

Chasing Pancho Villa in Mexico

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The United States Army and Mechanization

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Introductions:

In the early morning hours of March 9, 1916 one of the most frequently



forgotten, but very important and brazen attacks on the American nation occurred. Not an attack on American interests overseas, or Americans on a ship, or on an American Embassy, but on American soil. This attack occurred in the small town of Columbus, New Mexico, and was carried out by nearly five hundred (500) raiders from Mexico under the Command

of the dashing revolutionary Pancho Villa.

The American Response

The United States was furious! An American town had been attacked. Calls for Justice and for War were common. President Wilson responded with a "Punitive Expedition" to catch Villa, under the command of General John "Blackjack" Pershing, who would lead American Troops into Mexico. The expedition itself would be a success, but Villa always remained elusive, and the US

Army was able to take “good from the bad” and learned quite a few lessons from the “adventure” into Mexico.

The First Use of Trucks and “Motor Vehicles” in Combat



The US Army bought hundreds of trucks and “automobiles”, and ended up using them for the first time in Combat in a raid. These vehicles would be the first of many, and would change not only the American military, but the American civilian car market.

Patton Earns his Notches

In a Battle with Mexican “Bandits” (really soldiers under Villista Commander Julio Cardenas), future General George S. Patton would be involved in his first taste of Battle, where and other Americans would kill 3 Villistas, after using Dodge Model 1916 staff cars, in the first American mechanized battle. The cars were faster than horses, and would weigh deeply on the young Patton's mind, and would eventually lead to the development of mechanized warfare in WWII.