



THREE MILITARY POSTS IN NORTHEASTERN CALIFORNIA 1849-1863

NORRIS A. BLEYHL

Occasional Publication Number Nine
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ASSOCIATION FOR NORTHERN CALIFORNIA
RECORDS AND RESEARCH

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However he was quite within the limits, and he could
quite often, were there some one of Sydney King's poems being for
used to be read. His study work continued and their work continued

**THREE MILITARY POSTS IN NORTHEASTERN
CALIFORNIA 1849-1863**

He was a member of the Board of the Second, and served the
the last, World War was in the ranks of Chico State College,
of the West Librarian, bringing with him his personal collection of
materials in history, the father and mother of the first history department
of Chico State. It was a small school then and the library resources and
facilities were in keeping with the needs of a small college.

NORRIS A. BLEYHL

The library grew accordingly to meet the needs.

There are the "new" library building in 1911-12 and the "old"
the "new and" library building, wrapped around the "old" library as well
the largest white building north of Sacramento in terms of square foot-
age. Norris's knowledge of what a library should be to do for the good
of LIBRARY was evident in both structures. It was evident, at least, in
what those structures contained for the enlightenment of students and
the edification of the community.

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Norris then became Director of the University's Regional Informa-
tion and Records Project and served in this capacity until his retire-
ment, after more than thirty years of service to the college community
and to the larger community of which it was and remains a vital part.
He was a founding member of the Association and served as its President
for many years.

NORRIS ARTHUR BLEYHL

Whenever he comes quietly to memory's circuits, and he comes quite often, some lines from one of Rudyard Kipling's poems spring forward in my mind: "For their work continueth/ And their work continueth/ Broad and deep continueth/ Greater than their knowing!"

He was a veteran of what we knew as the Second, and hoped was the last, World War when he came to the campus of Chico State College, as its Head Librarian, bringing with him his personal attributes and a doctorate in history, the father and mother of so many modern academic disciplines. It was a small school then and its library resources and facilities were in keeping. As the College slowly became a University, the library grew accordingly to meet its needs.

There came the "new" library building in 1958-59 and then came the "new new" library building, wrapped around the "new" library to make the largest public building north of Sacramento in terms of square footage. Norris's knowledge of what a library should be to deserve the name of LIBRARY was evident in both structures. It was evident, as well, in what those structures contained for the enlightenment of students and the edification of faculty, and it was more than evident in the librarians who made the buildings and their contents far more than walls and books.

Norris then became Director of the University's Regional Information and Records Project and served in this capacity until his retirement, after more than thirty years of service to the collegial community and to the larger community of which it was and remains a vital part. He was a founding member of our Association and served as its Project Director for many years.

It was during these latter years of his career at Chico State that he produced the reference works on Indian/White relations in North-eastern California that reflect so well the meticulous and judicious scholarship that marked his entire academic career. He was engrossed in another ambitious research project that was an outgrowth of his earlier work when he walked down that trail which ends, so the Apache say, where the Black Burro waits to ferry travellers across life's last gravelly ford.

Three segments of the larger project he had in mind comprise the contents of this latest in ACNRR's list of publications. They are not as finely polished as they would have been had he lived to give them his final lapidarian touches. We publish them for our members and for posterity for two reasons: one, the work they represent should not be lost and two, their publication is our means of paying tribute to a kindly and a gentle man, a scholar and a librarian, one of the dedicated servants of that continuing quest for knowledge for all of whom Mr. Kipling penned "A School Song."

W. H. Hutchinson,
Professor Emeritus of History,
California State University, Chico

Fort Far West

Fort Far West, sometimes referred to in official correspondence as
 Camp Far West, or Camp Far West, was established on September 24,
 1849 on the north bank of the Bear River in Yuba County. At that time
 Bear River was designated "Bear Creek", but the modern name of "river" was
 used herein. George F. Second Infantry, arrived in the vicinity of the
 site eventually selected on September 24. The location chosen was about
 one mile above Johnson's or Kayser's Ranch, which ranch had been granted
 to Paula Schlerens in 1844, on the north side of Bear River. Callaway
 having been killed, William Johnson and Sebastian Kayser purchased the
 land for \$150,00 from John A. Sutter, in the latter's capacity as single
 agent of the region. Fort Far West was about thirty miles northward
 of Sutter's Fort and fifteen miles west of the Truckee River east of
 Nevada. In terms of present day landmarks, to reach the site of the
 fort one turns eastward in the center of Nevada, Yuba County, and goes
 one and one-half miles to the E. Clemons North Ranch, then turns right on
 a dirt road and follows signs to the Camp Far West Barracks.

FORT FAR WEST

The site of Fort Far West was selected by Capt. Mansfield Day, Second
 Infantry, assisted and advised by Lieut. First Lieut. George H. Derby, of the
 Topographical Engineers. Lieut. Derby's report described Johnson's place
 as a one-story stone building then (1849) owned by a Mr. Dillapic. He
 described the site as being on the "Truckee route," by the wagon route
 from Salt Lake via the Truckee River, and on the wagon route both to the
 Yuba River and to the Feather River "Dry Digging." He said the site was
 a course of six miles on the northwest bank of Bear River, near a

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Fort Far West

Fort Far West, sometimes referred to in official correspondence as Cantonment Far West, or Camp Far West, was established on September 28, 1849, on the north bank of the Bear River in Yuba County. At that time Bear River was designated "Bear Creek", but the modern term of "River" is used herein. Company F, Second Infantry, arrived in the vicinity of the site eventually selected on September 24. The location chosen was about two miles above Johnson's or Kayser's Ranch, which ranch had been granted to Pablo Gutierrez in 1844, on the north side of Bear River. Gutierrez having been killed, William Johnson and Sebastian Kayser purchased the land for \$150.00 from John A. Sutter, in the latter's capacity as magistrate of the region. Fort Far West was about thirty miles north northeast of Sutter's Fort and fifteen miles northeast of the Feather River port of Nicolaus. In terms of present day landmarks, to reach the site of the fort one turns eastward in the center of Wheatland, Yuba County, and goes one and one-half miles to the E. Clemens Horts Ranch, then turns right on a dirt road and follows signs to the Camp Far West Reservoir.¹

The site of Fort Far West was selected by Capt. Hannibal Day, Second Infantry, assisted and advised by Bvt. First Lieut. George H. Derby, of the Topographical Engineers. Lieut. Derby's report described Johnson's Rancho as a one-story adobe building then (1849) owned by a Mr. Gillespie. He described the site as being on the "Truckee route," or the emigrant trail from Salt Lake via the Truckee River, and on the wagon roads both to the Yuba mines and to the Feather River "Dry Diggings." He and Day staked out a reserve of one square mile on the northwest bank of Bear River, plus a

strip two hundred yards wide on the opposite bank to prevent squatting or settling too close to the post. Derby reported that the approximate location of the site was $39^{\circ} 2'$ north latitude and its longitude, $120^{\circ} 45'$, but his chronometer was not registering accurately, he said, because travel had badly shaken it. A later reckoning placed Far West at latitude $38^{\circ} 33'$ and longitude $121^{\circ} 20'$. Derby optimistically thought that because the soldiers could mine gold in their spare time only three or four miles from the post, desertions should be fewer than at other sites.²

Far West was intended as an auxiliary depot in the direction of the mining districts, for it was thought that "any part of the mines, mountains, or country beyond can be reached . . . by the troops at almost any season." It was also located so as to aid the Indian agents in preventing the oppression by lawless white men of peaceable Indians dwelling in the valley and along the foothills of the Sierra Nevada. Further, it was expected that the fort would check those tribes which had "manifested a decided hostility to the settlers."³

On September 20, 1849, Bvt. Maj. Gen. Bennet Riley visited the camp of Maj. Julius J. B. Kingsbury near the village of Sutter on the Sacramento River several miles below the mouth of the American River. At that time Kingsbury commanded companies E and F of the Second Infantry. Riley reported that the major had been ordered to establish a camp on Bear River about thirty miles above Sutter's Fort. That camp, of course, was Far West. Capt. Hannibal Day was its first commandant, but on October 8 Kingsbury arrived on the scene, and he, being the ranking officer present, apparently assumed command and almost simultaneously relinquished it to Capt. Day. At that time Maj. Kingsbury was placed under arrest, his arrest having been

ordered for reasons presently unknown to the writer. The arrest appears to have been ordered by General Riley.⁴

Far West was originally garrisoned by Companies E and F, Second Infantry. Company E consisted of three sergeants, two corporals, one fifer, and eleven privates. Company F was able to muster for duty Captain Day, Second Lieut. Henry B. Hendershot, two sergeants, one corporal and nineteen privates. Five privates of Companies A and K joined the little garrison on September 29. These men had been left behind in Sacramento because of illness, they having originally been detailed in August as escort in the Sacramento Valley for the exploring expedition of Bvt. Capt. William H. Warner of the Topographical Engineers. Their illnesses were perhaps "valley fever" or malaria. In October, Capt. and Bvt. Major Justus McKinstry joined the garrison and became the post's Assistant Quartermaster. In November, Capt. George C. Westcott joined the command as did Assistant Surgeon Robert Murray, a Marylander who eventually rose to the rank of Brigadier General and Surgeon General of the Army. All of the officers except Westcott and Murray were graduates of West Point. Capt. Day, who entered West Point in 1819 was the senior officer and commander, and except for the Post Returns of August and September, 1850, which were signed by First Lieut. Nelson H. Davis, Day signed all Post Returns through the May, 1851 return.⁵

The Letterbook of Capt. Day yields much of the known history of Fort Far West. Day's first letter, to Maj. E. R. S. Canby, Assistant Adjutant General, Tenth Military Department, encloses a report from his Assistant Surgeon, advising that vegetables be supplied for the command "for good reasons." Perhaps the captain had the scourge of scurvy in mind as a "good

reason" for wanting vegetable matter in the diet of his command. Day also pleaded for four barrels of potatoes for each company to be used as seed, for, said Day, the post is located on good river bottom soil. Day also confessed to fear that the Depot Quartermaster at Benicia would furnish him very little, if anything, in the way of building materials "under the impression that Gen. Smith does not intend my command to winter here." Day said he thought his men should be adequately housed, even if they were to be removed two days after being so housed, it not being his business to anticipate the duration of the camp. He further asked for authority to negotiate the purchase of lumber from a steam sawmill being erected a few miles from camp. Incidentally, this letter reports the murder by Indians of Capt. Warner.⁶

The twin themes of the lack of adequate shelter for his men and the slow arrival of supplies and foodstuffs recur frequently in Day's letters. These letters yield a vivid picture of what soldiering was like in north-eastern California in the years 1849, 1850 and 1851. On November 16 Day again wrote to Maj. Canby urging the sending of supplies before winter rains made roads "impracticable for wagons" between Fort Far West and Vernon, then the nearest river port for transshipment of supplies from boat to wagon. He observed that four deaths within the past month would seem to verify the prediction of Assistant Surgeon Murray "unless . . . we can shelter ourselves from the winter rains."⁷

Day's next letter to Canby, dated January 1, was a bit more upbeat in tone. He thought that when supplies for his post reached Vernon he could have them conveyed from that port "partly by land and partly by water." He reported that his command was partially sheltered and he expected to have the men completely sheltered when some tarpaulins or canvas

covers arrived with the supplies. He thought he could keep the command reasonably healthy throughout the winter "provided we receive the vegetables promised some weeks since." Then, maybe with the better fortune of troops stationed at headquarters in Monterey in mind, Day went on to suggest double rations for those stationed in the interior "with greater deprivation in all respects."⁸

On the same New Year's Day, however, Day penned another letter to Canby in which he had to report the complaint of Capt. Westcott that quarters were not being assigned according to rank. In his own defense, Day said he still had to keep his two companies in tents, and it was desirable to have some of their officers near them. He said the only exception to tent-quartering would be for the sick.⁹

Day had not yet heard the last of Cpt. Westcott's complaint, for on January 15 he had to write again to Canby to forward Westcott's charge of neglect of duty against him. Day explained that when quarters for one company but not the others were ready for occupancy the Acting Assistant Commissary of Subsistence told him that supplies and provisions were being damaged by winter rains. He then ordered that these be stored in the unfinished company building. For the sake of justice, Day said, neither company would occupy more desirable quarters until both could. Each company building would be forty feet by twenty. Meanwhile, Day reported, his men had completed "our main cabin with shingle roof." Day refused to back down in his decision concerning his quartering arrangements unless he was ordered to do so. In a letter to Bvt. Maj. McKinstry, dated the same day, he ordered McKinstry to designate to the officers of the post those quarters or floored tents which are subject to choice."¹⁰

On the same day, Capt. Day reported in another letter to Canby that nothing had been heard concerning the supplies or vegetables promised from Benicia. He said that meat and bread were available but no vinegar was available for issue for nearly a month. On February 1, Day wrote again to Canby to say that a small transport had reached the mouth of Bear River, fifteen miles from camp, but no vegetables were included in its cargo. He pleaded for vinegar and sugar, and for boats and canvas, the former to move the supplies, the latter to cover them once they had reached their destination.¹¹

In his second letter of January 15, Day had had to report seven cases of desertion in the past month, five of the deserters having been pursued and captured. Day requested that a Court Martial be ordered for their trial. And a Special Report of Casualties of Company F, Second Infantry, 28 December 1848-January 31, 1850, credited Far West with seven desertions, naming the offenders as Eyremin R. Flint, C. A. Mooney, John Croston, William Hawkins, Alan Becker, R. J. Allen, and Ed Ryan. Somewhat earlier, George Eckweller, musician, had "gone over the hill."¹²

Insufficient diet and substandard housing were doubtless contributing to the desertion rate from the garrison at Fort Far West, which was at best much too small to control so large a frontier area as northeastern California in the late winter of 1850. On March 29, 1850, David H. Vinton, Major and Quartermaster, remarked laconically.

. . . Post on Bear Creek. Two companies of infantry.
To cover themselves by their own labor, with materials
to be found in their vicinity.¹³

That is exactly what the command at Far West was doing.

In January, Day grasped his pen to instruct one of his subalterns concerning a point of military courtesy. The junior officer had written to his commanding officer the words "call the attention of," which Day admonished him, are fittingly used only by a senior officer to remind a junior officer of some previous neglect of duty. The subaltern's use of the term Day branded as "entirely unmilitary."¹⁴

On March 1, 1850, Day had to report to Canby that all of his teamsters had deserted, but only after they had turned out all of the fort's horses and mules, thereby delaying somewhat their pursuers whom Day sent to apprehend them. That day must have been a dark one for the post commander, for he remarked in the letter that if the War Department did not intend to send him recruits, soon the officers of Far West would be without rank and file. About this time Day wrote to Lieut. Davis instructing him to requisition, among other supplies, a half dozen leg irons to improve security in the guard tent.¹⁵

A fortnight later Day observed that the few sacks of potatoes which he managed to have conveyed to Far West despite "impracticable" roads had "produced a visible good effect upon our cases of scurvy." And, again writing to Lieut. Davis, Day ordered him to construct bridges on the road to Nicolaus¹⁶ and to notify the settlers along the road who had earlier promised to assist in building bridges that their assistance would be welcome if they were still so disposed. And on March 24, he ordered Davis to start three wagons under Sgt. McCollum for Nicolaus and to continue until all supplies had been delivered. The teamsters were told to construct bridges over wet sloughs.¹⁷

On April 9, Company E left its post at Fort Far West for Benicia,

where it was assigned to field duty at the head of the Sacramento Valley for the summer. The unit did not return to Far West until September.¹⁸ The nature of the unit's field duty is unknown to the writer.

Captain Day informed Assistant Adjutant General Canby on April 16 that a skirmish between Indians and miners had occurred on Deer Creek, a tributary of the Yuba River, "in which the rifles of the latter proved fatal to some of the former and in which their skill in archery was found quite inefficient." Day characterized the Indians as "savages," who were "harmless entirely, save in their propensity of thieving." He said that the aggression was on the part of the whites.¹⁹ Earlier he had written that the miners were well equipped with arms sufficient to defend themselves.

Which tribes or tribelets lived in the vicinity of Fort Far West? Indian Agent Adam Johnston who arrived at the post on June 7 of the same year (1850) reported that they were the Yubas, O-lep-as, Boga, Erskins, Ma-chuc-na and "Like" Indians. Modern anthropologists have designated these Indians as Nisenan, or Southern Maidu. As did Captain Day, Johnston regarded these Indians as being "not warlike."²⁰

Warlike or not, though, when they felt outraged these Indians could and did retaliate, the victims of their retribution often being other than those white people who had wronged them. Such was the case in a series of Nevada County incidents. As Captain Day told it, on May 8 he received a message from James Walsh who resided on Wolf Creek some twenty-two miles up the Emigrant Road, which message conveyed word that Indians had attacked Samuel and George Holt who were working in their sawmill, not more than a half mile from Walsh's cabin. Samuel was killed and George was severely

wounded by arrows. Hearing this, Day dispatched 1st Lieut. Henry B. Hendershot,²¹ a corporal and five privates to arrest the guilty Indians and Assistant Surgeon Murray to render medical assistance. The Holts were said to have been on friendly terms with the Indians.²² The guilty Indians having made good their escape before Hendershot and his detail arrived, the officer placed himself and his men at the disposal of the sheriff. It developed, said Day, that a few days prior to the attack upon the Holts the Indians who visited their fury upon the Holts had been attacked in their camp by ten white men who wrongly supposed that these Indians had stolen their cattle. Several Indians had been killed in the attack, but the next day the missing cattle were found. The sheriff did not accept Lieut. Hendershot's offer to assist in the apprehension of the guilty white men. Day concluded his report on the pair of violent incidents by suggesting that Indian agents be sent among the natives to warn them "of their probable fate unless they discontinue their thieving and submit with a better grace to being shot down. . . ."

Less than a fortnight later, Capt. Day wrote again to Canby, this time telling him that Indians had killed Charles Mott, a settler, who was driving up the road with a loaded wagon. They also drove his cattle away. Day's barebones garrison was too weak, he said, to deal with this outrage. He noted, however, that Thomas J. Green, State Senator of California, and Major General of the Militia, led a party of twenty-five whites into the hills and routed two bands of Indians, killing two or three and wounding twice as many. They took about ten women and children prisoner, distributing them among the older ranches of the valley. Day confessed that he knew not what reports might be made to the State Executive regarding "the total inefficiency of my command for any protection." He said those of his men who

were not needed to guard prisoners (deserters) were ill with ague or scurvy.²³

Capt. Day, evidently, was careful to establish and maintain good relations with the civil authorities in the northeastern portion of California, for the defense of which Fort Far West had been established. His instructions to Lieut. Hendershot to place his detachment at the disposal of the Nevada County Sheriff has been noted above.²⁴ Day also offered the support of his troops to aid Stephen J. Field, Alcalde of the City of Marysville, in enforcing his decisions, should that assistance be required. This is said to have had a good effect. People recognized that the sanction of military assistance enhanced the enforceability of the decisions of the man who would, a little more than a decade later, be seated on the highest court in the nation.²⁵

In at least one other instance, Capt. Day was found to be cooperating closely with the civil authorities. He permitted Private John Barrett, Company F, to be tried before the Alcalde on the charge of robbery allegedly committed on the premises of a Marysville citizen, one Doctor Ousley. Barrett was convicted of purloining sixty dollars worth of gold dust and suspected of having stolen \$1,200 worth of additional gold dust. The private was sentenced to two hundred lashes, all but twenty of which would be remitted if he confessed and restored the \$1,200 worth. The sentence worked. After twenty lashes Barrett confessed and produced the gold dust in question. However, Barrett was still not a free man. He was confined by Day because he contemplated desertion.²⁶ Such was the nature of rough and ready justice on the frontier of northeastern California.

Canby received one very personal letter from Capt. Day. In May, 1850, Day requested a change of assignment to recruiting duty, preferably in the

eastern United States. He said that he was the senior captain of his regiment. He mentioned his father's illness, which left him the only able-bodied male protector of his family in the east. He asserted that for the first time in thirty-one years of service he had been on the sick list. He thought he could be "quite as serviceable to (his) country in Recruiting as here in command of less than a platoon." He asked for a reprieve from "Botany Bay," the emphasis being as he wrote the term in his letter to Canby.²⁷

However much he wished to be relieved, Capt. Day remained another winter at Fort Far West, as well as with the same set of problems which, at times, had discouraged him in the past. In July he had to plead for leg irons--balls and chains--for the reason, he said, that it was impossible to keep in tents prisoners not properly ironed.²⁸ In August, he advised the Tenth Military Department Assistant Adjutant General that no dependence could be placed on the Post Office at Vernon. Therefore, he wanted his mail addressed to "Sacramento City."²⁹

Moreover, in November Day pleaded for shingles, lime, and a few hundred feet of boards and some iron wedges for splitting wood. The temporary shelters of the first winter fabricated in large part from canvas tents, were already dilapidated and "ill calculated to be of much service this winter."³⁰ The Secretary of War told Congress that during the fiscal year which ended on June 30, 1850, \$376.50 was expended for "barracks and quarters" at Fort Far West. During the following fiscal year an additional sum of \$616.25 was devoted to the same purpose.³¹

On November 12, 1850, a public auction of damaged subsistence stores was held at the post. These stores were advertised as being

principally breadstuffs. The advertisement offered "a liberal percentage . . . for the services of an auctioneer on the occasion."³² Whether these stores were damaged because they could not be adequately protected from rain is not known. That may, however, be a reasonable assumption.

The problem of supply also continued to vex Capt. Day. In December, 1850, Day told Canby that the beans and candles "requisitioned were found wanting for our winter use." Day wrote that "so long as supplies . . . are forwarded at discretion and irregularly without being based on our estimates and requisitions so long shall we be imperfectly supplied." At that time, Day had no boots to issue to the men of Company F.³³

Although Fort Far West was at least 250 miles from the scene of the killing of Capt. Warner, it was the base from which Capt. Lyon (probably Bvt. Capt. Nathaniel Lyon) and his twenty infantrymen and dragoons operated in their vain search for the Indians who had taken Warner's life. The party engaged in several skirmishes with Indians, in which fifteen Indians and one soldier lost their lives.³⁴

The last Post Return for which Capt. Day bore responsibility was that of May, 1851. He relinquished command of Far West to First Lieut. Nelson H. Davis on June 9, 1851, and left the post on the same day, per S. O. no. 14, Headquarters, Pacific Division, Sonoma, California. Several months later Day achieved his majority in the Second Infantry, the unit in which he was first commissioned an officer almost thirty years earlier.³⁵

Except for the fortnight when he was on detached service (March 22-April 4) First Lieutenant Nelson H. Davis commanded Fort Far West throughout the remaining months it was an active military post. The final Post Return in the series is that of April, 1852. For several months previous to that time the garrison had been very small, it having consisted of two

subalterns, one of whom was post commander, an assistant surgeon, and seventeen men, including non-commissioned officers, a musician, an artificer, and several privates.³⁶

Not many months after it was established, Fort Far West was recognized as having been located in a fever-ridden area. At that time and for at least a quarter century thereafter, malaria was a common disease in the Sacramento Valley. When relocation was first considered, Gen. Smith, Commanding the Third Division, thought the fort should be moved "up into the mountains, on one of the principal routes across the Sierra Nevada."³⁷

By the time the deactivation of Fort Far West was ordered, though, the location of its successor was not to be in the mountains on a principal route across the Sierras but rather at the head of the Sacramento Valley near the present city of Cottonwood, Shasta County, on Cow Creek, where, as time was to reveal, the malaria problem would be just as severe as it had been at Far West. Nevertheless, the new fort, Fort Reading, was better located from the standpoint of policing the far-flung hinterland which was northeastern California. Moreover, in its new location the army post could give some protection to travelers entering California from Oregon by way of Yreka and to those entering from the eastern states by way of Nobles Emigrant Trail.

On April 30, eighteen recruits arrived from Benicia Barracks to augment the twenty men who were about to abandon the post at Far West. The April Post Return was the final one from Far West. It was abandoned on May 4, and Lieut. Davis and Company E established Fort Reading on May 26, 1852. Officially, even after the fact, the reason for the abandonment of Fort Far West continued to be the unhealthfulness of its location. A

public sale of the extra stores of Far West, that is, those not needed at Fort Reading, was held on May 1, 1852.

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1849, 2.5. National Archives and Records Service, 1968. Microfilm roll 100. U.S. Army, Adjutant General's Office, Historical Report of the Army and Navy in the Army of the United States, 1 - January, 1851 to January, 1852. U.S. Congress, 1st Session, Senate Executive Document 19, 101st Cong. Serial 101, 1st S. 1851-52, 111. "Company Staff." Monthly Report, 1851 (March, 1851). - (Extract from Doolittle's report on the military in action at the Battle of Chaparral during the Mexican war. "It was a common opinion to send reports, such as an honor roll, such as inventing did not carry with it the increase in pay by authority. Doolittle's statement that in this line was General Lieutenant - W. B. D. ...")

Doolittle's report of his reconnaissance of the mountains called to the north of Santa Fe in 1846 is found in 1846-47, 1st S. 1851-52, 111. Executive Document 47, pt. 2, pp. 3-16. Serial 101, 101. Historical Information relating to Military Posts, 1720-1800. U.S. National Archives and Records Service, 1972. 2 vols. in 1.

Report of the Secretary of War, December 31, 1849, 111. 1st S. 1851-52, Serial 101, 101.

Letter, South W. Eldridge to S. S. May, Santa Fe, New Mexico, February 7, 1851, found with a reproduction copy of the letterhead of Capt. Samuel May, U.S.A., Camp San Juan, October 16, 1850 (January 7, 1851), which purports to be a copy of the original made by the Indians some of the Golden West, Wheatland, California. Copy is to be found in the California Section of the California State Library, 2011 March, October, 1851. - Maj. Eldridge was discharged from the army on January 21, 1851; he died on June 28, 1854. See Wilson, Francis S., et al., Biographical and Dictionary of the United States Army, from its Organization, September 8, 1789, to March 1, 1901. Washington Government Printing Office, 1902; Urbana, University of Illinois Press, 1965. 2 vols., 11.00, 1901.

Capt. Doolittle's Army career extended from September 1, 1816, when he entered West Point to August 1, 1853, when he retired as Colonel, 1853. He was promoted a Brigadier General on March 11, 1855. "See also his faithful service in the Army." Wilson, Francis S., et al., Biographical and Dictionary of the United States Army, from its Organization, September 8, 1789, to March 1, 1901. Washington Government Printing Office, 1902; Urbana, University of Illinois Press, 1965. 2 vols., 11.00, 1901.

May, letterhead, leaves 1 and 7.
This, leaves 1-1.
This, leaves 11-11.
This, leaves 11 and 11.

1851

FOOTNOTES

¹U.S. Army. Adjutant General's Office, Post Return, September, 1849. U.S. National Archives and Records Service, 1968. Microfilm roll 360; U.S. Army Surgeon General's Office, Statistical Report of Sickness and Mortality in the Army of the United States. . . January, 1839 to January, 1855. 34th Congress, 1st Session, Senate Executive Document 96, 703 p. Serial Set no. 827, at p. 449; Kimerer, L.L., "Camp Far West," Grizzly Bear, 2:37 (March, 1908). /Brevet rank in Derby's case was awarded for gallantry in action at the Battle of Cerro Gordo during the Mexican War. It was a common custom to award brevet rank as an honor but such brevetting did not carry with it an increase in pay or authority. Derby's permanent rank at this time was Second Lieutenant --W.H.H.⁷

²Derby's report of his reconnaissance of the Sacramento Valley to the mouth of Butte Creek is to be found in 31st Cong., 1st sess. Senate Executive Document 47, pt. 2, pp. 3-16. Serial Set no. 558; Historical Information Relating to Military Posts, 1700-1900. U.S. National Archives and Records Service, 1972. 8 rolls; in roll 3.

³Report of the Secretary of War, November 30, 1849. 31st Cong., 1st sess., Senate Ex. Doc. 1, p. 185, Serial Set no. 549.

⁴Letter, Zoeth H. Eldredge to S. H. Day, Carson City, Nevada, February 7, 1913, bound with a typewritten copy of the "Letterbook of Capt. Hannibal Day, U.S.A., Camp Far West, October 16, 1849-January 7, 1851," which purports to be a copy of the original owned by the Natives Sons of the Golden West, Wheatland, California. The copy is to be found in the California Section of the California State Library; Post Return, October, 1849. Maj. Kingsbury was dismissed from the Army on January 27, 1853; he died on June 26, 1856. See Heitman, Francis B., Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army, from its Origination, September 29, 1789, to March 2, 1903. Washington Government Printing Office, 1903; Urbana, University of Illinois Press, 1965. 2 vols., in vol. 1:601.

⁵Capt. Day's Army career extended from September 1, 1819, when he entered West Point to August 1, 1863, when he retired as Colonel of the 6th Inv. He was breveted a Brigadier General on March 13, 1865, "for long and faithful service in the Army." Heitman, Op. cit., 1:362 and passim; Post Returns, Op. cit.

⁶Day, Letterbook, leaves 1 and 2.

⁷Ibid., leaves 5-7.

⁸Ibid., leaves 10-11.

⁹Ibid., leaves 12 and 13.

¹⁰ Ibid., leaf 17.

¹¹ Ibid., leaf 21.

¹² Ibid., leaf 22.

¹³ Report of the Secretary of War, November 30, 1850. 31st Congress, 2nd sess., Senate Executive Document 1, pt. 11, p. 267, Serial Set no. 587.

¹⁴ Day, "Letterbook," letter to Lt. Davis, Late Officer of the Day, January 9, 1850, leaf 15.

¹⁵ Ibid., leaf 26.

¹⁶ Captain Day referred to the Feather River port as "Nicholas," rather than as "Nicolaus," its present-day spelling.

¹⁷ Ibid., leaves 26-27.

¹⁸ Letter, Day to Canby, April 16, 1850; Post Returns, April-September, 1850.

¹⁹ Day, Op. cit., leaves 37-38; Letter, Day to Canby, February 16, 1950, Ibid., leaf 24.

²⁰ Letter, Johnston to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, July 6, 1850, in U.S. Office of Indian Affairs, Letters Received by the Office of Indian Affairs, 1824-1881: California Superintendency, 1849-1886. U.S. National Archives and Records Service, 1958. Roll 32, 0039-0044.

²¹ Captain Hendershot, a Kentuckian and a West Pointer, retired March 30, 1864, as a captain. He was breveted a colonel in 1865 for faithful and meritorious service connected with the recruitment and organization of the volunteer units of the Army during the Civil War. Heitman, Op. cit., 1:522.

²² The Holts were said to have enticed Indian women and girls into their mill to insult them. However, the writer who asserted that the Holts acted in that disgraceful a manner, did not arrive in California until after the incident at the sawmill. Until corroborated by other sources, the alleged questionable behavior should be regarded as unproved. See Morse, Edwin Franklin, "The Story of a Gold Miner; Reminiscences of Edwin Franklin Morse," California Historical Society Quarterly 6:205-237 (September, 1937).

²³ Letter, Day to Canby, May 28, 1850, Ibid., leaves 47-48; Thomas J. Green, a State Senator, was elected Maj. Gen. of the State Militia by the Legislature in 1850. He died in Warren County, North Carolina on December 13, 1863. California. Secretary of State, California Blue Book, 1903, 623 pp., at p. 414.

²⁴ See p. 11.

²⁵ Sketch of the Life of Stephen J. Field of the U.S. Supreme Court. Published in the New York Sun of April 25, 1880, n.p., n.d. 36 p. at p. 8.

²⁶ Letterbook, Letter, Day to Assistant Adjutant General, Hq., 10th Military Department, April 16, 1850, leaves 37-38.

²⁷ Letter, Day to Canby, May 16, 1850, leaves 43-44.

²⁸ Letterbook, Day to Canby, July 1, 1850, leaf 53.

²⁹ Ibid., August 1, 1850, leaf 59.

³⁰ Ibid., Day to Canby, November 1, 1850, leaf 61.

³¹ "Expenditures for Barracks and Quarters, Letter of the Secretary of War," 35th Cong., 2d sess. House Exec., Doc. 93, Serial Set no. 1008.

³² "Auction Sales," Sacramento Transcript, November 4, 1850, p. 3/1, November 5, 1850, p. 3/1.

³³ Letter, Day to Canby, December 16, 1850, leaf 68.

³⁴ "Indian Expedition," Alta California, August 26, 1850, p. 2/2.

³⁵ Post Return, June, 1850; Heitman, Op. cit., 1:362.

³⁶ Report of the Secretary of War, November 29, 1851. 32nd Cong., 1st sess., H. Ex. Doc. no. 2, p. 207, Serial Set no. 634.

³⁷ Letter, Gen. Persifor F. Smith to Capt. Irvin McDowell, Asst. Adj.-Gen., Headquarters of the Army, May 25, 1850, in Report of the Secretary of War, November 30, 1850. 31st Cong., 2d sess., Sen. Exec. Doc. no. 1, pt. 2, p. 80, Serial Set no. 587.

³⁸ Post Return, Fort Far West, April, 1852; Prucha, Francis P., Guide to the Military Posts of the United States, 1789-1895. Madison, Wis., State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1964, 178 p. at p. 74; Statistical Report on the Sickness and Mortality in the Army of the United States . . . from January, 1839, to January, 1855. 34th Cong., 1st sess, Sen. Exec. Doc. no. 96, 763 p. at p. ; Serial Set no. 827; History of Yuba County. Oakland, Calif., Thompson & West, 1879, 150 p. at p. 38.

Fort Reading

Fort Reading was established on May 12, 1852 by Co. E, 2nd Infantry, the unit which earlier that month had evacuated Fort Fort Verde orders of establish a new fort in the upper Sacramento valley. Fort Reading was located on the west bank of Cow Creek approximately two and one-half miles from its confluence with the Sacramento River. It was about twenty miles southeast of today's "old" Shasta, which was then the county seat of Shasta County and located at 40° 28' 12" north latitude and 121° 1' west longitude. In terms of modern cultural features of the area, it stood on the western boundary of the Snows Ranch property. The site can be reached by going out of Anderson, California, in a westerly direction on North Street to Deitch Road. The site of Fort Reading is 3.5 miles west of this town, and it was named in honor of Francis S. Reading, a California pioneer and the holder of a Mexican land grant in Shasta County.

FORT READING

The Fort's Returns of Fort Reading are available in microfilm roll 593 of Returns from U. S. Military Posts, 1800-1876, published by the National Archives and Records Service. Returns for 1852 through August, 1852 were signed by 1st Lt. Nelson S. Davis, Co. E, 2nd Infantry, the commanding post commander, who in obedience to orders had evacuated Fort Fort Verde and had the company to the upper Sacramento Valley. Returns for September, 1852 through April, 1855, were the responsibility of Major and later Col. George Wright, also a West Pointer, who was not only the commander of Fort Reading but also the commander of the whole northern California and western Oregon District, including Fort Jones, California, the Bear River District, comprising an Indian country of something like 1,000 warriors. The

Fort Reading

Fort Reading was established on May 26, 1852 by Co. E, 2nd Infantry, the unit which earlier that month had evacuated Fort Far West with orders to establish a new post in the upper Sacramento Valley. Fort Reading was located on the west bank of Cow Creek approximately two and one-half miles from its confluence with the Sacramento River. It was about twenty miles southeast of today's "old" Shasta, which was then the county seat of Shasta County and located at 40° 28'22" north latitude and 122° 7' west longitude. In terms of modern cultural features of the area, it stood on the northern boundary of the Hawes Ranch property. The site may be reached by going out of Anderson, California, in a northerly direction on North Street to Dersch Road. The site of Fort Reading is 5.4 miles east of this turn,¹ and it was named in honor of Pierson B. Reading, a California pioneer and the holder of a Mexican land grant in Shasta County.²

The Post Returns of Fort Reading are available on microfilm roll 993 of Returns from U. S. Military Posts, 1800-1916, published by the U. S. National Archives and Records Service. Returns for May through August, 1852 were signed by 1st Lt. Nelson H. Davis, Co. E, 2nd Infantry, the founding post commander, who in obedience to orders had evacuated Fort Far West and led his company to the upper Sacramento Valley. Returns for September, 1852 through April, 1855, were the responsibility of Major and Bvt. Col. George Wright, also a West Pointer, who was not only the Commandant of Fort Reading but also the commander of the whole northern California and southern Oregon district, including Fort Jones, California, and Fort Lane, Oregon, comprising an Indian country of something like 1,000 warriors. The

January, 1854, return indicates that Fort Reading supplied Army units throughout this district.

The Post Returns for March, 1853, indicate that 1st Lt. Edmund Russell of Fort Reading was killed by Indians at the head of Thomes Creek, some twenty miles from the town of Tehama, on March 24, 1853, which is an indication of patrol activity on the part of troops stationed at Fort Reading. Returns for May, 1855, through March, 1856, were signed by Capt. and Bvt. Maj. Francis O. Wyse, 3rd Artillery. The March Return states that on March 24, Co. D, 3rd Artillery marched up the Sacramento seventy miles through Indian country, returning to post on March 30.

No Returns are available for the period April, 1856 through April, 1857; Fort Reading apparently not having been staffed during that period. The Return for May, 1857 explains that the fort was re-occupied on May 7, 1857, by Co. A, 1st Dragoons and its commanding officer, Capt. John W. T. Gardiner. The post was again vacant between June, 1857 and November, 1866. On the other hand, there are Returns for December, 1866, through June, 1867, when Capt. Robert H. Chapin and Co. G of the 8th Cavalry occupied it. Fort Reading was finally abandoned in June, 1867. By Act of Congress the Fort Reading military reservation was restored to the public domain in 1881.³

Movements of the units that saw service at Fort Reading are revealing of Army life on the California frontier. Co. E, 2nd Infantry, founded Fort Reading and remained as a part of its complement until the company was broken up in November, 1853; its musician and privates being transferred at that time to Co. D, 4th Inf. In September, 1852 Co. A, 1st Dragoons took station at the fort, departing, evidently, for Fort Jones in November, 1852. Co. D, 4th Inf. arrived in October, 1852, and left for Fort Jones in April, 1853. Companies A and D, 1st Dragoons arrived in February, 1853, from Fort

Jones and returned to Fort Jones on April 15, 1853. Co. D of the 4th Inf. arrived in March, 1853. From November, 1853 until June, 1854, it was the only unit stationed at Fort Reading. In June, 1854, it was joined by Co. D, 3rd Artillery. In December, 1855, Co. E, 4th Inf., joined the latter two companies. However, by February, 1856, Co. D, 3rd Artillery was alone at the fort, as it was again in March, 1856. In May, 1857, Co. A, 1st Dragoons re-occupied the post for one month. The last time the post was activated, December, 1866 through June, 1867, it was garrisoned by Co. G, 8th Cavalry.

Fort Reading appears for the first time in the annual Report of the Secretary of War, dated December 4, 1852. At that time Maj. and Bvt. Col. George Wright's command consisted of two companies, 2nd and 4th Inf., two Assistant Surgeons, two First Lieutenants, one Second Lieutenant, one Bvt. Second Lt. and 101⁴ enlisted men. Fort Reading's supplies came from Benicia Army Depot by river steamer to Tehama, thence by public teams for a distance of fifty miles to the fort, at a cost of \$24 per ton, counting the cost of the price of forage, the hire of teamsters and the cost of wear and tear on both wagons and harness. In the Report of the Secretary of War, December 1, 1853,⁵ only the name of the commanding officer, the two companies present, the number of enlisted men (63) and officers (7) present, and the number of officers absent (two captains, 3 subalterns) and enlisted men (2) are given. See also same, December 4, 1854.⁶

On February 11, 1853, Major Wright wrote to Maj. E. S. Townsend, Hq., San Francisco, wanting to be advised concerning whether white people settling in his northern California command were entitled to do so. On March 1, 1853, Maj. Townsend replied that the question was so "delicate" that an answer was being sought from Washington, D.C. Meanwhile, the

Commanding General said that they should be permitted to enter Indian territory. ⁷ In the same source, (Roll 34 #194) a newspaper editorial (unidentified) discusses the plight of the starving Indians. It advocates the placing of two or three thousand bushels of wheat at Fort Reading for distribution to needy Indians.

In the Indian War Files of the State Archives, Sacramento, is a letter from John G. Dreibelbis, April 13, 1854, to Governor Bigler, which gives details concerning Indian difficulties in the Pit River country and which says that aid was requested from Col. Wright at Ft. Reading. The letter requests reimbursements for monies already expended.

Fort Reading was host on two occasions to parties of the Corps of Topographical Engineers making surveys of possible railroad routes from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Coast. Lt. Edward G. Beckwith and party reached Fort Reading on July 12, 1854, while on a reconnaissance from the valley of Mud Lake and Nobles Pass. They were courteously received and entertained while their animals were being shod and their supplies being replenished. In 1855, Lts. Robert S. Williamson and Henry L. Abbot visited the post and were received by Maj. Francis O. Wyse, Dr. John F. Hammond, Post Surgeon, agreed to have a series of barometric observations taken at the fort. Incidentally, Surgeon Hammond, a South Carolinian, remained in the Union Army and was a respected Lt. Col. at the close of the war. The party carried with it to the clear, cool air of the mountains the seeds of the malaria acquired in the Sacramento Valley. ⁸ A letter from Maj. F. O. Wyse, Commanding Fort Reading, to Maj. Townsend, August 19, 1855, states that citizens are opening a wagon road on the west bank of the Sacramento to Yreka and that an Indian reservation on the Sacramento River is therefore desirable. On Sept. 19, 1855 Thomas J. Henley, Superintendent, California

Indian Superintendency wrote to Maj. Gen. John E. Wool stating that he saw Maj. Wyse at Fort Reading, where they discussed the proposed reservation. He said he would write to Washington, D.C. concerning it.⁹

In the Report of the Secretary of War, 1855,¹⁰ Capt. Rufus Ingalls, Assistant Quartermaster, wrote to Major Thomas S. Jesup, Quartermaster General, U. S. Army, November 22, 1855 that he had taken horses overland to Oregon and California from Fort Leavenworth and that he had turned over the animals destined for California to Fort Reading authorities on July 20, 1855. There Capt. Ingalls paid off and discharged the civilian employees of his party.

Inspector General Mansfield visited Fort Reading on July 18-21, 1855.¹¹ His report indicates the far-flung geographical extent of the post commander's responsibility, extending from Weaverville to the California-Nevada Territory boundary, including the Rogue River and Klamath valleys of Oregon. The colonel regretted that so much labor and expense was devoted to this fort, which was situated in such an unhealthy climate where ague fever prevailed. The fort was constructed of adobe, with the floor planks laid directly on the ground. During the rainy season the grounds of the fort become boggy. Mansfield noted that Capt. and Bvt. Lt. Col. Henry L. S. Scott, Co. D, 4th Inf., of this post was on detached service as aide to the Commanding General of the Army.

An excellent source of additional documentation of the unhealthfulness of the locale at Fort Reading is the U. S. Army Surgeon General's Statistical Report on the Sickness and Mortality in the Army of the United States . . . January, 1839 to January, 1855.¹² The report said that Cow Creek overflows during the winter and runs between the buildings used for quarters and that intermittent fever occurs at all seasons of the year. Assistant Surgeon

John Campbell said that in September, 1853, a company of infantry left the fort for field duty, but it had to halt thirty miles from the post, the men being so debilitated from intermittent fever that they were unable to proceed to the seat of the Indian disturbances.

Between fiscal years 1851-52 and 1855-56 the government spent a total of \$36,318.45 for construction and repairs for Fort Reading. Most of the construction labor was furnished by the men of the fort.¹³

Brig. Gen. George Wright wrote to C. C. Bush, County Judge of Shasta County, on May 17, 1865, concerning the petition of Shasta and Tehama county citizens for protection against the Indians. Wright said he recommended to Gen. McDowell that a company of cavalry be sent to Fort Reading, which would be a central point for the operations against the Indians.¹⁴ However, the post was not occupied at that time. It was, on the other hand, occupied from December, 1866 through June, 1867.

On October 18, 1866, Major General Irvin McDowell, reporting for the Military Division of the Pacific and the District of California noted that "There is, I think; no danger to any of the settlements in the late [sic] district of California; the only apprehensions are from the settlers in the vicinity of Fort Reading," which was shortly thereafter occupied for the last time.¹⁵

The Fort Reading military reservation appeared for the last time in a U. S. government publication on December 19, 1876, when a report of the House Committee on Military Affairs, noting that it was abandoned by the Army on April 6, 1870, recommended that the land be surveyed, appraised and offered for sale, it being presumed that the lands of the reservation ". . . are more valuable than ordinary public lands subject to preemption."¹⁶ As noted earlier, the lands were restored to the public domain in 1881.

FOOTNOTES

¹Prucha, Francis P., Guide to the Military Posts of the United States, 1789-1934. Madison, Wisc.: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1964, p. 191; U. S. National Archives and Record Service, Historical Information Relating to Military Posts and Other Installations, 1700-1900. 8 rolls of microfilm, in roll 6; Hart, Herbert M., Pioneer Forts of the West. Seattle: Superior Publishing Co., 1969, pp. 118-119.

²Giles, Rosena A., Shasta County, California; A History. Oakland: Biobooks, 1949, 301 p. at p. 122.

³Post Returns, Giles, Ibid., p. 123; Prucha, Op. cit., p. 101; Statutes at Large, XXI, 325.

⁴32nd Cong., 2nd sess. Sen. Exec. Doc. 1, pt. 2, 187 p. at pp. 62, 88, 91.

⁵33rd Cong., 1st sess. Sen. Exec. Doc. 1, 2v. Ser. set nos. 691, 692, at pp. 122-123.

⁶33rd Cong., 2nd sess. Sen. Exec. Doc. 1, pt. 2, 381 p. at pp. 62-63, Ser. set no. 747.

⁷U. S. Bureau of Indian Affairs, Letters Received by the Office Indian Affairs, 1824-81: California Superintendency, 1849-1880. U. S. National Archives. 1958. Roll 33, #200-202, 207-209.

⁸Report of Explorations and Surveys to Ascertain the Most Practical and Economical Route from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean. 33rd Cong., 2nd sess. H. Exec. Doc. 91. 1855-1860. 12v. Ser. set no 791-801.

⁹U. S. Bureau of Indian Affairs, Op. cit., Roll 34, #745-746, 750.

¹⁰34th Cong., 1st sess., Sen. Exec. Doc. 1. Ser set no 811.

¹¹Mansfield, Joseph K. F., Mansfield on the Condition of the Western Forts, 1853-1854; ed. by Robert W. Frazer. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press. c1963. 254 p. at pp. 159-162. Sketch of Fort Reading, plan no. 20.

¹²34th Cong., 1st sess., Sen. Exec. Doc. 96. 703 p. Ser. set 827 at pp. 450-452.

¹³U. S. War Department, Expenditures for Barracks and Quarters, Letter of the Secretary of War, 35th Cong., 2nd sess. H. Exec. Doc. 93. 119 p. Ser. set no. 1008.

¹⁴U. S. War Department, War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies. Washington: Government Printing Office. 1897. ser. I, vol. L, pt. II, p. 1234.

¹⁵39th Cong., 2d sess. H. Exec. Doc. 1, 774 p. at p. 33. Ser. set o. 1285.

¹⁶Fort Reading Military Reservation in California. 44th Cong., 2d sess. House Report 35. 1 p. Ser. set no. 1769.

NEWSPAPER REFERENCES

"Statement of Troops," Alta California, July 27, 1852, p. 2/3.

States that 1st Lt. N. H. Davis, Co. E, 2nd Infantry, including a total of five officers and fifty-seven men are stationed at Fort Reading.

"More Indian Massacres," Alta California, March 30, 1853, p. 2/4.

"Murder of Lt. Edward Russell by Indians," Shasta Courier, April 3, 1853, p. 2/2.

Lt. Edward Russell, 4th Inf., who with his men had captured and disarmed eight to ten Indians, was murdered at the head of Thomes Creek, Colusa County, when he was separated from his men. The Indians placed seven arrows into his body. The alleged treachery of his guide and interpreter may have led to his undoing. The body was buried at Fort Reading.

_____, Shasta Courier, May 21, 1853, p. 1/2.

Col. Wright of Fort Reading passed through Shasta on his way to Fort Jones, Scott Valley, Siskiyou County.

"Army Intelligence," Alta California, July 21, 1853, p. 2/2.

Says Co C, 1st Dragoons, Co. E, 2nd Inf., and Co. D, 4th Inf., 120 officers and men under Bvt. Col. G. Wright are at Fort Reading. No action is taking place.

"Troops for Rogue River," Alta California, September 19, 1853, p. 2/2.

Four infantry companies of twenty men each passed through Shasta enroute to Indian disturbances in the north. One company is from Fort Reading. All are commanded by Col. Wright.

"Movement Among the Troops," Shasta Courier, October 8, 1853. p. 2/2; same, October 10, 1853, p. 3/7.

Col. Wright returned with a battalion of infantry to Fort Reading from the Rogue River. The troops saw no combat. Lt. Bates and his troops, encamped at Tower's House, also returned to Fort Reading. Col. Wright, who met the chiefs, said there will be no trouble this winter in Oregon.

"From Eureka," Shasta Courier, February 18, 1854, p. 2/2.

Citizens of Scott Valley want Col. Wright of Fort Reading to have Capt. Judah of Fort Jones chastise the hostile Indians.

"Letter from Cottonwood," Shasta Courier, July 1, 1854, p. 2/3.

The letter, signed "Samivel," says that he saw sixty officers and men drilling at Fort Reading. They looked like fine troops. Lt. Van Voast (2nd Lt. James Van Voast, 9th Inf., probably) arrived with fifty men of Co. D, 3rd Artillery. The writer thought the fort should be moved to higher ground, for too many were ill with fever.

"A California Porcupine," Shasta Courier, February 3, 1855, p. 2/1.

Lt. Van Voast of Fort Reading killed a porcupine, supposedly the first of its type to be killed in California. The Indians feared it.

"Officers of the New Regiments," Shasta Courier, April 14, 1855, p. 2/3.

Bvt. Col. Wright has been promoted to Col. of the 9th Inf. and will continue as Commander of Fort Reading.

"Departure," Shasta Courier, May 12, 1855, p. 2/1.

Col. G. Wright of Fort Reading, accompanied by Lt. Van Voast will join his new regiment at Old Point Comfort, Virginia. Maj. Wyse will assume command of Fort Reading.

"Arrival," Shasta Courier, August 11, 1855, p. 2/1.

Lt. John B. Hood, sent out on the Lt. Williamson exploring expedition twelve days ago, has returned. Lt. Hood departed for Fort Jones where he has been stationed for two years. (Hood later would win fame in the Confederate Army--WHH)

"Lt. Williamson's Exploring Expedition," Marysville Herald, Nov. 3, 1855, p. 3/1.

Lt. Williamson of the Topographical Engineers left Fort Reading with an escort of a hundred /sic/ men as escort for his exploration of the passes in the Cascade Range, through the Pit River country and into the Willamette Valley, Oregon. The party was not disturbed by Indians, although great apprehension was felt on this account.

"Troops Bound for Oregon," Shasta Courier, November 10, 1855, p. 2/5.

Lt. Underwood, Fort Reading, has orders to proceed with a company of infantry to fight the Rogue River Indians. Capt. Smith with a company of dragoons will join Capt. Judah, who is already in the field with a company of the 4th Inf.

"Lt. Underwood's Company" Shasta Courier, November 17, 1855, p. 2/3.

States that the community wants to wish Lt. Underwood and his company good luck in fighting Indians.

"Another Battle at Jump-Off-Joe," Yreka Union, November 24, 1855, p. 2/3.

Bob Williams and twenty-five volunteers found the trail of raiding Indians between Grave Creek and Jump-Off-Joe. They discovered the cargo of a mule train taken by the Indians and the still burning houses of the widows Nider and Harris. Capt. Judah arrived from Fort Reading with a portion of the 4th Infantry and a howitzer.

"Later from Oregon Way," Shasta Courier, December 1, 1855, p. 2/5.

Lt. (William B.) Hazen, with a portion of the 4th Inf. stationed at Fort Reading, is going to Oregon.

"Arrival of Steamer Oregon," Shasta Courier, January 19, 1856, p. 2/4.

Col. George Wright and Lt. Van Voast, formerly of Fort Reading, returned with six companies of 421 men, plus 22 women and 17 children. Lt. Van Voast is the Quartermaster.

"More Troops," Red Bluff Beacon, May 13, 1857, p. 3/2.

Capt. Gardner (probably Capt. John W. T. Gardiner) with a company of dragoons arrived at Fort Reading after a ten-day march from Benecia. They are headed for the Pit River country to establish a new post.

"U. S. Soldiers," Red Bluff Beacon, June 17, 1857, p. 2/4.

Lt. Williams, (probably Robert Williams, a Virginian, rose to the rank of Bvt. Brigadier-General for faithful and meritorious service during the Civil War) 1st Dragoons, passed through with ninety mounted men and eight six-mule wagons enroute to Fort Reading. Later they will continue on to the Columbia River.

"Capt. E. Underwood," Shasta Courier, August 2, 1858, p. 1/4.

States that Capt. Underwood (Edmund Underwood) has returned from the East. Praises him and says that he will return to Fort Reading.

"Honor to Col. Wright," Shasta Courier, November 6, 1858, p. 2/2.

Says that Wright, formerly Commandant at Fort Reading has covered himself with glory in the recent campaign against Indians in Washington and Oregon.

"Fort Reading Ball," Red Bluff Beacon, April 27, 1859, p. 2/3;
Ibid., May 7, 1859, p. 2/1.

A grand ball is to be given at Fort Reading on Monday, May 2. The second citation states that because of heavy rain the ball will be held next Monday. Capt. Wells has worked hard to decorate. There will be horse racing on Tuesday.

_____, Shasta Courier, November 19, 1859, p. 1/6.

Lt. Ransom has been commissioned by the President as Assistant Quartermaster. Lt. Ransom was formerly stationed at Fort Reading.

"Fort Reading," Shasta Courier, November 4, 1865, p. 2/1.

The fort was re-occupied on September 1 by seventeen of Uncle Sam's "Blues". Two and possibly three full companies will be stationed there this winter. This move will mean increased business for farmers.

"Fort Reading," Red Bluff Independent, December 19, 1866, p. 2/1;
"Proposals for Forage," Advertisement, Ibid., p. 2/3.

Lt. Gillett, Quartermaster, Fort Reading, invited bids for barley and hay until May 1, 1867, and for supplies of fresh beef to be delivered as needed.

"Drowned," Shasta Courier, January 5, 1867, p. 2/1.

Lt. Cornelius Gillett, Quartermaster, Fort Reading, was drowned while attempting to cross Cow Creek when his horse threw his head back, knocking the officer out of the saddle. The Lt. had \$500 in gold and the same amount in greenbacks on his person when the mishap occurred. He was on his way to Red Bluff at the time to pay for supplies. The drowning occurred on December 24, 1866. (See also Heitman, Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army, 1:457.)

"Deserters," Shasta Courier, January 5, 1867, p. 2/3.

Nine cavalymen deserted from Fort Reading, taking with them horses, guns and supplies. Two of them headed for Shasta. A non-com was sent after them, but hearing that they might shoot him if he attempted to apprehend them, he notified Sheriff Hopping, who deputized Isaac Bloomfield and William Lahnman, who apprehended and jailed them at Whiskeytown. The other seven headed for Red Bluff.

Oliver, James A. Shasta County, California: A History. Oakland: Wildcat Press, 1969. 201 pp.

Fort Reading is the subject part of Chapter VIII, pp. 122-123. This source contains the anecdotal description of Fort Reading, which was built in the highest bluffs in July, 1864. It states that Fort Reading was originally founded in 1864, yet there was great trouble with the fort for December, 1865 to June, 1867. Part of the fort's facilities burned. That was soon done or sold in 1870. On February 14, 1867 (1866), the reservation was returned to public domain. An army team is still being used. It is stated that in 1867 the army married Sgt. and Mrs. Martha Jane Thomas. They had four children, which were not recorded until 1913. Mrs. Thomas claims that she came from Fort Reading from December, 1864 to June, 1867.

Port, Herbert W. Frontier Days of the West. Los Angeles: Superior Publishing Co., 1907. 124 pp.

Fort Reading is discussed on page 118. Fort Reading was established in 1864 to watch the Indians. It was built in every direction. This statement may be a bit too strong considering the generally small of the area. Fort Reading was established a year after the state of California, and its location was not far removed from the state's Indian. Has postscript of the ring of the fort and the historical marker there.

Reed, George. The Army of the Pacific, 1846-1861. Glendale: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1931. 433 pp.

In 1861 citizens of Shasta and Tehama counties petitioned the Wright to send a company of soldiers to Black Rock or Hill Cross. This source also says that the post (Fort Reading) was used until 1863, which would appear to be an error. (See Dunlap, above)

Wells, Robert L., Jr. The Study of minorities in Shasta County, 1846-1860. Western State, California State University, 1961. 176 pp.

In February, 1861, eighteen Chinese and two white men were sent to Shasta to dig ditches on the McLeod River. Indians surrounding the camp entered their camp killing all except two. Fort Reading was a search party under Sgt. and Major. The Indians were headed back to the party. Twenty-five of them were killed and two were wounded. Fort Reading is discussed on page 122.

SECONDARY SOURCES

Dunlap, Virginia Hawes. "Fort Reading Ranch and the Hawes Family," The Covered Wagon, 1963: 22-24.

Fort Reading stood on the northern boundary of the present (1963) Hawes Ranch property. This sketch of the history of the fort states that the post was abandoned in 1866. Actually it was staffed by Troop G, 8th Cavalry, from December 1865 through June, 1867. The location of the fort was not particularly appropriate for controlling the Indians, and it was an unhealthful location where malaria plagued the troops unless quinine was administered daily.

Giles, Rosena A. Shasta County, California: A History. Oakland: Biobooks 1949: 301 pp.

Fort Reading is the subject part of Chapter XIII, pp. 122-123. This source mentions the government ferryboat at Fort Reading, which was sold to the highest bidder in July, 1864. States that Fort Reading was officially abandoned in 1866, yet there are post returns from the fort for December, 1866 to June, 1867. Part of the fort's buildings burned. Most were torn down or sold in 1870. On February 18, 1871 (1881), the reservation was restored to public domain. An army barn is still being used. Erroneously states that in 1857 the newly married Maj. and Mrs. Chapin left Shasta County for Fort Bidwell, which was not founded until July, 1865. Maj. Chapin signed post returns from Fort Reading from December, 1866 to June, 1867.

Hart, Herbert M. Pioneer Forts of the West. Seattle: Superior Publishing Co., 1967: 192 pp.

Fort Reading is discussed on pp. 118-119. Fort Reading was established in 1852 to watch the Indians for 200 miles in every direction. That statement may be a bit too strong concerning the westerly point of the compass. Fort Humboldt was established a scant seven months later to police northwestern California, and its location was too far removed from the troublesome Pit River Indians. Has photograph of the site of the fort and the historical marker there.

Hunt, Aurora. The Army of the Pacific, 1860-1866. Glendale: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1951: 455 pp.

In 1865 citizens of Shasta and Tehama counties petitioned Gen. Wright to send a company of soldiers to Black Rock on Mill Creek. This source also says that the post (Fort Reading) was used until 1866, which would appear to be an error. (See Dunlap, above)

Heid, Robert L., Jr. "The Study of Minorities in Shasta County, 1850-1880," Masters Thesis, California State University, Chico, 1969: 179L.

In February, 1854, eighteen Chinese and two white men were prospecting new diggings on the McCloud River. Indians pretending friendship entered their camp, killing all except two. Fort volunteers formed a search party under Bvt. Col Wright. The Indians were hunted down by the party. Twenty-two of them were killed and two were wounded. Fort Reading is discussed on pp. 33-34.

Southern, May H. Our Stories (i.e. Storied) Landmarks: Shasta County, California. San Francisco: P. Balakshin Printing Co., 1942: 100 p.

A general secondary account, Fort Reading being discussed on pp. 60-65. Makes the point that the fort was not in a good position for controlling the Indians, especially the Pit River Indians.

Utley, Robert M. Frontiersmen in Blue: The United States Army and the Indian, 1848-1865. New York: The Macmillan Co., c 1967: 384 pp.

The mining boom on both sides of the California-Oregon boundary created a situation in which both whites and Indians needed protection from each other. Fort Reading was the first fort to be established with this end in view: Fort Jones followed six months later. Fort Humboldt, established in January, 1853, guarded the northwest coast west of the Trinity Mountains. Later came Forts Bragg and Crook, and several years later than the latter, Fort Bidwell.

Camp Bidwell

Captain Augustus W. Starr and Co. F, 2nd Cavalry, California Volunteers, left Camp Bidwell, near Lawrence, en route to Orlow, on July 12, 1863, in obedience to Special Orders of the General Commanding the Department of the Pacific. The company arrived in the vicinity of Chico by July 31, 1863 to remain there to protect whites and to collect and protect friendly Indians.

The First Report for August, 1863 gives the date of establishment of Camp Bidwell as August 1, 1863. The same source is also authority for the fact that Co. E, 2nd Inf., C. V., arrived on August 15 and that Co. A, 9th Inf., C.V., arrived on August 26, at which time Lt. Col. Andrew W. Hocket assumed command of the post. The First Report of Camp Bidwell consisted of five officers and 102 enlisted men, including a soldier.

CAMP BIDWELL

The exact location of Camp Bidwell, as known to the present writer, is a letter from Lt. Col. Hocket to Col. G. C. Davis, Assistant Adjutant General, Department of the Pacific, dated August 28, 1863, states that Lt. Col. Hocket and his command started from Chico Landing, where they disembarked, to Camp Bidwell, a march of six miles. His letter indicated that the camp was located a mile from Chico. Hocket immediately assumed command and proposed to relocate the camp in a position better calculated for offensive and defensive operations and more desirable in policy of health.

A possible clue to the location of Camp Bidwell (probably to its second location) is contained in an entry by Mrs. Emily F. Bidwell, wife of "Blackie Chico Indian: The Necheyeh," the original of which is in the private collection of Mrs. Mack (Dorothy F.) Hill of Chico. In the March

Camp Bidwell

Captain Augustus W. Starr and Co. F, 2nd Cavalry, California Volunteers, left Camp Union, near Sacramento, en route to Chico, on July 28, 1863, in obedience to Special Orders of the General Commanding the Department of the Pacific. The company arrived in the vicinity of Chico on July 31, 1863 to remain there to protect whites and to collect and protect friendly Indians.¹

The Post Return for August, 1863 gives the date of establishment of Camp Bidwell as August 1, 1863. The same source is also authority for the fact that Co. K, 2nd Inf., C. V., arrived on August 15 and that Co. A, 6th Inf., C.V., arrived on August 26, at which time Lt. Col. Ambrose E. Hooker assumed command of the post. Initially the garrison of Camp Bidwell consisted of five officers and 102 enlisted men, including a saddler.

The exact location of Camp Bidwell is unknown to the present writer. A letter from Lt. Col. Hooker to Col. R. C. Drum, Assistant Adjutant General, Department of the Pacific, dated August 28, 1863,² states that Lt. Col. Hooker and his command marched from Chico Landing, where they disembarked, to Camp Bidwell, a march of six miles. His letter indicated that the camp was located a mile from Chico. Hooker immediately assumed command and proceeded to relocate the camp ". . . in a position better calculated for offensive and defensive operations and more desirable in point of health."

A possible clue to the location of Camp Bidwell (probably to its second location) is contained in an essay by Mrs. Annie K. Bidwell, entitled, "Rancho Chico Indians: The Mechoopda," the original of which is in the private collection of Mrs. Mack (Dorothy J.) Hill of Chico. In the fourth

to the last paragraph of that work Mrs. Bidwell says "The soldiers camped where the cutting shed is now, northeast of the mansion." The essay being dated May 12, 1913, one might infer the location of the camp if the 1913 location of the cutting shed could be determined.³

Camp Bidwell was located in the Chico area in response to citizen demand which was generated by Indian depredations in 1862 and 1863. In the summer of 1862 three of William Hickok's children, who were gathering blackberries on Rock Creek six miles east of the Shasta Road, were killed as was Thomas Allen, a teamster who was traversing the road from Stratton's (Morrill's) Mill to J. L. Keefer's ranch in the same general area.⁴

In March, 1863, George Hays, a sheepherder, was shot and wounded while pursuing Indians who had broken into his home.⁵ A few months later, Indians killed Richard Morrison, Mrs. Blum, and two of the Lewis children, whose parents lived near Pence's Ranch. Some fifty Indians, after having heard about these killings, thought it prudent to surrender their arms and ask for protection, which was granted.⁶

With the white residents of Butte County up in arms concerning this series of blood lettings and suggesting the extermination of the Indians, George M. Hanson, the northern California Indian agent, appealed to General Wright for a company of soldiers for Butte County to protect, collect and remove the Indians to a reservation. Wright's answer was the ordering of Captain Starr and his company F, to Chico to establish an army camp. In quick succession he also ordered Co. K of the Second California Infantry and Co. A of the Sixth California Infantry to Chico and vested command of the new post in Lt. Col. Ambrose E. Hooker.⁷

Almost as soon as he arrived at his new post, Lt. Col. Hooker, saw that it would be necessary to have a medical doctor in residence at Camp

Bidwell, for he reported to Col. Drum that quite a few of his men were ill with fever, ague or chill fever. His superior agreed with him. In October, citizen physician C. C. Waller was added to the staff at Camp Bidwell.⁸

Col. Drum in letters to Captain Starr, dated August 1 and August 3, 1863, instructed Starr to protect whites and friendly Indians, especially those living and working on the ranches of citizens against the assaults of "bad" white men. He was also advised to consult freely with Major Bidwell, both on account of his ". . . large experience in these difficulties and also from the fact that he is the representative of the Indian Department in that portion of the state."⁹ Drum also ordered Starr to apprehend those Indians who had committed murders and depredations.

Evidently Indians were either assembling in great numbers or they were being brought in by white settlers, for on August 10, just ten days after the camp was established, Captain Starr wrote to Col. Drum to ask what he was to do with five to six hundred Indians whom the settlers wanted removed from Butte County. The answer, apparently, was already being formulated when Starr asked the question, for on August 11, Col. Drum wrote to Lt. Col. Hooker to inform him that the Indians were to be conveyed to the Round Valley Reservation in Mendocino County, where they were to be placed in the custody of the Indian Department. Since Agent Hanson was not able to feed them, Col. Hooker was authorized to issue flour, meat and potatoes with the money value of these rations going to the credit of the War Department in Washington, D. C.¹⁰ Drum, in a letter to Hooker, dated August 20 advised him ". . . under no circumstances will you permit the indiscriminate slaughter of Indians who are known to be peaceable and quiet."¹¹

On August 16, Capt. Alfred Morton, commanding Co. K, 2nd California

Infantry, which arrived at Camp Bidwell on August 15, wrote to Col. Drum to report that Major John Bidwell thought it necessary to send an additional company to the post. In response, Co. A, 6th California Infantry and Lt. Col. Hooker, the post commander, arrived and took post on August 26. (Post Return, August, 1863). Morton added the information that Capt. Starr would take a detachment to the field to bring in about 200 Indians supposed to be on Pea Vine Creek.

Meanwhile, the settlers were demanding action. Two mass meetings were held at Pence's Ranch. At the first meeting it was decided that all Indians should be given thirty days to come to settlements prepared to move to distant reservations or be killed. At the second meeting the attendees wanted to know how many Indians had been relocated to Chico Landing on the Sacramento River.¹⁴ In a letter to Drum dated August 28, Hooker labeled the citizen group at Pence's Ranch "principally, if not all, Copperheads and anti-war men."¹⁵ In his letter to Drum of October 1, 1863, Hooker observed that there simply were not 500 perfectly armed and organized men prepared to exterminate the Indians and drive out the troops sent to protect them.

In his letter to Hooker of August 11, Drum specified that no more than twenty or thirty Indians be sent to the Round Valley Reservation at a time.¹⁶ However, the season being well advanced and rain being a possible hindrance to travel over the Coast Range to Round Valley, Hooker decided that it would be more prudent to send the assembled Indians in one group. Accordingly, in compliance with Post Orders no. 6 and 7, Capt. Starr left Camp Bidwell on September 4 with his command of twenty-three mounted men, 461 Indians, one government wagon and six mules.¹⁷ They were bound for

Round Valley, which was about a hundred miles from Chico. Ere long, Starr's troopers had to dismount and yield their horses to those "too old, too young, too sick to march." The travelers had to halt for three days at Mountain House, where Starr decided to leave 150 Indians who were no longer able to travel. Provisions for four weeks were left there for the sustenance of these unfortunate people. The procession moved on toward Round Valley on September 15. The goal was reached on September 18, when Starr and his men delivered 277 Indians to the reservation, whose superintendent, Doctor Melendy, was absent. Thirty-two Indians died enroute and two escaped. Starr reported in his letter of September 25 to Lt. Col. Hooker that the reservation did not have enough food for the Indians already there, and he thought the reservation buildings were poorly constructed and in bad condition. The Captain and his men left Fort Wright, about a mile from the Round Valley Reservation on September 21 and arrived in Chico on September 24.¹⁸

By October Hooker had decided that there was no serious trouble to be anticipated or feared from the Indians. He thought the valley Indians, who for the most part were ". . . owned or employed by the farmers or rancheros on whose ranches they live," were peaceable and quiet. As for the mountain Indians, they could not field "fifteen able-bodied bucks." One might question Hooker's use of the term "owned," and, in deference to contemporary Indian feelings, he might substitute the word "warriors" instead of the term "bucks," but Hooker's assessment of the situation appears to have been sound. At any rate, he went on to recommend that a detachment of twenty cavalrymen would, for the coming rainy season, be as adequate a garrison for Camp Bidwell as a larger force.¹⁹

Hooker's superiors must have agreed with his recommendation for on October 25, 1863, pursuant to Special Orders No. 240, Hooker, Co. A, 6th Infantry, C.V., and Co. K, 2nd Infantry, C.V., left Camp Bidwell for Chico Landing to embark on a river steamer for Benicia Barracks.²⁰ Co. F, 2nd Cavalry, C.V., Captain Augustus W. Starr, Commanding, was left behind to garrison Camp Bidwell and to patrol Butte and adjacent Tehama County, where warlike Mill Creek Indians continued to harass the settlers.

Despite the onset of the winter rainy season, all was not to be quiet and uneventful for the Camp Bidwell cavalrymen. On November 19 in obedience to Special Orders from the Commanding General of the Department, Capt. Starr and sixteen men set out to aid the Special Indian Agent in recapturing Indians who had already made their way back to Butte County from Round Valley. Starr left Sgt. B. L. Duncan in command of the post while he and his men scouted through Pence, Yankee Hill, Cherokee, Hubbard's, Oregon City, Oroville, and Henshaw's Ranch, all of which were in Butte County. The party returned to camp on November 23, with the twenty Indians they had taken into custody enroute. Probably in order to avoid the problems heavy winter rains would bring in traversing the route to Round Valley, Starr and his men left on November 25, to deliver these Indians once more to Round Valley. The party arrived at the reservation on November 28, thereby underscoring Starr's concern for the weather and perhaps also indicating that the September march to Round Valley had been attempted with too many Indians to permit the reaching of the goal with dispatch and without acute discomfort to those being convoyed.²¹ Starr and his men returned to Camp Bidwell on December 2.²²

On December 12, Capt. Starr and ten men accompanied Provost Marshall D. C. Burlingame to Centerville in Butte Creek Canyon, to arrest three

civilian men who had refused to give their names to the enrolling officer. These men were held in custody at Camp Bidwell until December 20, when the Departmental Provost Marshal ordered their release.²³

Apparently, January was a quiet month for the troops at Camp Bidwell, but during February the depredations of the Mill Creek Indians attracted the attention of the Captain. On the twelfth and again on the twenty-third Starr and his detachments were in the field on fruitless scouts to capture the elusive Mill Creeks, for Starr was ordered to capture their leaders and send them to Alcatraz for confinement.²⁴

March and April were uneventful at Camp Bidwell, except that the April Return indicates that Co. F, 2nd Cavalry, and Captain Starr abandoned Camp Bidwell, per Special Orders No. 77, Hq., Department of the Pacific, which were received at camp headquarters on April 13. The company was ordered to proceed to Camp Union at Sacramento.²⁵

However, Camp Bidwell was not yet destined for permanent abandonment. Rumors and anticipated Indian troubles in Butte and Tehama Counties, some of which were embodied in a letter from George Wood of Bidwell and Co. to O. C. Pratt of San Francisco, dated June 11, 1864, caused the Department of the Pacific Headquarters to send Captain James Van Voast, 9th Inf., and Provost-Marshal of the Department to Chico to investigate and report. Van Voast, who had ranked eighth in his class at West Point, found that farmers who did not employ Indians thought that competition from growers who did employ them was unfair. Those who had no Indian employees tended to blame the valley Indians for outrages perpetrated by foothill and mountain Indians. Van Voast said that those who employed Indians were fearful that valley Indians would be driven off or murdered and their (the employers) property would be destroyed in the process. Van Voast recommended,

instead of a permanent post in the Chico area, a short campaign or march through the area. One might call his proposal a "showing of the flag." He concluded by stating that those having valley Indians in their keeping would be well able to defend these Indians and their property.²⁷

Four days after Capt. Van Voast wrote his report, the Department of the Pacific went beyond his recommendations and ordered Capt. James C. Doughty and his Co. I, 2nd Cavalry, C.V., to Chico with the proviso that special instructions would be issued later "relative to the movement and further operations."²⁸ A letter from Col. Drum to Capt. Doughty informed the Captain that supplies for sixty days would be furnished initially, and after that he would be supplied by water. He was ordered to maintain the peace and give protection both to Indians and to settlers in Butte, Tehama and Plumas Counties.²⁹ Doughty's company remained at Camp Bidwell until May, 1865, when it was ordered to Camp McDermitt, Nevada.

Co. I reached Camp Bidwell on July 18, 1864, and on either July 26 or 27 (the Letter of Doughty to Drum, August 10, 1864, has July 26; the Post Return, for the last eleven days of July, 1864, has July 27) the Captain and twenty-one men departed to investigate difficulties at Pence's Ranch, Cherokee Flat, Mesilla Valley, Dogtown (now Magalia), Forks of Butte, Helltown, Centerville and Diamondville, all in Butte County. In the country around Cherokee Flat and Mesilla Valley, people blamed some 300 Indians from Bald Rock and Berry Creek for their troubles, Doughty reported. The detachment marched sixty-five miles before returning to its post on July 19.³¹

On August 1, 1864, Doughty and twenty-one men were again in the field. They marched up the Chico and Humboldt Road between Chico and Butte Creeks and then to Deer Creek Meadows to enlist Hiram Good, "one of the best Indian hunters in the country", as a guide in the territory of the Deer Creek (Mill

Creek) Indians. Unfortunately, Good was not at home. Captain Doughty decided not to attempt a reconaissance of the Mill Creek country without an experienced guide such as Good. Instead, he turned toward Big Meadows and from there followed the Dogtown Road through Humbug Valley to Inskip. There he sent seven men and the team down the Dogtown Road to Pence's Ranch. Doughty, with fourteen men, crossed the West Branch of the Feather River and scouted the country between that river's West Branch and North Fork, passing through Balsam Hill, Crain Valley, KimsheW, Flea and Concow Valleys to Yankee Hill, where he crossed the West Branch of the Feather River and went to Pence's Ranch. The detachment had marched 160 miles but Doughty confessed that he had not gained sufficient information to know which Indians had committed the depredations.³²

For the time being, at least, the Mill Creek Indians would remain unknown quantities to Capt. Doughty, for his superior officers had perhaps more important tasks in mind for him than merely protecting whites and Indians in Butte and adjoining counties. On August 30, 1864, First Lt. Edward D. Waite, Acting Assistant Adjutant-General, District of California, wrote to Doughty to order him, on behalf of the Commanding General, to take half of his men, a wagon and provisions for thirty days and explore Surprise Valley to determine whether there was any necessity for a military post there. He was also instructed to observe the character of the country, its supply of wood and water, its other resources for subsisting men and horses, the number of settlers, and the number and character of the Indians residing or visiting Surprise Valley. The September Post Return stated that the detachment marched 500 miles on its fact-finding journey through Surprise Valley, which is in extreme northeastern California. Doughty and his men were away from Camp Bidwell from September 4 to September 28 on this Surprise

Valley assignment. Unfortunately, Doughty's report on Surprise Valley was not published in the War of the Rebellion. In passing, it is interesting to note that both Lt. Waite and his commander, Gen. George Wright, were lost at sea near Crescent City, California, on July 30, 1865. They were at that time enroute to a new duty station in Washington Territory.³⁴

Meanwhile, in August, men of Co. I also performed useful service somewhat closer to their Chico camp. On August 1, Capt. Doughty and twenty-one men went on a scouting expedition in the general direction of Honey Lake. They returned to camp on the ninth. On August 15 Sgt. O'Keefe and ten men were sent to Cottonwood Creek to investigate the number and nature of the Indians in the watershed of that Tehama and Shasta County Creek. They returned on the nineteenth, having traveled 120 miles. On August 23, Lt. Livergood and twenty men sent to Oroville to bring back three deserters. Sgt. McTarnahan and Pvt. Rice left camp on August 14 on a secret mission to keep watch over a party of secessionists. Unfortunately, presently available sources do not reveal the upshot of this surveillance.³⁵ Finally, during August a "quiet and polite" trooper from Camp Bidwell, while in a Chico saloon, attacked a man who was praising the rebels. He later explained that he was paid for fighting secessionists, so he did just that.³⁶

The September, 1864, Post Return listed Privates Albert North, Michael Lynch, William H. Williams, Peter Moore, and Enoch K. Hale as deserters from Camp Bidwell. In October, Capt. Doughty departed with twenty-two troopers whose terms of enlistment had expired. They were bound for San Francisco, where the men would be mustered out of service. In the temporary absence of Capt. Doughty one October Post Return was signed by Lt. Joy H. Naper.

November and December, 1864, and January and February, 1865, were largely uneventful winter months at Camp Bidwell. During December of 1864 1st Lt. Naper was mustered out of service and in March, 1865, 2nd Lt. Daniel W. Livergood was discharged in order that he might accept a commission as a 1st Lt.³⁷

During January, however, some soldiers left Camp Bidwell in a two-horse wagon for the Rose farm to get honey. They tied their horses and began to smoke the bees, whereupon Mr. Rose began to shoot at them. When they returned his fire Rose retreated. Later, he and a friend followed the troopers back to camp. The soldiers had to surrender the keg of honey and two beehives and pay Rose fifty dollars. The editor thought the troops were not properly officered or such incidents would not have occurred.³⁸

During March, 1865, Headquarters of the District of California, Gen. George Wright commanding, was attempting to determine where a new post designed to protect travelers over the roads from Chico and Red Bluff to the Owyhee mining district of southeastern Idaho should be located. A related question was how to protect emigrants and other travelers coming into California by way of the Humboldt River of Nevada. General Wright tended to favor locating a new army post at or near Goose Lake. At that time he thought that Capt. Doughty and his company should remain at Camp Bidwell at least through the coming summer.

A few days earlier he had written to Col. Drum, Assistant Adjutant-General, Department of the Pacific, to order Capt. Knight and his cavalry company to relieve Capt. Starr's Co. F., 2nd Cav., C.V. so that the latter could relieve Capt. Doughty's company at Camp Bidwell. At that time his plan was to have the latter company return to Camp Union, probably for redeployment elsewhere.³⁹

By March 28, however, Col. Drum was writing to General Wright to inform him that the Major-General commanding did not plan to keep up Camp Bidwell beyond the period for completing the movement to extreme north-eastern California for protecting the roads and the settlers.⁴⁰

Meanwhile Capt. Doughty at Camp Bidwell remained active. He led a scouting expedition of thirty-five men from April 5 through April 18 through the Pine, Deer, Mill and Antelope Creek areas to arrest Indians who had committed depredations. The Mill Creek Indians had been active again. This time Doughty was able to secure the services of Hi Good and William Morgan as civilian guides. The scout was, nevertheless, unproductive. No Indians were sighted, said Doughty, they being securely hidden where they could view the movements of the scouting parties. Doughty received intelligence from his headquarters which necessitated his immediate return to camp.⁴¹

Capt. Doughty returned to Camp Bidwell because Corporal Hudson had shot Lt. Daniel W. Livergood on April 14, 1865. The Lieutenant died on April 16.⁴² For his crime Hudson faced a general court martial at Camp Bidwell.⁴³ On June 16, Hudson was hanged at Camp Union.⁴⁴

On May 6, 1865 John Bidwell wrote to Major-General McDowell, this time concerning the Mill Creek Indians, rather than Indians who were in a position to harass travelers on the road to the Owyhee mining district of Idaho. Concerning the Mill Creeks, Bidwell succinctly characterized the threat they posed: "the(ir) number is small, but they are, from the peculiarity of the region they inhabit, capable of great mischief."

Along with his own letter, Bidwell enclosed a letter to him from Judge C. C. Bush of Shasta County, dated May 2, 1865, who requested that a scouting party of thirty to forty men be stationed at Black Rock on Mill

Creek, to work in unison with the troops at Ft. Crook, Fort (i.e., Camp) Bidwell and the new camp at Goose Lake (which was actually located in upper Surprise Valley instead of at Goose Lake) to reach and punish these depredators.⁴⁵

For the next few weeks Camp Bidwell's officers and men were destined to be more concerned with white malefactors than red ones. General Wright informed Col. Drum that he had received reliable information to the effect that the "rebels" of Colusa had fired guns and cheered when they heard that President Lincoln had been assassinated. He quickly ordered Capt. Starr and a detachment of men to march from Camp Bidwell to arrest all such persons and send them under strong guard to Camp Union. He added that he had ordered Lt. A. Tillinghast to Colusa to aid Capt. Starr.⁴⁶ Lt. Tillinghast's orders appear in the same source.⁴⁷ Co. F also arrested and conveyed to Camp Union a "prominent traitor" of Yolo County.⁴⁸

Although the manner in which certain residents of Colusa County reacted to word of President Lincoln's assassination was magnified by their Unionist contemporaries, Capt. Starr and his detachment arrested A. J. Scoggins, H. Goodman, Jonas Baer, John Campbell, Dudley Shepardson, and, somewhat later, Marion Tate and Josiah Lee. All of them were taken to Camp Union and, subsequently, to Alcatraz Island, where they were detained for two months before being turned over to civil authorities, who dropped all charges against them. The Colusa County Grand Jury indicted Capt. Starr for kidnapping, but he was never tried on that charge.⁴⁹

The May Post Return indicates that Oliver P. Stewart and James Gregory, citizens were being confined at Camp Bidwell for "treasonable language." A contemporary newspaper account characterizes Gregory as a "Peace Democrat" who then lived in Hamilton Township, Butte County.⁵⁰

No more is known to the writer concerning Gregory. He was not enrolled as a voter in the Great Register of Butte County, 1866-1877, nor does he appear in the Assessment Roll of 1864. Oliver P. Gregory, who was in all probability the same Oliver P. Gregory who was being held at Camp Bidwell in May, 1865, appears in the Great Register of Butte County, 1866-1877 as a registered voter whose native state was Virginia. He was a farmer whose address was Rock Creek. The 1864 Assessment Roll of Butte County carried his locale in the county as Chico Township. At that time he owned no land but did own personal property, chiefly horses and cattle, with a cash value of \$1,098.

The temporary preoccupation of the Camp Bidwell garrison with treasonable or seditious white men was but an interlude. John Bidwell continued to be interested in possible threats to the tranquility of the road from Chico to Idaho. On April 21, he grasped his pen and again wrote to General Wright to inform him that, while the then-known Indian troubles were occurring fifty miles east of the Idaho road, ". . . the Indians are roving and will be sure to infest the traveled roads." He was sure that cavalymen could traverse the road without difficulty, but their baggage would have to be gotten over some of the snow barriers on sleds. He said that Capt. Starr was still in Colusa, and Capt. Doughty was "somewhat under the weather from boils." Bidwell enclosed a petition from citizens of Lassen County requesting that troops be posted to Smoke Creek Station, which, they said, would protect Honey Lake Valley, Surprise Valley, the road to the Boise mines and the Humboldt Road.⁵¹

Had he known that General Wright had already planned his moves and planned them in such a manner that Bidwell's concerns were already taken into account, John Bidwell would have had reason to rejoice. For as early

as April 4 General Wright wrote to Adjutant-General Drum to inform him that Capt. Starr was ordered to Camp Bidwell to prepare to move to Honey Lake and Surprise Valley.⁵² Nor were the citizens of Lassen County to be disappointed, for on May 13 Capt. Doughty and his Camp Bidwell garrison (Co. K, 2nd Cav., C.V.) were ordered to take post at Smoke Creek Station. In the same letter, Capt. Starr was advised that he could take from Camp Bidwell "whatever may pertain to his command." Doughty was admonished to leave the camp in the keeping of some responsible party in Chico.⁵³

The May, 1865, Post Return was the last one in the series. Camp Bidwell in its last days served as a staging area for the movement of troops into the hinterland to protect routes of travel and people who chose to make their homes in favored valleys such as Surprise Valley and Honey Lake Valley. The soldiers, obeying orders, moved from Camp Bidwell to Smoke Creek Station and Fort Bidwell. They had not been able to apprehend, arrest and convey troublesome Mill Creek warriors to Alcatraz Island. It was left to the residents of Tehama and Butte Counties to deal as best they could with these fractitious natives of Mill and Deer Creeks.

FOOTNOTES

¹Orton, Richard H., Records of California Men in the War of the Rebellion, 1861 to 1867. Sacramento: State Printing Office. 1890. 887 p. at p. 182.

²War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies. Washington: Government Printing Office. 1880-1901. 70 v. in 128. Series I, vol. L, pt. II at pp. 593-594.

³For what it may be worth, the "cutting shed" is said to have been located in the vicinity of today's County Building and Municipal Court complex in Chico. --- W.H.H.

⁴Letter, Gov. Leland Stanford to Brig. Gen. George Wright, June 27, 1862, War of the Rebellion, Ser. I, vol. L, pt. 1, 1162-1163, "Letter from the scene of blood," Red Bluff Beacon p. 3/2; "Found," Ibid. July 17, 1862, p. 3/2.

⁵"More Indian depredations near Chico," Butte Record, March 7, 1863, p. 2/1; Alta California, March 13, 1863, p. 3/1.

⁶"Indian Difficulties," Butte Record, July 25, 1863, p. 3/1.

⁷War of the Rebellion, Ser. 1, vol. L, pt. 1, pp. 1162-1163; pt. II, pp. 543-544; U. S. Adjutant General's Office, Returns from U. S. Military Posts, 1800-1916, Washington, D. C. National Archives 1968. Microfilm roll II; Camp Bidwell.

⁸Letter, Hooker to Drum, August 28, 1863, Ibid., pp. 593-594; Post Return, October, 1863.

⁹Letters from Drum to Starr, August 1, 1863, and August 3, 1863, Ibid., pt. II, pp. 550-551.

¹⁰Letters Received by the Office of Indian Affairs, 1824-1881; California Superintendency, 1849-1880. Washington: National Archives, 1958. Microcopy 234. Reel 39, #302.

¹¹War of the Rebellion, Ser. I, vol. L, pt. II, p. 562-563; Special Orders no. 195, Hq., Department of the Pacific, August 20, 1863; Ibid., pp. 584-585.

¹²Ibid., pp. 584-585.

¹³Letter, Morton to Drum, August 16, 1863, War of the Rebellion, Ser. I, vol. L, pt. II, pp. 572-573.

¹⁴"Meeting at Pence's Ranch," Chico Record, August 1, 1863, p. 3/1; "Mass Meeting," Ibid., August 15, 1863, p. 2/6.

- ¹⁵Ibid., pp. 593-594.
- ¹⁶Ibid., p. 563.
- ¹⁷Ibid., pp. 633-635.
- ¹⁸Letter, Hooker to Drum, October 1, 1863, Ibid., pp. 633-635; Letter, Starr to Hooker, Ibid., pp. 635-636.
- ¹⁹Ibid., pp. 633-635.
- ²⁰Post Return, October, 1863.
- ²¹Orton, Op. cit., p. 183; Post Return, 2nd and 3rd ten days of November.
- ²²Post Return, 1st ten days of December.
- ²³Post Return, December, 1863; Letter, Capt. Starr to Capt. E. Sparrow Purdy, Asst. Adj. Gen.; Hq's, Dept. of the Pacific, December 3, 1863, War of the Rebellion, Ser. I, vol. L, pt. 2, p. 691.
- ²⁴Post Return, February, 1864; War of the Rebellion, Ser. I, vol. L, pt. II, p. 617.
- ²⁵Post Return, April, 1864; "Cavalry Moving", Butte Record, April 28, 1864.
- ²⁶Heitman, Francis B., Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office,
- ²⁷Van Voast to Drum, June 24, 1864, War of the Rebellion, Ser. I, vol. L, pt. II, pp. 874-876.
- ²⁸Special Orders No. 142, Hq., Dept. of the Pacific, June 28, 1864 in War of the Rebellion, Ser. I, vol. L, pt. II, p. 880.
- ²⁹Drum to Doughty, June 28, 1864, Ibid., pp. 880-881.
- ³⁰Orton, Op. cit., p. 170.
- ³¹Letter in War of the Rebellion, Ser. I, vol. L, pt. II, pp. 942-943.
- ³²Ibid., pp. 942-943; Balsom or Balsum Hill is in Sect. 32, T25N, R5E; Crain Valley or Crane Valley is in Sect. 6, T24N, R5E; Kimshe Valley, Sect. 8, T24N, R5E, or Sect. 3, T24N, R4E; Flea Valley, Sects. 23, 24, T23N, R4E; Yankee Hill, Sect. 3, T21N, R4E; Pentz's or Pence's Ranch, Sect. 24, T21N, R3E. See, Dunn, Forrest D., Butte County Place Names. Chico, California: Association for Northern California Records and Research. (1976) 121 p., passim)

³³ Waite to Doughty, August 30, 1864, War of the Rebellion, Ser. I, vol. L, pt. II, p. 960. This was the wreck of the Brother Jonathan near Point St. George. --W.H.H.

³⁴ Heitman, OE. cit., p. 993, 1062.

³⁵ Post Return, August, 1864.

³⁶ On It", Butte Record, August 27, 1864, p. 3/1.

³⁷ Post Returns, November, 1864-March, 1865.

³⁸ "Soldiers on the Rampage", Butte Record, January 15, 1865, p. 3/1.

³⁹ Ibid., p. 1164.

⁴⁰ Drum to Wright, March 28, 1865, Ibid., p. 1172.

⁴¹ Report of Capt. James Doughty on Expedition from Camp Bidwell to Antelope Creek, dated April 24, 1865, War of the Rebellion, Ser. I, vol. L, pt. I, p. 408.

⁴² Post Returns, second ten days of April.

⁴³ Wright to Drum, May 1, 1865, War of the Rebellion, Ser. I, vol. L, pt. II, p. 12818.

⁴⁴ Orton, OE. cit., p. 269.

⁴⁵ War of the Rebellion, Ser. K, vol. L, pt. II, pp. 1221-1223.

⁴⁶ Letter, Wright to Drum, April 18, 1865, Ibid., pp. 1209-1202.

⁴⁷ Waite to Tillinghast, April 18, 1865, Ibid., p. 1202.

⁴⁸ Orton, OE. cit., p. 184.

⁴⁹ Aargis, Jay J., "The History of Colusa County Politics, 1851-1865," Master's Thesis, California State University, Chico, 1979, 92 l., at leaves 55-56.

⁵⁰ "Arrested," Butte Record, May 6, 1865, p. 3/1.

⁵¹ Bidwell to Wright, April 13, 1865, Ibid., pp. 1205-1206.

⁵² Ibid., pp. 1176-1177.

⁵³ Letter, Wright to R. W. Kirkham, Department Quartermaster, San Francisco, May 11, 1865, Ibid., p. 1226; Letter, Waite to Doughty, May 13, 1865, Ibid., p. 1230.---