

Camp Yuma — 1852

EDITED BY ROBERT W. FRAZER

Some sixty miles from the head of the Gulf of California, as the crow flies, or 150 miles along the meanderings of the river, the Colorado, coming down from the north, makes an almost abrupt swing to the west before resuming its southward course. It is there, where the Colorado turns west, that it is joined by the Gila. On the left bank of the Colorado, opposite the mouth of the Gila, a low eminence rises about eighty feet above the surrounding country. A few miles down stream, where the Colorado again turns south, Pilot Knob juts up from the floor of the desert to an elevation of almost nine hundred feet. Below the Gila, the only permanently dry and solid land along the right bank of the Colorado was at the base of Pilot Knob.¹ This stretch of the river became a traditional crossing place, used by Indian and Spaniard, by mountain man, trader, and explorer, and it was there that Brigadier General Stephen Watts Kearny and his Army of the West crossed into Alta California. The little hill facing the mouth of the Gila gained in strategic importance when the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo fixed the "middle" of the Gila as the boundary between Mexico and the United States.

The first United States military post in the area was a temporary encampment established by First Lieutenant Cave J. Couets, First Dragoons, on October 2, 1849, to serve as a base for the United States boundary survey party.² It occupied the low hill fronting the Gila and was named Camp Calhoun in honor of John C. Calhoun.³ By the time it was broken up on December 1, 1849, when the survey party concluded its work in the area, the crossing of the Colorado had assumed even greater importance because of the growing number of gold seekers hastening to California by the southern route. The need to protect the often ill-prepared emigrants both from the Indians and the perils of the desert was recognized. There was, moreover, the need to put a stop to such activities as those engaged in by the notorious John Glanton and his gang who had operated a ferry on the Colorado until the Yuma Indians killed all but three of them in the spring of 1850. In the mean-

Camp Yuma—1852

time, they had been accused of robbing and murdering emigrants as well as grossly mistreating the Indians.⁴

On the fourth of July 1850, Captain and Brevet Major Samuel P. Heintzelman, with Companies D and H, Second Infantry, was instructed to establish a post "at the junction of the Gila and Colorado Rivers."⁵ Various delays occurred in arranging for transportation and supplies, and Company I, Second Infantry, was added to the command before it left San Diego for the Colorado late in October 1850.⁶ On November 27, Camp Yuma was established in the bottoms on the right side of the Colorado River about half a mile below the mouth of the Gila. In March 1851, it was moved to the hill top formerly occupied by Camp Calhoun.

Camp Yuma, though little more than a collection of brush jacales, was for some years among the most expensive military posts to supply in the United States. Stores were freighted across the mountains and desert from the sub-depot at San Diego, roughly 210 miles, at enormous cost.⁷ In 1851, Secretary of War Charles W. Conrad embarked upon a campaign designed to produce a drastic reduction in the expenses of his department. Because of the great difficulty and high cost of supplying Camp Yuma, the garrison was withdrawn to Santa Ysabel on June 6, 1851. First Lieutenant Thomas W. Sweeny and a detachment of ten men were left behind to protect public property and to render such aid as they could to passing emigrants. Sweeny established his little command at what he called Camp Independence in the Colorado River bottoms about six miles below Camp Yuma.⁸

In November, First Lieutenant Edward Murray, Second Infantry, was sent with ten soldiers and five months' supplies, in charge of eight teamsters, to relieve Sweeny and his command. Because of the hostile attitude of the Indians, Murray decided that Sweeny and his detachment must remain on the Colorado, which meant that the teamsters, too, must stay, because no escort would be available for them. As a result, the rations on hand for the combined force were sufficient for less than two months. An express of two men was sent off to San Diego to explain the plight of the post.⁹ Captain Delozier Davidson, Second Infantry, was dispatched with sixteen men to reinforce Camp Yuma. He carried "orders to remain there and give protection to emigrants." Davidson arrived at Camp Independence on December 3 but brought no additional supplies with him. Apparently he decided immediately that the post could not be maintained, and, without informing Heintzelman of his intentions or seeking further instructions, he abandoned the camp

The Historical Society of Southern California

on December 6. Sweeny wrote that Davidson was "advised to the course that he adopted by all of the officers present"—it was either that or starve.¹⁰ Davidson was strongly criticized for abandoning the post, and in July 1852, a court of inquiry was assembled at his request to look into his actions. In the opinion of the court the abandonment was not justified, but nothing further was done in the matter.¹¹

Actually, by that time, Camp Yuma had been reestablished. Major Heintzelman marched from Santa Ysabel early in February 1852, with a force of some 250 men, to chastise the Indians and reoccupy Camp Yuma. The command consisted of Companies D, H and I, Second Infantry, the same companies which had been withdrawn nine months earlier, two companies of Dragoons, and one company of Artillery.¹² Camp Yuma was reoccupied on February 29 and soon thereafter the garrison was reduced to the three Infantry companies which were present when Colonel George Archibald McCall inspected the post.

McCall was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in 1802. He attended the United States Military Academy from which he graduated in 1822, ranking twenty-sixth in a class of forty. He was assigned to the Infantry and, prior to the Mexican War, served in Florida and at various western military posts. By 1845, when he participated in Colonel Zachary Taylor's occupation of Texas, he held the rank of captain. McCall was involved in the Mexican War from its outbreak, and was twice breveted for gallant and meritorious conduct in the early months of the conflict.¹³ He was soon affected by the ill health which bothered him periodically and which he later attributed to the years he had spent in malarial climates. On April 5, 1847, he was granted a four months' leave of absence.¹⁴ In fact, almost two years elapsed before McCall returned to active duty, part of which time he spent in England in an effort to regain his health.¹⁵

While McCall was on leave he was promoted to Major, Third Infantry, and, after he returned to duty in March 1849, he was ordered to report to his regiment, then headquartered in Santa Fe, New Mexico.¹⁶ He left Philadelphia in November, and, after a variety of delays en route, arrived in Santa Fe on March 11, 1850.¹⁷ McCall did not like New Mexico and his pleasure was obvious when, on August 28, 1850, he received a commission as Colonel, Inspector General's Department, together with instructions to conduct a general inspection of the Ninth Military Department, then to report in person to Washington.¹⁸ He lost no time in carrying out those instructions, completing his tour of inspection on October 14. Two months later he was in Washington.

Camp Yuma—1852

McCall remained in the East until March 1852, when he was ordered to inspect the Pacific Division.¹⁹ Taking the Panama route, he arrived in San Francisco in the latter part of May. There he inspected the Presidio before going south by sea to San Diego, accompanied by First Lieutenant William M. Gardner, Second Infantry, who was appointed to act as his aide-de-camp during the inspection tour.²⁰ McCall inspected the Depot of San Diego and the Mission of San Diego²¹ and on June 4 left for Camp Yuma. At Sackett's Well, north of the present Plaster City, he encountered Lieutenant Sweeny, who was in pursuit of two deserters from Camp Yuma. The two parties travelled together to the camp, which they reached on June 12.²²

McCall inspected Camp Yuma three and a half months after it had been reestablished and at a time when the command was engaged in suppressing Yuma Indian hostilities. The conflict with the Yuma was essentially a punitive action, and it was not until October 1852, that they were considered to be sufficiently disciplined.²³ Because of this involvement very little had been accomplished toward the physical improvement of Camp Yuma. Later in the year it was given the status of a permanent post and designated a fort, but not until the spring of 1855 was the work of erecting permanent facilities undertaken. The single exception was the adobe quarters for the commanding officer built in 1854.²⁴

McCall spent only two days at Camp Yuma. Part of his report was based on his own observations and part on information gleaned from the officers stationed at the post. Since Heintzelman had advance knowledge that the inspection would take place it must be assumed that the camp and garrison were prepared to make the best possible appearance. Some of McCall's remarks reflect both of these factors. Nevertheless, he presents a description of an important western military post early in its career and indicates some of the problems and difficulties with which the army had to cope in order to maintain a post on the lower Colorado. Fort Yuma continued to play a significant role in the military history of the West until it was abandoned in 1883.

In McCall's inspection report,²⁵ which follows, the original spelling has been retained, abbreviations have, in general, been spelled out, and punctuation has been added or deleted where it seemed desirable for clarity. The paragraph headings have been omitted.

* * *

The Historical Society of Southern California

Inspector General's Department
Camp Yuma, So. Cala., June 14th 1852.

General,

In obedience to General Orders No. 13 of the present year, I have the honor to present the following report of the inspection of the Troops, staff Departments, etc. at Camp Yuma.

Garrison,

Captain and Brevet Major S[amuel]. P[eter]. Heintzelman, Second Infantry, Commanding.

Assistant Surgeon J[ohn]. J[efferson]. Milhau, United States Army.

First Lieutenant and Brevet Major G[eorge]. P[earce]. Andrews, Third Artillery, Assistant Commissary of Subsistence and acting Assistant Quartermaster.

Captain Delosier Davidson, Second Infantry.

First Lieutenant T[homas]. W[illiam]. Sweeny, Second Infantry.

Brevet Second Lieutenant J[ames]. Curtiss, Jr., Second Infantry.

Brevet Second Lieutenant A[dolphus]. F[reeman]. Bond, Second Infantry.

D, H, and I Companies, Second Infantry—total present 135.

—temporarily detached 41.

—absent, sick 7.—183

The site of this post was selected by Major Heintzelman, and it was first occupied by a detachment of the Second Infantry under his command, on November 27th 1850. On June 5th 1851, the troops were removed with the exception of one Officer and ten men, who were subsequently reinforced by Company I, same Regiment, under command of Captain Davidson.²⁶ On December 6th 1851, the post was abandoned by Captain Davidson. Finally it was reoccupied by Brevet Major Heintzelman, in command of the Companies now present, [on] February 29th 1852. Since which time to the present date the post has been under his command.

This officer appears to have exercised much judgment and energy in the reestablishment of the Post. At the time he left it in charge of a small detachment, he had erected comfortable quarters, hospital, etc.—on his return in February last, he found it a heap of ruins, the Indians having burnt the buildings after they were evacuated by Captain Davidson.²⁷

Camp Yuma—1852

In consequence of this, the troops, when not engaged in active operations against the Yuma Indians, have within the last two months been employed in removing rubbish and putting up sheds over their tents;²⁸ their instruction in the drill, therefore, and in the general duties of Garrison and Camp, of Guards, etc. has not received the attention requisite to perfect them in their various exercises. The larger number of men are Recruits who joined the Regiment in March last.²⁹ These have been pretty well instructed in the school of the soldier—in that of the company, not at all. This, however, cannot be ascribed to any want of attention on the part of the commanding officer, who is now devoting his spare time to the drill.

The officers at this post understand their duties, and are apparently zealous in the performing of them. There is every evidence of a general harmony which is essential to good order and military discipline.³⁰

Many of the noncommissioned officers, as well as the privates are recruits, and, like most raw troops, pay less strict attention to the orders they receive, and have less regard for their personal appearance than well disciplined troops. A pervading disposition to desertion has also manifested itself among them, and it has called out all the vigilance and force of the Officers to check it. Combinations were formed, and nothing but the difficulty of effecting a passage across the desert has probably prevented numbers from attempting to escape from a post where the duties are particularly arduous and disagreeable. Every means within the power of the officers has been resorted to in order to prevent or check the growth of this spirit; and they have been well sustained in their efforts by most of the old soldiers of the command. This subject will be referred to in the sequel to this report.³¹

This Post is the Head Quarters of the southern district of California,³² and the offices of acting Assistant Adjutant General and Post Adjutant are in charge of Brevet Major Andrews, who has recently relieved Lieutenant [George H.] Paige,³³ in these duties. Requisitions for the Books necessary for these offices have been sent in—but the books have not yet been received, and the Orders, Letters, etc. emanant from the offices have been copied on detached sheets, to be transferred to the books as soon as received. The Company Books are all accurately kept, and with some few exceptions are brought up to present date.

The Assistant Commissary of Subsistence and acting Assistant Quartermaster appears in all respects to discharge his duties in a satisfactory manner. And in both Departments, his accounts as far as due have been

The Historical Society of Southern California

forwarded to the proper offices—duplicates of the same being in his possession. His books are not fully posted up, owing to their being but recently received. The funds on hand are in his own possession—in an iron safe. In the Quarter Masters Department there are no funds. In the Subsistence Department there are \$4,107.33, of which sum \$1,700 has been advantageously expended in the Quarter Master's Department, to be returned on receipt of funds in that Department.

The Medical Officer present has been on duty at the post since March last, and exhibits in the condition of his Hospital etc., evidence of the faithful discharge of his duties in this important department of the service. No building is yet erected at the post for a Hospital, and the sick are in Hospital tents, under sheds of brush-wood.³⁴ The health of the post has been good—the principal cases of sickness being those of scurvy, originating in exposure and want of vegetable food. The Instruments, Medicines and Hospital stores are of good quality and are in sufficient quantity for the post with its present garrison. This Officer reports that the Surgical Instruments last received were injured by rust acquired at sea—this he believes has arisen from want of proper attention to packing them for the long voyage round the Cape.

There are no Barracks, storehouses or other buildings at the Post. All stores are under tents or tarpaulins. The Commanding Officer purposes commencing in a short time, by the labour of the troops, the erection of *adobe* buildings for these purposes.³⁵

The muskets are in serviceable condition for the field. They have suffered much in outward appearance from exposure at sea, and by subsequent service on scouting parties—they, therefore, are not generally in fine order. Two Mountain Howitzers, in charge of the Commanding Officer are complete in all respects, except one elevating screw, which has never been received at the post. For present use there is on hand a sufficient supply of ammunition for these pieces, as well as for the small arms.

There is no woollen clothing on hand for issue; and but very little in possession of the troops. The soldiers are at present clothed entirely in cotton. This, owing to the extreme heat and dryness of the climate at this post, answers every sanitary purpose at the present season; but the men should have woollens for winter and for field service. The Quarter Master has been instructed to procure it.

This [forage] is a very considerable item in the expenses of this post. Since March 26th/52, when the present acting Assistant Quarter Master

Camp Yuma—1852

entered upon his duties, the cost of forage (grain alone, hay not included) for each horse and mule has been about 85 cents (eighty five cents) per day. This includes, of course the freight from San Francisco, *viz*: \$75 per ton. No Hay has been issued; nor can a sufficient supply be cut within at least one hundred miles of the post; so that the only point from which it can be supplied is San Francisco. There is some cane, and an abundance of willow on the river from 1 to 15 miles below the post: and this has been used as a substitute for hay.³⁶

The Assistant Quarter Master has for service, three horses for express purposes and for the mail; and twenty eight mules for similar service and for draught. He has also four wagons, one ambulance and one cart for the use of the garrison, together with harness for all. It appears to require the individual service of one wagon and six mule team to supply the post with water, one more exclusively for fuel, which is cut within half or three quarters of a mile, by the troops, and the other two are employed in hauling timber for building purposes.³⁷

The provisions now on hand for issue are all of good quality except rice, which is believed to have been damaged at sea while coming round the cape.

Beef cattle, on the hoof, yielding an average of 400 [pounds] nett, were last delivered on contract at \$49 per head. This appears to be a high price as the same cattle do not command in the country around Los Angeles, and San Louis [Rey], more than \$18 or \$20; but the risque and expense of crossing the Desert are, doubtless, considerable. The stock on hand is turned into the cane brakes by day under the charge of a *Vacara* [Vaquero], employed at \$60 per month, and driven in at night. Thus far none have been carried off by Indians. Fresh beef is issued four days in seven.³⁸

With respect to the best means of furnishing this post with Subsistence, there can be, I think, no question. The last supply brought by water from San Francisco, cost \$75 per ton.³⁹ The next should not, probably, exceed \$40. Whereas, the supply now coming by wagon train which I passed a few days since upon the Desert, will not be delivered here at a cost short of \$333.00, per ton. This estimate is thus arrived at.

It is assumed that a wagon train would make twelve trips between San Diego and Camp Yuma per year—each wagon carrying 2,000 pounds. The Government is then charged with the interest on the outlay, the wear and tear, the wages of wagon masters and teamsters, cost of forage, in fine all the expenses of maintaining the necessary train

The Historical Society of Southern California

for twelve months, and it appears that the cost of the transport of each ton of subsistence would not fall short of the sum above stated. This, too, is a liberal estimate for I have not included losses by accident. Moreover, instead of twelve trips with 2,000 pounds each, I do not believe a train would make more than eleven trips, (altho' 30 days is the time usually occupied in a trip,) with 1,800 pounds each.⁴⁰

The loss in Subsistence stores, over land, by damage from excessive heat, is about 10 per cent. This occurs principally in the salted meats—the heat on the Desert as indicated by the thermometer during six or seven hours of the day, at the time I crossed it was from 140° to 150°—there was no shade, and the heat within a canvas wagon cover is, under such circumstances, at least as great as it is without; hence the barrels open and the brine is lost. In the last supply by water transport the damage was also about 10 per cent. This supply was brought from the mouth of the river, a distance of 144 miles, in flat boats. On this part of the voyage, 15,200 pounds of flour was damaged by water and a total loss to the Government after the expense of transport from San Francisco to the mouth of the Colorado, had been incurred.⁴¹ If a small steamboat were employed on this part of the route, the loss would be nothing.

I am induced to request the attention of the General in Chief and the War Department to the subject of supplying this post with water from a consideration of the following facts, *viz*: It requires the constant service of a wagon and 6 mule team, as heretofore stated, to supply the Garrison with water from the river, for culinary and other purposes. The Commanding Officer and Assistant Quarter Master recommend the construction of a reservoir on the bluff, to be filled by the aid of machinery which would be put in motion by a water-wheel at the foot of the bluff, where the river impinges. The cost of all the machinery necessary, they estimate not to exceed \$1,000. It will be found that at the rate since March last, the cost of maintaining six mules for 12 months, with the wages of the teamsters, amount to \$2,821.50. The reservoir would be constructed by the troops, and the expense of tools for boring log pipes would be trifling. If it is contemplated to make this post a permanent one, economy would seem to dictate the outlay, altho' it should be double that estimated.⁴²

Without pretending to offer any opinion as to the necessity of maintaining a body of troops here at heavy cost, I will simply lay before you such facts, having a bearing on the question, as I have been able to gather while in this part of the country.

Camp Yuma—1852

The Indians immediately in the vicinity of the post are the Yumas, who are supposed to number about 250 warriors. Altho' experience has proved that all estimates as to the numbers of an Indian tribe or band with which little intercourse has been had, are extremely vague; yet there are good grounds for believing that they are underrated at the above figures.⁴³ Few of them have fire arms—their weapons being the bow and arrows and the club, the latter being the more effective of the two. Their women and children are not numerous. They plant large fields of corn, beans, pumpkins, mellons, etc. They were pacified and well disposed towards the troops, and the whites generally for more than a year after the establishment of the military post in their country.

How a hostile spirit was subsequently engendered, I shall not undertake to show; but that open hostilities did ensue is known to the Government. The troops took the field against them, and they were driven from their old haunts with loss. They retreated up the Colorado, some seventy miles, where it was understood they were preparing to plant as soon as the water of the river, which is now above its banks, shall have subsided and left the flats in fine condition to receive the various seeds. It is the intention of the commanding officer to send out a detachment to destroy these fields as soon as the season is sufficiently advanced to render a second planting useless.⁴⁴ And it is thought by persons acquainted with their character that they will before long come in and sue for peace and permission to return to their old grounds. Yet, the night before I arrived here, they came into the camp of the Boundary Commission, which is within half a mile of the military post, and carried off three horses and eleven mules.⁴⁵ Acts of this kind left unpunished, as they generally are from the difficulty of overtaking the marauders in a wild country (as this is) impracticable to any but the savage himself, are calculated to give confidence to the Indians generally and to induce, if anything will, lasting hostility. The Yumas are the only tribe in this quarter with whom difficulty at present exists.

The Cocopas occupy the River-country from 50 miles below the post to the mouth of the Colorado. They are believed to have from 150 to 175 warriors; in proportion to whom, the women and children are not numerous. They appear to have some industry and plant corn and vegetables, tho' not to the same extent as the Yumas. With the latter they are not on friendly terms yet they rarely fight if they can avoid it, being weaker in numbers, and, it must be said, less expert with their weapons. They have hitherto been friendly (so were the Yumas at first)

The Historical Society of Southern California

but it should be borne in mind that they have as yet had but little intercourse with the whites. Should the river, hereafter, be regularly navigated, they may give trouble.

On the Gila river are the Maricopas and Pimos. These tribes intermarry, altho' their languages are different—they are both well disposed at present to the whites. These are all the Indians within this District.

How long it will be before the amicable relations we now hold with the three tribes last named, may be broken by some unjustifiable conduct of the whites who pass through their country cannot be foretold; yet it may be very confidently anticipated as no very distant occurrence. The establishment therefore of a Military post in the vicinity of the Pimos to afford protection to them rather than to our own people, would seem to be worthy the early attention of the Department.⁴⁶

I believe it would be good economy to cause the outposts in this country to be furnished with articles of the *best quality* that are to be found at the General or other Depots of Subsistence and Quarter Master Stores. There are always at these Depots a certain quantity of subsistence stores which, tho' not exactly fresh, are still sound and fit for issue at the Depots and at posts in the immediate vicinity. But these stores when exposed to long continued heat in the course of land transport, or to partial wetting, if sent by water, are often seriously damaged by the way, and on their arrival at the outpost, which they have reached at heavy cost, *unfit* for issue, and perhaps a total loss to the Government; whereas fresh stores in sound barrels and boxes would arrive in good condition.

These conditions have not perhaps sufficiently attracted the attention of distributing officers.

Similar remarks would apply to various articles in the Quarter Master's Department. But in no particular does attention to this appear to be more important than in the choice of mules and wagons. The cost of forage has been shown to be excessive, and it costs as much to feed an inferior mule as it does for the best, whereas the work he does is perhaps but one half that of the other. Again, if old and much worn wagons and harness are sent to an outpost, it soon occurs that a wheel (for example) is broken which cannot be replaced without long delay, at a time when the troops want timber for building purposes; thus the work is retarded altho' the inclement season may be approaching; and in the meantime the mules must be maintained in idleness. Thus if a certain quantity of timber etc. is to be hauled, sometimes from a distance of many miles,

Camp Yuma—1852

for the purpose of building quarters or storehouses at an outpost, it will be found to be economy to furnish mules and wagons that will do it in the shortest time. They should therefore *be furnished with the best at the Depots*—the contrary or opposite of which is often the rule that governs.

But a consideration above all others, as I conceive, is the sound policy—in assigning Recruits—of *selecting* good men for posts like this. The garrison should not—if it is possible to prevent it—be composed *chiefly* of raw recruits. The service at these posts is of the most important character of all that is required of the troops; it is at the same time the most trying to the health, the patience, and the constancy of the soldier. The recruit, then, besides being inefficient and therefore rendering less service to the Government, is disheartened and disgusted with the service, and he often deserts as soon as a favourable opportunity offers.

Therefore it would be well, in assigning recruits to Regiments and Companies, to select for those companies at out posts, men who have *previously served*.

I have the honor etc.
GEORGE A. MCCALL
Inspector General

Major General Winfield Scott
Commanding in chief United States Army
Washington City, D. C.

NOTES

¹ Godfrey Sykes, *The Colorado Delta* (Baltimore, 1937), p. 31.

² Second Lieutenant Amiel W. Whipple, Topographical Engineers, who was in charge of the survey party, selected the site. Amiel W. Whipple, *The Whipple Report*, ed. by E. I. Edwards (Los Angeles, 1961), p. 56. Coutts was in command of the Dragoon escort for the party.

³ The hill had previously been the site of Father Francisco Garcés' Mission Puerto de la Purísima Concepción, established in 1780 and destroyed by the Yuma Indians in July, 1781. See Elliott Coues, trans. and ed., *On the Trail of a Spanish Pioneer: The Diary and Itinerary of Francisco Garcés* (2 vols., New York, 1900), I, 19-23.

⁴ Thomas W. Sweeny, *Journal of Lt. Thomas W. Sweeny, 1849-1853*, ed. by Arthur Woodward (Los Angeles, 1956), pp. 132-137; Douglas D. Martin, *Yuma Crossing* (Albuquerque, 1954), pp. 138-152.

⁵ Special Orders No. 33, July 4, 1850, RG 94, Records of the Office of the Adjutant General (hereafter cited as OAG), Orders and Special Orders, Department No. 10, The National Archives, Washington, D.C.

⁶ Special Orders No. 39, August 18, 1850, *Ibid.*; Sweeny, *Journal*, p. 49.

⁷ This situation prevailed until arrangements were made to ship supplies from the principal depot at Benicia around Baja California to the Colorado delta where they were transferred to shallow draft river steamers. The first to make a successful run, all the way from the delta to Fort Yuma, was the *General Jesup* in February 1854. See Arthur Woodward, *Feud on the Colorado* (Los Angeles, 1955).

⁸ Orders No. 10, May 9, 1851, RG 94, OAG, Orders and Special Orders, Department No. 10; Sweeny, *Journal*, pp. 52-55. Sweeny chose the name Independence not for patriotic reasons but because he was free of Major Heintzelman, for whom he held something less than affection.

⁹ Sweeny, *Journal*, pp. 138-139.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 137, 139; Orders No. 34, August 12, 1852, RG 94, OAG, Orders, Pacific Division. By this time all supplies had been virtually depleted as a result of official parties drawing on the post.

¹¹ Orders No. 26, June 22, 1852; Orders No. 34, August 12, 1852, *ibid.* Captain Davidson was subjected to general courts martial in 1851 and again in 1852, both times on charges involving judgment, discipline, and disobedience of orders. In both cases he was found guilty of a portion of the charges. Orders No. 21, November 8, 1851; Orders No. 60, December 6, 1852, *ibid.*

¹² Sweeny, *Journal*, p. 145.

¹³ Commission Branch: File M752 of 1863, Relating to George A. McCall, RG 94, OAG.

¹⁴ General Order No. 93, April 5, 1847, Headquarters of the Army, Veracruz, in *ibid.*

¹⁵ George A. McCall, *Letters from the Frontier* (Philadelphia, 1868), pp. 334, 485.

¹⁶ Special Orders No. 69, November 8, 1849 in *ibid.*, 485.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 490.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 492-495, 523-524. The commission was dated June 10, 1850. Commission Branch: File M752 of 1863, RG 94, OAG.

¹⁹ The Pacific Division consisted of the Tenth and Eleventh Military Departments and included the posts in the present states of California, Oregon, and Washington. See Raphael P. Thian, *Notes Illustrating the Military Geography of the United States* (Washington, 1881), p. 25.

²⁰ Special Orders No. 31, May 24, 1852, RG 98, Records of United States Army Commands, Special Orders, Pacific Division.

²¹ The mission of San Diego was occupied as a military post from 1849 until 1858. The depot, which later became San Diego Barracks, was located at what was then called New San Diego.

²² Sweeny, *Journal*, pp. 159-160. The deserters had murdered Brevet Lieutenant Colonel Louis S. Craig, Third Infantry, commander of the escort for the United States-Mexican Boundary Commission.

Camp Yuma—1852

²³ Orders No. 52, October 31, 1852, RG 94, OAG, Orders, Pacific Division.

²⁴ Joseph K. F. Mansfield, *Mansfield on the Condition of the Western Forts, 1853-54* (Norman, 1963), p. 147.

²⁵ The inspection report for Camp Yuma is in McCall's Inspection Report, Department of the Pacific, 1852, RG 94, OAG, The National Archives.

²⁶ According to Sweeny, Davidson's command was a detachment of sixteen men, not a company. *Journal*, p. 137.

²⁷ This, it is reasonable to assume, was Heintzelman's description of Camp Yuma as it was before the removal of the garrison to Santa Ysabel. Actually, it was a collection of tents and brush huts which provided doubtful comfort.

²⁸ John Russell Bartlett, United States Boundary Commissioner, who was at Camp Yuma at the time of McCall's inspection, wrote, "The officers and men were living in tents, covered with sheds made of branches to protect them from the sun." *Personal Narrative* . . . (2 vols., New York, 1856), II, 162.

²⁹ These were recruits newly arrived from New York by way of the Isthmus of Panama. In February 1852, 250 recruits came ashore at San Diego, 211 of them for the four companies of the Second Infantry stationed in southern California. Order No. 2, February 13, 1852, RG 94, OAG, Orders, Pacific Division. Sweeny conducted 130 of the recruits to Camp Yuma in March. Sweeny, *Journal*, p. 151.

³⁰ Doubtless the officers were on their best behavior during McCall's brief visit. There is clear evidence of a lack of harmony between Heintzelman and some of his officers, including Sweeny.

³¹ What McCall had in mind is not clear. He mentioned the problems of desertions in most of the reports devoted to the inspection of the division but did not again refer to the problem as it existed specifically at Camp Yuma.

³² "The southern portion of California, threatened with Indian hostilities," was constituted a district on December 5, 1851. Special Orders No. 47, RG 94, OAG, Special Orders, Pacific Division.

³³ Lieutenant Paige, with a detachment of twenty-seven men, was assigned to escort Bartlett and a part of the boundary survey party to the Pima villages. Bartlett, *Personal Narrative*, II, 156-157.

³⁴ McCall noted in his report of the inspection of the mission of San Diego that many invalid soldiers were sent there from Camp Yuma. McCall to Scott, June 4, 1852, McCall's Inspection Report, RG 94, OAG.

³⁵ When Colonel Mansfield inspected Fort Yuma in 1854 he found that, with the exception of Heintzelman's quarters, the quarters, storehouses, and hospital were "constructed of willows" and considered them worthless. *Mansfield on the Condition of the Western Forts*, p. 147. At that time Mansfield and Heintzelman worked out a plan for the erection of permanent buildings built of adobe, construction of which was commenced in 1855.

³⁶ Though hay could not be cut near Camp Yuma it was abundant in the vicinity of San Diego. McCall himself noted in his report of the inspection of the mission, "Hay and wild-oats may be cut in any quantity at from 5 to 10 miles distance." McCall to Scott, June 4, 1852, McCall's Inspection Report, RG 94, OAG. Major Osborne Cross, who became chief quartermaster of the Pacific Division in May 1852, wrote, "There is not a sprig of grass about the post [Camp Yuma] or its vicinity, and all the forage used is carried by land from San Diego." Cross to Brigadier General Thomas S. Jesup, August 31, 1852, 32 Cong., 2 Sess., House Exec. Doc. 1, II, 85. Mansfield stated, without explanation, that in 1854 hay and wood were "had by cutting from two to ten miles off." *Mansfield on the Condition of the Western Forts*, p. 147. In addition to the cane and willow mentioned by McCall, the mesquite bean was used as forage for government animals.

³⁷ The wood employed for fuel was principally mesquite, according to Cross. Although Heintzelman employed willow for construction there was a quantity of cottonwood in the river bottoms. Cross proposed the erection of a saw mill near the junction of the Gila and Colorado to make use of the available timber. Cross to Jesup, August 31, 1852, 32 Cong., 2 Sess., House Exec. Doc. 1, II, 85.

³⁸ According to the *General Regulations for the Army of the United States* (Washington, 1847) fresh beef was to be issued as often as a post commander ordered but not less than twice a week.

The Historical Society of Southern California

³⁹ In March 1849, when the establishment of a post at the mouth of the Gila was being contemplated, Brevet Major General Persifer F. Smith, commander of the Pacific Division, proposed that it be supplied by way of the gulf as soon as vessels of the proper draft could be secured. Smith to Colonel Roger Jones, March 15, 1849, 31 Cong., 2 Sess., House Exec. Doc. 17, 711. The first shipment of supplies by the all-water route was not an unqualified success, but some stores reached Camp Yuma in April, 1852. Sykes, *Colorado Delta*, p. 24. Cross made a contract to carry 150 tons of stores from Benicia to Camp Yuma at \$120 per ton. This necessitated the provision of a river boat by the contractor. After the initial delivery and until September 1853, additional stores were to be carried to Camp Yuma at \$50 per ton. Cross expressed the fear that the contractor would be unable to meet his commitment. Cross to Jesup, August 31, 1852, 32 Cong., 2 Sess., House Exec. Doc. 1, II, 85. McCall strongly recommended that the government operate its own boats, both river and sea-going, to supply the post. Report of Inspection of Staff Departments, McCall to Scott, June to September, 1852, McCall's Inspection Report, RG 94, OAG.

⁴⁰ At this time the Depot of San Diego maintained a herd of 286 mules, primarily to haul stores to Camp Yuma. A sub-depot had been established at Vallecito, on the edge of the desert, and a station at Santa Ysabel, the last point where there was an abundance of grass and water. At Santa Ysabel a large quantity of hay was put up from the natural grass, and this, with grain, provided forage across the desert. The teams from and to Camp Yuma were changed at Santa Ysabel. According to McCall the trip from Vallecito to Camp Yuma required six days. Cross to Jesup, August 31, 1852, 32 Cong., 2 Sess., House Exec. Doc. 1, II, 84; McCall to Scott, June 3, 1852, McCall's Inspection Report, RG 94, OAG.

⁴¹ One flat boat was swamped and was lost with its entire cargo. Sykes, *Colorado Delta*, p. 24.

⁴² Mansfield reported in 1854 that Heintzelman was "entitled to great credit" for supplying the post with water, which was raised by force pump and mule power to a reservoir above the level of the parade. After it had settled the water was piped to a second reservoir for distribution. *Mansfield on the Condition of the Western Forts*, pp. 147-148.

⁴³ In this same period Whipple (1849) placed the number of Yuma near the mouth of the Gila at 5000. *Whipple Report*, pp. 31, 65. Cross (1852) estimated that total number as 500. Cross to Jesup, August 31, 1852, 32 Cong., 2 Sess., House Exec. Doc. 1, II, 86. Mansfield (1854) stated that there were 300 Yuma warriors and that the warriors of all the tribes in the vicinity totaled only 1000. *Mansfield on the Condition of the Western Forts*, pp. 109-110.

⁴⁴ According to Sweeny, some of the Yuma plantings were destroyed in July. *Journal*, p. 178.

⁴⁵ Bartlett recorded that the Indians stole fifteen animals, including his horse, which he described as "the finest I had seen in the country." None of the animals were recovered. *Personal Narrative*, II, 153-154.

⁴⁶ This recommendation was not carried out. A military post, later designated Fort Lowell, was established in Tucson in 1862, but not for the purpose of protecting the Pima.