part of Central America and the Caribbean, claiming rights of occupation subsequently endorsed by a treaty between themselves and Spain. The views of the indigenous people were not considered relevant, neither then nor now. By the 1763 Treaty of Paris, Spain conceded England’s demands to cut logwood in the Bay of Honduras, but no territorial parameters were set. The oversight was corrected in the 1783 Treaty of Versailles when the boundaries for cutting logwood were defined as the Rio Hondo to the north the Belize River to the south, and the New River to the west. However, by this time, mahogany had replaced logwood in value. Through the 1786 Convention of London, Spain granted additional concessions to England, including extending of the southern boundary of the English mahogany and logwood operations to the Sibun River.¹ However, Spain and England agreed in these treaties that sovereignty over the Belize territory remained with Spain.

With independence in 1821, Mexico, and Central America, claimed to have inherited Spanish sovereignty rights over Belize. However, when Central America broke away from Mexico and reorganized as five independent republics, Guatemala claimed Spain’s rights over Belize. England had consistently denied Mexico and Guatemala’s claim of sovereignty over Belize. But it was not until 1859 and 1897 that boundary treaties respectively settled the Belize boundaries with Guatemala and Mexico.²

The Caste War of Yucatan that raged in the peninsula between 1847 and 1901 spilled into Belize with the coming to Belize of some 12,000 primarily Maya and Mestizo migrants according to the 1861 census.³ This influx of new population significantly altered Belize's demographics and cultural identity. The incoming Maya became inextricably mixed with the few "original" Belize Maya who lived in northwestern Belize before 1847. Moreover, the point must be made that for Indigenous peoples, the boundaries of emerging nation-states did not erase cultural entities. Since time immemorial, cultural boundaries, not artificial boundaries or even rivers like the Rio Hondo, have separated them from their cultural kin. The Maya who lived on the Mexican side of the Rio Hondo did not consider the Maya who lived on the English side of the Hondo as "alien". But the English in Belize later made it quite clear that English territory began from the middle course of the Rio Hondo.

During the Caste War, the English developed flexible working relationships with the two main Maya groups at war in Yucatan, the Icaiché Maya, and the Cruzob Maya, though they favored the Cruzob.⁴ The English's prime interest was their continued access to logwood and mahogany by expanding as much as possible the undefined northwestern boundary of the English settlement and beyond through agreements with the prevailing authority in the area and, secondly, a peaceful frontier area to avoid the violence of the peninsula-wide war from affecting Belize's forestry and nascent sugarcane industry.⁵

As early as 1851, the Maya of southern Yucatan of the Chichanjá district in Campeche decided to withdraw from the war raging in the central and northern parts of the Yucatan peninsula. This agreement was formalized in 1853 in a signing ceremony in Belize Town between the Yucatan state authorities and the southern Maya, then dubbed Pacificos del Sur, with Superintendent Philip Wodehouse as a witness of honor. Despite the Mexican government's failure to ratify the treaty, the Yucatan state agreed to allow the Pacificos to retain their autonomy over local government, including lands under their control, tax exemption, and the right to keep their arms. In return, the southern Maya were to oppose the Cruzob Maya, who continued fighting against the Yucatan government,⁶ made the southern Maya a target for the Cruzob, who considered them traitors to the Maya cause. The Cruzob, the people of the Cross, launched deadly attacks on the southern Maya, particularly on their town of Chichanjá. Bacalar was re-captured in 1858 by the Cruzob. As a result, Chichanjá was abandoned, with most of its people migrating to Santa Clara de Icaiché and other parts of Campeche, Peten, and the Orange Walk and Cayo districts of Belize.

With their eyes on the Belize maps that defined the boundaries of the English settlement per the Anglo-Spanish treaties of 1783 and 1786, and the 1853 agreement signed in Belize, the Icaiché believed that they exercised effective occupation over the lands on which they were settled and the surrounding forests that were

not part of the Belize settlement according to the maps that accompanied the treaties. With the Mexican government out of sight and the Yucatan government occupied with the war with the Cruzob, the Icaiché were the only de facto non-English power that had effective control over the lands that the English coveted for their continued extraction of logwood and mahogany. At various times, the Campeche governor extended formal recognition to commandants of the Icaiché as bona fide officers of the state. However, for the most part, the Icaiché acted independently of the supervision of state officials at Xkanjá, demonstrating their autonomy despite occasional acquiescence with Campeche's orders.

At times, Icaiché chiefs had made it clear to the English that they were welcome to extract logwood and mahogany in forests controlled by the Icaiché provided that, in recognition of Icaiché authority over the lands they controlled, English land companies pay an agreed-upon royalty for each mahogany log and for the logwood moved out of their forests. The problem was not the payment of royalty in principle, nor was it a matter of "extortion" as painted by at least one North American historian. The English accepted and even respected, albeit begrudgingly, the de facto authority of the Icaiché in their forests. They acknowledged that they could not militarily defeat neither the Icaiché nor the Cruzob in offensive operations as experience had shown, for example, at the Battle of San Pedro Yalbac on 21 December 1866 when the Maya decisively defeated regular English troops.⁷ The problem was the extent and the basis of the claims of the Icaiché per the 1783 and 1786 treaties with Spain and the Treaty signed in Belize in 1853, co-signed by the English Superintendent Philip Wodehouse in a context where there was no defined northwestern border. In this instance, the Icaiché were in effective occupation of these areas. The treaties signed by the English clearly signified that sovereignty and effective occupation over these areas were at least not yet in English hands.

From José María Tzuc to his son Luciano Tzuc, and then to Marcus Canul and beyond, the Icaiché chiefs have been steadfast in defending their right to royalty for the extraction of wood resources in their forests.⁸ Payments enabled them to defend themselves from the Cruzob and even from the English themselves. But in this working relationship, the Maya demanded mutual respect, in the agreements made with them and in their access to markets in Belize for their products and for their purchase of manufactured goods. The Pacíficos also accessed Roman Catholic priests through the Jesuits in northern Belize to bolster their Catholic traditions.⁹ Through the larger Maya villages in the Orange Walk District, the Icaiché contracted the services of music bands for their fiestas.¹⁰

When the English began to unilaterally define the northwestern border with Mexico and the west with Guatemala, they intruded into lands claimed by the Icaiché. For example, Booth's River was initially considered as the branch of the Rio Hondo said

to mark Belize's northern border; subsequently, the English moved the boundary line west to the Rio Bravo branch and finally to the Blue Creek branch of the Rio Hondo, each time the border moving westwards. Regarding matters regarding boundaries and sovereignty, the English did not consider it necessary to consult with indigenous people.¹¹ On the other hand, when English Lieutenant Abbs began opening the western boundary line with Guatemala, English land companies demanded a pause to ensure the line moved more to the west.¹² The Icaiché observed these maneuvers as the naked usurpation of their lands and tried to put a brake on it. In 1856, Luciano Tzuc succeeded in collecting from Young, Toledo & Co. cash and some arms in return for the release of their field manager, Stephen Panting, who was arrested and taken to Icaiché for non-payment of royalties.¹³

The above outlines a general context of the Battle of Orange Walk of 1 September 1872, marking a high point of the Icaiché's military and political prowess that, at the very least, had the effect of limiting the further advance of the English toward what is now northwestern Belize that for practical purposes was Icaiché-claimed territory. As the Battle of Orange Walk reports indicate, the Icaiché Maya were frequent visitors to Orange Walk Town, selling their products and purchasing manufactured goods, including rum. During the agricultural cycle, Icaiché men worked in logwood and mahogany extraction mainly through subcontractors from Orange Walk, San Estevan, and San Antonio, Rio Hondo, among others. Interestingly, none of the reports mentions guns and gunpowder, which was an important, if surreptitious, commodity vital for the Icaiché's defense against their enemy, the Cruzob, and their agenda in their relationship with the English. Orange Walk's supply of gunpowder to the Icaiché infuriated the Cruzob, and it was one of their main complaints against the English.

Why did the Police Magistrate, the Officer Commanding the Detachment, and the leading residents of Orange Walk Town in 1872 not anticipate a possible attack from Canul? Quite apart from the Icaiché Maya's defense of their lands from English encroachment and its attending conflict over the non-payment of royalties, in April 1870, Marcus Canul, with about 116 soldiers, "occupied" Corozal Town without getting into a fight. Canul later explained that his reason for going to Corozal was to negotiate a trade treaty with the English similar to one that existed with the Cruzob.¹⁴ Similarly, in the 1874 correspondence from Eugenio Arana (who had overall authority over the Pacíficos del Sur, including Icaiché) to Lieut. Governor W. W. Cairns (appearing as the last entry in this work), speaking for the Icaiché and all the Pacíficos, Arana, proposed a trade treaty with the English. What brought the Icaiché belligerency against the English troops held up in their barracks in Orange Walk? We cannot speak with certainty regarding the Icaiché's mobilization of over 100 troops, the amount of ammunition expended in almost continuous firing for five to six hours, and the seven stacks of arms the Icaiché were reported to have left behind when they retreated from Orange Walk. This version of Belizean history

does not capture the Maya lens on the battle since no one asked the Icaiché why they were so furious with Magistrate Downer in particular and with the English in Orange Walk in general.

It appears that while the Icaiché were prepared and seemed to prefer to negotiate in peace when possible but defend their interests militarily when necessary, they were generally speaking quite eager to have a mutually satisfactory working relationship with the English in Belize (therefore, their repeated proposal for a trade treaty), with the land companies that paid them, albeit reluctantly, royalties for their forestry resources, with the Maya/Mestizo refugees who had migrated to live in Orange Walk and Cayo, for trade and wage labor from time to time in the English settlement. However, they expected mutual respect from the English in Orange Walk. The attitude of the land companies, the Magistrate, the Commander of the Troops, senior officers of the detachment, the medical doctor, the two Americans (Price and Bordeau), and the leading residents of Orange Walk were all blatantly arrogant and racist as gleaned from their reports. Their collective stance towards the Icaiché did not contribute to an environment conducive to a mutually satisfactory working relationship.

The Magistrate himself provided us with the narrative that fleshed out the likely reason why Marcos Canul's visit to Orange Walk, unlike his visit to Corozal in 1870, tilted from a visit to negotiate a trade treaty with a show of military strength to that of a punitive expedition to exact revenge on an arrogant and racist neighbor that humiliated an Icaiché soldier and by extension his Comandante Marcos Canul. Magistrate Downer's kangaroo court in which he "found" the Icaiché defendant guilty for which he ordered two months imprisonment with hard labor and brutal "thrashing" may have personified English arrogance towards their Maya neighbor for which the Icaiché appeared to have opted for a military response. Notably, the Magistrate's house was among those burnt in the Icaiché attack. While he may have been ashamed to put it in his official report, other sources indicate that Richard Downer was "vilely mistreated" and "flogged in the public square" by the Icaiché.¹⁵ If accurate, the Icaiché were most likely unwilling to execute an English Magistrate but were determined to show the Magistrate that he too could be subjected to the same treatment he imposed on Maya prisoners, including the Icaiché soldier, Pedro Manzanero, in August of 1872.

The Battle of Orange Walk, where Marcus Canul was mortally wounded, signified not only a defeat for the Icaiché but also the closing of an important chapter in the history of indigenous resistance to European imperialism in Yucatan and Belize. This was the last military stand of the Icaiché in taking up arms to oblige the English land companies and the English colonial authorities to respect the rights and dignity of the Icaiché and, by extension, the Belize Yucatec Maya of Yalbac to the lands they considered their own, albeit as surrogates of the rights of Spain,

a former colonial power. While the tension between the English and the Icaiché continued to the 1880s, the northwestern boundary line with Mexico had been all but ratified by 1893. However, the rest of the western and southern line with Guatemala had been agreed to by 1859. By the third quarter of the nineteenth century, the Cruzob Maya had decimated in numbers and resources had been pretty much vanquished.

Porfirio Diaz and the liberals had finally won the war in Yucatan, and the Maya forests were assigned to the large land companies, some of which were co-owned by the English capital. In Belize, the British Honduras Company, Young, Toledo and Company, and a few others by well-defined boundaries, no longer had to be concerned with the Icaiché and former Icaiché Maya, who in the 1930s were relocated to Nuevo San José Palmar near Orange Walk Town from where they could be better monitored and controlled. Orange Walk Town could boast of two forts built within four years of the battle: Fort Cairns and Fort Mundy. Corozal's Fort Barlee, like the two in Orange Walk, was named in honor of the most senior colonial administrators who had served in Belize mostly to protect the interests of the large land and mercantile companies that owned the colony. As for the residents of Santa Clara de Icaiché, they too were relocated in the 1930s to Botes on the Mexican side of the Rio Hondo. These former Icaiché warriors were so destitute that they faced slow extinction by disease, malnourishment, and famine.

Ángel Cal

Belmopan

October, 2024

References for Introduction

¹ Narda Dobson, *A History of Belize*. Trinidad & Jamaica: Longman Caribbean, 1973, see especially map on p.228.

² Dobson, *ibid.* pp.82-87.

³ For the 1861 census, see Burdon's *Archives of British Honduras*, Vol. 3, 1931-35 also available at BARS, as R.74. On the Caste War, see for example, Nelson Reed, *The Caste War of Yucatan*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1964. For a more recent interpretation of the Caste War as a conflict between the "machete" (the barbarians, the rebel Maya) and the Cross (civilization) see Don E. Dumond, *The Machete and the Cross. Campesino Rebellion in Yucatan*. Lincoln & London: University of Nebraska Press, 1997.

⁴ In the conflict with Yucatan, the Cruzob Maya bought most of their weapons in Belize but the English had to contend mostly with the demands of the Icaiché for royalty over logwood and mahogany extracted from lands in the undefined northwestern border area claimed by the Icaiché who were willing to back their claims with military force if necessary. The English tried to use the Cruzob as a possible counterweight in their conflicts

with the Icaiché.

⁵ For a detailed analysis of the relationship between the Cruzob and the Icaiché Maya and the English in Belize based on primary sources from the Belize Archives and Records Service (BARS), see Angel Cal, *Anglo-Maya Contact in Northern Belize: A Study of British Policy toward the Maya during the Caste War of Yucatan, 1847-1872*. Unpublished M.A. thesis. University of Calgary, Calgary, Canada, 1983.

⁶ BARS. Stevenson to Doyle, 7 Oct. 1856, R.54. pp.607-617; José María Tzuc to Philip Wodehouse, 27 October 1853, R.78, pp. 240-241. I have seen a copy of the treaty signed by the seven chiefs of Icaiche at BARS.

⁷ BARS. Austin to Consult General at Havana. 23 December 1866, R. 72, p.503.

⁸ BARS. Canul to Panting, 7 May 1866, R.93, p.19.

⁹ Angelus. 1895, 1899, 1901 and Letters and Notices. Ex Typographia Sanctia Josephi, 1873. Several letters/reports of Jesuits regarding their missionary work in northern Belize.

¹⁰ See *More than Half a Century of Oral History: Yo Creek, 1900 to 1970*. Interview with Cándido Cal conducted in June 1985 with a brief analysis by Angel Cal. Manuscript. May, 2024.

¹¹ BARS. Robelo to B.H.C., 27 April 1868, R.97, pp.464-465. Lt. Governor Longden himself admitted that the survey line crossed a “country never before claimed by the English”. Longden to Grant, 12 May 1869, R.98, p.199.

¹² BARS. Captn. Wray to Rogers, 16 July 1861. R. 75, pp.363- 385. See also, William Miller, “Notes on a part of the Western Frontier of British Honduras,” *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society of London* n.s. 9 (1887): 420- 423.

¹³ BARS. Stevenson to Doyle, 7 Oct. 1856, R.54. pp.607-617. There were many Icaiché incursions (Qualm Hill, Indian Church, San Roman, San Pedro, Corozal and Orange Walk) that demonstrate to the English that the Pacíficos were quite capable of defending their rights with the use of military forces if necessary.

¹⁴ BARS. Marcos Canul and Rafael Chan to Lt. Gov. Longden, 4 May. 1870, R.106. pp.137-139. In Corozal, some of the pro-Yucatan residents came out to welcome Canul and his men. Canul retreated ostensibly when information reached him that English troops and Cruzob soldiers were on their way to “rescue” Corozal. Dumond takes a different view of the Icaiché in their relationship with the English. He regards Canul’s “visit” to Corozal on 14 April 1870 as a “visit of extortion”. Dumond, *The Machete and the Cross*. p.332.

¹⁵ Cited in Charles John Emond, “The History of Orange Walk.” Second edition. *Belizean Studies*. Special Issue. Vol. 11, No. 3, 1983, Part 8, p.2.

Major William Johnston's Summary Report.

Invasion of the Indians of the Northern District Orange Walk, N. D.
Rec'd. 13th. Inst. British Honduras Vide reply.
11 September 1872 Signature.

Sir,

The important and many duties to carry out during the existance [sic] of Martial Law, and the short time left before the mail leaves for Jamaica, prevents my doing otherwise than sending Your Excellency a hurried report of the invasion by an armed force of Ycaiché Indians under their leader Marcus Canul. The attack on Orange Walk and the repulse by the Detachment of the 1st. West India Regt. on Sunday the 1st. September 1872.

2. I have had a plan¹⁶ drawn of the Town, the position of the Barracks and the buildings burnt are clearly marked. Also the strong position taken up by the Indians during the attack.

3. The statements of Lieut. Smith and Sergt. Belizario, 1st. West India Regt. taken by a Court of Inquiry together with written reports from Dr. Edge, the Staff Assistant Surgeon of the Detachment, Mr. [Richard J.] Downer, Magistrate at Orange Walk and Mr. Oswald are all enclosed, marked as per margin.

I have also obtained as much information as I could from the principal inhabitants of the town. This information I had to get in the form of questions and answers, they will however, be sufficient to prove the attack in question was never expected, and that the inhabitants with the exception of a few, I am sorry to add not more than 6, fled in all directions, leaving the little detachment and the few who remained to face the attack.

4. From the statements and reports received and from my own observations I have come to the following conclusions. A strong force of armed Indians under Marcus Canul, of about 150 men¹⁷ crossed the Hondo at Panting's Landing, near the town of Corosalito early on Saturday the 31st. August last & advanced to August Pine Ridge, when nearly all the inhabitants of the village fled to the bush, on hearing the Indians had arrived, mainly being Indians themselves. They appear to have pushed through to Water Bank without halting, where they arrived at 1 o'clock P.M. A party at once surrounded Gonzalo's [Gonzalez] House which they robbed, but not finding him, they searched others, found and tied him and carried him off, about a mile from St. Lazaro, a Rancho. He was killed, his body cut to pieces & was found the next morning by his servant. On the arrival of the Indians at the Rancho on

Saturday night they appear to have placed advance parties of 25 men at each of the paths leading to Orange Walk, San Antonio and many other places. Here they remained the night and pushed on to Orange Walk at daylight.

5. About 8 in the morning, Sunday 1st. September 1872, their approach to the town was not known until they reached Mr. Downer's house, which is about the first nearest the bush on the direct road used by these Indians on the South west end of the Town. A man called Johnson seeing the Indians close to Mr. Downer's, rushed off to give the alarm that Indians were coming in at the double when he was shot in the arm. This shot turned the Guard out. Mr. Downer was captured and but for his wife, and for the arrival of Mr. Oswald and 2 Policemen, who killed one of the Indians and released Mr. Downer, he would have been killed.¹⁸ Mr. Downer then went to the Police Station. At the same time another party of Indians opened fire on the Barracks from a Bush on the south east corner not 75 yards from the Barrack building. In front of this Bush had been collected large quantities of cut log-wood. This the Indians took possession of, and from such a well-protected position their fire must have been very severe. Firing now appears to have come from the house in the South, and from the houses on the South, and from the houses in the main street, causing the Barracks to be between two heavy fires. At the first shot Lt. Smith & Dr. Edge both living close to the Barracks rushed to their men who fortunately having 20 rounds each commenced a return fire whenever they could see an Indian. The portable magazine was brought into Barracks under heavy fire. Lt. Smith, finding he had the key at his quarters, sent Sergt. Belizario rushed across the square fired at in all directions and succeeded in getting the key and returning safely. He took a rifle and shortly became severely wounded, at this period of the attack 1 soldier killed and 10 wounded.

6. The Magistrate, in the meantime, with his inferior arms & ammunition tried to protect the Police Station with only 2 police men, but had to retire and dashed across to the Barracks.

7. Mr. Oswald who had sought the protection of the Barracks after saving Mr. Downer's life, then volunteered at the request of Lt. Smith to go to "Trial Farm" for assistance and to send off [a message for help] to Corozal. This the old man did bravely and it is with disgust, I must add, he was allowed to return by himself. The 60 able bodied labourers had fled; with such a body or even 20 would have permitted this little force, now available for a dash out of Barrack, to have sent every Indian flying – instead of keeping up the attack for so many hours.

8. About 10:30 two gentlemen were seen coming from the road near the bush where the Indians were in such force. The Indians appear to have been surprised at seeing them, which caused a little confusion, when a few men rushed out and

fired a volley into the Indians who had slackened fire on the Barracks. The men were however, prevented from following up their very important movement by seeing Mr. Price and Mr. Bodreau making for the Barracks. These gentlemen were wounded by the Indians, but succeeded in getting into the Building, where the Indians again covered the Barracks with a heavy fire. At the same time, from the main street, in front of the Barrack a heavy fire was kept up, our men also keeping up an incessant fire on their positions which prevented them from carrying out their object in setting fire to the Barracks. Finding the soldiers could not be driven out, they set fire to a block of buildings on the south side, hoping the Barracks would catch more fire. The kitchen was burnt, but the Barracks stood it out.

9. The Indians at about 2:30 P.M. slackened fire. The Detachment, in small parties rushed out from the front to the main street and fired and drove out the Indians who now took to flight. During the attack about 60 Indians were in possession of the main street, a few of the shops were entered and small quantities of cotton goods etc, were taken out but I am strongly of the opinion, if any further articles were taken, that the people of the place laid their hands on whatever they could get.¹⁹ The houses or buildings burnt by the Indians during the attack are as follows, marked on the plan.

- The Magistrate's house with everything he possessed.
- Mr. Oswald's the military ration contractor with everything also
- The Police Station belonging to the Government's Interpreter
- The Officers' Quarters with every they had but the suits of clothes they had on²⁰
- The Barrack Kitchen and the block of houses to the south.

10. The defenders were not in a position to pursue the Indians but prepared themselves for a further attack.

11. The arrival of reinforcements and the steps taken by me I have already reported in my letters as per margin; (Corosal 4/9/72; Orange Walk 9/9/72) the letter reporting the recrossing of the Indians via "Panting's Landing" and at "Corozalito" which place they plundered on Monday the 2nd Sept. 1872. In this letter I have also reported the dying state of Canul on Sunday evening. I have reason to believe 15 dead have been left by them on this side of the Hondo and expect many more of their wounded will perish on the other side.

12. In conclusion of this very hurried report I must bring to Your Excellency's attention the very gallant conduct of Lieut. Smith, although dangerously wounded kept his command until his voice and strength failed, also the valuable assistance rendered by Dr. Edge, Staff Assistant Surgeon, the conduct of Mr. Downer, also

that of Mr. Oswald is beyond all praise.²¹ I have carefully investigated the conduct of the men of the Detachment and cannot but feel proud that they did their duty and kept up the honor of the old First West India Regiment that has not a single disgrace recorded against it.

13. In the Doctor's report will be found a detailed statement of the killed and wounded of the Military Force. Officers, 1 dangerously wounded. Men, 2 killed and 14 wounded. The correct list of civilians either killed or wounded I cannot obtain at present.²² After the flight of the Indians 7 stacks of arms were picked up belonging to the Indians Force.

I have the honor to be
Your Excellency's Obedient humble Servant
(Signature) William Johnston, Major, 1 W.I.R.
Corosal Troops

Major William Johnston, First West India Regiment to W. W. Cairns, Lt. Governor, 11 September 1872. Report on the Invasion by Indians of the Northern District.

BARS. 111 R.97, pp.271-277.

John Haylock's Statement

The Indian Attack on Orange Walk on Sunday, the 1st. September, 1872

John Haylock states. I reside at present at Orange Walk. Am a carpenter. I was in Orange Walk on Sunday 1st. instant. My house is near the river at the south east corner of the Soldiers Barracks about 50 [?] yards off. Somewhere between 8 and 9 o'clock in the morning of that day, I heard someone who run past my house call out "the Indians coming". My little boy peeped through the stockade wall of the house and said "for true man Indian da come". My wife was then in the house with we (sic). I told her to get out of the way with the child which she did immediately running off with the child into the bush at the back of my house. By this time, I heard them trotting in there only a few steps from my door and I seeing I had no time to escape went into my bedroom and got behind the pavilion of my bed. My bedroom was partitioned off my sitting room with palmetto sticks. Plenty Indians maybe 8 or 9 came into the house and I heard plenty more outside. Inst as they come to my house, they open fire on the Barracks and began yell and very soon after the soldiers opened fire in direction of my house and many times the shot came right through my house & sometimes the balls scatter the plaster & throw the dirt in my face. For a good time during the firing I heard like two of the Indians talking together with one giving orders to those other Indians outside. I heard

them speak the word, “tinta” several times. I know it means logwood. I did not see them for I was behind the pavilion. I heard particularly one of the Indians who appeared to be in the street by Mr. Gonzales fence calling out “Come out you English brutes, you damned sons of bitches. This was said not [in] English. I also heard one of the Indians in my house speaking in Spanish.²³ I understand Spanish a little. He said After this we go to Corozal & heard a good deal of boisterous talk in the Indian language but I could not tell what was said. Sometime after the firing had lasted, one of the bullets from the Barracks came through the wall and strike [sic] a biscuit pan I had on the table. Then they seemed to get scared and leave the house. There were large piles of logwood in front of the East side of my house behind which it seemed to me plenty Indians were firing on the Barracks. Sometime after I observe silence about my house. I come from behind the pavilion and peeped out & not seeing any Indians, I ran & get into the Barracks. All the time the Indians were firing, they shout most wretched.

[Signed] John Haylock

Before us at Orange Walk

This 13th September 1872. [Signature; not legible] William W. Johnston Major
Commanding Troops

Statement of John Haylock, carpenter of Orange Walk on the Indian attack on Orange Walk on Sunday, 1st. September 1872, before Major William Johnston (commanding the troops) and another person whose signature is not legible. 13 September 1872

BARS. 111R. 80, 341-342.

Court of Inquiry, F. B. P. White, President.

Proceeding of a Court of Inquiry, assembled at Orange Walk Barracks British Honduras, this 7 [?] day of September 1872, by order of the Hon'ble Major Johnston, 1st. W. I. Regt. Commanding the Troops in British Honduras for the purpose of receiving and recording evidence relative to the Invasion of the Northern District by the Ycaiché Indians, the attack on the outpost of Orange Walk, on Sunday 1st of September 1872, the defense of the Outpost and the Repulse of the Indians by the Detachment 1st West India Regiment under the command of Lieutenant Joseph Graham Smith, 1st West India Regiment.

President

Captain F. B. P. White, 1st. W. I. Regt.

Members

Lieut. H.L. L. Boltow [?] Lieut. C.O. Bulger Garrison Adjutant, 1st. W. I. Regt. 1st W.I.R. [On left margin] Rec'd 11/9/72. Attached to reports. [Signed] William Johnston Major Commanding

The Court having assembled pursuant to order proceed to take evidence and call upon Lieut. Smith, 1st. W. I. Regt. who being dangerously wounded makes the following statement.

Statement of Lieut. Smith, Officer Commanding Detachment on 1 September 1872
I arrived at Orange Walk for duty on the 18th of June 1872 and took over command of the detachment consisting of 40 non-commissioned officers and men from Lieut. Bulger 1st W. I. Regt. on 19th of July last. From that time I have used every means to obtain all information that lay in my power in addition to that already given to me by Lieut. Bulger. It was my duty to report weekly upon the state of this district, and more frequently in case of need. No cause of uneasiness was brought to my notice & reported by me to the Brigade Office at Belize until the morning of the 12th ultimo, when Mr. Downer the Magistrate of this District called upon me and said in words as far as I can recollect, "Smith, I am rather afraid we are going to have a little trouble with these Indians", and asked me to attend as Escort to listen to a case he had to dispose of against an Ycaiché Indian, as it would be a good opportunity for me to see and learn something of them. I went to the Court and forwarded a summary of the case to Belize and Corozal.

Ever since I have been here, this very tribe has to my certain knowledge been living and trading in this town and its vicinity, in fact many have been employed continually as labourers by various parties. Lieut. Bulger informed me that Rafael Chang [Chan]²⁴ said to be second General or Commander of the tribe had on one occasion, about three months before my arrival, paid him a friendly visit with the

Government Interpreter, that he gave him a glass of grog and Chang [Chan] went away seemingly well pleased, no subject of business of any description being mentioned and that Lt. Bulger was himself favorably impressed with the Chieftain.

No circumstance of any importance whatsoever occurred²⁵ until Sunday the 1st of September I believe at a quarter to nine o'clock that morning as I was about bathing I heard the report of a gun and the whiz of a bullet across a dirt road running past the Barrack rooms. I looked out of the door of my house facing the Barracks and saw the Corporal of the old Guard which had been relieved, running towards me and saying, "the Indians are come". I repeated this to Dr. Edge who was living in the same quarters he replied, "Oh, nonsense." I drew out a pair of trousers, ran across into the Barrack door and got the men under arms as quickly as possible. By this time several shots had been fired and we commenced a general independent fire. Recollecting that I had not the key of the portable magazine with me, I accompanied by Sergeant Belizario, the senior Sergeant of the Detachment returned to my house and brought it to Barracks. The magazine was with some difficulty dragged into the Barrack room. I took a snider²⁶ and some ammunition and looked through the "palmetto" sides of the Barrack room to get a shot at some Indians myself. After a few shots I placed myself at one of the west doors of the Barracks to try and knock over the most conspicuous of a party that were firing from an advantageous position upon us. While there I felt struck in the left side and at the same instant Private Robert Lynch who was standing next to me, fell dead on the spot pierced by two balls. I turned round and said to Dr. Edge "I am hit" he asked me to let him see it I said "it is of no use just now," as I wanted to continue firing and did not feel incapable of doing so. For about two hours I continued taking a shot whenever I had an opportunity, moving from place to place and directing the men to fire steadily and take aim and not waste their ammunition. I asked Dr. Edge to assist me in carrying out these orders and I feel bound to state and bring [not legible] to notice that no one could have been more zealous and efficient than Staff Assistant Surgeon J. D. Edge especially after I was unable to speak, louder, than a whisper who most coolly and energetically carried out all my wishes and surprised me in the tact he displayed. The example he set greatly encouraged the stubborn and effectual resistance that was made against a most sudden, well placed, directed and determined attack, continued for upwards of five hours from an enemy under bullet-proof cover and whose aim was most accurate. I will now try and give a general idea of the attack.

Commencing with the South east corner of the Barrack site, the ground falls to the river which is about 50 yards off in that part. About 10 yards from the river was a large quantity of Logwood packed in piles 4 feet high and some little distance from each other. From this the Indians in large force from the very first, kept up a steady continuous fire into the Barrack rooms.

The whole of the South and just across the road and about 20 yds from the Barracks afforded capital cover to the Indians firing from the houses till these were burnt with the object of firing the Barrack. The kitchen which was between soon caught and was burnt to the ground.

Over the South west corner another large party kept up a steady fire and it was from this direction that I and Private Lynch were shot.

The west front of the Barracks was the weaker side of the attack though the ground was occupied in places favorable for cover.

On the North west was placed a party who kept up a good fire and commanded the road leading to the wharf and bounding the north side of the Barracks.

Thus the Barracks was entirely surrounded save the East side bounded by the river and a portion of the North side, which as I have stated was under fire from the Indians.

While the kitchen was burning, Mr. Price a civilian advised a move from the Barracks to the North side, as he thought the Barracks must catch fire.

I considered a move from the Barracks would be erroneous and premature till fire compelled it.

1st. Because then it would undoubtedly and easily be burnt.

2nd Because I was in hopes our fire was now sufficiently effective to prevent the attempt at burning with Sulphur if we escaped catching fire from the kitchen.

3rd Because it was almost impossible for us to have taken up any cover that was not already taken in flank and such position I felt should not be taken up unless necessity compelled it.

Mr. Price a ranchio [sic] proprietor [not legible] I have referred to, came up to the Barracks about an hour and a half after the fire commenced, together with an American gentleman from Tower Hill a ranchio [sic] about 4 miles from Barracks. Riding up to the rear of the Indians near that logwood piles firing into them made them show themselves, our men rushed out thinking the Indians were coming on. Mr. Downer and Dr. Edge seeing that it was Mr. Price directed the men to cease fire saying "it was Mr. Price" and their order was promptly obeyed, I being unable to make my voice heard.

The South end of the Barrack rooms is bounded off into cells and guard room to which there was no entrance from the Barrack rooms but as it was very important to open fire in that direction to prevent firing the Barracks, I ordered an opening to be made which Dr. Edge vigorously set to work to do.

Sergeant Belizario's conduct, I would particularly mention, his coolness, bravery, and zeal could not be excelled. Throughout the whole time from the commencement of the firing till re-enforcements arrived, he was invaluable, on the fire of the Indians becoming slack he led a party of skirmishers to clear the place of the Indians. The men of the Detachment at this period all volunteered and begged to be allowed to follow the Indians. Lieut. D [Smith?] would not allow more than 8 men under Belizario to skirmish at once fearing it might be only a feint retreat. However, there is no question [the] fact our fire was too destructive for them and compelled them to retreat and that in great haste, but of course we were unable to pursue them into the bush.²⁷

It was about 3 P.M. I should think when the Indians finally left the vicinity of the Barracks.²⁸

Thus the whole attack was completely repulsed with our loss of one man killed, 1 dangerously wounded and since dead, 8 severely wounded 3 badly wounded and 8 slightly.

Although I feel it invidious to name a few whom I personally observed but I must especially mention Lance Corporal Spencer and Private Hoffer, Maxwell, Osborne, Musgray and Morris for their gallant conduct. Lance Corporal Sterling's name I desire also to mention for his behavior and noticed by Dr. Edge though I did not personally observe him.

Mr. Downer who came into Barracks with two policemen about half an hour after the firing commenced rendered valuable assistance in the defense of the Barracks by his cool and praiseworthy conduct, taking a snider which I had to show him how to handle. He went out to skirmishes and assisted ably in clearing the tours of the Ycaichés.

I must mention Mr. Oswald who boldly rushed out of the Barracks at my request and was the means of communicating the earliest news of our situation.

Judging from the rapidity of the fire and the various points from which it came I should estimate the force of Indians that attacked the Barracks to have been rather over 200.²⁹

The next day we endeavored to obtain outside cover by throwing up breastworks of barrels and logwood at each end of the Barrack room. Six sentries were posted and visited regularly by Dr. Edge as well as other military duties performed entirely to my satisfaction for I was unable to attend to my duties.

Finally I trust my behavior and the course I pursued and the gallant conduct of the whole of the Detachment I had the honor to command may meet with the approval of the Hon'ble the Major Commanding the Troops.

Dr. Edge being called informs the Court he is preparing a statement which will be ready in a few days.

Sergeant Belizario is directed to adopt the same course.

Mr. Downer Police Magistrate states he will prepare a statement.

Mr. Oswald the Military Ration Contractor states he is also preparing a statement.
11th. September 1872

Dr. Edge, Staff Assistant Surgeon, Sergeant Belizario, 1st West India Regiment, Mr. Downer Police Magistrate and Mr. Oswald, Ration Contractor, appear before the Court and hand in written statements which being duly signed are marked, A, B, C and D and attached to the Proceedings.

The Court having adduced sufficient evidence now close due proceedings. Dated at Orange Walk, British Honduras this 11th day of September 1872 [Signed] Fred B. P. White Capt
1st. W. I. Regt.
President [Signature not legible]
Garrison Adjutant [Signature not legible]
Lieut. 1st W.I. Regt.
Approved. [Signature] William Johnston
Major Commanding

Orange Walk , Northern District 11/9/72

Proceedings of a Court of Inquiry at Orange Walk Barracks, British Honduras, 7 September 1872, including statement of Lieut. Smith, 1st. West India Regiment, Officer Commanding at Orange Walk during the attack on Orange Walk by the Icaiché Maya

BARS. 111R.101-105. pp.279-287, 11 September 1872.

Report of Magistrate [R.J.] Downer

Relative to the attack on the town of O Walk by an armed Force of Ycaiche Indians on Sunday 1st September 1872

At about 8 o'clock on the morning of Sunday the 1st September whilst I was in my house at Orange Walk. I heard someone in the street shout out, Lord! Looks the Indians coming with guns." I immediately went to the corner of my house & saw at the distance of 60 yards off or thereabouts a large party of armed Indians coming in at the double, in file & in regular order. My first impulse was to make my way to the Barracks, but remembering my wife was in the bedroom, I determine to take my chances & remain in the house.

I then went to my wife in the bedroom, when almost immediately after I heard footsteps of what appeared a large number of persons entering my house through the front door and shouting out my name. A few seconds after, an Indian entered my bedroom and seeing me (as I made no attempt to conceal myself) drew his machete and rushing up to me, attempted to cut me down. My wife then threw herself between me and the Indian protesting in an imploring manner that I was not Mr. Downer.

By this time 6 or 8 more Indians had entered the bedroom and another attempt was made to macheat me but my wife still clung to me with her arms around my neck addressing them beseechingly in Maya 30 and offering them \$3,000 to spare my life. At least this is what my wife told me she said to them. My hommock in the bedroom was then cut down and a piece of the rope cut off with which they firmly secured me with my arms behind me.

During this time, the bedroom was being robbed of all valuables & many articles of no use to the Indians wantonly destroyed. I was then taken out into the sitting room, my wife still clinging to me. A delay of about a minute took place during which they consulted in a frantic manner concerning me so far as I could gather from their gestures.

Three Indians then approached me with drawn macheats [sic] and my life was about being torn away from me when providentially Mr. Henry Oswald with 2 of my policemen (Sheppard & Gray) appeared at the opposite corner of the street with rifles and fixed bayonets and boldly charged into my house.

A shot was fired at them by the Indians who however to the number of 11 or 12 precipitately retreated through my back door and ran down the street, excepting one Indian who still held on to me and endeavoured to drag me along with him, but

Mr. Oswald and the two policemen being now in the room prevented the possibility of his escaping and Mr. Oswald vigorously thrusting with his bayonet, Sheppard then gave him 2 more thrusts passing the bayonet clean through his body. This made the Indian release his hold of the rope. I then freed myself. He was again twice bayoneted by Sheppard and Gray coming up shot him dead with his rifle.

I then went into the street with the two constables and looking round the corner of my house saw a good number of Indians getting under cover of some houses about 50 yards up the road down which they had come. Immediately upon seeing us some shots were fired at us. Taking Gray's rifle I had a shot at them. Seeing their numbers and fearing we should be surrounded I retreated with the Policemen Sheppard to the Court House or Police premises & Mr. Oswald with Gray went in the direction of the Barracks. In nearing the Police Station I observed Bentick the Police Corporal from an opposite pathway which leads through some bush wood to a side street. I at once called to him and told him to get his rifle as I saw he was not armed. On his coming up to me he said he was wounded & I observed some blood on his shirt. I found he was slightly wounded from a buckshot on the right temple.

On arriving at the Police Station (about 150 yards from my house) I got some ammunition for myself and the men. Posting ourselves behind the palmetto fencing we fired upon the Indians then advancing in the direction of my house. Our fire was heavily returned a goodly number leaving in their advance got under cover of the houses and trees in the line of our retreat to the Station. A mutual fire was kept up for some time till we were forced to retreat to the Barracks which we did under a heavy fire concentrated on the Barracks. The Corporal of Police did not follow but made his way through a fence on the opposite side of the street and disappeared. He joined us at Barracks in the evening after the Indians had left.

On entering the Barracks with Sheppard (the only other constable, Rush, making the 3rd being absent on duty at Indian Church) I at once enquired for Mr. Smith, the Officer Commanding. Seeing him standing up not far off I immediately went to him & saw he was severely wounded. He consent with standing busily engaged giving orders to the soldiers & directing everything with great energy and spirit. Providing myself with a "Snider" in lieu of the old Enfield I had & also procuring "Sniders" for Sheppard and Gray whom I found in the Barracks, we joined in the work of defense of the Barracks their being assailed from nearly all points; particularly from the South East corner where the Indians were under cover of a large pile of logwood. The firing was incessant. A few minutes after my arrival I observed Dr. Edge busily attending the wounded men (which I noticed were many) and otherwise exerting himself in a most laudable manner Encouraging the troops & loudly repeating any orders given by Lieut. Smith who was becoming too weak to give his orders in

a loud tone of voice. Although this officer was badly wounded & had lost much blood, he was to be seen actively engaged directing his men & himself shooting at an Indian through the stockaded wall of the Barracks whenever he had a chance to do so. An almost incessant fire was kept up on both sides amid repeated yells and shouts from the Indians. Their yells from behind the logwood where a large party appears to have been posted were answered with similar howling from others who were firing on the front of the Barracks from three different points.

They sounded their bugle frequently after this & I suggested to Mr. Smith to answer with our bugle which he directed to be done with the "Advance" in the hope that they might perhaps understand we are about to charge & cause a panic be caused among them. They however continued to fire as before. After the firing had been kept up for about 2 hours many of the men became much excited & wished to leave the Barracks to attack the Indians but Lieutenant Smith opposed this move. A heavy cross fire being then directed on the Barracks & our wounded considerable, compared with the number of effective men. Shortly after this the fire of the Indians began to slacken and Mr. Smith allowed a small party of skirmishers to go out, who returned after a short absence with the news that they had shot 2 Indians. They brought in at the same time 2 rifles (captured) and some clothing that had been taken from the Indians killed. A new Coloured shirt belonging to me formed part of the articles brought in.

About this time Mr. Price the Proprietor of Tower Hill Estate made his appearance from the corner of the street where the Indians had taken up a strong position behind the logwood as stated and also behind a fence which sheltered the street in its course Southward. On Mr. Price appearing round the corner a volley was accidentally discharged at him by the soldiers thinking a rush was being made by the Indians; but fortunately he escaped without being hit. Although when he came into Barracks he had a buckshot wound in the leg received from the Indians at the time they were surprised in rear by himself and Mr. Bordeau who also came into the Barracks, a few moment after Mr. Price, wounded in the leg.

It was shortly after this that the setting fire to the houses round the Barracks commenced, ending with the burning down of the kitchen attached to the Barrack about 20 feet off at the South end. When the kitchen was fairly blazing Mr. Price and others (averaging the number) suggested to make a rush and take up a position at the North East corner of the Barracks about 150 yards off where there were a number of boats beached with which it was proposed to make a kind of breastwork. This move was however opposed & perhaps it was as well it was not carried out as the Barrack miraculously escaped being destroyed by fire, which there can be no doubt, it was the intention of the Indians to do.

The soldiers staid with the success of the skirmishing parties became almost unmanageable from excitement, "Make we go after them" was the general cry. Nothing could have been more gallant than the conduct of the Troops. Sergeant Belizario Corporal Spencer, Private Maxwell, Sterling, Murray, Hoffer, and a few others deserve the greatest praise for their plucky conduct from beginning to end. At about 2 o'clock P.M. or half past the Indians ceased firing and made a hurried retreat from the town but as they were not followed up by the troops, we had no idea of the direction they had taken & for all we knew they might have only partially retreated and perhaps hiding in the surrounding bushes. At about sunset Messers Price and Burdeau left the Barracks & started up River in a dorey [canoe], same night they repassed by the river on their way to Corozal.

All that night a strict watch was kept, lest we should be surprised by the Indians. Dr. Edge was indefatigable in posting Sentries. Lieutenant Smith in such a low state, owing I believe to over exhaustion that I feared he would die during the night. Early next day (Monday) we began to prepare against the attack and the first step taken was to level all the logwood behind which the Indians had the day before found such an excellent cover. At about 9 A.M. Dr. Edge and myself sat down & commenced writing our reports for Belize.

Gal [?] An alarm being given that the Indians were "coming", we seized our rifles and joined the men whom it was somewhat difficult to keep in order given their great anxiety to trust away in all directions to meet the Indians. The alarm turned out to be unfounded, at least no Indians came near the Barracks. Dr. Edge and I shortly after this finished & dispatched our reports to Belize. We then decided to have the logwood that had been of such great service to the Indians brought near the Barracks & have a breastwork made of it.

I then prepared every able-bodied black man (chiefly old soldiers from Trial Farm) that I could and at once organized a force and with the approval of Mr. Smith with such spare "swords" as could be got, as also old Enfields and fowling pieces. I then sent out a party to press anyone found about the town to assist us in getting up the breastworks.

In this way I secured a sufficient number of Indians of the town to do the work, and by securing our breastwork was ready to command the points whence we had met with such an obstacle and dogged attack from the Indians behind the same logwood. Mr. Oswald here rendered great assistance & remained with us during the night, expecting every moment to be reinforced from Corozal we felt great disappointment when Tuesday morning appeared and no sign of the "Relief" we believed were coming for Mr. Adolphus had written Mr. Morrison, Manager of Trial Farm, & that letter was sent to me by Mr. M. in which was stated that Mr. Bulger

and 20 men of the 1st W.I. Regt. would be at Orange Walk on the morning of the 2nd Inst.

Private Bidwell one of the wounded soldiers died Tuesday night and was buried on Wednesday morning by the side of his comrade Lynch whom we buried on Monday morning.

The whole of Tuesday we were engaged getting up breastworks and putting things in order. Wednesday morning & no reinforcements yet. We occupied the day principally in getting up further defenses. All the empty barrels & puncheons we could get we rolled to Barracks & made breastworks with them, at different points digging trenches on the river side and filling the Barracks with dirt, logwood, etc. At between 11 and 12 Wednesday night, Captain White and Lieut. Bulger arrived with reinforcements to our great joy. Next day the Hon'ble The Major Commanding & Staff arrived with the last of [?] reinforcements.

The following facts may be worthy of note bearing upon the Indian attack on O Walk.

At between 7 or 8 o'clock on the morning of the 12th August last, a complaint was made to me at my house by one Jose Ignacio Gonzales, a respected Yucatecan living at Water Bank about 12 miles from O Walk that his house had been forcibly entered and searched by an Ycaiché Indian (then brought before me by Constable Sheppard) who it appeared was looking for some woman formerly of Ycaiché supposed to be concealed in Gonzales house. Also a complaint was made against the said Indian of assaulting Mr. Gonzales servant then in charge of his house. About 15 Ycaiche Indians were present in front of my house on that occasion. Having heard Mr. Gonzales statement also that of the Indian whose manner was impudent in the extreme & who gave anything but a satisfactory explanation for his conduct, I promptly ordered Sheppard to take him to the Lock up at the same time informing the balance of the Indians that at 10 o'clock I would hear the case. Most violent threats were then used by them in my presence towards Gonzales. I at once in a loud tone ordered silence & then through the Interpreter told the Indians that I would have everyone of them arrested & would punish them if they misbehaved. They were then quiet, and went away from my house.

At 10 that morning I went to Lieut. Smith's quarters and asked him to be present in Court as I had a case against an Ycaiche Indian and should like [him] being present to know something of the character of these people. At the same time, I told him that I feared we would have trouble with them.

The Indian³¹ was tried, found guilty, and sentenced to 2 months imprisonment

with h.l. [hard labour] for the assault which was accompanied with brutal thrash [thrashing?]. The Prisoner's excuse was that he was acting according to his Captain's orders and the Capt. said he only carried out Marcus Canul's orders.

Everything went off quietly at the Court House & I half flattered myself that a good lesson had been given to Indian impudence. On or about the [space left blank] the Indian Prisoner made his escape from the prison gang whilst at work cutting down the bush at the graveyard. He alleged a call of nature and the instant he got into the bush he bolted.

* * * *

The threat against Mr. Gonzales have been carried out with a vengeance. He was tied & must cruelly cut to pieces with macheats [sic]. [See Major William Johnston's summary report above.]

When in my house the Indians with cruel jeers and taunts told me they had come to pay me the "horse and dog tax"³² (my wife interpreted all this)³³ and one man a rather small Indian coming up to me reminded me that I had once put him in goal & passing his hand across his throat with a most diabolical expression of countenance, intimating that I was about to be killed.

From the time of the punishment of the Indian up to the time of the attack nothing occurred to induce the slightest belief on my mind that the Ycaiche Indians intended an attack on O Walk. On the contrary so quiet were they after the Indian was punished that I firmly believe they had been taught a lesson useful to them & beneficial to ourselves as far as letting them understand distinctly that they could not trifle with & sit at defiance as they had done British authority.

Orange Walk

11th September 1872

[Signed] Downer Magistrate

Dated at Orange Walk this 11th day of September 1872.

[Signed] Fred B. P. White Capt.

1st West India Regiment

President

Report of Mr. [Richard J.] Downer [Police Magistrate at Orange Walk] Relative to the attack on the town of O Walk by an armed Force of Ycaiché Indians on Sunday 1st September 1872

BARS. 111 R. 114-118, pp. 305-316.

The Statement of John Dallas Edge M.D.

I am the aforementioned Surgeon in Medical Charge of the Detachment 1st W. I. Regiment stationed at Orange Walk N.D. British Honduras. On the morning of the 1st of September about 8:30 o'clock, while in the act of taking my bath, I heard a shot fired next to the house I lived in. This house was situated immediately in front of the Barracks facing the river and was occupied by Lieut. Smith the officer commanding the detachment and myself. I lived in the south end of this building which end faces one of the roads leading from the magistrate's house to the Barracks crosses this in front of my end room. It was down this latter road I heard the bullet whistling. Immediately afterwards I heard Lieut. Smith calling out a "The Indians are down."

On entering my room from the bath house I perceived my end door opened and saw several armed men running across the road leading to the bush. I closed the door seized my revolver and made for the Barracks though almost naked expecting to have to fight my way out. As I reached the door I saw Lieut. Smith just entering the Barracks under a pretty smart fire. I followed and succeeded also in reaching it safely. By this time the troops were under arms in fact some had already commenced firing on the enemy who had taken up a strong position behind some pile of log wood and the house of the south end of the Barracks. The firing from this part of the Town was very heavy but the utmost order prevailed amongst the men of our Detachment and the fire was returned with vigour and steadiness. Our first attention was turned to the safety of the Magazine which was placed under the verandah of the Barracks near the Guard room. This Guard room being at the extreme South of the Barracks was constantly exposed to this severe fire. It was then discovered that the key of the Magazine had been left in Lieutenant Smith's quarters. He and Sergeant Belizario ran across the square to get it under a heavy fire. They had a miraculous escape returning with the key in a very few moments. During their absence I took charge of the door, so as not to delay their entrance. The Magazine was with some difficulty drawn into the Barrack room. We now perceived that the Indians had taken up their stand in the form of a Semicircle and displayed wonderful tact in choosing cover and commanding positions. We could not ascertain the number at the time but from the continued whooping that was kept up all around us we knew there must have been a considerable force opposed to us. The door of the Barrack having been closed the men took up their position behind the palmettos of which the sides of the buildings were composed. Lieut. Smith being a good shot also joined them with a Rifle, while I opened the packages of ammunition and distributed them to the men and while thus occupied I saw Lieutenant Smith opening the door besides me for the purpose of firing to dislodge some men who were posted at the corner of the cross street at the end of our house and where the fire was beginning to be very destructive to our

men. Scarcely however had Lieutenant Smith and a Soldier Private Robert Lynch presented themselves at the door when both were Shot. Private Lynch staggered back some four or five feet and fell. I immediately ran to his assistance but found him already dead having received two large bullet wounds in the upper part of the chest. Almost at the same moment I heard Lieutenant Smith cry out to me. "John, I'm hit." I left Private Lynch and went to him but he refused to allow me to examine the wound insisting upon still firing. I suppose that I might consider his state as unfit for exertion. During this time a very heavy fire was been kept up by the Indians and it was their first fire that proved so destructive to our men. Of the wounded men, some were able to use their rifles. Those who could not do so I assisted into protected places to keep a look out for us.

Mr. Downer the Police Magistrate and two policemen arrived shortly after Lieut. Smith was wounded having had to pass through a very heavy fire to reach the Barrack. They all joined our men in resisting the attack and Mr. Downer rendered us valuable assistance in directing his own arm and in using a rifle himself.

The firing had lasted about one hour and a half when the Indians finding they could not dislodge us endeavoured to effect their purpose by burning the Barracks all the houses adjacent to the South end of the Barrack was therefore fired as we could not see anyone approaching that end of the Barrack on account of the cells intervening between the Barrack room and the outer wall an aperture had to be made in the boarded partition this I endeavoured to do using a soldier arm as a battering ram. A man was placed here to watch & fire on anyone exposing themselves. To our consternation a few minutes after he reported the kitchen on fire. The kitchen was only about 10 yards from this end of the Barracks. Everything now appeared to be lost what with the wounded men, the determined and rapid firing of the enemy, & the small force left to offer resistance without a building as a cover. Our position was indeed desperate. Even before the kitchen was fired all the civilians became advocated on deserting the Barracks & taking up a position on the bank of the river, behind some small boat. But this proposition Lieut. Smith and I opposed with determination having resolved not to leave the Barracks until it was actually on fire. Fortunately the wind was favourable at this moment & the kitchen burned itself without firing the Barracks.

One half hour before the kitchen had taken fire, we perceived a commotion amongst the Indians behind the logwood piles who exposed themselves more than usual, on seeing this some of our men rushed out & delivered an effective volley, but perceiving two civilian gentlemen, Messers. Price and Bordeau, the men were ordered not to fire on them. The commotion it appeared must have been caused by these gentlemen attacking the Indians [from the rear] & had it not been from their position that our men were firing many more of the Indians must have been killed.

Messers. Price and Bordreau were both wounded when they were admitted through the front door of the Barracks. After this the Indians again took up their position behind the logwood & continued to fire upon us.

For upwards of two hours Lieut. Smith continued to fire and encourage the men & it was not until he had become so weak that he could not stand that he would allow me to examine him. I then found him spitting blood & having great difficulty of breathing. The wound on the chest had nearly stopped bleeding but as I saw small bubbles of air coming from it, I insisted on his lying down & and not speaking. He remain in this position during the remainder of the day & night. As soon as the fire from the front had slackened somewhat, Sergt. Belizario, Corporal Spencer and six men went out & cleared the road passing Barrack police square to Mr. Oswald's house. They also went in the direction of Mr. Downer's house. They shot an Indian at Mr. Oswald's house and two between that & Mr. Downer's. During their absence another small party went out, which Mr. Downer accompanied. They brought in several items & plunder dropped by the Indians in their hurried retreat. We were so exhausted by the day's fight & running about the town after the Indians that we could not follow up on our success & as we did not know the number they might have in reserve in the bush.

During the whole affair Lieut. Smith's [demeanor?] remained cool & determined & though dangerously wounded he never lost his presence of mind. After he received the wound, he could not exert his voice much but his orders which I endeavoured to carry out were I have no doubt the means of saving the Detachment. The conduct of the Non-Commissioned Officers and men was beyond praise. Some of them attract particular notice. Sergt. Belizario for his coolness, steady firing and management of the men. Lance Corp'l Spencer and Sterling, Private Murray, Hoffer, Tell and others were also remarked for their courage and the prominent position they took. The wounded [were] also deserve great praise for the way in which they tried to assist us, even when badly wounded they never gave in but tried to give as little trouble as possible. During the attack we adopted every means of protecting the men by placing the tables, farm beds and bedding against the Palmetto sides of the building. During the remainder of the day, a keen [?] scout out had the logwood heaps levelled and got in some provisions from the shops & supplied them to the men. After all was over some volunteers came in and assisted us in arranging the Barracks so as to be prepared for a fresh attack should the Indians be reinforced. To these men we issue the spare rifles belonging to the wounded men. During the night we kept six sentries on the Barracks, one at each end & two in front and rear. We also had two mounted civilians riding around the town all night. I kept constantly visiting the sentries and attending to the wounded during the night. The men slept with their arms beside them so as to be ready at a moment's notice.

In the morning we had Private Lynch buried close to the Barracks with as little delay & as quietly as possible. I then proceeded to examine the wounded & to remove the bullets where lodged, etc.

During the day we had the Barracks put in order & Mr. Downer pressed some Indians & Spaniards of the place who carried the logwood towards the Barracks, so as to build a stockade from which we could have some protection. We also had all the walls, fences, etc. of the burned houses leveled and a good part of the bush behind the heaps of logwood cut away. At about 10 o'clock a.m. I sent a report to the Honorable Major Commanding the troops at Belize & Mr. Downer sent one to the Lt. Governor.

During Monday night we kept up the same number of sentries and had a patrol of civilians out all night.

The next day in strengthening our position. At 11 o'clock Prvt. Bidewell died from inflammation of the abdomen the result of a bullet wound. We buried him the next morning.

Capt. White & Lieut. Bulger arrived that day with the advance of the reinforcements from Belize.

I may here add the opinion not only of myself but of everyone that I have met that such a thing as an attack from those people was out of the question as they were always in & out of the town trading.

Appended is a return of the killed and wounded.

[Signed] J. Dallas Edge M.D.

Staff Assistant Surgeon

Dated at Orange Walk this 11th day of September 1872

Fred B. P. White Capt.

1st W. I. Regt.

President

The statement of Staff Assistant Surgeon John Dallas Edge M.D. to Court of Inquiry regarding the attack on Orange Walk by the Icaiché on 1st September 1872. Attachment: Return of the Dead and Wounded.

BARS. 111 R. 106 pp. 289-296.

Return of the Killed and Wounded

No.	Rank & Reg. no.	Name	Remarks
Dead			
1	Private	Lynch Robert	Shot dead. 2 bullet wounds on the chest
2	Private, 1162	Bidwell George	Shot in the abdomen. Died third day
Wounded			
1	[Officer commanding Detach. O.W.]	Lieut. Smith J. G.	Bullet wound in chest. Penetrating
2	Private, 1151	Daws James	Bullet wound in thigh
3	Private, 861	Gordon William	Bullet wound in chest
4	Private, 1397	Harris Samuel	Bullet wound in thigh
5	Private, 1106	Johnston James	Slight wound in chest
6	Private, 754	Morris R. U.	Slight wound
7	Private, 1158	Osborne Samuel	Slight wound in forearm
8	Private, 1200	Boden Richard	Slight wound in legs
9	Lance Corporal, 1209	Sterling Robert	Bullet wound in shoulder
10	Lance Corporal, 1141	Thompson Adam	Slight wound in Back
11	Private, 1175	Tell William	Slight wound in calf of leg
12	Private, 977	Thompson James	Slight wound
13	Private, 1251	Dougherty William	Bullet wound in thigh
14	Private, 1130	Wallace William	Slight wound in ankle
15	Private, 1035	Woodhouse Thomas	Slight wound

In conclusion I venture to express a hope that the Honorable the Major Commanding the Troops in British Honduras will consider from the evidence given in the matter & from his own opinion formed thereon that I have been successful in carrying out my duties as the medical officer in charge of the Troops & also in performing the functions I was compelled to undertake during the engagement, in consequence of the wound which incapacitated Lieut. Smith from giving his orders except by my voice & from seeing them carried out except by my personal intervention.

[Signed] J. Dallas Edge M.D.
Staff Assistant Surgeon
In medical charge of Detach, 1st W. I. Regt.
Orange Walk
September 11th 1872

A return of the killed and wounded at the Battle of Orange Walk, 1st September 1872, by Dr. John Dallas Edge, M.D. Staff Assistant Surgeon to the Detachment at Orange Walk.
BARS 111 R.110 p.297

The Statement of Edward Belizario

No. 1214 Sergeant Edward Belizario 1st West India Regiment states –
I was the senior Sergeant of the Detachment at Orange Walk on the 1st September 1872. Our strength for duty on that morning was as follows – 1 Officer
2 Sergeants 35 Rank & file

Of the remaining 3 privates, one was a patient in Hospital and the other two were at Corozal waiting passage for this place.

About 8:15 o'clock on that morning (Sunday) I was in my quarter which was situated at the North end of the Soldiers Barracks. There are two rooms at this end, one is occupied by Sergt. Agard and the other by myself. At this hour my wife rushed in and told me the Indians were coming. I at once seized my rifle, and loaded it, as we were allowed to carry 20 rounds of ammunition and proceeded to the Barrack room. As I entered a shot was fired into the room and I found the men in the act of loading and returning fire. The attack I perceived was, at first, entirely on the south end of the Barracks and as there are three roads leading from the bush on to this end of the building and in some of the houses occupied by civilians, are scarcely 25 yards from the Barracks. The enemy taking us by surprise were enabled to post themselves in these houses and pour in a very destructive fire.

A large pile of Logwood, the property of a Mr. Gonzalez, was also used by the

Indians as a cover, and from this point its distance from us being about 75 yards, the firing was very heavy, in fact it was from this place that most of our wounded men were hit.

Behind the log-wood the bush was very thick and the large trees also afforded cover to the enemy, so that they were enabled to keep up a heavy fire from there without harming their comrades behind the log-wood, but making this double fire very hot for us.

A slope in the road running close to the log-wood, which had been recently cut away by civil prisoners has gave very good shelter to the Indians. About half an hour after the commencement of the attack, the Indians had spread themselves almost round the Barracks, so close that some of the bullets passed through the Barracks, coming in at one side and going out at other. Two in particular passed through the Barracks & perforated the head piece of two of the iron bedsteads.

Immediately the alarm was given Lieut. Smith, the Officer in Command ran down to the Barracks from his quarters, which was situated in front, followed by Dr. Edge. The keg of the magazine, which had been forgotten in the Officer's quarters being wanted, Lieut. Smith and myself doubled across from it and returned under a sharp fire, but we both escaped.

Lieut. Smith took a rifle himself and commenced firing to help the men, but he had not done so for more than 10 minutes when I heard he had been hit while endeavouring to fire through the open door. Pt. Robert Lynch who was trying to do the same was shot dead. Lieut. Smith, however, continued at his post for nearly two hours and kept the men together, instructing them how to place the bed cots and mattresses so as to give them some little cover from which to fire.

After this however, he was obliged to give in and lie down, but I continued carrying out his orders on every point. Dr. Edge and Mr. Downer the Magistrate also helped in making the men obey the wishes of Lieut. Smith. The Indians kept up this heavy firing until nearly 2 o'clock P. M. without being able to move us out of our Barracks though they occupied such a very strong position. About that hour, we succeeded in forcing a small party who were well posted to retire, and this allowed us to make a rush into position that would enable us to clear the log-wood.

Myself and about six men at once made a rush for this position, but we perceived that the Indians had already deserted the log-wood piles and were in retreat along the road, in [seeing] this we at once opened fire. After they had disappeared in this road we drifted to the front of the barrack and advanced on them at this side skirmishing and forcing them to fall back after killing three and wounding many

more. I did not proceed further than the outskirts of the Town but returned to the Barracks after ascertaining that all the Indians had left. At this time there were five Indians dead that we saw on our return to Barracks.³⁴

I had no trouble with the men of the Detachment, who showed every willingness to carry out their orders, especially the following men which I have already reported to Lieut. Smith, viz Lance Corporal Spencer & Sterling, Privates Hoffen, Thomas Kery, Osborne, Maxwell, Murray, Gordon, Wolfe and Lance Corporal Thompson, the latter being the Corporal of the Guard.

Immediately the Indians were repulsed we at once had the logwood pile thrown down, also the ruins of the burnt houses and some of the log-wood was carried up and made into a stockade round one part of the Barracks in case we should be again attack which was rumoured that the Indians intended returning the next dry. Towards the latter end of the firing the Indians when they found they could not drive us out, attempted to do so by firing the buildings. The kitchen of the Barracks was situated only about 5 yards from the South end of the Barracks itself and about 10 yards beyond this, the houses occupied by the civilians, and which have been already mentioned, ran at right angles to the Barracks in the direction of the Magistrate's house. It was these houses that the Indians first seized on in their attack, and from which they opened fire, and it was these also that they fired at the end of the attack in the hopes of our Barracks catching. The kitchen only 5 yards from us caught & was burnt to the ground, but owing to the mild wind blowing in a contrary direction their attempt on the Bks [Barracks] was unsuccessful.

After the attack was repulsed in inspecting the Detachment we found our casualties to be 1 officer and 15 men wounded and one-man dead. One other, Prt. Bidwell, has since died of his wounds. I should say that the attacking force was certainly 150 strong.

Signed in presence of the Court this 11th day of September 1872.

Edward Belizario Sergt. 1st W. I. Regiment

Dated Orange Walk

11 Sept 1872 [Signature] Fred B.P. White Capt.

1st W. I. Regt.

President

[Signed, by members of the Court] Garrison Adjutant and a Lieut.

1st W.I. Regt.

Statement of Edward Belizario, 1st W. I. Regiment, 11 September 1872

BARS. 111 R.111-113 pp.299-303.

Statement of Principal Inhabitants of Orange Walk
relative to the attack on the Town by an Armed Force of Ycaiché
Indians under Marcus Canul on Sunday 1st September 1872.³⁵

José Agustín Gonzáles

	Questions	Answers
1.	What is your name and position in Orange Walk	Jose Agustin Gonzales, contractor for cutting logwood. Have lived in Orange Walk for over [piece of page missing]. Own nearly half the lands of the town, and many houses.
2.	Were you in Orange Walk on Sunday the 1 st Instant [September] when the Indians attacked the town.	Yes, in my house near the Barracks... [Piece of page missing] the logwood piled at... the water side. But I ran away & ... attack was made ... about 8 o'clock in the morning.
3.	When did you first hear of their arrival	When the Indians were firing on the Barracks ... from behind the logwood & from the bush near my house.
4.	Had you any previous information that would lead you to believe the Indians intended to attack the place.	No. Never thought they would do so, as ... were always in the habit of coming into the town trading. Sometimes in large numbers.
5.	Have you lost any property by the attack	Yes. 3 large houses, the one at the corner near the Barracks, the Officers' Quarters, & the Magistrate's house were burnt down.
6.	Did you see any of the natives living in Orange Walk assisting the Indians in any way previous to or at the time of the attack.	No. I ran away during the attack.
7.	Did you hear any remarks made by any of the Indians during the attack or previous to <u>it</u> .	Nothing but yelling.
8.	What was the strength of the Indian force	I believe from 100 to 150 but cannot speak with any certainty as they were nearly all over town & I was not long enough in the town to know.
9.	Can you give any information as to the state of the Indian force after their repulse? Also, any remarks you may wish to make on the conduct of the soldiers during the fight.	No. but when I returned I heard from everyone that the Indians were beaten. Many killed & that the soldiers saved the town by beating them off.
	Taken in my presence [Signed] William Johnston	[Signed] Jose Agustin Gonzales
	Major Commanding 9/9/72	

Cerapio Ramos

	Questions	Answers
1.	What is your name and position in Orange Walk	My name is Carpio Ramos. I am a shopkeeper in Orange Walk, on the Main Street near Mr. Henkel's shop.
2.	Were you in Orange Walk on Sunday the 1 st Instant [September] when the Indians attacked the town.	Yes. I was in the back of the town fishing.
3.	When did you first hear of their arrival	When I heard the reports of many guns, I thought it was the soldiers firing for some holiday. This was about 7:30 in the morning, shortly after I saw several women running out of the town on the North Side. I called out, what is the matter? They answered the Indians are fighting with the Troops. I then ran to my house & from there ... over the river.
4.	Had you any previous information that would lead you to believe the Indians intended to attack the place.	Not the least. They personally purchase from my shop when they come to Town. I had heard nothing to make me believe they were unfriendly or likely to attack O.W. Orange Walk or any place belonging to the English.
5.	Have you lost any property by the attack	Yes. I lost \$545 a few pieces of cotton goods not much. I am not certain if the Indians or people of the place took these, as I was away in the bush during the fight.
6.	Did you see any of the natives living in Orange Walk assisting the Indians in any way previous to or at the time of the attack.	I did not. I was not long enough to see
7.	Did you hear any remarks made by any of the Indians during the attack or previous to it?	I do not know their language. ³⁶
8.	What was the strength of the Indian force	I have no idea. I saw about 60 between my shop & Mr. Henkels'. But heard another party firing on the South Side of the Barracks.
9.	Can you give any information as to the state of the Indian force after their repulse? Also, any remarks you may wish to make on the conduct of the soldiers during the fight.	I was not here during the fight but returned when the Indians had been driven out by the soldiers. I was told by everybody they lick the Indians off.
	Taken in my presence [Signed] William Johnston	[Signed] Cerapio Ramos
	Major Commanding OW10/9/72	

Alejo Ayuso

	Questions	Answers
1.	What is your name and position in Orange Walk	My name is Alejo Ayuso. Contractor for logwood. I had a house and own much land in the Town.
2.	Were you in Orange Walk on Sunday the 1 st Instant [September] when the Indians attacked the town.	Yes, in my house near the Barracks.
3.	When did you first hear of their arrival	When they were firing on the Barracks from the back of the logwood.
4.	Had you any previous information that would lead you to believe the Indians intended to attack the place.	No, as I did not hear any rumors that they had any intention.
5.	Have you lost any property by the attack	Yes. Two [?] houses near the Barracks and everything in them.
6.	Did you see any of the natives living in Orange Walk assisting the Indians in any way previous to or at the time of the attack.	Cannot give any information as I ran away into the Bush.
7.	Did you hear any remarks made by any of the Indians during the attack or previous to <u>it</u> .	No.
8.	What was the strength of the Indian force	Cannot say.
9.	Can you give any information as to the state of the Indian force after their repulse? Also, any remarks you may wish to make on the conduct of the soldiers during the fight.	I believe they were beaten and heard they have many wounded. The soldiers saved the Town.
	Before my presence [Signed] William Johnston Major Commanding 10/9/72	[Signed] Alejo Ayuso

Manuel Espejo

	Questions	Answers
1.	What is your name and position in Orange Walk	My name is Manuel Espejo. Planter of some position in Orange Walk. I own a Rancho and several houses in Town.
2.	Were you in Orange Walk on Sunday the 1 st Instant [September] when the Indians attacked the town.	Yes, in my house.
3.	When did you first hear of their arrival	When I heard, Indians firing about the Town, believe at about 7 – 8 breakfast time.
4.	Had you any previous information that would lead you to believe the Indians intended to attack the place.	No. When I last saw these Indians in the Town trading on the 15 th of August, they said nothing to me to expect any bad feelings.
5.	Have you lost any property by the attack	8 of my laborers inhabitants of Orange Walk have ran away out of the country. I have lost nothing else.
6.	Did you see any of the natives living in Orange Walk assisting the Indians in any way previous to or at the time of the attack.	No. I went over the river during the fight to look for my family who had fled.
7.	Did you hear any remarks made by any of the Indians during the attack or previous to it?	No. If I had I should have reported it before.
	What was the strength of the Indian force	I cannot say, they were two parties one at the logwood on the South side of the Barracks and the other party was behind the houses in front of the Barracks.
9.	Can you give any information as to the state of the Indian force after their repulse? Also, any remarks you may wish to make on the conduct of the soldiers during the fight.	The soldiers drove them out of the Town.
	Taken before us this day, 10/9/72 [Signed] William Johnston Major Commanding	[Signed] Man'l Espejo

Louis Henkel

	Questions	Answers
1.	What is your name and position in Orange Walk	My name is Louis Henkel. I own a large shop in Orange Walk. I have lived here 6 years. I am a German by birth.
2.	Were you in Orange Walk on Sunday the 1 st Instant [September] when the Indians attacked the town.	Yes, in my Shop.
3.	When did you first hear of their arrival	When they commenced their fire, at about 8 o'clock AM.
4.	Had you any previous information that would lead you to believe the Indians intended to attack the place.	Not the least. They usually trade with us.
5.	Have you lost any property by the attack	Yes. All the dried products in the shop. I value the sum at \$2,000.
6.	Did you see any of the natives living in Orange Walk assisting the Indians in any way previous to or at the time of the attack.	No.
7.	Did you hear any remarks made by any of the Indians during the attack or previous to it?	No. Except some people up the place asked us for goods during the attack. I had not any to give.
8.	What was the strength of the Indian force	Very large number was like such [?] crossing in after each other. About 150. [Comment on left margin] No one believes this answer. [Signed] William Johnston, Commanding
9.	Can you give any information as to the state of the Indian force after their repulse? Also, any remarks you may wish to make on the conduct of the soldiers during the fight.	During the fight, I took my family over the River. When I returned about 3 in the afternoon I found many dead Indians but cannot say how many were wounded but they were driven out of the Town by the Soldiers. I consider the Soldiers behaved very bravely.
	Taken before me 11/9/72 [Signed] William Johnston Major Commanding	[Signed] L. Henkel

Francisco Escalante³⁷

	Questions	Answers
1.	What is your name and position in Orange Walk	Francisco Escalante. I am shopkeeper and logwood contractor. I own many lots and houses at O Walk.
2.	Were you in Orange Walk on Sunday the 1 st Instant [September] when the Indians attacked the town.	I was at my house at Orange Walk on Sunday the 1 st instant; between 7 and 8 o'clock AM when I heard a noise and rumor of Indians. I at once went for my rifle and go outside and I commence to fire [piece of page missing] [at] the Indians. Same time I got a wound in my left leg.
3.	When did you first hear of their arrival	It was on Sunday morning I think when the Indians were firing that I knew there [sic] arrival.
4.	Had you any previous information that would lead you to believe the Indians intended to attack the place.	Nothing had lead [sic] me to believe that the Indians would likely attack the town otherwise I would had reported. Although I heard from them many of times when they were in liquour threatening their coming to attack the town but I had never paid any attention to this language.
5.	Have you lost any property by the attack	I lost in the attack of the Indians about \$3000 dollars in cash and goods stolen from my shop. ³⁸
6.	Did you see any of the natives living in Orange Walk assisting the Indians in any way previous to or at the time of the attack.	No, I did not recognize any one but I saw from where I was that the Indians were going and coming constantly at one Rosado's house.
7.	Did you hear any remarks made by any of the Indians during the attack or previous to it?	The remark is same I had stated that always when the Indians got Drunk commence to say
		that they coming [sic] to attack the town but I paid no attention.
8.	What was the strength of the Indian force	I cannot say the number but I saw plenty of them on the street.
9.	Can you give any information as to the state of the Indian force after their repulse? Also, any remarks you may wish to make on the conduct of the soldiers during the fight.	My opinion is that the soldiers saved the town.
	Stated before me by order at San Esteban this 10 th day of September 1871 [September 1872] [Signed] J. H. Carrillo P. I. [Public Interpreter]	[Signed] Fran'co Escalante

Statements of the Principal Inhabitants of Orange Walk relative to the attack on the Town by an Armed Force of Ycaiche Indians under Marcus Canul on Sunday 1st September 1872.

BARS. 111R.121-124 pp.323-329.

Icaiché Maya continue to propose trade treaty with English in Belize Letter in Spanish

[En margen izquierdo, hoja membretada del] Estado de Campeche, Pacíficos del Sur. [Al inicio de la carta, escrita a mano] Recibida 14/4/74. En respuesta, ver Miscelánea No. 21

[En margen izquierdo] [No leíble, Union?] Mejicana, Canton General de Xkanha Hoy dia de la [no leíble] regreso del Ciudadano Rafael Chan, siempre [con cargo] de General el mentado Luis Moo, lo desterraron en San Juan de Ulua [prisión], y dies mas que trajo el ciudadano [?] Chan que son los principales complices de la sublevacion que abian hecho, pero haora lla esta sumamente tranquilo el Canton de Ycaiche, por lo que hagan [los que se habían sublevado] estoy pronto a auxiliar al ciudadano [?] Chan, porque yo estoy por la Justicia y por la tranquilidad.

Vuelvo a molestarlo a Vuestra Señoría de que queremos selebrar los tratados con Vuestra Señoría como se le puse en ultima [correspondencia] para que yo y mis subditos puedan venir a negociar a esa colonia de su superior mando. Rafael Chan es el encargado de recibir el contesto y mandarmelo a este Canton a mi mando, suplico a Vuestra Señoría sea y pronto.

Tambien digo a Vuestra Señoría los que quieran trabajar pueden con toda tranquilidad trabajar en que nadie los perjudicara, en otro oficio que le puse vino sin numero y por eso no le ago aprecio [de lo que] le puse lo mismo pues cuando ablo es con palabra de honor. No tengo mas que decirle.

Estado de Campeche. Canton Xkanha, Marzo 16 de 1874.
[Firma] Eugenio Arana
Para Gobernador de la Colonia de Velice
De Eugenio Arana al Gobernador de la Colonia de Velice
16 March 1874

BARS. R.113, p.399

Letter translated into English

[On left margin, printed on official stationery of] State of Campeche, Pacificos del Sur. [On top of letter, hand written] Rec'd 14/4/74. In reply, vide Miscellaneous No. 21

[On left hand margin] Mexican Union [?], General District of Xkanha

Today on the [not legible] return of Citizen Rafael Chan retaining the title of General, one Luis Moo, imprisoned at San Juan de Ulua, along with ten more [prisoners] that citizen [?] Chan brought [captured] who are the principal accomplices of the revolt; now the Ycaiche district is most peaceful. Should they [the rebels] persist I am prepared to support citizen [?] Chan, because I am in favor of justice and peace.

Again if it is no bother to Your Excellency, we wish to celebrate a trade treaty with Your Excellency as proposed in my last correspondence so that my subjects and I may come to trade in the Colony under your Excellency's command. Rafael Chan is our agent authorized to receive your Excellency's reply that may be sent to this District under my command. I beg Your Excellency for an early reply.

I also wish to state to your Excellency that those [British subjects] who wish to work [in cutting logwood and mahogany] may do so in perfect peace; no one will bother them. In my previous correspondence, sent without a file number, I had made the same proposal. When I speak it is on my word of honor. Without any more to add to Your Excellency.

State of Campeche. District of Xkanha, 16 March 1874.
[Signature] Eugenio Arana
To Governor of the Colony of Belize
From Eugenio Arana to Governor of the Colony of Belice
16 March 1874.

BARS. R.113, p.399

Ángel Cal
Belmopan
October, 2024

References for Reports

16 The drawing should be available at BARS.

17 The estimate might be closer to 100. Canul took 116 men to Corozal in 1870. Not all were engaged at the Barracks; some of the parties were at the Police Station and a few at other points in Town.

18 There may have been a longer interval between the whipping of Magistrate Downer at the public square and his being freed by Mr. Oswald and the two policemen. This nugget of information, however, is absent from Mr. Downer and Mr. Oswald's reports.

19 It is evident that for the most part the Icaiche did not come to rob and steal.

20 The Magistrate's house and the Officer's quarters burnt belonged to José Agustín Gonzáles according to Gonzales' statement.

21 The Major Commanding the Troops in Corozal did not highlight as worthy of praise the key support provided by the "Americans", Mr. Price and Mr. Bordeau. Oral reports to this day credit the Americans in the attack from the rear from where the Icaiche were firing towards the Barracks that led to the commotion which saved the day for the detachment of 37 men including three officers.

22 In his *The History of Orange Walk*, Charles Emond accepts as fact the death of Francisco Escalante's son reported in Alejo Ayuso's oral history of the Battle of Orange Walk. In that account, Francisco Escalante is credited as the man who shot and mortally wounded Canul. Unfortunately, Escalante's written statement (see Escalante's statement reproduced in this work) does not coincide with the oral version; there is no mention of a dead son and in response to the question on the behavior of the troops during the attack, Escalante does not mention that he shot at Canul but that in his opinion, the "soldiers saved the town".

23 This is highly unlikely; the Icaiche themselves did not for the most part understand Spanish and they were not likely to blurt out confidential information during an assault unless the information was intended to confuse their enemy.

24 Rafael Chan was second in command to Asuncion Ek, leader of the San Pedro Yalbac Maya who defeated the English troops on 21 December 1866.

25 All of the reports emphasize that there was no indication of tension or disquiet with the Icaiché. Magistrate Downer became the scapegoat. He had, in the view of the Icaiche, humiliated an Icaiche soldier who tried to capture and return a woman hiding in Jose Ignacio Gonzales' house at Water Bank. Apparently, Gonzales paid with his life his involvement in the affair and the Magistrate was apparently publicly whipped, lost his belongings as his house was burnt and almost lost his life.

On the other hand, Don Dumond with late twentieth century academic spectacles blamed the Icaiché: "Whereas their compatriots of Xkanhá were moving to assume the trappings of civilization ..., the Icaiché Pacificos again turned to the machete", (Dumond, p.337), that is, to their barbarism.

26 A breech-loading rifle.

27 Again, we find that Lieut. Smith only credits the soldiers of the Detachment and not the "Americans" for saving the day.

28 It is very likely that upon the serious wounding of Marcus Canul, the Icaiché decided to retreat. Perhaps, Rafael Chan second in command did not participate in the battle as someone with seniority had to remain in Santa Clara de Icaiché to defend the Icaiché capital. Without a leader, indigenous people tend to retreat.

29 Lieut. Smith as commander of the detachment was the only one to report such a high estimate. Naturally the larger the size of the enemy, the greater the glory. Following the battle, Lieut. Smith, Dr. Edge and the

two corporals were promoted while Sargeant Belizario was awarded a medal. The privates who were Black, including the two who paid the ultimate price in defending the town were commended. Magistrate Downer received no commendation. Emond, *The History of Orange Walk*, part 8, p.3.

30 Mr. Downer's wife saved his life. We are left to wonder how much her ability to speak Maya to negotiate may have contributed to the pause during which Mr. Oswald and the policemen arrived to save him.

31 In his arrogance, R. J. Downer does not even bother to name the person. He was an Icaiché soldier by the name of Pedro Manzanero who had been instructed by his Captain who had been directed by Marcos Canul to fetch a woman from Icaiché who had absconded and was living in Gonzales' house at Water Bank on the English side of the Rio Hondo. What Canul probably expected was that the prisoner should have been arrested and sent to Santa Clara de Icaiché for trial.

32 At various times, the English had used horse and dog taxes to pressure the Maya to move back to Icaiché where they were exempt from paying any taxes. The fact that this was mentioned as a popular complaint tells us that these anti-Maya measures were deeply resented.

33 It is interesting to note that Downer's wife spoke Yucatec Maya. Given Downer's racist attitudes, it is not likely that she would have been Maya but given that Maya was the lingua franca of Orange Walk at this time, this is not surprising.

34 The number of dead and wounded on the Icaiche side is not clear. They range from 50 (Edmond, *The History of Orange Walk*, 1983) to 15 from Major Johnston's letter to W.W. Cairns and 5 from Sergeant Belizario. No estimates are given for the wounded among the Maya.

35 I have modified the format, placing it in a table, with one informant responding to questions that have been repeated. Note that none of the questions ended with a question mark in the original.

36 For a small shopkeeper not to know the lingua franca of the village is surprising unless this response demonstrates the white Yucatecos' attitude towards the Maya even though these were the very same clients Ramos depended on for his business.

37 Of the six principal residents of Orange Walk invited to give statements about the battle, only Francisco Escalante whose house and shop were probably directly endangered by the Icaiché because of the building's location in relation to the Barracks, picked up a weapon to help defend the town. The rest all ran away with some 1,200 residents of the town. Why? As in Corozal, there were undoubtedly many Spanish and Mestizo residents who sympathized with the Icaiché who had made their peace with the Yucatec authorities and were claiming and defending territorial rights of the former colonial power, Spain, over much of the forestry resources of northern Belize. Secondly, the English tended to favor the Cruzob Maya to whom they supplied arms with the expectation that should they have to face a grand-scale conflict with the Icaiché, the Cruzob would come to their aid. Spanish and Mestizo residents of northern Belize probably did not wish to risk their lives in the conflict, preferring the English to protect the town. 38 An oral version of the Battle written by Alejo Ayuso in the 1960s (grandson of the Ayuso whose statement appears in this work) credits Francisco Escalante for his very active participation in defending Orange Walk by firing at the Icaiché and for the death of his son in so doing. In his written statement, Escalante did say that he fired at the Icaiché (as his house was not far from the Barracks) and that he was wounded on the left leg but does not mention his son. The oral version also credits Escalante for mortally wounding Canul. This is contradicted by Escalante's own written statement when he wrote that the "soldiers saved the town".

1847 the caste war erupts

conflicts in Belizean history

places of memories
northern belize



fort barlee
Corozal



fort mundy
Orange Walk



battle for Orange Walk

CAUSES



henequen



sugar cane



mahogany

Wealthy haciendas in Yucatan expand and invade Maya land and enslave the Maya. British expand mahogany extraction and invade Maya land.

Turning points for Icaiche campaigns

1864- General Tzuc dies and Marcus Canul becomes General.

1866- Canul & Rafael Chan strike blow to incoming British troops to San Pedro.

1870 & 72- Canul major raids on Corozal & Orange Walk.

1872- Canul killed during raid on Orange Walk.

1875- British report a San Pedro/ Icaiche alliance.

1893- Mexico/British border treaty includes joint effort to fight Maya groups.

Corozal mural



1860. Santa Cruz raid & burn Chichenha
1857. Santa Cruz raid Chichenha
1851-53. 1st Santa Cruz attacks

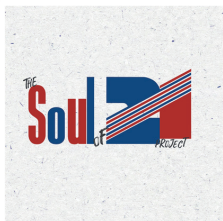


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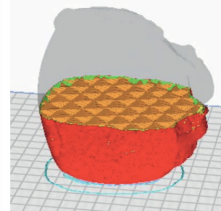
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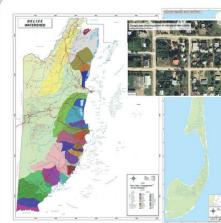
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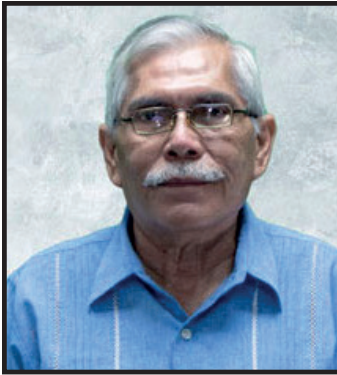


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Dr. Ángel Cal

Dr. Ángel Cal has 43 years of experience in higher education administration, teaching & learning, research and service. He studied in Belize, Canada and the USA culminating with a Ph.D. in Latin American history and ethnohistory from the University of Arizona. He has taught mostly in higher education in Belize with a couple of courses in the USA, Canada and Quintana Roo, Mexico. His research work has focused on the Belize peasantry in the nineteenth century and is currently involved with Spanish archival material on the Battle of St. George's Caye and the Battle of Orange Walk of 1 September 1872. His last publication in a peer-reviewed international journal was published in January 2017. Though most of his public service has been served in Belize, he contributed to CXC for 22 years and three years in central Quintana Roo, Mexico. He is reasonably familiar with higher education models including major accreditation systems in the USA, the Anglo-speaking Caribbean, Central America and southern Mexico. He was privileged to serve for ten years in the President's Office at the University College of Belize and was the founding President of the University of Belize. He has served as Quality Assurance Officer at UB and Galen University and is now serving as a full time Associate Professor in history at the University of Belize. In 2024, Dr. Cal was elected by the National Accreditation Council of Belize as Chairman of the Board.

“Dr. Cal presents a significant collection of historical documents...

It allows the readers to interpret this critical moment of indigenous resistance against European expansion and encroachment on their territories.”

- from Foreword by Delmer Tzib

The Battle of Orange Walk, where Marcus Canul was mortally wounded, signified not only a defeat for the Icaiché but also the closing of an important chapter in the history of indigenous resistance to European imperialism in Yucatan and Belize. This was the last military stand of the Icaiché in taking up arms to oblige the English land companies and the English colonial authorities to respect the rights and dignity of the Icaiché and, by extension, the Belize Yucatec Maya of Yalbac to the lands they considered their own, albeit as surrogates of the rights of Spain, a former colonial power. While the tension between the English and the Icaiché continued to the 1880s, the northwestern boundary line with Mexico had been all but ratified by 1893. However, the rest of the western and southern line with Guatemala had been agreed to by 1859. By the third quarter of the nineteenth century, the Cruzob Maya had decimated in numbers and resources had been pretty much vanquished.

- from Introduction by Dr. Ángel Cal

published by



ISBN: 978-976-97177-3-2

EAN: 9789769717732

With support from and in collaboration with:

