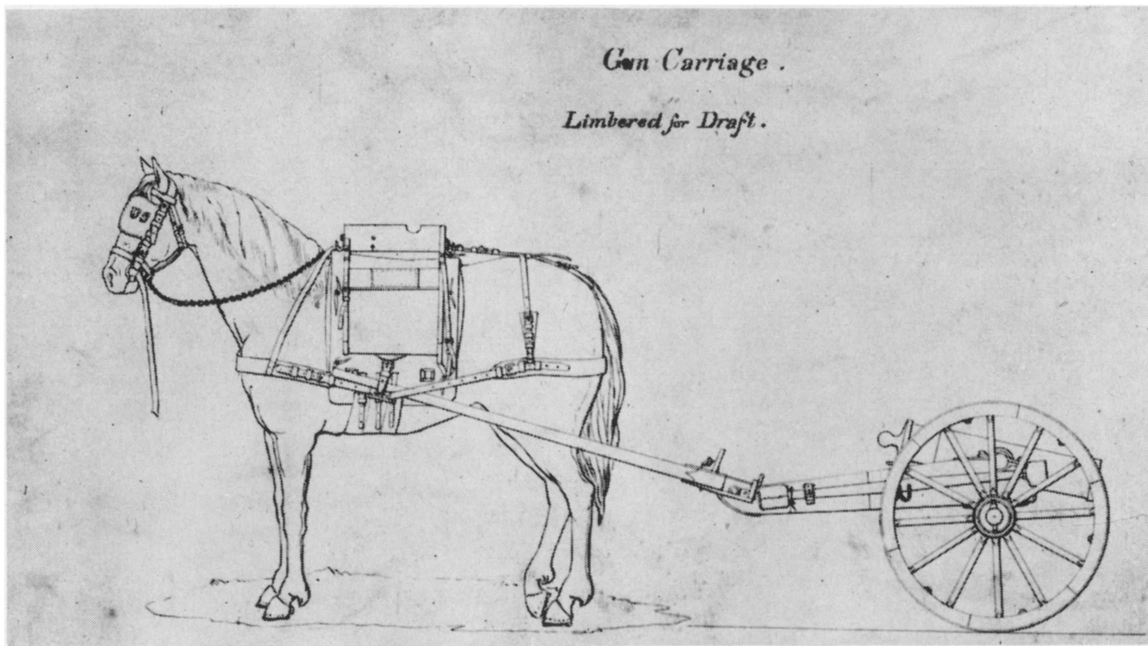


TWELVE-POUND BRONZE MOUNTAIN HOWITZER
Type used by General Kearny in 1846
Photograph supplied by U. S. Ordnance Department

Lances at San Pascual

By Arthur Woodward

PROLOGUE

IN THE year 1846 California was a lazy, irresponsible youngster clad in long calzoneras* and a short jacket, with velvet topped shoes upon his feet, spurs upon his heels and a low crowned broad brimmed hat set well back upon his head. He drowsed in the sun and gambled away the hours at monte or cock fights. He was a reckless joven armed with a short sword and a long lance and he wouldn't walk across the road if there were—and there always was—a horse to ride. He cocked hoydenish grimaces at Old Mother Mexico. He punched cattle for a living. He hated farming and had little use for hard money. He hunted grizzly bears with a rawhide reata and chased the wild Indians who stole his horses. He went to church most of the time, but when the Missions were broken up by the Powers That Be, he took over the Mission cattle and lands and filched the tiles and adobe bricks from the Mission buildings to construct outbuildings upon his newly acquired lands. He was not impious; no, just careless and somewhat shiftless. He was practical in an impractical sort of way. The Missions no longer served their purpose. He was a true son of the Church, but he knew that untended buildings would speedily revert to the earth whence they came unless the sun-baked adobes were used; so, what would you, señor?

He loved to speak in flowery phrases, and when he wrote, which he did upon occasion, he stormed heaven with his bombards of effusive rhetoric (on legally stamped paper, of course), and if no proper paper was at hand, he noted it very carefully, thus showing that his intentions were good. He made love ardently and fought his enemies just as heatedly, but his battles were mostly verbal and there was little bloodshed.

Being a ranchero he loved the matanzas where the cattle were slaughtered for their hides and tallow. The hides and botas of tallow were the leather dollars and their accompanying currency for the purchase of silks from China, packed in gaily painted leather chests, satin shoes from France, ironware from England and copper stills from New York and Philadelphia. He sent fence posts, clay tiles and sea-otter pelts to the Sandwich Islands. From Mexico came brown sugar, the delectable panocha, made in little truncated brown cones and packed in straw; cotton cloth from Puebla; cooking wares from Tonalá; beans, gourd water-bottles, new immigrants, letters and politicians. All except the latter were welcome. In his heart this overgrown, sprawling youngster, so gay and irresponsible, was essentially an orphan on his own. He was tied to the apron strings of Old Madre Mexico, but, like all

* English equivalents of less common Spanish words used in text are given in Glossary preceding Notes.

adolescents he felt himself to be a man, and so he resented the political guardians set over him, particularly if they came from Mexico. Occasionally he kicked over the traces; he rebelled noisily with printed manifestoes, bombastic speeches and much sword rattling, then subsided once more into good-natured, lazy indolence broken only by the excitement of the rodeo and matanza or the bailes held at the various ranchos. He would rouse himself to ride for miles on horseback or in the creaking wooden carreta to attend one of these fiestas, where he tried to outdo the tecolero or dancing master and displayed his feats of horsemanship (it was said a Californio could throw a reata better with his foot than a Sonorense could with his hand).

He lived in six sleepy villages scattered the length of the land: Yerba Buena at the north, Monterey the capital, San Jose, Santa Barbara, Los Angeles and San Diego. All of these places except San Jose and Los Angeles were presidio towns, and naturally the latter, being military centers, were more important.

There were the ranchos to be sure, great tracts of land upon which thousands of head of cattle, sheep and horses grazed. Prior to 1820 there were but few of these ranchos in existence but by the year 1846 they had increased one hundred fold. It was the Golden Age of living. The Missions, which had been the agricultural, religious and cultural centers of the land, were in the winter of their discontent. The rancheros had grown wealthy and comfortable. They were complacent in their provincialism and were little interested in events beyond their immediate horizon.

Now and then foreigners drifted into this Pacific paradise. They found this young Californio a hospitable host. Some were roving trappers, others were sailors who jumped ship to escape the harsh life on board the trading vessels and hide droghers that put in at the sleepy little California ports. There were doctors, or would-be doctors, carpenters, soldiers-of-fortune, merchants and horse thieves. These newcomers found the land good and they lingered on. They married the daughters of the rancheros, acquired ranchos of their own and settled down to enjoy the easy way of living. In time they became true brothers of the paisanos who drowsed in the sun. They learned to speak Spanish and wore fancy clothes. They took out naturalization papers and almost forgot the lands from whence they came. Even the Americans did this.

There were no heavy taxes. There was no large standing army. Like the Missions, the army had gone to seed. The soldiers were recruited from the ranchos and they were few in number. Their arms were the lance, sword, and flintlock musket. A few clung to the old rawhide adarga or laced shield, of the style brought into Mexico in 1519 by Cortés.

The Indian menace had dwindled, thanks to the efforts of the Franciscan gray robes, and an active military force was no longer needed in this Never Never Land. Cannon rusted in the presidios, the muskets lost their flints,

and the soldiers began drifting away to work as vaqueros on neighboring ranchos. It was the only way they could keep from starving to death.

Such, in brief, was California in 1846 when the first thunder heads of trouble began piling up on the eastern horizon. It was only when John Charles Frémont and his crew of buckskin clad mountaineers began making unneighborly gestures in the northern part of the province, that this somnolent youngster that was California began to wonder what the fuss was all about. Eventually he became fully awake to the danger that menaced him and his free way of living. He was puzzled, hurt, then angry, and, like a youth feeling the first pangs of his manhood, he thought only of revenge upon the invaders. He knew of only one method of settling these differences, with horse and lance. Since those gringos had selected as their insignia the grizzly bear, which they painted upon their home-made flag at Sonoma (and which the Californians thought looked more like a pig—which it did) they determined to fight them as they did the grizzlies, with the lance and reata. Hadn't he, El Vaquero de California, noosed grizzlies many times with his reata and dispatched them with lance and sword? Si señor!

So, this irate joven slapped saddle upon his favorite caballo, seized his pennoned lance and galloped off to the fray, whooping and singing. It was his last ride as a free man, but he didn't know it, and at a little Diegueño Indian ranchería known as San Pascual he rode into the mists of the morning shouting:

"Aquí hacemos un gran matanza!"

(Here we are going to make a great slaughter!)

These were just words. In his heart he didn't really want a great killing. He didn't actually want to fight, but it was his nature to boast. When the hour came, he rode into the fray with leveled lance and shouting. Soon it was over. Men lay dead upon a sandy creek bed under the willow trees. Then El Vaquero rode away. He left the enemy in possession of the field and technically the victory went to the Americans. In his heart El Vaquero knew he was defeated although he tried to claim the day as his own. He returned home on jaded horse with lance pennon drabbled with blood. It was over. The Golden Dream was fading. Actually the life of old California vanished in those mists at San Pascual and the purpose of this article is to recall briefly the last act of the drama enacted a century ago and to allow the actors once more to emerge from historical limbo and speak their parts. Salud defensores y adiós! We shall never see your like again.

Dust rose in stifling clouds and the late November sun beat down upon the bone-weary troopers of Stephen Watts Kearny's "Army of the West" as it neared its camp 106, the site of which was one and one-half miles south of the junction of the Gila and Colorado rivers. This was the evening of November 22nd, 1846.[1] All day a strong east wind blasted flying sand against the tired and hungry men. The horses and mules, purchased at such great

expense in New Mexico, were falling by the wayside. General Kearny's horse gave out that day and he had to mount a mule. Many of the men were on foot and many were without shoes. Food was scarce and to top it all the scouts had brought in news that somewhere in their vicinity was a camp of at least a thousand horsemen, to judge by the tracks in the trail. This was disheartening for a small force of 101 worn-out men. However, Kearny decided that the Americans were too few in number to bear the brunt of an attack and so must act the part of the aggressor, hoping that the enemy could be dispersed before he learned of the small force which opposed him.

Camp was pitched that night in a grassy hollow of the sand hills, which were overgrown with thorny mesquite trees. Forage for the broken-down dragoon animals was imperative, particularly if there was a battle in the offing. As usual the stubby little 12-pound bronze mountain-howitzers were late getting into camp. These stolid looking toy cannon with their four-foot barrels and four-inch bores had looked impressive as they sat on their wheeled carriages, frowning down on the flat mud roofs of Santa Fe, but now their value was questionable. Two out of an assorted battery of sixteen pieces of ordnance which had started from Fort Leavenworth were with Kearny. The howitzers had been cast by Cyrus Alger and Company of Boston and the initials "C.A. & Co. Boston" stood out plainly upon the trunnions, as did the "U.S." stamped into the breech of the barrel near the copper-lined touch hole.[2] With these sawed-off cannon Kearny hoped to impress the enemy, when and if he met him. But so far on the long 800-mile trek from Santa Fe the guns had proved to be a nuisance. The carriages were cracked and broken. The long desert miles, the rocky cañons leading to the San Pedro and the Gila rivers, had taken their toll of the woodwork and the wheels. The guns were lashed to their mounts with strips of rawhide and could not be elevated. Thongs of the same material were bound around the wheels. In short, the weapons were useless, but being government property they could not be abandoned, not, at least, by a martinet like Kearny. Colonel Frémont had left a cannon of this same type in the mountains far to the north when he crossed into California in 1842,[3] and oddly enough he had obtained the howitzer from Kearny, who was at that time in command of the Third Military Department with headquarters at St. Louis.

On this night of November 22nd, the howitzers as usual creaked and jounced into camp long after dark. As soon as the light had faded from the western sky, preparations were made to descend upon the enemy. General Kearny said he must know the strength of the Mexicans who, he supposed, were forces under Gen. José Castro. Earlier the same evening a mounted Mexican had been observed spying upon the camp from a nearby hill, but he had disappeared before he could be captured. Kearny was nervous and with very good cause. Lieut. Thomas C. Hammond, the officer in charge of the howitzers, had reported seeing bright fires on the opposite bank of the

Gila at a distance of about five miles. Accordingly Lieut. William Hemsley Emory was ordered forward to scout the enemy and make a report.[4]

With his party and fifteen dragoons Emory beat about in the mesquite until he struck a slough of the Gila. Here were some tall willows, and a sergeant climbed one of them to spy on the enemy. He heard horses, hundreds of them. In describing the man's excitement, Emory says that he "slipped down the tree much faster than he climbed it, quite enchanted with the hope of exchanging his weary mule for a charger. Instead of reporting what he had seen, he exclaimed, 'Yes, sir, there are enough for us all.' 'Did you see the fires?' 'No! but they are all on horses; I heard them neighing, and they cover much ground.' "

However, as General Kearny wanted to know how many men were in front of them, the small detachment proceeded stealthily through the mesquites under the cover of the desert night. Suddenly a large fire blazed up ahead. Lieutenant Emory and two dragoons, Maurice Londeau and a man by the name of Martínez, worked cautiously forward until they were within a few feet of the fire where stood an armed Mexican. Emory sent his two men in to pose as trappers. The conference was short. It developed that these Mexicans were not members of Castro's army. They said they were a party of men en route with a herd of 500 horses destined for Castro's army in Sonora. Emory took four of the principal Mexicans back to camp, where they were questioned separately and all told different stories concerning the ownership of the horses and their ultimate destination.

The truth of the matter was this:

While Andrés Pico and his men were riding to San Diego to take up positions best adapted for the successful harassment of the Americans in that town, Don Antonio Franco Coronel, who had been appointed a sort of quartermaster officer for the forces around Los Angeles, was ordered by Gen. José María Flores to go to Sonora to ask for help from the officials in that state.[5] Accordingly he assembled a small force of two soldiers, three personal servants, a caballada of one hundred horses for remounts and set out posthaste on his mission. With him was a Sonoran, Felipe Castillo, who knew the road across the desert to Sonora. Shortly before Coronel started, a small party of Sonorans, who had appropriated a herd of horses entrusted to them by the Californians, had started across country for Sonora, hoping to dispose of their loot in that area.

Coronel took the inland route which went through Warner's Ranch. When he arrived there he heard a rumor that a party of Americans had set out from San Diego to intercept him. It was also rumored that the Americans had been advised of his plans by Miguel Pryor, an ex-trapper who had been one of the foreigners in Lieut. Archibald H. Gillespie's force, held captive in Los Angeles by Flores late in September. Coronel proceeded

cautiously but with haste. He arrived at a famous watering place on the California-Sonora trail known as Algodones, which is still a sleepy little Mexican town on the border a few miles west of Yuma. At this place he was advised by some friendly Yumas that a great many Americanos were encamped on the east bank of the Colorado river.

Coronel somewhat doubted this report, but, to play safe, he sent forward Castillo, who made his way through the sand hills to the thickets along the Colorado. There he fell in with the Sonora horse thieves, who, thinking Coronel had been sent in pursuit of them, assured Castillo that the report was true and that if Coronel persisted in going on to Sonora he would be captured by the gringo soldiers.

On this same day Capitán Charague, the Yuma leader, sent an official warning to Coronel, reiterating the dangers and affirming the report that a great many Americanos were on the river and seemingly had every intention of crossing it. Coronel was in a quandary; his dispatches must get through, so he decided to entrust them all to Castillo, reasoning that since the aspect of the desert was forbidding, the route off the beaten track, with water holes so far apart and an unknown force of enemy soldiers camping across the Sonora trail, one man who knew the country would have better chances of getting through than a small party with a herd of loose live stock.

The upshot of it was that Castillo took the papers, wedged a couple of bottles of vino into his saddle bags and crossed the river. This was on the 23rd of November, the day after the four horse thieves had been apprehended by Emory.

Shortly after sunrise on the morning of the 23rd, Lieut. W. H. Warner of the Topographical Engineers, and J. M. Stanley,[6] the artist-draughtsman of the expedition, left the American camp and went to scout the land in the direction of the junction of the Gila and Colorado rivers, distant about a mile and a half to the north of the camp. It was a blustery day with the wind sweeping down from the north and blasting great clouds of sand before it. They made their observations, started back, and en route fell in with the luckless Castillo. Naturally the Americans were suspicious of a person who seemed set for a long ride, and they took him into camp. He advanced all sorts of polite excuses for not accompanying them. He was looking for some lost horses. Would the señores like to see a poor but honest caballero lose all his extra mounts? Would they not let him go for a short time until he had rounded up the runaway animals; then he, Felipe Castillo, would return? Unfortunately the Americanos were a hard-bitten suspicious lot. They would not hear of their guest departing without a word with el general. So, protesting, Castillo went along.

In camp, the Americans examined the saddle bags and found the dispatches and the letters asking for aid.[7] From the correspondence Kearny learned that a counter revolution had taken place in California. The Americans had been

expelled from Santa Barbara, Pueblo de Los Angeles and other places. The Alcalde Louis Robideaux (Robidoux, etc., variants) of Los Angeles, brother of Kearny's guide, Antoine Robideaux, was in prison; "the detestable Anglo-Yankee yoke" had been thrown off.

Vivan los Californios!

The defeat of Gillespie and the frustration of the abortive attempt of Captain William Mervine and his Colt's Rifle Men and blue jackets to retake Los Angeles were described in minute detail. The latter action was doubted by the Americans, but even as they read the dispatches Kearny and his men knew that something serious was happening on the coast, not at all in accord with Kit Carson's confident assertion that the Californians would never fight.

From Castillo, Kearny also learned that the horses which he, Kearny, had detained were those belonging to the Californians and so could be deemed legitimate booty. Captain Benjamin D. Moore was ordered to remount his men from the herd.

Nothing that the Americans could say or do would shake the story of Castillo and the other captives. California was up in arms and if the rash gringos persisted in marching to the coast they were but going to their deaths. All of which had no effect whatsoever upon the Americans except to make them more impatient to continue the journey and engage the enemy.

Castillo, much to his amazement, was handed back his dispatches, all neatly resealed and he was released.

In the meantime the dragoons were having a grim kind of circus, cutting out fresh mounts from the herd of wild untamed California broncos, for they were determined to get into the saddle once more. Many of them had been on foot for some four or five hundred miles, marching through a country which, as Moore had said a few days earlier, was so miserable that they all "deserved a good trouncing" for ever coming into it.[8]

Eventually, however, in spite of tumbles in the dust, the foot-sore dragoons managed to subdue and mount their animals, much to the amazement of some of the Californians. Captain Abraham R. Johnston reported that one old Mexican said: "Why those fellows can ride as well as us, if they had good horses; they are not a bit afraid." The horse thieves were equally amazed when they were paid for their animals at the rate of about twelve dollars a head.[9]

On the night of the 24th, after a tiring day of breaking their new mounts, the troops camped on a sand bar among the willows on the east bank of the Colorado. What were their thoughts as they sat by their mesquite-wood camp fires facing the sullen, roily expanse of the Colorado, which at this point was about 1500 feet wide?

Behind them lay over 1600 miles of rough terrain which they had crossed in all kinds of weather, much of it on foot. Ahead of them stretched an unknown land. Carson had warned them of the harshness of the desert,

without water or feed for their horses and mules. Beyond the desert, some place, was the enemy. What were his numbers? Where would he make his last stand?

Probably, as all soldiers have done when facing dangers of this sort, their thoughts drifted homeward. There was Lieutenant Thomas Hammond,[10] the incurably romantic, who had been married on horseback high on a hill top. No doubt he was thinking of his wife and his "angel baby," born a few short months before, of whom he had raved when in his cups in Santa Fe just two months past, much to the embarrassment of his genial, naïve young hostess, Susan Shelby Magoffin.[11]

Sergeant John Cox of C Company,[12] too, was a newly wed, and he had left his bride of but a few days when he took up the march westward. What were his thoughts that night?

Many no doubt did very little thinking of the morrow. They were dog-tired after a hard day's work. They were hungry. Their feet were blistered from the heavy boots and the deep sand; others had no shoes at all and left bloody footprints along the way.

On the morning of November 25th they crossed the Colorado. It was at low ebb. The ford was only about four feet deep in the shallows, but let a horse stray to one side, or the other, and man and beast were soon floundering.[13] The mules objected to the cold water but the outfit crossed without mishap. At last the entire detachment stood on the California side. Beyond the river bottom loomed hills of shifting white sand, "a floating mass like snow drift," as Captain Johnston himself expressed it. The troops forged through the willows and mesquites, which were thicker on the west bank than on the eastern, for a distance of some ten miles, riding south, parallel with the sand dunes and camped at night fall beside a scanty pool of water.

That night the men cut grass for their mounts and packed the saddle bags with mesquite beans. At half past six on the morning of the 26th the sun found the detachment in the saddle and heading out into the desert, jornada tired, hungry and thirsty. They rode some twenty-three miles, hoping to find a well capable of supplying the command with enough water to carry them through the arid stretch that lay ahead. They found a small one dug in the sand,[14] but "the prospect of watering 250 animals and 150 men at the well was gloomy enough; and it was necessary to decide whether to halt here, or run the risk, or [and?] go on without water for 60 miles—the command having been 30 hours without water." So wrote Captain Johnston, Kearny's aide-de-camp.

All night the men labored to water their horses from the shallow well, taking out 800-1000 four-gallon buckets full. Some of the Californian horses would not drink from buckets, so the receptacles had to be buried in the sand and mesquite beans floated on the surface to simulate pools. The only forage was these mesquite beans which the animals ate greedily.[15]

All that day their route had been along the dunes, and at the southern end they had crossed through the sand to the open graveled plain with occasional patches of grass on which they let the horses graze for an hour.

This march was on the 26th and 27th. On the latter, about eight o'clock in the evening, they saw a lake. The Mexicans had warned them that it was salty and bitter, unfit for man or beast, but the trail-weary troopers hoped that the Mexicans were lying. They soon discovered that their erstwhile captives had been telling the truth. As the late comers straggled into camp they rushed to the stinking water and threw themselves down to drink, only to find it as salt as the ocean.[16]

They were now well out on the desert and over half way to the mountains that rimmed the western horizon. Their route had taken them along the southern edge of what is now the Imperial Valley and thence north, passing a little west of where El Centro now stands.[17] Emory observed that: "At the point where we left the sand, sketches were taken of the objects by which our pilot wended his way; these may serve to guide future travellers. From this point the traveller may go directly to the gap exhibited in the sketch, nearly magnetic west, through which the trail passes [p. 102]." Unfortunately the sketch of which he speaks is not included in his report, hence we must guess at the exact route taken across the Imperial Valley to the entrance of Carrizo Wash.

A dense fog, blown in by a southwest wind from the Gulf, enveloped the desert on the morning of the 28th. The blankets were soaked with the refreshing moisture and both the animals and the men enjoyed a respite for two or three hours before the sun burned the mist away.

Now their route was plain. The straggling column of horses and men, accompanied by the snub-nosed howitzers on their creaking carriages, plodded across the last few miles of desert bottom land and ascended the sloping bench of the ancient inland sea, the beach of which was (and still is) carpeted with thin nacreous shells that crackled brittlely under foot. Here, too, were smooth, water-worn pebbles and a harder footing. The trail wound through rounded clay buttes, carved into fantastic shapes, some of them barren, red, yellow and gray. They must have looked like the gates of hades to the starved and thirsty men.

At last the army reached Carrizo Spring. It is a large warm spring varying in temperature from 68° to 75°, highly impregnated with sulphur, sulphate of lime, magnesia and chloride of sodium. In spite of its warmth and its taste, the water was a godsend to the troopers and their animals.[18]

The forage was insufficient at Carrizo Spring, and on the morning of the 29th the dragoons were again on the march. Many of them were now down to their last slim ration[19] of food, and Major Swords,[20] the quartermaster officer, found one of his best pack mules slaughtered and the choicest bits cut from shoulders and ribs. Hungry men will eat anything, and according

to the adage of the old mountain men, "meat's meat." Also slaughtered were two mares and a colt. No one knew who the miscreants were and no one tried very hard to discover their identities.

All day the dejected column plodded through the heavy sands of Carrizo Wash. Mesquite clumps and the tall, graceful ocotillo dotted the landscape. There were thickets of the needle-leaved agave and the bristling yellow-thorned cholla looking silky but venomous in the white sunlight. These thorny plants took severe toll of the ragged troopers whose legs in many instances were bare. Some of the fleshy leaves of the agave were cut and chewed as food by the men as they marched along. Scores of horses and mules, bloated by the warm waters of the Carrizo and the rushes they had eaten, fell by the way and the men had to get them on their feet and moving again. Many did not reach camp until ten that evening and yet the distance traversed was only 16 miles.

At Vallecito[21] the worn-out detachment, down to one ration per day, slumped to the ground amidst the salt grass and mesquites. Vallecito lies in a long valley with a range of rocky hills rising on the west. Eastward is another range of low, clay hills, and other peaks studded with granite. To the south and southwest rise the blue Lagunas and the pine-crested Cuyamacas. It is a pleasant oasis in an otherwise barren land. There are warm sulphurated springs, and near the old Butterfield Stage station is another spring of cool water, less impregnated with minerals than those in the bottomland.

Here they found a camp site of the Yahano Indians,[22] otherwise known as the Diegueños. These tribesmen had their villages scattered from the desert's edge to the slopes of the Cuyamaca Mountains. They were in the Lagunas and beyond the Cuyamacas to the Santa Ysabel Valley and among the huge oaks and pines of Mesa Grande. The Indians cleared out when they saw the blue-coated strangers straggling across the desert, warned no doubt by Don Antonio Coronel, who, unseen and unsuspected by Kearny, was spying upon the soldiers all across the desert. Coronel had sent his small herd of horses back to Aguanga,[23] southwest of Warner's Ranch, and at the same time he sent an Indian to General Flores advising him of the Americans' advance and asking for orders. He was ordered to remain on the job and be prepared to conduct a party of American prisoners to Mexico.

By the time Coronel reached the little Indian village of San Felipe, which is about twelve miles west of Vallecito, he became uneasy. There were rumors that the Indianada were going over to the Americanos and that all Californios would be captured and turned over to the Yanquis as prisoners. Not wishing to risk capture, Coronel decided to go to Aguanga, where, he had heard, a party of Sonorans was camped, en route to Mexico with their families. Coronel also hoped to find his father and his friend, Agustín Olvera, camped at that spot. He thereupon gave over his role as spy and

set out for Aguanga, arriving there on the evening of December 3rd at eleven o'clock at night.[24]

It was bitterly cold and rain had been falling all day. He was chilled through and soaked to the skin. He went to one of the huts which butted against a brushy hill. The occupants made him welcome. He slipped out of his wet trousers and jacket and spread them before the fire and was warming himself when he heard the tramp of horses' feet. The night had turned clear and a full moon was overhead. Moving back from the fire, Coronel peered out through a crack and saw the moonlight glinting on the carbine barrels of American troopers. There was no time to be lost. He went out the back door and made for the brush, clad only in his shirt. It was none too soon. The soldiers surrounded the house. Coronel, in order to have a better view of things, climbed an aliso tree. He hoped, as soon as the soldiers had left, to slide back into the house and retrieve his clothes.

Much to his dismay, however, he saw the soldiers remove all of his personal belongings from the house. They took his documents and weapons, too. His servant, Vicente Romero, was taken prisoner, as well as the inhabitants of the house. He also saw others of his servants and two Sonorans mounted on horseback and forced to act as guides to the hidden caballada of remounts. The guide and interpreter for the Americans was an old Negro by the name of Fisher, who at one time had acted as a servant in Coronel's household. This man knew that Coronel had passed through Warner's Ranch and was in hiding at Aguanga. Coronel also feared that the Yankee troopers were going to employ Indian trackers from a nearby ranchería of Cupeño Indians, under the command of a Capitán Andrés, to track him (Coronel) to his hiding place.

Knowing that no time was to be lost, and fearing capture, Coronel set out across country in his shirt, heading for the ranchería of a friendly Indian leader, Capitán Alejo. The half-naked man traveled all night until about five o'clock in the morning when he arrived at the Indian ranchería.

All was silent in Alejo's house save for a low, monotonous song coming from the lips of Alejo as he sat beside a small fire in his brush jacal. All other members of the family were asleep. As Coronel stepped silently into the doorway, Alejo looked up in alarm and seized his bow; then, recognizing his visitor, Alejo stepped outside and motioned Coronel a short distance from the house.

"What has happened, Najalito?" he asked. (Coronel explains in his memoirs that the word najal was a term commonly employed by these Indians when speaking to an employer or a gente de razón.)

Coronel explained some of the circumstances and requested Alejo to get a horse for him. Alejo said he had none and he thought Coronel had better be gone as soon as possible, since all of the Indians of the neighborhood had declared in favor of the Americans and if they caught Coronel they would

turn him in; moreover, it would also go hard with Alejo for sheltering an enemy. Even as they talked they heard horses on the trail and Coronel was forced to hide in a nearby cactus patch.

Soon a patrol of American troopers arrived and Alejo was questioned. He denied having seen Coronel; and after telling him to seize the fugitive if he appeared, they rode away.

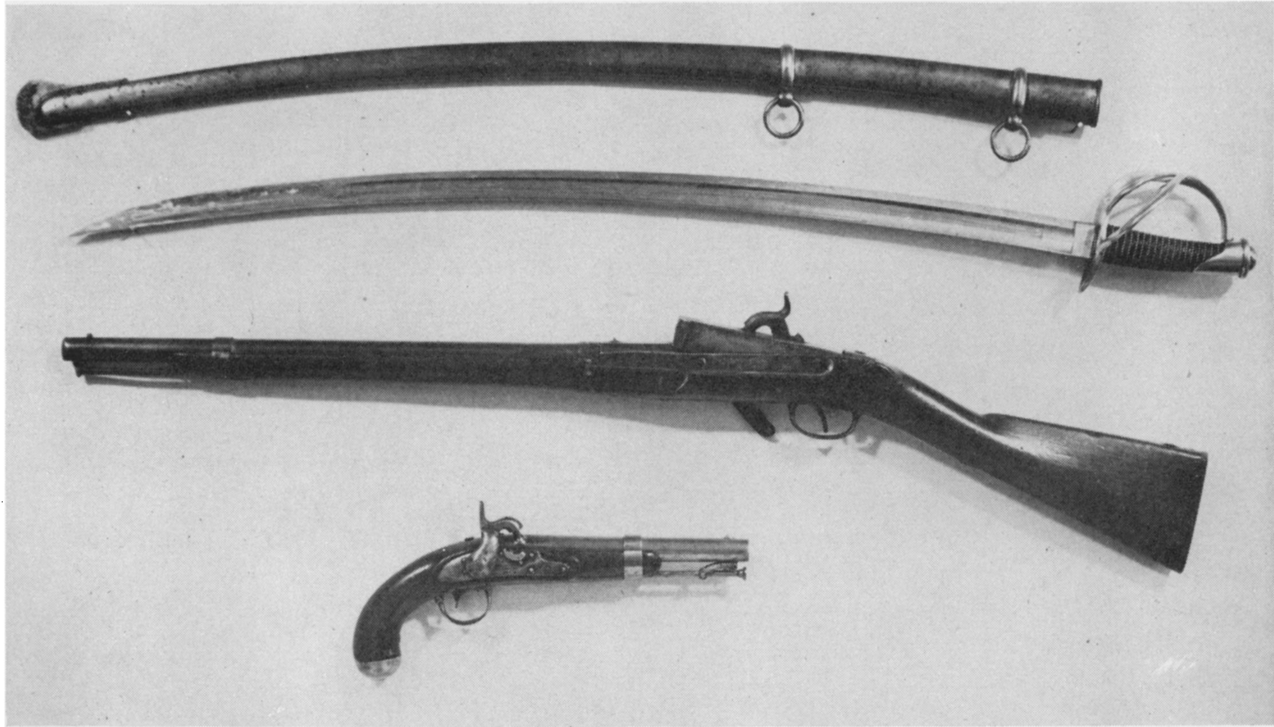
The Indian now gave Coronel a pair of sandals, a straw sombrero and a frazada (a poor type of serape). Then the two men set off on foot for a friendly Indian ranchería near Pala where Alejo hoped to borrow a horse for Coronel. En route Coronel's feet gave out. The sand worked into the sandals and blistered his toes. Alejo tore strips from an old cotton sheet, that was wrapped around him, and bound up Coronel's feet. They arrived at the ranchería, which proved to be an acorn-gathering camp, about 4 P.M. Here Coronel was well treated. The old Indian women doctored his feet and gave him food. Alejo managed to obtain a poor bony horse, having only a jáquima for a bridle and a sheepskin for a saddle. Thus equipped Coronel set out for Temécula. When he arrived there, he found an Indian servant and a Sonoran awaiting him with messages. After getting a fresh horse, saddle and bridle and some decent clothes, the worn-out man set out for Los Angeles to make his report.

We left Kearny encamped at Vallecito, the oasis on the desert's edge, where his weary troopers and their mounts were trying to recuperate from the march over the desert. The Coronel episode had come later.

At Vallecito they held the last review of the Army of the West. A strange picture it must have presented. Here were serried rows of ragged scarecrows, mounted on steeds scarcely less fit than themselves. The men were unshaved, their hair was shaggy and their bellies empty. Their blue dragoon uniforms were dirty and torn. The uniforms of Kearny and his immediate staff were travel stained and spotted with dark grease patches obtained in far away New Mexico when they had joined in good fellowship in a religious procession in the little village of Tomé on September 8th last. Said Emory:[25] "Some American officers followed, each holding a candle. Unfortunately I emerged just as this group was passing; there was no escape, and the moment I joined a grave Mexican (apparently a man in authority) thrust a candle into my hand. I thought of my coat, my only coat, the coat which was on my back, and which must take me to California, and back again into the interior of Mexico! Suddenly there was a halt without any word of command, and in the confusion we jostled against each other and distributed the tallow in great profusion."

The ill-fated Captain Abraham Johnston, upon whose shoulder the bony fingers of death were then resting, thus described the review at Vallecito:[26]

"Our men were inspected today [November 30th]. Poor fellows! They are well nigh naked—some of them barefoot—a sorry looking set. A dandy



ARMS USED BY GENERAL KEARNY'S MEN

Top: Ames saber and scabbard; weight over four pounds.

Center: Hall percussion breech-loading carbine with improved side lever. Model, 1843-52.

Bottom: A. Waters single-shot percussion pistol. Model, 1843.

would think that; in those swarthy sun-burnt faces, a lover of his country will see no signs of quailing. They will be ready for their hour when it comes."

One cannot help but wonder at the thoughts of Kearny, the commander-in-chief. Kearny the disciplinarian, who, during the march down the Rio Grande in September to quell a Mexican uprising that never took place, issued an order, as recollected by Col. A. W. Doniphan,[27] on the morning of the third for "... *every man to put on his coat, or he would dismiss him from the service of the country*." Since the weather was extremely hot the order "came like a clap of thunder in a clear sky." It seemed unreasonable "to the volunteers who were accustomed to think for themselves, and consult their own convenience and comfort in matters of dress." They obeyed reluctantly, all save Captain John W. Reid's company of fifty-four men from Saline, Missouri. Kearny halted at this company, which was drawn up in order awaiting marching orders. The Missourians were carelessly attired. Doniphan's account continues:

"Captain, have your men no jackets?" "Some of them have, and some of them have not." "Make your men, Captain Reid, put on their jackets, or I will dismiss them from the service—the government has paid them commutation for clothing, and expects every man to dress in a manner wholesome for military discipline."

[Captain Reid was not abashed.]

"My men, sir, came here, not to dress, but to fight the enemies of their country, and they are ever ready to be of service to you and the country in that way. As to the commutation which you say the government has paid my men for clothing, I must inform you that you misapprehend the truth. My men have never received *one dime* since they entered the service, and what money they brought from their homes with them they have already expended for bread while on half rations, owing to the neglect of your chief commissary. As to being dismissed from the service, sir, we do not fight for wages. If there is no place for us in the army, we will furnish ourselves and fight the enemy wherever we may find him. Acting thus we shall not lose the respect of our countrymen."

General Kearny bit his lip, the account says, and rode off, giving orders for the march to commence.

The author of this statement went on to say:

"General Kearny's greatest error consisted in an effort to reduce the volunteers to the same discipline, and treat them with the same rigid austerity, and dissociability, which he was wont to exercise over the regular troops under his command."

What, then, did Kearny think when he saw his "regular troops," members of Companies C and K of the First United States Dragoons, as they sat on

their horses, or stood before him, without shoes and in uniforms that were in tatters?

December 1st dawned clear and chilly. The clouds that had hovered over the lofty peaks of the pine-clad old Cuyamacas, looming blue and solid on the southwestern horizon, had disappeared, leaving the mountain tops covered with a light fall of snow. The wind that swept down from those peaks cut through the men's ragged clothing to their bones.

Away from Vallecito marched the Army of the West. The bugle echoed from the hills, and even it sounded forlorn and lost. Four miles from camp the column struck Vallecito Hill,[28] a steep slope studded with boulders, a hill destined to give trouble to the United States forces well into the days of the Civil War. Here the howitzers had heavy going. Once over the hill the road traversed a narrow valley filled with mesquites, creosote bushes and the ever present agave. Four miles beyond the hill, the trail turned abruptly to the north.

It threaded through a narrow rocky cañon, so narrow that the howitzers navigated it with difficulty and the horses and mules stumbled and fell over the sharp rocks. Said Johnston, "impassable without work, for wagons." This was the famous Box Cañon through which Colonel Philip St. George Cooke and his Mormon Battalion smashed their way the following month, with axes and crowbars,[29] and even then had to take their wagons to pieces and pack them piecemeal over the worst spots. Today that cañon is still narrow, though it was widened during the days when horse-drawn stages rattled along the Butterfield Trail and subsequently, when long trains of white-topped supply wagons traveled the route during the Civil War; but, even so, it is a rugged bit of road and now it has been abandoned as a thoroughfare, while the modern road winds down the hill to the west of the cañon.

In the San Felipe Valley at an abandoned Indian village, eighteen miles from Vallecito, the dragoons arrived on the night of December 1st. On December 2nd they took up the march for Warner's Ranch, their route passing a trifle south of the modern highway but parallel to it. They ascended the slope leading to the divide, and emerged from the desert into the fertile valley of Buenavista, otherwise known as Warner's Ranch.[30] Gone were the cactus and the junipers, the agave and the mesquites. In their place were huge live oaks, growing among the grass and shrubs which clothe the high, rolling hills and valley lands of the back country in San Diego County. Tall pines grew upon the higher crests. The air was cooler.

The first stop was made at Warner's Ranch. The old house[31] is some three miles east of the hot springs for which the ranch is famous. Here, Juan Largo Warner (Long John), to give his Californian nickname, was living in a two-room adobe house with a thatched roof. There appears to be some discrepancy in the stories told by the various diarists of Kearny's march as to the actual location of the building known today as Warner's old residence.

Dr. Griffin states in his entry for Dec. 3d:

"This place of Warners is called the Aqua Calliente, there is a boiling spring heads just above Warner's house—it is a bold stream, there is a strong smell of sulphureted hydrogen, and where we are encamped there is a fine spring of cool, sweet water—this furnishes sufficient for stock & I suppose for irrigating the soil—The Ranch is some three miles distant from Warners house:[32] about the house there is some ten or fifteen acres under cultivation, about one acre and a half of which is a vineyard."

Emory says:[33]

"Our camp was pitched on the road to the Pueblo, leading a little north of west. To the south, down the valley of the Aqua Caliente, lay the road to San Diego. Above us was Mr. Warner's backwoods, American looking house, built of adobe and covered with a thatched roof....

"Near the house is the source of the Aqua Caliente, a magnificent hot spring, of the temperature of 137° Fahrenheit, discharging from the fissure of a granite rock a large volume of water, which, for a long distance down, charges the air with the fumes of sulphuretted hydrogen. Above it, and draining down the same valley, is a cold spring of the temperature of 45°, and without the aid of any mechanical instrument, the cold and warm water may be commingled to suit the temperature of the bather.

"The Indians have made pools for bathing. They huddle around the basin of the spring to catch the genial warmth of its vapors, and in cold nights will immerse themselves to keep warm. A day will come, no doubt, when the invalid and pleasure seeking portion of the white race, will assemble here to drink and bathe in these waters, ramble over the hills which surround it on all sides, and sit under the shade of the great live oaks that grow in the valley."

These were prophetic words and could the writer drop in now on the springs he would scarcely recognize the place. Gone are the old Indian made pools. The rude thatched huts of the Cupeño Indians are now white-washed, modernized adobes for "the invalid and pleasure seeking portion of the white race." A huge swimming pool accommodates the guests and the paved highway to Los Angeles swings past the spot where Kearny and his ragged companions relaxed for a few brief hours one hundred years ago.

Captain Johnston's account runs as follows:

"We found Warner's a place which would be considered a poor location in the United States, with a hot spring and a cold one on his place; a good place for stock, but bad for grain, one would think.... We encamped a quarter of a mile west of the warm spring."[34]

It would seem, then, that Kearny's troopers camped in the flat below the hot springs, not far from Warner's residence at the Agua Caliente, and not at the adobe three miles east of the springs. There is certainly no hot spring "just above Warner's house," as described by Dr. Griffin or Lieutenant Emory.

Warner's Ranch was a godsend to the dragoons. Here they had their first square meal in many days. Bill Marshall, the deserter from the *Hopewell*, who was later hung as the renegade white leader of the Garra uprising in 1851, was in charge of Warner's establishment when Kearny's forces arrived.[35] "Long John" Warner, himself, was a prisoner of the Americans in San Diego, having been detained there upon the suspicion that he was more favorably inclined towards the Californios than his own countrymen.

(To be continued)

GLOSSARY

bota, small leather wine bag; large cowhide bag for tallow; leather legging
caballada, a number of horses
calzoneras, long trousers buttoned down both sides
frazada, blanket of rather poor quality
gente de razón, white persons in distinction to Indians
jacal, Indian hut, wigwam
jáquima, headstall of a halter
jornada, journey performed in one day
joven, youth
paisano, countryman (as opposed to the military)
reata, rope used in catching loose stock or for tying one animal (horse or mule) to another, to make them go in straight line
serape, narrow blanket worn by men or thrown over saddle

NOTES

1. William Hemsley Emory, *Notes of a Military Reconnoissance from Fort Leavenworth in Missouri to San Diego, California*, 30th Cong., 1st sess., H. Exec. Doc. 41 (Washington, D. C., 1848), pp. 93-94.

2. Henry L. Scott, *Military Dictionary* (New York, 1864), p. 426. This official description of the howitzer gives a maximum range of 1000 yards for the weapon. Although the pieces are normally described as being made of brass, they are actually made of bronze.

The howitzer lost by Frémont in 1842 was recovered in 1859 by two miners who found the abandoned cannon near Genoa, Carson Valley, Nev. It was formally reclaimed for government service in the Civil War, and now, after many years in seclusion, is on display in the Nevada Museum and Art Institute, Carson City.

The howitzer lost by Kearny at San Pascual was later obtained by Frémont through the terms of the capitulation of Cahuenga, January 13, 1847. In the famous Frémont court-martial case, this piece was one of the bones of contention between Kearny and Frémont, and the howitzer Frémont had lost on January 29, 1844, likewise entered into the controversy. (See John Bigelow, *Memoir of the Life and Public Services of John Charles Frémont* [New York, 1856], pp. 311-14; Bancroft, *History of California* [San Francisco, 1884-1890], V, 446, note 16.)

3. John C. Frémont, *Report of the Exploring Expedition to the Rocky Mountains in the Year 1842 and to Oregon and North California in the Years 1843-44* (Washington, 1845), p. 226.

4. Emory, *op. cit.*, pp. 94-95.

5. Antonio Franco Coronel, "Cosas de California" (manuscript in Bancroft library; dictation to Thomas Savage at Los Angeles, 1877), pp. 95-97.

6. John Mix Stanley was born at Canandiagua, N. Y., in 1814. He was orphaned at the age of 14 and was apprenticed to a wagon maker at Naples, N. Y. His boyhood was spent there and around Buffalo, N. Y. In 1834 he went to Detroit where he began his painting career. He soon became interested in painting Indians and visited the frontier at various points in Minnesota, Arkansas, and New Mexico with this in view. For the greater part of 1845 he was in New Mexico. By 1846 he had painted 83 canvases, enough to hold an exhibition of his work in Cincinnati and St. Louis. During the same period he painted portraits of Keokuk and Black Hawk, chiefs of the Sauk and Fox tribes. He joined Kearny's expedition at Santa Fe in October 1846. Stanley was under the direct orders of Lieut. Emory as draughtsman. On this expedition he lost all of his personal belongings but saved his sketches, canvas and paints. After the war he went to Oregon where he narrowly missed being killed in the Whitman massacre. He visited the Ha-

waiian Islands in 1848, where he painted the portraits of King Kamehameha III and his queen.

Stanley continued to paint Indian subjects during the 1850's and 1860's; but his collection of 151 pictures, which had been placed in the Smithsonian Institution, was nearly all destroyed by fire in 1865, only five being saved. Stanley died at Detroit, April 10, 1872. David I. Bushnell, Jr., "John Mix Stanley, Artist-Explorer," *Annual Report,* Smithsonian Institution, 1924, pp. 507-12; see also F. W. Hodge, "A Proposed Indian Portfolio by John Mix Stanley," *Indian Notes,* VI (October 1929), pp. 359-67; and B. P. Draper, "John Mix Stanley, Pioneer Painter," *Antiques* (March 1942), pp. 180-82.

7. Emory, *op. cit.,* p. 96.

8. John Struther Griffin, *A Doctor Comes to California, Diary 1846-1847,* edited by George Walcott Ames, Jr., with foreword by George D. Lyman, M.D. (San Francisco: California Historical Soc., Spec. Pub. 18, 1943), p. 37. Dr. Griffin was a native of Virginia. He was left an orphan at an early age and was reared by a maternal uncle in Louisville, Ky. In 1837 he was graduated as an M.D. from the Medical Department of the University of Pennsylvania at Philadelphia, and practiced medicine in Louisville until 1840, when he entered the U. S. Army as assistant surgeon. At the commencement of the Mexican War, Dr. Griffin was attached to Kearny's command with the rank of captain. He served all during the Mexican War in California, and in 1853 was ordered east for duty in Washington, D. C. He remained there until 1854, when he resigned his commission and returned to private practice in Los Angeles, where he became one of the solid citizens of the community. Dr. Griffin acquired a large tract of land (now known as Lincoln Heights), and was one of the original incorporators, as well as a stockholder and director, of the Los Angeles City Water Company and the Farmers and Merchants National Bank. George L. Cole, M.D., *Medical Associates of My Early Days in Los Angeles* (Los Angeles, 1930), pp. 5-7; also *A Doctor Comes to California,* as above.

9. Quotations, here and elsewhere, from Capt. A. R. Johnston, are taken from pp. 609-10 of his "Journal," in 30th Cong., 1st sess., H. Exec. Doc. 41 (Washington, D.C., 1848). See also Griffin, *op. cit.,* p. 38.

10. Thomas C. Hammond was born in Pennsylvania and entered West Point from that state on July 1, 1837. He graduated and was brevetted a 2nd lieutenant. On March 6, 1843, he transferred to the 1st Dragoons. Judge Benjamin Hayes, who knew Hammond well, spoke of him as an amiable, high-toned youth with a romantic flair for doing the spectacular, such as getting married on horseback on a high Kansas hill, which, in the more or less staid age of the 1840's, when men's lives were fairly conventional, was no doubt deemed the height of audacity. Francis Heitman, *Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army, 1789-1903* (Washington, D. C., 1903), I, 496.

11. Susan Shelby Magoffin, *Down the Santa Fe Trail and into Mexico, Diary, 1846-1847,* edited by Stella Drumm (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1926).

Mrs. Magoffin was en route to Mexico with her husband, trader Samuel Magoffin, brother of James Magoffin, who paved the way for Kearny's bloodless entry into New Mexico in August of 1846. Mrs. Magoffin entertained Kearny's officers in Santa Fe, and her comments are both amusing and enlightening as to the personal habits of some of the men as seen through a contemporary's eyes. Under her entry of September 24 she says: "Lieuts. [W.H.] Warner & [T.C.] Hammond called since tea to bid us good bye, they are of the Calafornia [*sic*] expedition. The latter, (I do not mean to slander him at all) has taken a little more of 'the ingredient' than he can well bear. He constantly talked of the American women, *their strict virtue.* . . . Said his was a run away match, and they 'were married *on horse back on top of a very high hill.*' Talked of his 'angel baby,' then flew off to the War, and almost went off into extacies on the subject; he is all eagerness for a fight, and says he has done all in his power to provoke one. And

then he commenced eulogizing every body. . . . How he happened to be in such a *fix* tonight, is strange, for he is a most perfect gentleman when *sober*." (pp. 145-46.)

She also made comments on other officers of Kearny's staff, whom she saw at the dance on the night of the 10th of September: ". . . circling giddily through the dance, Cpt.M. of Dragoons [Benjamin D. Moore of the First Dragoons]; if necessary we can be sure of at least one person to testify to the 'virtues or vices' of what has been graphically called 'the ingredient'." (pp. 121-22.)

Captain Henry Smith Turner was, in her estimation, "a gentleman of extensive information; exceedingly polite, endeavors to make himself agreeable and to interest the company with his interesting narrations; he spent a year in France, and has traveled in Prussia—his conversation is both interesting and improving to his hearers. . . . Mrs. Turner is a niece of one of the Lexingtonians, Mr. John W. Hunt." (pp. 125-26.)

Captain Abraham Johnston did not acquit himself too well as a conversationalist when he called upon Susan on the evening of the 15th; said she, "and not to be too severe a critic, I shall only say I think I have had some more talkative, interesting and agreeable visitors." (p. 131.) Later, when Johnston, Turner, and Major M. L. Clark called upon her to say good bye, she remarked: "Three more gentlemanly, polite and intelligent men have not entered our house in Santa Fé." (p. 146.)

Even General Kearny succumbed to the charm of the young lady from Kentucky. He called upon her several times with members of his staff. The general promised to select a home site for her in California; regaled her with stories of his reception in the small village of Tomé on the Rio Grande, "how he paraded through some little village in the priests procession, carrying as did all his officers a lighted candle lightening the train of the Virgin Mary. . . . He told of his fine feasts, the balls, Indian sham battles etc." (pp. 129-30.)

Mrs. Magoffin also went on a personally escorted tour of the American camp, accompanied by the general mounted on his "splendid bay charger." She inspected the artillery "arranged in two rows on one side of an outer street—from this we wound our way along by the barracks, formerly for [Manuel] Armijos troops, where a small party of soldiers were engaged, as the Gen. passed they all touched their beavers with profoundest respect, while he kindly returned the salute." After looking over the new walls of Fort Marcy, then unfinished, they returned to the house where, "The Gen. came in and sat half an hour with us. . . ." (pp. 140-42.)

12. Sergeant John Cox, according to Emory *(op. cit.*, p. 111), was "a gallant fellow, who had, just before leaving Fort Leavenworth, married a pretty wife."

13. Emory, *op. cit.*, p. 99: "At the ford, the Colorado is 1,500 feet wide, and flows at the rate of a mile and a half per hour. Its greatest depth in the channel, at the ford where we crossed, is four feet. The banks are low, not more than four feet high, and, judging from indications, sometimes, though not frequently, overflowed. . . . The ford is narrow and circuitous, and a few feet to the right or left sets a horse afloat. This happened to my own horse."

14. This was the well at the spot termed by Emory the Alamo. It was known as the Alamo Mocho (stunted cottonwood) and consisted of a large hole with little water. An old champagne basket, used by one of the officers as a pannier, was lowered into the well to prevent the walls from caving in. This did not suffice, and a rude lining of woven willow boughs was made, through which the water "15 or 20 feet below the surface" seeped and enabled the men to hoist it out in a camp kettle (pp. 100-101.) In later days the well was used by emigrants and stages. The site of this water hole was south and east of the present town of Mexicali, in Mexico.

15. Mesquite beans were the staff of life to the desert Indians. They have a high sugar content and consequently are very nutritious.

16. This alkaline body of water was later known as the Big Laguna and lay a few miles northwest of Calexico. At that time, according to Emory, it was a "thick soapy quagmire." (p. 102.)

17. The route taken by Kearny and his troops across the desert was for the most part through what is now Mexico. They turned north at New River slough at the point where Mexicali now stands and followed a northwesterly direction, crossing the highway between Seeley and Dixieland. Thence they followed along the route approximating the road that leads across the desert and climbs the sloping shell-littered beachline of Blake's Sea from Plaster City to the mouth of Carrizo Wash.

18. Carrizo Spring is still about the same as when Kearny and his men saw it. The water is surrounded by a sward of crisp salt grass, and about twenty-five years ago a squatter at the spring built a small dam which formed a clear pool. This attracted wild ducks and supplied the temporary resident at the spring with fresh meat. In the late 1850's the Butterfield Overland Mail had an adobe stage station at Carrizo Creek. In May 1858 the station keeper, William Mailland, murdered the Indian woman with whom he was living, during a fit of *delirium tremens*. He escaped into Sonora, while the body of the unfortunate woman was buried in the rear of the house. (Sacramento *Union*, June 16, 1858.) At the present time, the old stage station is a mound of melted adobe, and the desert is as wild as when the dragoons marched through it.

19. At Carrizo Creek on November 28th, Dr. Griffin (*op. cit.*, pp. 39-40) related that his mess had eaten a "canister" of potted meat, a cup of tea and a brandy toddy. Then he drank pinole with Kit Carson, ate again with Capt. Moore, and continued to drink tea and water until he could stand no more. Many of the messes had only a little bread made with salt, flour and water, or a handful of boiled beans and corn, "with not even enough meat to grease it." The general himself was among those reduced to the latter diet.

20. Thomas Swords was from New York state. He became a cadet at West Point on July 1, 1825. Early in his career he showed signs of promise and promotions were rapid. He became a captain in the Quartermaster Corps in 1838 and a major in April 1846. Swords remained in the army and served all through the Civil War. Eventually he rose to be a major general and died March 20, 1886. Heitman, *op. cit.*, p. 941.

21. Vallecito has long been a well-known stopping place for travelers using the desert route in and out of southern California. It was an old camping ground of the Yahanos or Diegueño Indians. After 1846 it was a favorite resting place for all inbound and outbound traffic. Lieut. Cave Couts halted at Vallecito in 1848, bound for the Colorado River. In 1851, during the Garra insurrection (see Note 35, below), Vallecito became a small military depot. An adobe building was erected and from this time on there was always some sort of a structure near the springs. In 1858, when the Butterfield Overland Mail began operating through the desert, a stage station was built which incorporated the older adobe building once occupied by James Lassitor, later murdered in Arizona. See Note 28, below.

22. Judge Benjamin Hayes, "Notes on the Indians of San Diego County," with notes by Arthur Woodward, *The Masterkey*, VIII (September 1934), pp. 140-50.

23. Aguanga is a few miles southwest of Warner's Ranch on the inland route to Los Angeles. It is in Luiseño Indian territory. A stage station was maintained there during the late 1850's and early 1860's. At present the site is owned by Harry Bergman.

24. Coronel, *op. cit.*

25. Emory, *op. cit.*, p. 42. See also Magoffin in Note 11, above, for Kearny's account of the incident.

26. Johnston, *op. cit.*, p. 612.

27. William E. Connelley, *Doniphan's Expedition* (Kansas City, 1907), pp. 223-26.

28. Arthur Woodward, "Oasis at Vallecito," *The Desert Magazine* (March 1942), pp. 22-26. See also *Cooke's Journal,* Southwest Historical Series (Glendale: Arthur H. Clarke Co., 1938), VII, pp. 218-22. (Account of Vallecito and Vallecito Hill.)

29. Cooke, *op. cit.,* pp. 222-23.

30. Joseph J. Hill, *The History of Warner's Ranch and its Environs* (Los Angeles, 1927), pp. 108-111. Jonathan Trumbull Warner's other California name was Juan José Warner.

31. The ranch house in its original state was 40 feet long and 21 feet wide, and was divided into two rooms. In later years six more rooms were added. The old building has served as a ranch house for the George Sawday Cattle Co. for many years.

32. This reference must pertain to the present adobe known as Warner's ranch house, which is approximately three miles from the springs. See Note 31, above.

33. Emory, *op. cit.,* pp. 105-106.

34. Johnston, *op. cit.,* pp. 613-14. He wrote but two more entries in his journal after this one.

35. Bill Marshall was living with the Indians at Warner's and acting as storekeeper. He incited the Cupeños to a revolt and was co-partner in this crime with Antonio Garra, Sr., in 1851. He was hung for his part in the rebellion, and not for any participation in the Pauma massacre which occurred in December 1846. Both Marshall and Garra were tried and executed for their crimes in San Diego.

Lances at San Pasqual

By ARTHUR WOODWARD

(Concluded)

Maj. Archibald Gillespie in August of 1859 wrote a letter to Col. E. J. C. ("Alphabet") Kewen,[36] giving an explanation of why J. J. Warner had been imprisoned in San Diego:

In reply to your inquiry respecting the imprisonment of J. J. Warner at San Diego during the late war with Mexico and the operations in this country, I have to state, that in the summer of 1846, being military commandant of the Southern Department of the Territory of California, and having the direction of the field with my headquarters at San Diego, I then made the acquaintance of Mr. Warner, however not until a long time after his presence had been desired and expected at that place, as it had been noticed upon the arrival of the U. S. forces at San Diego, in July and August that he had not appeared amongst our countrymen, to unite with us even by his approval, in the acquisition of California.

Mr. Warner, being an American by birth, no one could possibly suspect him of acting a treacherous part towards his countrymen; consequently he came and went from the camp without any interruptions whatever, until, finally, when we were making preparations in November and December for the march upon Los Angeles Mr. Warner's visits became more frequent and his stay shorter, which being remarked, it was discovered that he had given expression of feelings opposed to the war; had denounced the President, Mr. Polk; had deprecated the acquisition of California by the U. S. Arms, had excited the Californians against us, and was really carrying information of our movements to the enemy; had driven horses and mules and cattle near to the Californian forces and into the mountains to prevent their falling into the hands of my foraging parties; this too when he knew his countrymen very much needed subsistence and transportation.

These charges having been officially reported, I was obliged to order the arrest of Mr. Warner, and held him prisoner until compassion induced his release by superior orders.

The feeling of the troops and citizens against Mr. Warner was very strong; his release caused great murmuring, and had any opportunity offered he could not have escaped summary proceedings at their hands.

For myself, I was greatly pained at the unfortunate situation of Mr. Warner, as I felt that his early political prejudices—having ever been violently opposed to the Democratic party—had much to do with his actions at that time.

Daniel Sexton[37] was also called upon to testify. He too was with the American forces at San Diego in 1846 and stated:

In the year 1846, Captain [Samuel] Gibson, with a command of twenty-five men were out on a scouting party, and halted a while at Warner's Ranch, when Warner informed Captain Gibson that some five or six hundred gentle animals could be had of some Sonorians a few miles distant, who sent some persons to ascertain the truth of the information. The party sent in quest of the animals were directed to a place where there were about one hundred armed men of the enemy. Upon the return of this party with this information, Warner was arrested and carried into San Diego Mission, where

he was delivered over into the hands of Major Gillespie. Major Gillespie gave orders to his sentries that the tall man, meaning Warner, was a traitor and if he went outside the lines to shoot him.

Soon after, Warner affected to be crazy and Commodore Stockton asked me if I thought it was feigned or real, and urged that he was unwilling to try and execute a crazy man, but if he was not crazy he would be courtmartialed and shot. That he was guilty of betrayal, every man in the army felt confident, and none were found at the time to sympathize with him. The plea of insanity was the only ground upon which he escaped, as I have been informed by Commodore Stockton and Major Gillespie, the penalty of treason.

B. D. Wilson[38] was drawn into this dispute, and on August 8, 1859, writing from Lake Vineyard, answered a letter from Warner (who called upon him to refute Kewen's charges) thus:

In answer to your letter enquiring whether "Col. Kewen was authorized to appeal to you (me) in support of what is contained in his speech and card respecting myself (yourself.") I state that I have said to Col. Kewen that while many of the American residents of this county, including myself, were in close confinement in 1846 as prisoners of war to the Californians, we heard the report that you had betrayed into ambuscade a portion of the American army in San Diego, from whose advance we expected our liberation; that this report was a matter of public notoriety at the time, but that owing to my confinement in Los Angeles I could not speak as to the truth of the report. . . .

Other prominent citizens of the day who participated in the stirring events of 1846 gave varied testimony. Alexander Bell,[39] for example, in a letter dated August 8, 1859, from Los Angeles, said:

. . . On the 30th of September 1846 I left Los Angeles in company with Major A. H. Gillespie when he retired from this place. We arrived in San Diego, by water, about the 1st of the following November, where I remained until the 29th or 30th of December, 1846, when I came to Los Angeles with the command of Commodore Stockton.

I have an indistinct recollection that while I was in San Diego I heard that your arrest was caused by a report that you had held communication with the enemy, but I never heard of your having guided a party on any occasion into an ambuscade of the enemy, nor of your having acted as a guide to any American force at any time. Nor do I believe that you ever attempted or could have consented to have been a party to any such transaction. . . .

Don Abel Stearns[40] made his statement concerning Warner's arrest in 1846:

. . . With regard to your arrest in San Diego in 1846, by this Lieut. Gillespie, I can only say, that a few days subsequent to the occurrence, I arrived there and in conversation with Capt. Fitch, Miguel Pedrorena, Capt. Snook and Jose Antonio Estudillo, then living, (now dead,) and residing in that place, learned that a day or two after the taking of San Diego by the U. S. forces you arrived, and were ordered to the presence of Gillespie then in command of the town.

You were questioned as to whether Gov. Pio Pico or Lt. Col. Castro with their forces or any part of them had passed your rancho for Sonora, and in consequence of your laconic answers to his queries, you were placed in the guard house by his orders, and subsequently released, at the request of some of the above named gentlemen.

Until lately I had never heard you accused of betraying U. S. troops into an ambuscade of the enemy. . . .

John Reed[41] of Rancho del Puente wrote to Warner on August 18th, 1859:

Sir:—In answer to the enquiries you make of me, respecting yourself, and touching your having led the American army, or a part of it, into a situation where it could be attacked by the enemy, I answer that I never heard of it in 1846 or 1847. I left Los Angeles with Major Hensley, and returned with him to Los Angeles. I went to your rancho with him while we were at San Diego. On our return, we met Gillespie about twenty miles from San Diego. While we were at the place of meeting, you came to us, and was either taken or went back to San Diego with us. As for the reports, or your being verbally abused by the Americans, you were no more so than Mr. Stearns, or Mr. Temple, or any other person who took no part with us.

From all the evidence pro and con on this matter, Warner was apparently accused unjustly, some thirteen years later, of having betrayed American soldiers into an ambuscade; but that he was arrested for having displayed an evident lack of enthusiasm for the political party then in charge of the government of the United States, and, quite possibly, because he was in sympathy with the paisanos in their fight to preserve their lands, is indisputable. One cannot judge the Americans of Warner's day in California too harshly, on the grounds that they did not give instantaneous and full support to the invading American forces. Many of them, Warner included, had become naturalized citizens of Mexico and were married to Californian women. They did not feel justified in taking up arms against the Americans, neither did they feel that they should betray their friends, neighbors and relatives-in-law; hence many of them remained neutral, or as nearly so as possible.

Corroboration of Coronel's statement, given in some detail above, that he was traced from Warner's Ranch to Aguanga, is found in Captain Johnston's diary[42] under the entries for December 2d and 3d:

. . . We encamped a quarter of a mile west of the warm spring. Having heard of a herd of mules 15 miles hence, belonging to Flores, the insurgent chief, Lieutenant [J. W.] Davidson, with 25 men, was despatched with Carson and Sanders, to see if we could get a remount; they started at dark. . . .

December 3.—Lieutenant Davidson and Carson returned about noon, with a large gang of tame and wild animals, most of which are said to belong to Flores, the Californian general.

Emory[43] describes the incident thus:

Information was received on the 2d, that fifteen miles distant, on the road to the Pueblo [Los Angeles], a band of horses and mules were cached, belonging to General Flores and others. Tired as our people were, nightfall found twenty-five of them in the saddle, with fresh horses, under the command of Lieut. Davidson, accompanied by Carson, on their way in pursuit of the cache. Davidson was successful, and returned with the horses on the 3d, about meridian; but the animals, like those we captured at the mouth of the Gila, were mostly unbroken, and not of much service.

Dr. Griffin[44] stated that "... Davidson also captured several guns, & lances, one very fine rifle." The latter piece may well have been Coronel's own gun.

While at Warner's, General Kearny was told that a Mr. Stokes, an Eng-

lishman, lived at the Santa Ysabel Ranch, about fifteen miles southeast of Warner's.[45] Kearny sent Bill Marshall to ask the gentleman to come to Warner's, and within about three hours Señor Eduardo Stokes was in conference with the commander of the dragoons. Stokes frankly told Kearny that he, an Englishman, married to a daughter of José Joaquín Ortega, was a neutral. On the other hand, he volunteered information that the Californians were in possession of all the country between San Diego and Santa Barbara; that Commodore Robert Field Stockton was, however, in command of San Diego and was holding the port without any trouble. The ranchero said also that he was going to San Diego the following day (3d December) and would carry any despatches the general cared to send. Accordingly Kearny[46] sent the following letter to Commodore Stockton:

Head-quarters, Army of the West,
Camp at Warner's, December 2, 1846.

Sir: I this afternoon reached here, escorted by a party of the 1st regiment dragoons. I come by orders from the President of the United States. We left Santa Fe on the 25th September, having taken possession of New Mexico, annexed it to the United States, established a civil government in that territory, and secured order, peace, and quietness there.

If you can send a party to open communication with us on the route to this place, and to inform me of the state of affairs in California, I wish you would do so, and as quickly as possible.

The fear of this letter falling into Mexican hands prevents me from writing more.

Your express by Mr. Carson was met on the Del Norte; and your mail must have reached Washington at least ten days since.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,
S. W. Kearny,
Brigadier General, U. S. A.

Commodore Stockton acted promptly upon Kearny's request for reinforcements.[47] At 8 p.m. the night of December 3d, Capt. Archibald Gillespie marched out of Old Town, San Diego, with a force of 26 volunteers under Capt. Samuel Gibson, Lieut. Edward F. Beale of the *Congress*, Passed Midshipman James M. Duncan, ten carbineers and a small brass four-pounder, the famous "Sutter gun," to reinforce Kearny's ragged troops.[48] The night was brilliant with moonlight, and as cold and clear as it sometimes is during a southern California winter.

At this time there were two main roads leading into the back country of San Diego—if horse trails and narrow, two-wheeled carreta ruts could be called roads. One of these led through Mission Valley, climbed up the narrow cañon and eventually came out near the present site of Santee on the Rancho de Santa Monica, otherwise known as El Cajon. Thence the trail continued over the hills, north-northwest, across steep ridges and through small upland valleys covered with wild oats, sycamores, cottonwoods, and oaks, debouching at last into the broad rolling lands of the Pamo Valley, also known as the Santa Maria Valley.[49]

Unseen eyes, peering from adobe huts in Mission Valley, watched Gillespie and his men ride north into the mountains. One of these quiet watchers, according to Pablo Véjar,[50] was Mariquita, sister of Andrés Pico. She scribbled a note which she sent posthaste to her brother, telling him that Gillespie and a force of men had sallied forth to join another group of Americanos in the mountains. Pico had already been advised by friendly Indians that Gillespie was on the move, bound for the Sierra. Thus did the "moccasin telegraph" function in the days before telephones and radio.

When the messages reached him, Pico was camped at Rancho Soledad, some four leagues northwest of San Diego. He disbelieved the story that Gillespie was going out to join another force. Por Dios! Did he not know that all of the Americans were boxed up in San Diego? No, El Señor Gillespie was out to steal cattle and sheep to feed the starving gringos in Old Town. This time he, Andrés Pico, would settle Gillespie once and for all!

He reasoned that Gillespie, knowing the country, would drive his ill-gotten herds of live stock back into San Diego by the San Pascual road; and when he did, Andrés Pico and his "Galgos" (Greyhounds) would be there waiting, with ready lances, to spit Gillespie and his men like so many sheep. Pico then sent a few men over the Santa Monica trail while he took the major portion of his force, about seventy-two men in all, and rode toward the humble Indian village of San Pascual, some thirty miles distant from San Diego.

This San Pascual road was the second trail connecting San Diego with Santa Maria, Santa Ysabel and Warner's.[51] It was a narrow, rough trace that left San Pascual Valley approximately opposite the Indian village and angled north-northeast up a long, narrow hog-back until it reached the uplands, a series of low, rolling hills; thence it led through the brush for about seven miles, until it came out upon the open lands in the western part of the Santa Maria Valley. Eventually it meandered by the small adobe house owned by Eduardo Stokes,[52] which stood on the north bank of Santa Maria Creek at the base of a steep brushy hill. From the Stokes' ranch house the path twisted back and forth along the hillside until it passed through a narrow valley now known as Rose Glen; then, by an easy ascent, it climbed through the live-oaks until it dropped into the upper end of Ballena; thence by another cañon pass, still upward, into the narrow defile of Witch Creek, emerging once again upon open grasslands, studded with huge live-oaks, covering the rounded tops of the hills that fringe the south side of the Santa Ysabel Valley.

On the morning of December 4th, we have this three-scene picture: The weather has changed from clear and cold, and Kearny and his weary troops can be observed marching southward from Warner's Ranch in the driving rain, headed for Stokes' second ranch at Santa Ysabel—the abandoned asistencia formerly owned by Mission San Diego. Gillespie and his men, equally

wet, have left their camp ground on the Rancho Santa Monica by 3 a. m. and are headed for Stokes' small ranch house on the banks of the dry Santa Maria Creek.[53] Andrés Pico and his force have ridden into the Indian village of San Pascual and are camped in the adobe huts.[54] They have turned their horses out to graze in the northern end of the valley, where the San Dieguito River tumbles, brawling, out of the maze of sleek, gray, granite boulders, into the comparative quiet of the broad river-bed fringed with willows and cottonwoods.

General Kearny and his dragoons did not break camp until nine o'clock on that morning of December 4th. The murky sky was pregnant with rain, and by the time the bugle blew the advance, the heavens opened and rain had pelted down upon the miserable men, as we saw above, humped over in their saddles on their fifteen-mile journey to the old asistencia of Santa Ysabel.

At one time this was a flourishing little mission with a quadrangle nearly as large as at San Luis Rey. In 1839 Father Vicente Pascual Olivas, answering a petition of José Joaquín Ortega (Stokes' father-in-law) for Santa Ysabel, said:[55]

The locality of Santa Ysabel is not vacant land as the petitioner says in his representation; it is now a Mission with church, cemetery and other requisites of a civilized Pueblo, and the Priest does not reside in it only because of the scarcity of priests. The Indians of the said Mission have their plantings of wheat, barley, corn, beans, peas and other plants for their sustenance, and two vineyards, with their gardens, their horse stock; and in summer their lands occupied with sheep. And if the government should grant this land to the petitioner to what point will it banish the Indians, now 580 souls? The law says the native possessors of the soil are its true owners. *Melior est conditio posidentis*. This is all the report I can make upon this subject.

Mission of San Diego, May 7th, 1839. In the absence of the administrator,

P. Vicente Pascual Olivas.

But on August 4th, 1844, the Reverend Father finally gave in. He said:[56]

In consequence of there not being any possibility of improvement of the ranch at Sta. Isabel belonging to the Mission, all right of the Mission thereto is ceded: there does not exist on the said premises more than a few crumbling walls and two small vineyards with a small number of vines in good condition which also are ceded in consideration of 150 cows killed by Ortega for the neophytes of this Mission.

Accordingly on November 9th, 1844, Governor Manuel Micheltorena granted to José Joaquín Ortega and Eduardo Stokes four square leagues of land known as the Rancho Santa Ysabel.[57]

At that time the adobe chapel was in good condition. The small brush and mud huts of the Indians were huddled around it, and on the flats were their fields and peach orchards, with pasture lands extending up the valley for some three miles. It presented much the same picture in 1846, when Kearny and his "Army of the West" sloshed through Carrizito Cañon from Buena Vista and halted in front of the locked chapel, which had been converted into a residence by Stokes.

All during the miserable ride from Warner's, the officers and men had comforted themselves with visions of a blazing fire and plenty to eat and drink. Instead, they huddled shivering against the buildings until Sailor Bill, a deserter from an English merchantman some ten years previously and now major domo for Stokes, produced a set of huge iron keys and opened the chapel. But in common with the majority of California houses of those days there was no fireplace in the living quarters, the only chimney about the ranchería being in the kitchen, which was separate from the rest of the house; so the dragoons built roaring fires out-of-doors and stood around them, steaming, while the rain spat at the embers and the naked Diegueño Indians, drawn by the warmth of the flames, gazed soberly at the newcomers.

Kearny and his officers went into the cold chapel, where they were, according to Emory, "obliged to stand, cracking our heels. . . ." Sailor "Beel," as he was called, made good use of his keys and produced the ingredients of a meal, as well as a plentiful supply of not-too-good wine. But then, even as now, soldiers had a way of "liberating" things; in spite of their fuming, the officers had to wait two hours longer because the dragoons stole the food which "Beel" had prepared for them.[58] Eventually, however, they ate heartily of stewed and roast mutton, tortillas and wine.

On the following morning, Kearny ordered his men into the saddle for their ride to Santa Maria. It was still raining, with the wind from the west and dark clouds sweeping low across the oak-covered Mesa Grande to the southwest. The taller peaks of the Cuyamacas to the east were hidden from sight under the threatening gray blanket.

The Indians hovered around the fires and stolidly watched the soldiers go. The previous night, speaking through their leader (probably Capitán Lázaro), they had told Kearny that they were peaceable folk and wanted no part in the war. All they wanted to do was live in peace and work. The general agreed that this was an excellent thing to do. He advised them to forget the troubles between the Californians and the Americans and go about their business.[59]

Being uncertain of the road south, Kearny impressed Sailor Bill into service as a guide.[60] It appeared that the latter had spent the evening trying to drive the chill from his bones with Stokes' liquor and was in consequence befuddled. He took the wrong path and, after being thrown from his horse, lost interest in guiding and decided that he would round up horses instead. Kearny thought otherwise and persuaded Bill to try again—with an armed guard riding on either side of him. When the general put it in that light, Bill decided to cooperate and set them on the right road.

On the same morning (December 5th), Gillespie and his small detachment set out in the rain from Stokes' ranch house at Santa Maria and took the steep hill towards Santa Ysabel. He sent a scout in advance, who reported

back around 1 p. m., after having reached a point about midway between Santa Maria and Santa Ysabel. This would be approximately at the site of the present Ballena, a short distance from Witch Creek. Gillespie now ordered the flag unfurled and with colors flying—the first time the Stars and Stripes had ever floated over the back country—the small band of reinforcements rode forward to meet Kearny on the heights above Santa Ysabel.[61]

The newcomers were warmly greeted by Kearny and his officers. Gillespie reported on the conditions at San Diego and said it had been rumored there that a force of Californians were at El Cajon, to dispute the passage of his forces while en route to join Kearny, but that there were no signs of a party having been in that region.

Gillespie had apparently heard of the Pico contingent encamped at San Pascual. He advised that it would be easy to "beat up" Pico's camp; that is, send out a scouting party to determine its position, numbers of men, etc., and he offered himself and his detachment for the purpose but Kearny refused to let him go.

The time was now about 2:30 p. m. The rain had ceased for the moment but the clouds were still threatening, and the wind blew cold and strong from the mountains, the tops of which were covered with snow. Kearny wanted to march immediately for Santa Maria to pitch camp. Gillespie warned him that there was no feed nor water near the ranch house; he also requested permission to rest his command for an hour or so, and let the horses graze in a small dell some two miles back where there was plenty of grass. (This place was about on the site of the present schoolhouse at Witch Creek and along the trail that led into Ballena.)

Kearny agreed to this and Gillespie fell back and unsaddled, while the dragoons rode past them down the trail to Santa Maria. As Gillespie had predicted, the general found no forage[62] for his horses, making it necessary for him to press on two miles further to a small valley with huge live oaks and plenty of feed but no water. Quite likely Kearny's last camp[63] before his ill-fated engagement was under these oaks at the head of Clevenger Cañon. The place tallies with the description given, and lies about an eighth or a quarter of a mile west of the old San Pascual hill trail. It was dark when the dragoons pitched camp. The rain had recommenced and was falling in sheets on the cold and hungry men.

Gillespie followed in Kearny's wake as far as Stokes' ranch house. There he camped. Many of his party were "mountain men," clad in buckskins and tough as whang-leather.[64] They too were tired, but they considered their lot superior to that of Kearny's troops, and as soon as camp was made they began to clean their arms while Passed Midshipman Duncan and Lieutenant Beale[65] started grooming the Sutter gun, with whose history they must have been familiar. It was cast originally at St. Petersburg, Russia, in 1804, and

was one of the cannon mounted at Fort Ross. When John A. Sutter bought out the Russian establishment in 1841, he transferred the little brass bulldog to his fort at New Helvetia. In 1845, at the time of the Castro revolt, Sutter joined forces with Micheltorena and the stubby cannon went along. It was captured by Castro, was in turn captured by the Americans, and in 1846 was taken to San Diego.

The gun was 40 inches in length, had a 3½-inch bore, and the chamber, which ran to a point at the vent, took a charge of 8 ounces of powder. Its cast handles enabled the Sutter gun to be lifted easily by two men; and with its wheeled carriage it constituted the only piece of artillery in working condition in the fight at San Pascual.[66]

Shortly after dark, Capt. A. R. Johnston, Kearny's aide-de-camp, rode into Gillespie's camp and said that the general would like to use Rafael Machado, the native Californian scout attached to Gillespie's command, as a guide for a party under Lieut. Thomas C. Hammond, which was going forward to reconnoiter the enemy's camp under cover of darkness.[67] Gillespie requested Johnston to present his compliments to the general with the suggestion that Gillespie's mountain men, being in better condition for such a task, would be glad to make the trip and thus spare the worn-out dragoons.

It was not a night for suggestions, as Gillespie soon discovered. Earlier in the evening Kearny called a council of war among his officers, Lieutenant Hammond, Capt. Benjamin D. Moore, and Captain Johnston. It was proposed by Kearny that a night scouting expedition be made, and, following the receipt of information based upon this, a plan of attack in the early dawn was to be formulated.

According to George Pearce,[68] who was Kearny's personal messenger that evening, this plan was vetoed by Moore, who argued that the enemy would almost certainly discover the presence of the scouting party, would therefore be on the alert, and all hope of making a sudden surprise attack be nil. Moreover, if such an attack were attempted, the enemy, being in better condition and rated as among the best horsemen in the world, would have the advantage over the poorly mounted, half-starved troopers in Kearny's command. If an attack were to be made, why not launch it at once in force, and trust to darkness and luck to carry them through?

As a matter of fact, if one is to believe Don Lorenzo Soto,[69] Andrés Pico had been advised that the Americans were on the march against him by an Indian, who had come down from the hills and had been in Kearny's camp. Pico, for some reason, stubbornly refused to believe the Indio's story. Pablo Véjar[70] goes even further:

> The Indians on their own initiative, without having been ordered to do so, went forward, exploring and spying upon the movements of the Americans and brought back to us this information. Knowing from the reports of these Indians that the enemy was

near I recommended to Pico that we send out an advance patrol, and he answered me saying that it was not necessary, that the road was worse than that down Santa Inez hill, and that it was impossible for the Americans to come over it at night with their cannon.

Véjar adds a bit dryly that he did not attribute Pico's reticence to any intrigue with the enemy, but rather to his lack of experience.

It would seem from all accounts, that both Pico and Kearny stubbornly refused to credit the intelligence of their subordinates. Lieut. E. F. Beale, earlier in the afternoon, had advised Kearny not to go forward over the San Pascual road because it was rough and the strength of the enemy undetermined.

It seems difficult, judging by all that is now known of this action, to understand Kearny, who, after all, was a veteran campaigner.[71] With very little effort, he could have avoided a fight and thus have spared his men.[72] He knew that the road into San Diego via Rancho El Cajon and Mission Valley was but lightly guarded, if at all. Gillespie and his men had pushed through unmolested. The heaviest concentration of enemy forces, unknown at the time but rumored to be from 90 to 200 men, was at San Pasqual.[73] Consequently the Americans could have taken the open road to San Diego from Santa Maria without any opposition. The distance was approximately the same, and, although it was probably a little rougher, in the long run it would have been the sanest and most humane thing to do. One can only suppose that Kearny, having made one of the longest marches in the history of the United States army, was spoiling for a fight and intended to have it.

In spite of all arguments to the contrary, Kearny sent forward Lieutenant Hammond with Machado and a detail of men. It must have been a strange ride through the wet sagebrush and wild oats, over a narrow winding trail with the chaparral lashing out at them as they rode. Having walked over that trail in the day time, and realizing that the country is probably more open now than in Kearny's time, I can sympathize quite fully with the unfortunate dragoons who accompanied the lieutenant and the Californian guide over the uneven terrain in the dead of night.

Eventually they came out on the summit of the rocky, brush-covered ridge that overlooks the valley of San Pascual. About a mile and a half ahead of them they could see the camp fires of Pico's men, who were bivouacked among the huts of the Diegueño Indians.

The Indians in the valley had formerly been attached to Mission San Diego. Upon being dispossessed by the secularization of the missions, San Pascual village was founded by 81 of these desfilados in November of 1835. Two other Indian pueblos, those of Las Flores on the Santa Margarita Rancho, and San Dieguito, were established at the same time. The Mexican government guaranteed the rights of possession to these unfortunate refugees, and as late as 1846 refused a petition of Bonifacio López to take over San Pascual lands for pasturing his stock, asserting that the Indians were the

rightful owners of the land although they had no individual deeds to the property.[74]

The houses of the village, built of adobe and wattle and daub, were scattered along the bench lands above the river bed on the west side of the valley. In after years the crumbling remains of one of these huts stood on a slight knoll south of the main Ramona-Escondido highway and was known locally as "Fremont's Fort." Across the valley from hill to hill, the distance is roughly three-quarters of a mile—perhaps a trifle more at the point where the old San Pascual trail debouches from the ridge into the river bottom.

When Andrés Pico first encamped at the village he ordered all of the horses turned out to graze, under the care of Indian herdsmen, some two or three miles north of the pueblo. The men under Pico did not like this at all, as a Californian separated from his mount was always an unhappy man. These rancheros were particularly uneasy because they did not know at what hour the enemy might suddenly appear; furthermore, they did not trust the Indian herdsmen.

There was also an ugly suspicion in the Californian camp that their leader would surrender to the Americans at the first opportunity, or he would run.[75] When he gave the order to picket the horses so far from camp, according to Juan Bautista Moreno,[76] one of his captains, these suspicions seemed justified. Moreover, Pico, it was averred, was receiving messages daily from Flores in Los Angeles and was not telling his men all of the news.[77] This added to their dissatisfaction. They were not professional soldiers, the majority of them having left their homes and families in and around Los Angeles. The days being so uncertain, what with armed gringos coming from all directions, it was no time to be away from home too long, no señor!

As a result of these suspicions, José Serrano[78] and four of his companions kept their saddle horses tied up at the camp ground, ready for any emergency. From the way in which events developed that night of December 5th, they were justified in their actions.

When Hammond and his men saw the fires, they halted, and the lieutenant sent Machado ahead to learn what he could about the numbers and disposition of the enemy forces. According to Pearce, who heard the report of the scouting party after it returned to camp, Machado was accompanied by Sgt. Richard Williams. These two worked their way across the valley until they came near one of the huts. Through the open door they could see a number of blanketed forms lying on the floor and a lone Indian sitting by the fire. Machado beckoned this man outside and began questioning him. Unfortunately, however, a small dog, snooping about, caught the scent of the main body of American scouts and began barking.

It was about 11 p. m. and blacker than the inside of a witch's hat. The Californian sentry, José María Ibarra,[79] stationed in front of the camp, saw

no one, and Machado and Williams immediately withdrew, making a wide circle to rejoin their comrades.

About this time Andrés Pico, aroused by the yapping of the dog, shouted: "Sentry, who is the officer of the day?" "Don José Alipás," answered the sentinel.

Pico then told Alipás to ride toward the mountain to see if the dog were barking at anyone. He had not ridden very far when he heard Ibarra shout three times in a loud voice: "Quién vive!" ("Who goes there!")

There was a sound of pounding hoofs in the darkness, the subdued jingle of accouterments and the crash of heavy bodies breaking through the sodden brush. Alipás immediately shouted, "To arms!" and a patrol under Moreno set out to see what they could find. The moon broke out about this time and Moreno swore that the patrol consisted of about eight or ten men.

There was great confusion in the Californian camp. Here was the emergency, and most of the men were afoot. Pico still did not believe the disturbers of the night were enemy horsemen. Véjar discovered that three of his men had no weapons; they were in the care of Pico, and when Véjar requested three rounds of cartridges apiece, Pico denied the request.[80] Moreno and his patrol went on foot to the bottom of the hill and returned with an army blanket stamped "U.S." and a dragoon jacket. Even Pico could not deny this evidence. He ordered the horses rounded up, and Véjar, as captain of a company, told each man to saddle whatever animal came first to his hand.

If one is to believe Pablo Véjar, Pico, even at this late date, did not issue any coherent orders for a proper disposition of his troops.

Véjar, according to his own account, was born at the Presidio de San Diego, February 20, 1802. His father was Salvador Véjar, a native of Tepic and a carpenter at the presidio. His mother was María Josefa López, daughter of Francisco López, who had been one of the soldier-founders of San Diego. When the revolt against Gillespie occurred in Los Angeles, Véjar immediately took down his lance and went to war. Five companies were formed. He was captain of the first company; Bautista Moreno led the second; Gregorio Atensio, a native of New Mexico, was in command of the third; Leonardo Higuera, from Lower California, of the fourth, and Nicolás Hermosillo, a native of Old Mexico, captained the fifth company. At first this small force was under the command of the hot-headed Cérbulo Varelas, who led the attack on Gillespie; but later, when the paisanos realized they needed someone more versed in the art of warfare, they elected Capitán Don José María Flores as commander-in-chief of all their forces.[81]

The Californios under Flores were then divided into three main squadrons of cavalry of about 133 men each. One of these squadrons was commanded by Andrés Pico, another by Manuel Garfias and the third by José Antonio Carrillo. In the customary, flamboyant style of the day, each of

these outfits received a nickname. Pico's men were Los Galgos (The Greyhounds); the rancheros under Garfias became Las Arañas (The Spiders); the troopers of Carrillo were known somewhat derisively as Las Hilachas (The Ragged Ones).[82] All were armed with lances.[83] There were some swords, a few rusty flintlocks and a scattering of old pistolas.

The lanzas were forged at Mission San Fernando and at some of the neighboring ranchos. Their blades were nine or ten inches in length and about one and one-half inches in width at the base, and were made out of iron used for hoops or any convenient scrap-iron. They were tanged and set into shafts of mountain laurel or ash, cut on the nearby hills, and ranged in length from six to eight feet. Each lance bore a gay red, white and green pennon, fastened at the base of the blade. (After the battle of San Pascual some of the bravos flaunted these pennons, stained with blood, in the faces of the Americans in San Diego and nearly caused a riot.) Lances were deadly stingers in the hands of men long accustomed to their usage.[84]

Tradition also mentions the presence of one or two of the old, double-oval, rawhide adargas or shields, which had been in vogue as defensive armor in California since the first days of the entrada in 1769, but I have never been able to secure any definite evidence that any of these shields were carried at San Pascual.

After the formation of the three cavalry divisions, a council-of-war, held at Los Angeles, indicated that most of the Californios believed the Americans would first attack Santa Barbara and San Diego. Accordingly, Andrés Pico and his men were despatched to the latter point, while Garfias and his "Spiders" rode north to Santa Barbara, leaving the Carrillo detachment as home guards at Los Angeles.[85]

Véjar states that after the battle of Domínguez Rancho, when the Americans had been driven back to their ships at San Pedro, he remained around Los Angeles for some days and was then ordered to march, with about 25 of his men, to join Pico, who was en route to San Diego. With Véjar's company was a part of Bautista Moreno's second company, as well as a portion of the fifth compañía under Hermosillo. The entire force totalled 112 men.

Prior to Pico's advance on San Diego, a small force under Leonardo Cota and José Alipás had moved south to harass the gringos. Pico rode as far as Rancho Soledad, about four leagues from San Diego, where he learned that Gillespie had left San Diego, secretly, with a small force headed north into the mountains, presumably on a stock-raiding expedition. Upon receiving this news Pico divided his forces, sending a few of them to camp upon Gillespie's trail, while he, with the remainder—some 75 in all—rode northwest to San Pascual, where he hoped to intercept Gillespie upon the latter's return to San Diego.

But let us return to the dragoon patrol, which was last seen heading back up the long brushy ridge toward the American camp. The tired men arrived

at Kearny's headquarters about 11 p. m. Kearny, knowing the enemy was now alerted, decided to move out immediately. Earlier in the evening, Lieutenant Beale and Alexis Godey[86] had ridden to the main camp to see Kearny and receive orders for the next day. About 2 a. m., December 6th, the general issued orders to have the volunteer battalion ready for the trail in half an hour.

Gillespie immediately swung into action. His men mounted their horses at once. The short distance between their camp at the Stokes' adobe and the cheerless bivouac was covered in short order and they were lined up in a column of twos on the San Pascual trail, with the little Sutter gun in the van, when Kearny rode up about half an hour later.

The rain had ceased and the moon was shining brightly. It was bitterly cold in the mountains. The blankets of the wet and weary dragoons were white with frost and stiff as boards. It was still three hours till daybreak when they stumbled out of their bunks on the wet ground, dazed and scarcely aware of what was happening. There were no bugle calls, only the harsh, croaking voices of the sergeants and the clatter of equipment as the men crawled into the saddle and sat with chattering teeth, awaiting the order to march.

Gillespie, having seen the condition of Kearny's two jinx guns—the 12-pound mountain howitzers—suggested that Sutter's gun might go forward with some of the battalion artillerists, who were young men and spoiling for a fight. This was no morning for suggestions.

"Take that gun to the rear, sir," ordered Kearny.

Silently Gillespie obeyed, and to add injury to insult the volunteer battalion was ordered to fall back and aid in guarding the baggage train under the command of Maj. Thomas Swords.

At last the column moved out, with an icy north wind blowing down on them from the snow-covered mountains of Mesa Grande and the more distant Cuyamacas. To Lieutenant Moore was given the honor of leading the advance as far as San Pascual. Now the reaction was setting in; the men, half awake, were like automatons. Their hands were so cold they could scarcely hold the bridle reins, and the half-broken Californian horses and mules took full advantage of the helplessness of their riders.

The moon was down, the morning gray, with low-hanging clouds and fog. There was little talking on that ride of six or seven miles. The men were too miserable to talk and their bellies were too empty. At the crest of the hill, with the last mile of the trail before them, Kearny halted to give his final orders. As Gillespie records *(idem)*, the general told them that their country expected them to do their duty, and that "one point of the sabre was worth any number of thrusts." He also ordered them to surround the village and capture the Californians alive; there was to be no unnecessary killing.

The column of twos began its slow march down the hill. The heavy 3-pound Ames sabers clanged like bells in their cumbersome iron scabbards, until it seemed to the men in the rear that the whole countryside must be aroused. It was maddening to have to work so slowly down the brushy slope.

Capt. Abraham R. Johnston, the genial, nearly 6-foot Ohioan, had pressed forward to take the lead. He was anxious to justify his West Point training and make his Indian-fighting father proud of his soldier son.[87] Pat Halpin, the bugler, couldn't sound the calls. His chilled lips refused to function on the mouth of the trumpet. As the head of the ragged column reached the valley floor, the order to trot was passed along.

Johnston apparently misunderstood it. The dragoons were still three-quarters of a mile from the Pico encampment when, unable to restrain his eagerness, he drew his saber and shouted, "Charge!" It was a tragic mistake. Fully three-quarters of the command were either on top of the hill or feeling their way down the dark slope.

In the Californian camp all was confusion. The sentry guarding the approaches from the hill heard the trampling of the horses in the distance. He fired a warning pistol shot while Kearny's men were yet high up on the hill, then he raced back to camp. In the early morning darkness, the Californians were hastily throwing their saddles upon the first horses they found.

The rancheros were cursing Pico for his carelessness, just as the cold and hungry dragoons were cursing Kearny for his foolhardiness in taking them into battle in the gray winter dawn. They fumbled with the small copper percussion caps, trying vainly to put them on the nipples of the breech-loading Hall carbines they carried.[88] Later they cursed even louder when they discovered that the weapons would not fire—the paper cartridges had not been drawn and they were soaked with rain.

Now the Californians were vaulting into the saddles and racing, lance in hand, to meet the oncoming gringos.

The order of the day as given by Pablo Véjar to his alférez (ensign), Dolores Higuera, commonly known by his nickname "El Huero" (Blondy), because of his light hair and complexion, was: "One shot, and the lance!"[89]

There were few firearms among the Californians, and the excited owners of these began popping away as soon as they thought any Americans were within range. Captain Johnston paid for his temerity. He rode full tilt into the first volley and fell from his horse with a heavy musket ball from Leandro Osuna's flintlock full in his brain. Captain Moore, meanwhile, was racing ahead, unaware that he was alone with the enemy until he came face to face with Andrés Pico himself.[90] Moore fired one shot from his heavy, single-shot dragoon pistol and then made a pass at Pico with his saber. Both were ineffectual. Leandro Osuna and Dionisio Alipás lanced Moore at about the same time Pico returned Moore's thrust with a counter-thrust of his own sword. Moore fell to the ground and Tomás Sánchez, later to become sheriff

of Los Angeles County, finished off the wounded American with a pistol ball. In falling, Moore broke his sword within six inches of the hilt, and thus they found him later, still gripping his broken blade. For years afterwards, the Californians lauded the bravery of the "valiente Morin," who had charged their lines single-handed and attacked Pico himself.

Moore was thus the first man the Mexicans killed in a hand-to-hand fight. He died alone, but soon other dragoons were straggling across the flats to join the fight. It was still too dark to distinguish friend from foe. The field was alive with mounted men moving ghostlike through the half light. There were shouts in Spanish and answering cries in profane English. Here and there lone dragoons encountered two or three Californians, and after a futile attempt at firing their water-soaked carbines or pistols, the troopers either clubbed them or drew their heavy sabers.

Lieutenant Hammond, riding upon the heels of his brother-in-law, Captain Moore, ran into the same deadly lances and took a thrust between his eighth and ninth ribs. Thus, the two young men, who had been together through the long, grueling march and who had both left their sister-brides in far-off Missouri, fell at almost the same spot under a lone willow tree near the point of the rocky hill upon which Kearny and his men were to rest uneasily that night. Dr. Griffin met Hammond as the latter was moving slowly to the rear. The surgeon had his hands full at that moment, trying to dodge the Californians and attend to the wounded at the same time.[91]

All accounts, American and Californian, agree that it was virtually impossible to tell what was happening upon the field of battle. There were no regular lines, no trenches, no fixed positions of any kind. The battle swirled among the lowland bushes and willows, now eddying through the Indian huts, now flowing out along the plain.[92]

The driver of one of the ill-fated howitzers found himself in the forefront of the skirmish with a balky mule. Down upon this unfortunate trooper swarmed Gabriel García and Francisco Higuera.

The cannoneer scrambled under the carriage of the gun in a vain attempt to ward off the flickering lances. He died there. García killed the obstinate mule with a shot in the head, then the two vaqueros threw their reatas over the gun and dragged it off, a useless trophy but one which pleased them mightily.

Gillespie, pressing forward, saw the gun being taken. He also saw that Moore and Hammond were down, the latter pierced likewise in the breast, and that the dragoons were being slaughtered. The Californians, after the first onslaught, wheeled their horses and raced southwest across the flat, turning behind the southern point of the long hill where the battle monument now stands. Here, on the other side of the hill, in the little valley through which the highway now runs, they re-formed; and as the straggling line of dragoons swept past the point, the Californians charged with leveled

lances and rode down the bewildered and exhausted men. Many of the Americans lost control of their half-broken, half-crazed mounts and fell easy victims to the stabbing lances. Carbines were clubbed, but clubs and Ames sabers were poor weapons to put up against lanzas wielded by men accustomed to feats of horsemanship and the dexterous manipulation of the long-shafted lances against bulls and the more ferocious grizzly bears. So the Americans died.

Among the Californians, Juan Lobo Mariano—a twenty-three year old vaquero from San Gabriel Mission, whose only experience in life had been the care of a few horses and cattle—said by some of the paisanos to have been a corporal on that bloody morning, raged among the Americans like the wolf (lobo) for whom he was named. He assumed leadership because of his actions; and thereafter, when the fight was mentioned, Juan Lobo Mariano's name stood out above all the others as the one who led the Californians even better than Pico.[93]

Now it was growing steadily brighter, and as Gillespie rode forward, trying to rally the panic-stricken dragoons, who had been unnerved by the lightning charge of the Californians, he was spotted by many who had known him and hated him at Los Angeles. "*Aquí está Gillespie!*" they shouted. "*Adelante! Adelante! Matale! Matale! Aquí está Gillespie!*" (Here is Gillespie! Forward! Forward! Kill him! Kill him! Here is Gillespie!")

Four or five men charged upon the Marines' officer. They were all eager to flesh their lances in the body of this man whom they despised. He parried four thrusts but the fifth pierced his coat collar and hurled him to the ground. As he raised himself a lance slid into his back and pierced his lung. He turned to face his adversary and another thrust struck his mouth, ripped open his lip and broke one of his front teeth. Another lance took him in the left breast above his heart. At this moment Gillespie's horse started to run; and Higuera, who had been about to finish off the unfortunate officer, raced after the animal to seize it. Gillespie, staggering, with his sword still in his hand, took advantage of the incident and made his way toward the rear, with blood streaming from his wounds. He passed the stranded howitzer but could get no one to help recapture it from the enemy.

By this time the Sutter gun had come up and was in the battery. There were cries of "Where's the match?" "There isn't any!" "Where's the linstock?" "It's out!"

Lieut. W. H. Warner tried to fire it with a pistol but did not succeed. Gillespie pulled out his mechero (a cotton wick lighted by flint and steel, the grandfather of our present-day cigarette lighter and a commodity carried by everyone in California in those days). He lit the wick and fired the piece, then collapsed.[94] Gillespie always attributed the dispersement of the enemy that day to the discharge of grapeshot from this cannon.

Now the wounded began pouring to the rear where Dr. Griffin was busy,

aided by E. D. French, the hospital steward.[95] Hammond, dying from his numerous wounds, was stretched out near Gillespie's head and succumbed about an hour later.

General Kearny was wounded in two places, once through the arm and once in a spot which made sitting difficult.[96] According to Dunne,[97] who was in the fight, many of the dragoons voiced their approval of the wounding of the general.

The men were in low spirits and bitter over the poor leadership displayed in action. They blamed Kearny for taking them into a fight, poorly mounted, half-starved and frozen. They also felt that if he had waited until daylight, they could have seen whom they were fighting and have had at least a fifty-fifty chance.

As with all such actions, rumors concerning the battle were many and varied. Several assertions, made independently by the men, were to the effect that the officers had absorbed a good deal of wine found at Stokes' house on the night of the 5th and that the men were unable to get any of it. This story persisted for years after the battle. It is difficult at this late date, when all of the participants are dead, to ascertain the truth of such an accusation. Griffin notes that plenty of wine circulated among the officers at Santa Ysabel, and there may have been some full jugs or canteens carried away from that place. The men of that day were not noted for their sobriety, and at Santa Fe the officers of Kearny's command were often seen to be under the influence of liquor.[98]

A correspondent of the *Daily Alta California*, describing his visit to the battlefield of San Pascual, in company with John Wolfskill of Rincón del Diablo, in the issue of that paper for November 13th, 1868, said:

> . . . The day following, accompanied by Mr. Wolfskill, I rode over the hills two miles into the San Bernardo Valley, to visit the famous battle ground of San Pascual, where Kearny sustained such an ignominious defeat. It is located in the midst of an Indian and Sonorian settlement (an impoverished set of vagabonds). Two little huckster shops kept by white men more than suffice to do their trading.
>
> Many versions have I heard through print and word of mouth, of that historic Kearny charge with his broken-down mules, against the well-conditioned horses of the Californians, and of the demoralized rout and severe loss of the chargers; but here, for the first time, I listened to a new one, and really the best excuse or explanation that can be given for that most shameful affair. Long without liquor, during their overland travel, they all got drunk the night before, at the Santa Maria rancho, seven miles distant, upon a couple of casks of wine found there, and in a maudlin condition, the next morning, with their firearms neglected and unfit for use, by reason of the rain and fog upon the mountains, they came pellmell down into and across the valley, scattered in all directions, and thus the isolated men and officers fell easy victims to the enemy.
>
> (From a letter to the *Alta* by "C. E. P." [Charles E. Pickett], Tia Juana Rancho, Lower Cal., Oct. 23, 1868.)

Gillespie, who was living in San Francisco at that time, responded to this accusation with a heated denial, which was published in the *Alta California* on November 14th:

. . . The ungracious term of "ignominious defeat of General Kearny" is as untrue as it is gratuitous. Out of forty-five men engaged, there were nineteen killed—two Captains, one First Lieutenant, sixteen non-commissioned officers and privates, and the twentieth died the next day. There were eighteen wounded—amongst them General Kearny . . . —against seventy-eight Californians, whom the Americans drove from the field, with the loss of thirty killed and wounded.

"C. E. P.'s" informant is a positive falsifier in relation to the condition of the command on the morning of the battle, and whoever knew the exact position of the troops the night before the fight would instantly pronounce the statement, that "the men were under the influence of liquor," to be a miserable falsehood. It is a foul slander upon the brave officers and soldiers of the old First Dragoons who fell that day, and upon the survivors of the fight, as a short narration will show.

General Kearny was met on the heights of Santa Isabel, on the forenoon of December 5th, 1846, by myself, at the head of forty men, with a small field piece. Having communicated my orders to the General, he gave me permission to halt in a little dell in the hills, where the grass was plenty, to feed my horses and mules, as at Santa Maria, where I had bivouacked the night previous, there was neither forage nor grass. There was a small old vacated adobe house and a good barn or shed for protecting the wheat straw from the rains, but entirely empty. There was nothing about the place of use, not a vestage of anything to eat or drink, save water, the rancho having been deserted from the commencement of the war. General Kearny left me with the intention of halting at Santa Maria, but finding the facts as I had stated, he marched to a cañada, a mile further on, for grass; and, also, preferring his tent, rather than occupy the miserable hovel of Santa Maria.

It is not very likely that "two casks of wine" were to be found stowed away in the hills unknown to the Indians, and remain there any time; and it is not possible, that, with such an abundance elsewhere, the Californians would have taken to such a remote deserted place an article for which transportation was very difficult.

These are the facts, and having done only my duty in refuting the statement of "C. E. P.," wherein he has been grossly misinformed, I pronounce the whole story in relation to San Pascual to be untrue.

Archi H. Gillespie
Major First Cal. Battalion, 1846

San Francisco, November 13th, 1868.

No doubt Gillespie was correct in his statements concerning conditions at the Stokes' adobe at Santa Maria, but he had not been with the troops the previous day when Sailor "Beel" had broken out the wine for the officers and men of the 1st Dragoons at Santa Ysabel. Hence he could not have known the facts if some of the officers and men of Kearny's command had carried away a few full jugs and canteens of wine, to cheer them on their cold journey to San Diego.

Certainly something was wrong with the management of the entire affair. Dunne in his notes said that on the night at Santa Maria the officers got wine, but the men did not; and Dr. E. D. French observed that they had camped near the residence of Mr. Stokes, whither many of the officers retired to drink wine and have a good time generally.[99]

Dr. Griffin, commenting on the battle, said:[100]

This was an action where decidedly more courage than conduct was showed. The

first charge was a mistake on the part of Capt. Johnston, the 2d on the part of Capt. Moor. After the Genl was wounded and the men were rallied he was anxious for another charge but was persuaded not to risk it. We drove the enemy from the field and encamped. All that day was engaged in dressing the wounded.

In 1847 Lieut. John McHenry Hollingsworth[101] of Stevenson's Regiment, then stationed at Los Angeles where he met the survivors of the fight, said, basing his statements upon conversations with Dr. Griffin and Lieut. J. W. Davidson:

There was a great mistake made somewhere but who made it is the dufficulty to determine as the officers who were in it generally do not like to talk about it. The Californians claim a victory but as our troops kept the field and the Californians retreated the victory was ours although dearly bought.

John Mix Stanley,[101a] artist on the expedition, wrote:

From a misapprehension of an order, the charge was not made by our whole force, or with as much precision as was desirable, but the Californians retreated on firing a single volley, to an open plain about half a mile distant. Captain Johnston and one private were killed in this charge. The retreat of the enemy was followed with spirit by our troops skirmishing the distance of half a mile. When they reached the plains, our force was somewhat scattered by the pursuit. The Californians, taking advantage of this disorganization, fought with desperation, making great havoc with their lances. It was a real hand to hand fight . . . with what loss we could not learn.

Eye-witness accounts among the Californians vary. Each man, according to his own story, was a hero. There was Pablo Véjar. After the first melee with the Americans, Véjar shouted to a couple of his compañeros that he was going to draw to the side for a breathing spell. Four Americans, hearing him shout in Spanish, converged upon him, and Véjar, lance in hand, spurred up an arroyo with the intention of gaining a more favorable position from which he might charge upon the Americans. He was so intent upon this plan that he failed to see a badger hole, into which his horse plunged a foot and fell heavily upon its neck. Véjar's spur caught in the cinch, and thus pinned down he was unable to rise. The four pursuers fired at him with their rifles, the balls striking directly in front of his head and kicking sand into his mouth. Véjar played dead and the Americans, thinking no doubt that they had killed him, rode on. Véjar then struggled to free himself, and his horse, apparently unhurt by the fall, tried to rise. This movement attracted the attention of four other Americans and they too fired at the luckless Véjar. Again he tasted the sand from the river bed.

His horse got to its feet. At this moment two other gringos rode up and one of them fired at Véjar, who had managed to get up and stood lance in hand awaiting them. The ball passed so close to his lips that it caused him pain but drew no blood. His two enemies came up from the left and right sides. The one on his left shouted, "Damn you!" Véjar whirled to face him and looked into the muzzle of a loaded rifle. In a mixture of broken Spanish and English, he was informed that he was a prisoner. Véjar recognized one of the men, who was mounted upon a white horse bearing the brand of

Juan Machado, and indicated that he would surrender his lance to him, mentally planning to jerk the horseman out of the saddle the moment he leaned over to take the weapon. Then he planned to vault into the vacated seat and escape. This plan was frustrated by the second captor, who kept Véjar covered with his gun. The latter was all for shooting Véjar at once, but the one on the white horse refused, saying that Véjar had surrendered and was a prisoner, and, according to Gillespie, "prisoners were to be respected." So Véjar delivered up his lance, the point of which was still bloody from his previous victims, and mounted his own horse, not without some misgivings, because he feared that the Americans, seeing the blood of their comrades upon the lance blade, would sheathe the weapon in Véjar's own body.

Véjar's captor, who had protected him from being murdered in cold blood by the second man—a Canadian voyageur by the name of Patitoux[102]—was "Phillip Crossbett," in other words Philip Crosthwaite, one of the volunteers, who afterwards married María López, a second cousin of Véjar's. As the three rode off across the field they met another American, "Beale or Veal, or some such name," according to Véjar, whom he had known in San Diego. This man was married to a daughter of the Machado family and he proposed that Véjar be turned over to Patitoux and conducted to the rear, while Crosthwaite and Beale rode on after the Californians. Véjar protested this arrangement, feeling certain that the Canadian half-breed would kill him as soon as the other two were out of sight.

Beale said: "The Americans are not chuchos [dogs]. They won't kill you." Then Patitoux said: "Let's go!" So Véjar, unable to do anything else, rode to the rear and arrived unharmed among the Americans.

Gillespie, after the battle, questioned Véjar, saying: "And Señor Véjar, how many were killed on your side?" "Being a prisoner," answered Véjar, "I do not know." Then Dr. Griffin asked him why he didn't tell the truth—that there were 10 killed and 30 wounded?

Véjar, knowing that there were only between 70 and 75 Californians with Pico, with about 30 firearms among them, was actually unacquainted with the casualty list of his countrymen at the time, but said that he believed there were many more casualties than Griffin had affirmed. Later he learned that in reality they only had one man killed, Francisco Lara, and some twelve men wounded, one of whom, Casimiro Rubio, died at San Juan Capistrano. Others wounded were Juan Alvarado, Romualdo Young (Véjar was uncertain about this name), José Aguilar, Joaquín Valenzuela, Santiago Lobo, José Duarte, Antonio Ibarra, and still others he did not remember.

Practically all of the Californians agreed that only one man on their side was slain in the action, and they all name that man as Francisco Dorio Lara. The latter was a youth who seems to have been terror stricken in this, his first and last battle, Antonio María Osio[103] stating that the boy was left in

camp in this condition when the Californians moved into the fight. Don José Antonio (Tonito) Serrano,[104] an unwilling participant in the battle—who, it seems, was without weapons other than his reata—was making his way toward the Indian village (which, as said above, was situated along the base of the hill on the west side of San Pascual Valley, just back from the river bottom) immediately after Pico's men had made their second charge from the ambush around the point of the rocky hill. All was confusion. The Americans were retreating with the Californians hard on their heels, stabbing at them with flickering lances. Shortly before Serrano arrived at the site where the old Indian church stood beside its tiny campo santo, he saw three Americans lead young Lara away from one of the Indian huts where the terrified boy had been hiding. He saw Lara deliver up his arms. Thereupon two of the Americans rode away, leaving Lara in charge of the third, who shot the youth and then rode off. It was afterwards said, and seemed to be common knowledge at the time, that Lara was slain by some Indians whom Kearny had brought with him.

Serrano had been at the ranchería of Panto,[105] noted leader of the San Pascual Indians, when the fight started. He was about 100 yards from the house when the Californians loosed their "sheet of fire" and the Americans rode into it, "shouting like so many coyotes."[106]

Serrano was one of four or five Californians who had kept their horses picketed near camp, ready for any contingency. He rode from Panto's place to the house owned by Moses Mannasse,[107] keeping well up along the side of the hill and out of range of the actual combat until he was opposite the Mannasse house. Here it was free of fog and he could see quite plainly. Shortly afterwards the howitzer which García and Higuera seized was taken near this house. From the Mannasse place, Serrano proceeded to that of Lorenzo Soto on the nearby hill, where Pico had his quarters. (It is said that Soto himself took no part in the fight.) Serrano said he found Pico, Tomás Sánchez, and Leonardo Cota[108] at the Soto house. Soon after this the Californians withdrew from the field and rode south, camping among some oaks about three miles from the Americans, who moved into a patch of timber back of the Mannasse house and pitched a temporary camp with the field hospital at the point of the long hill. Later they moved up on the hill among the cactus and rocks. Said Emory *(ibid.*, p. 109): "Our position was defensible, but the ground, covered with rocks and cacti, made it difficult to get a smooth place to rest, even for the wounded. The night was cold and damp, and notwithstanding our excessive fatigues of the day and night previous, sleep was impossible." The artillery was placed on the ridge, so as to command the field.

It was a dejected and battered detachment of United States forces that camped on the battlefield that night. Although the enemy had technically been driven off, the Americans did not know at what moment the lanceros

might decide to return. The wounded had to be gathered and the dead had to be buried. It was decided to wait until nightfall to accomplish the latter task, since, according to Emory*(*loc. cit.*), the Americans feared that the dead, "... no matter where buried, would be dug up to rob the bodies of their clothes, and orders were given to pack them on mules, with the intention of carrying them to San Diego, but it was found that there were not a sufficient number of strong animals left to convey both the dead and the wounded, and directions were given therefore to inter them at night as secretly as possible."

Emory scoured the Indian village for the dead and wounded. The first body he found was that of Captain Johnston with a bullet wound between the eyes. There were ugly rumors after the fight that Johnston had not died from enemy wounds but at the hands of an American dragoon who had incurred the displeasure of the captain. These, however, were merely rumors, and there seems to be no foundation for them other than Crosthwaite's statement made about six years later. It is certain, however, that Johnston's body had been plundered. His watch, which he wore about his neck, was missing and only a fragment of the chain remained. This theft, too, was attributed to the disgruntled dragoon, although Emory himself does not say so. According to Emory (*ibid.*, p. 108):

> The work of plundering the dead had already commenced; his [Johnston's] watch was gone, nothing being left of it but a fragment of the gold chain by which it was suspended from his neck. By my directions Sergeant Falls and four men took charge of the body and carried it into camp. Captain Johnston and one dragoon were the only persons either killed or wounded on our side in the fight by firearms.

General Kearny, although wounded, was at first inclined to order his men to advance on the same day, but was dissuaded by his officers because of the dead and wounded.

Stanley (*loc. cit.*) alludes to the situation thus:

> At first General Kearny thought to move on the same day. The dead were lashed on mules, and remained two hours or more in that posture. It was a sad and melancholy picture. We soon found, however, that our wounded were unable to travel. The mules were released of their packs, and the men engaged in fortifying the place for the night. During the day the enemy were in sight curveting their horses, keeping our camp in constant excitement. Three of Captain Gillespie's volunteers started with dispaches to Commodore Stockton. The dead were buried at night and ambulances made for the wounded. . . .

The ambulances for the wounded mentioned by Stanley were constructed of willow poles (cut from the bed of the river) and fastened travois-style to the mules, the wounded being placed on buffalo robes lashed between the poles.[109] Friendly Indians at San Pascual are said to have aided in cutting the poles and making litters;[110] but to soldiers whose wounds were beginning to stiffen, the poles, jouncing along over the rough terrain, must have caused untold agony.

There were wheeled carretas at San Diego, some forty miles away, and it was determined to send messengers to Old Town to ask that some of these be sent, as well as food and reinforcements. This was the second time Kearny had had to ask Stockton for aid, and it must have galled his soul to do so; but there was no other recourse left for him, unless he wished to lose his entire force.

The three messengers despatched by Capt. H. S. Turner, Kearny's aide-de-camp, and acting commander of the dragoons during his incapacitation, were Alexis Godey, Thomas Burgess, and one other. The message from Turner to Stockton (reprinted in Frémont, *op. cit.*, p. 583) was as follows:

Headquarters, Camp near San Pascual,
December 6, 1846.

Sir: I have the honor to report to you that at early dawn this morning General Kearny, with a detachment of United States dragoons and Captain Gillespie's company of mounted riflemen, had an engagement with a very considerable Mexican force near this camp.

We have about eighteen killed and fourteen or fifteen wounded; several so severely that it may be impracticable to move them for several days. I have to suggest to you the propriety of despatching, without delay, a considerable force to meet us on the route to San Diego, via the Soledad and San Bernardo, or to find us at this place; also, that you will send up carts or some other means of transporting our wounded to San Diego. We are without provisions, and in our present situation find it impracticable to obtain cattle from the ranches in the vicinity.

General Kearny is among the wounded, but it is hoped not dangerously; Captains Monroe [Moore] and Johns[t]on, First Dragoons, killed; Lieutenant Hammond, First Dragoons, dangerously wounded.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

H. S. Turner,
Captain U. S. A., comdg.

Late on the night of December 6th, the dead were buried in a single grave under a willow tree,[111] said to have been growing on the slope of the hill a trifle east of the rocky point—possibly the same tree where Moore was killed and Hammond received his death wound. It was a melancholy occasion. Said Emory *(ibid.*, p. 109):

When night closed in, the bodies of the dead were buried under a willow to the east of our camp, with no other accompaniment than the howling of the myriads of wolves attracted by the smell. Thus were put to rest together, and forever, a band of brave and heroic men. The long march of 2,000 miles had brought our little command, both officers and men, to know each other well. Community of hardships, dangers, and privations, had produced relations of mutual regard which caused their loss to sink deeply in our memories.

Dunne relates in his "Notes" that after the fight, a pit was dug in which all the bodies, mixed together as they were, were placed.

To refer again to Emory *(ibid.*, pp. 109-10), whose description of the events of December 7th is the best of all:

Day dawned on the most tattered and ill-fed detachment of men that ever the United

States mustered under her colors. The enemy's pickets and a portion of his force were seen in front. The sick, by the indefatigable exertions of Dr. Griffin, were doing well, and the general enabled to mount his horse. The order to march was given, and we moved off to offer the enemy battle, accompanied by our wounded, and the whole of our packs. The ambulances grated on the ground, and the sufferings of the wounded were very distressing. We had made for them the most comfortable conveyance we could, and such as it was, we were indebted principally to the ingenuity of the three remaining mountain men of the party, Peterson, Londeau and Perrot. The fourth, the brave François Ménard, had lost his life in the fight of the day before. The general resumed the command, placing Captain Turner, of the dragoons, in command of the remnant of dragoons, which were consolidated into the company.

Arranging our wounded and the packs in the centre, we marched towards San Diego in the direction of the San Barnardo rancheria, taking the right hand road over the hills, and leaving the river San Barnardo to the left. The enemy retired as we advanced. When we arrived at the rancheria of San Barnardo, we watered our horses and killed chickens for the sick. The rancheria was the property of Mr. Snooks, an Englishman; it was deserted except for a few Indians.

Crosthwaite stated (and he was correct) that it was about five miles from the battle ground of December 6th to Snook's rancho. Kearny saw that the Californians were massing in front of him at a point where the valley narrowed, about a mile and a quarter from his camp; but instead of marching straight down the valley, which would have been the easier course, he swerved sharply to the right toward what is now Escondido, and rode along the hills.

This sudden maneuver caused the Californians to swing wide around his front into a new position. Kearny then swerved to the left and headed toward the Rancho San Bernardo, which lies in the valley west of the San Dieguito River, just west of a low range of hills. Here the dragoons halted at the ranch house standing in a clump of sycamores. The old adobe has long since vanished, leaving scarcely a trace, even of the foundation walls. The present ranch house is built a few feet west of the site of the old dwelling.[112] Here, as Emory states, the command caught a number of chickens and took them along for the wounded. They also rounded up a number of cattle to use for food. Now the enemy appeared in force to the southeast, having again circled behind Kearny and swept down from the north, in order to cross the road to San Diego in front of him. They also appeared from the southwest, attempting an enveloping movement; and thirty or forty were occupying a low, boulder-studded hill, about half a mile east of Snook's rancho.

This was not a prepossessing looking place. It was merely a small peak, crowned with granite boulders and covered with low brush. The ground between the ranch house and the hill was fairly open and level. From this vantage point commanding the road, the Californios opened a ragged fire on the advancing Americans. There were no casualties, and Kearny sent a small party of six or eight men under Emory to drive the lancers from their position. No men were killed in this brief passage at arms, although several

of the Americans were wounded before the Californians broke and fled, leaving the hill in possession of the troopers.

In the flurry of excitement attending the race for the hill, the cattle escaped, and the men lost all of their chickens. This left them without any immediate source of supply for their rations. Realizing that he could not move forward encumbered with his wounded and his baggage train, Kearny decided to camp for the night upon this hill, dress the wounds of his men, and, if necessary, cut his way through to San Diego on the succeeding day.

The plight of the Army of the West now appeared almost hopeless, unless the relief party from San Diego arrived soon. There was no food nor water, the river being dry,[113] and the enemy were encamped at the ranch house. The flour had long since given out. Here and there a few ounces were treasured by men who had hoarded it against such an emergency. The mules of the command were the only sources of food left to the starving men. They killed the fattest of these, but, as Dunne said, they were "fat in bone, low in flesh."

The morning of the 8th found the men on the hill, either crouched among the rocks of their barricade or lying exposed just outside. In order to add to the strength of his position, Kearny had his men pile smaller boulders into the openings between the large ones, thus creating, in effect, a long narrow room, the center of which was sprinkled with rounded rocks of all sizes. It was at best a cramped uncomfortable refuge and one entirely inadequate for Kearny's small force. Today, a hundred years later, the breastworks remain as an original monument to Kearny's men.[114]

The topic of conversation, one may be certain, was food, and the relief party. Why didn't that so-and-so sailor in San Diego send out food, carts, and reinforcements? Why, indeed?

They soon learned the answer, or at least had a partial explanation why relief had not arrived. A white flag appeared from the enemy's camp with a request from Pico to exchange prisoners. General Pico, it appeared, had four Americans whom he wished to exchange for four Californians. It was very embarrassing, because the Americans had but one man, Pablo Véjar, as a prisoner.

Lieutenant Emory rode forth to parley with Pico, whom he found to be "a gentlemanly looking, and rather handsome man."[115]

Véjar, in relating his experiences with the Americans as a prisoner, complained that they did not feed him from the day they took him captive on Sunday till the following Tuesday, when they offered him a piece of badly cooked mule meat. He had just begun to eat it when the flag of truce was brought into camp. Véjar asked Jean Nutrelle, a Frenchman, who acted as his guard, the meaning of the flag. Nutrelle explained and Véjar asked how many prisoners the Californios had taken. Nutrelle said four. This news caused Véjar to take heart, and when he was informed that he was to be

MULE HILL

San Diego County

Scene of Kearny's Last Stand at North End of Lake Hodges, San Diego County

exchanged for Burgess, Véjar immediately spat out the meat, saying: "Well, now I don't have to eat mule."

As they approached the Californian outposts, Véjar was on foot and Burgess was astride a horse. One of the Californians said: "Why should this one [indicating Burgess] ride on horseback while our comandante walks on foot? Dismount!" Thus Véjar returned to his friends, á caballo, while Burgess trudged across the flats on foot. Needless to say, the captive Californian was received by his amigos with much rejoicing, and the first thing for which he asked was a piece of juicy roasted beef!

From Burgess and Godey it was learned that the despatch-bearers, sent to San Diego on December 6th, had arrived safely and had started back with Stockton's reply when they were jumped by the Californians. The two Americans hid their despatches under a tree, but when this cache was examined later the letters were missing. Apparently Stockton had no spare horses upon which to mount his men and could not send a relief party. This was disheartening news and Kearny resolved to send another detail to San Diego, to impress upon Stockton the seriousness of his plight.

According to Commodore Stockton,[116] as soon as Godey and his companions arrived in San Diego, "... preparations were immediately made to dispatch a detachment for this purpose [i.e., relieving Kearny]." Stockton at first determined to go out in person. He did not know the exact size of the enemy's force and since Captain Turner, Kearny's new aide-de-camp, had failed to give information on this subject, and Godey could not, Stockton was undecided as to the number of men he should send. Two days' provisions were assembled and two field pieces made ready to accompany the relief party. Acting-lieutenant Guest was ordered to proceed to Mission San Diego and await Stockton at that place.[117]

In the starving camp on Mule Hill (so-named by the inhabitants because of their diet of mule meat) Lieut. E. F. Beale and Kit Carson volunteered to go to San Diego. At first Kearny said he could not spare Carson but Beale urged the necessity, saying the famous scout would be necessary for carrying out the plan. So, on the night of December 8th, Beale, Carson and an Indian crept through the three lines of sentries thrown about the hill by the Californians and started towards San Diego. The accounts vary as to the identity of the Indian accompanying the two Americans. Emory merely states (*ibid.*, p. 111): "At night, Lieutenant Beale, of the navy, Mr. Carson, and an Indian, volunteered to go to San Diego, 29 miles distant—an expedition of some peril, as the enemy now occupied all the passes to that town." Davis[118] stated that it was an Indian servant of Beale's who would not leave him, while Dunne says that an Indian from San Pascual guided Lieutenant Beale and Carson that night from the hill to San Diego—a reasonable statement, as a local Indian, originally from Mission San Diego, could be relied upon to know the main trails and side paths leading to Old Town.

Carson's[119] version of the episode was:

As soon as dark we started on our mission. In crawling over the rocks and brush our shoes making noise, we took them off; fastened them under our belts. We had to crawl about two miles. We could see three rows of sentinels, all ahorseback, we would often have to pass within 20 yards of one. We got through, but had the misfortune to have lost our shoes, had to travel over a country, covered with prickly pear and rocks, barefoot.

Got to San Diego the next night. Stockton immediately ordered 160 or 170 men to march to Kearny's relief. They were under the command of a Lieutenant, [and had] one cannon, which was drawn by the men by attaching to it ropes.

I remained at San Diego, Lieutenant Beale was sent aboard of frigate Congress; had become deranged from fatigue of the service performed, did not entirely recover for two years.

Carson also related that in March of 1847 (more correctly, February 25, 1847) he started for Washington with despatches for the War Department, Lieutenant Beale accompanying him with reports for the Navy Department. As Carson says:

Beale, during the first 20 days, I had to lift on and off his horse. I did not think he could live, but I took as good care and paid to him as much attention as could [be] given . . . and he had, before our arrival, got so far recovered that he could assist himself. For my care I was trebly paid by the kindness and attention given me by his mother while I was in Washington.

To return to the council of war on the hill: When Beale volunteered to run the gauntlet into San Diego, Kearny asked him if he had any provisions. Beale answered, "None." "Orderly," inquired Kearny, "What have we left?" "Nothing but a handful of flour, sir." "Bake it all into a single loaf and give it to Lieutenant Beale with my compliments." This was done and the orderly carried it to Beale, saying, "This is the last of it, sir, not only of the bread but of everything else." Beale refused it, telling the man to take it back to Kearny. In his pocket Beale had some parched corn and beans with a small piece of cooked mule meat. That was all.[120]

For Carson and the Indian, the nerve-racking trek to San Diego was more or less a matter of routine; to the young naval officer it was pure torture, and upon his arrival at Old Town, being unable to stand because of his lacerated feet, he had to be carried into Commodore Stockton's headquarters. The Indian reached San Diego ahead of Carson and Beale, the three having separated a few miles from their destination, to insure that at least one might get through.[121]

A baile was in full swing at Juan Bandini's house where Stockton's band was playing its sprightliest airs. The Californians loved music and so did Stockton, and every evening it was the custom to have the musicians from the *Congress* play in the plaza. Almost every night there was a dance in the Bandini house. This night it was interrupted by the announcement that Kearny's tattered force was besieged on a hill near San Bernardo and dying of wounds and starvation.[122]

Stockton hastened preparations for the immediate departure of the relief party. According to the commodore's account there were 215 men in all, under the command of Lieut. Andrew F. V. Gray of the *Congress* and composed of detachments of sailors and marines, the latter under Lieut. H. B. Watson. The musketeers from the *Savannah* were commanded by Lieut. William B. Renshaw, assisted by midshipmen George E. Morgan and Robert C. Duvall; those from the *Congress* by Lieut. John Guest, assisted by midshipmen B. F. Wells, Theodore Lee, and Joseph Parrish; and those from the *Portsmouth* were under Lieut. Benjamin F. Hunter, whose subordinates were Boatswain Robert Whittaker and Purser James H. Watmough. The artillery was in charge of Lieut. R. L. Tilghman and Passed Midsh. William H. Thompson. Capt. J. Zeilin of the *Congress* acted as adjutant of the forces. Each officer and man carried a blanket, 3 pounds of hard tack and 3 of jerked beef.[123]

In the meantime the beleaguered force on Mule Hill was having a rugged time. Sgt. John Cox of C Company died of his wounds on the morning of December 10th and was buried on Mule Hill.[124] His grave was covered with heavy stones to keep the coyotes from digging up his body. Said Emory,[125] "This was a gallant fellow, who had, just before leaving Fort Leavenworth, married a pretty wife."

Don Antoine Robideaux, a thin man of about fifty-two years, suffered greatly from his wounds and according to Emory, who slept on the ground next to him, grave doubts were entertained concerning the Frenchman's ability to pull through. The morning of the 9th Robideaux awoke and asked Emory if he did not smell coffee. Emory thought the man was out of his head, but upon investigation he discovered that the cook was heating a cup of coffee over a small fire of wild sage. As Emory[126] describes it:

> One of the most agreeable little offices performed in my life, and I believe in the cook's, to whom the coffee belonged, was, to pour this precious draught into the waning body of our friend Robideaux. His warmth returned, and with it hopes of life. In gratitude he gave me, what was then a great rarity, the half of a cake made of brown flour, almost black with dirt, and which had, for greater security, been hidden in the clothes of his Mexican servant, a man who scorned ablutions. I eat [ate] more than half without inspection, when, on breaking a piece, the bodies of several of the most loathsome insects were exposed to my view. My hunger, however, overcame my fastidiousness, and the morceau did not appear particularly disgusting till after our arrival at San Diego, when several hearty meals had taken off the keenness of my appetite, and suffered my taste to be more delicate.

Indirectly, the Californians added to the larder of the Americans. On the morning of the 10th, Cristóbal López and about half a dozen compadres decided to have a little sport.[127] They organized a manada (a drove) of mules at Snook's corral, fastened a dry bullhide to the tail of the leader, and with much whooping and laughter set the small band of animals in motion toward the American encampment. They hoped to stampede the

dragoons' mounts, which were picketed on the little grass at the foot of the hill with a guard of about twenty men. The dragoons saw the mules racing toward them; and the Sutter gun, which had been mounted upon the hill, jumped and roared, flattening the low brush with its muzzle blast. The four-pound ball kicked up dust just in front of the stampeding animals and turned them aside. One mule, much to the amazement of the Californios as well as the Americans, continued its headlong flight straight up the hill, where it was pierced with many musket balls. The animal was said to have been fat and supplied the camp with dainty morsels.

At night the Americans were ringed with the watch fires of the Californios, who, with their ready lances, circled the beleaguered dragoons, hovering just out of gunshot and indicating by their attitude that they were confident of victory. Unless a miracle occurred, the gringos must soon capitulate or starve.

General Kearny also believed that his situation was critical. He hoped his scouts would reach San Diego and bring relief, but the uncertainty was great. Accordingly on the morning of December 9th he had issued the following order:[128]

Headquarters, Army of the West
Camp at San Bernardo, Cal. Dec. 9th, 1846.

Orders,

All public property now in the camp which we have not the means of transporting to San Diego, will at once be destroyed, this of course becomes necessary in order to prevent such property from falling into the hands of the enemy by whom we are now surrounded.

By order of Brigadier-General S. W. Kearny
(Signed) H. A. Turner
Capt. A.A.A. Genl.

On the night of this same day, as we have seen, the relief party, composed of sailors and marines, set out from San Diego. They marched until nearly daybreak of the 10th, when they went into camp on a high hill entirely destitute of trees and affording poor concealment from any wandering horseman. Here they remained all the following day, distressed by the lack of water. At nightfall they resumed their march. It was bitterly cold, and, unaccustomed to land duty, the men suffered severely.

About 2 a. m. they sighted the fires of the California outposts, which were covered as soon as the sentries heard the force approaching. Shortly afterward the relief party saw Kearny's campfires blazing on the hill. The Americans were lying on their arms. They were hungry and tired but they could not sleep. At daybreak they would make one final desperate attempt to cut their way through the enemy lines. Suddenly a weary sentinel heard the sound of many men, marching. "Who goes there?" he challenged. "Americans," came the welcome response from the darkness.

Then, moving in a square formation, the relief party emerged from the

shadows and marched up the hill. The siege was over. Rescuers mingled with rescued. The sailors and marines were treated to bowls of hot mule soup, while they in turn distributed hard tack and jerked beef from their rations.

That night, as Philip Crosthwaite sat by the fire enjoying a piece of pork handed to him by a sailor, a lone musket banged somewhere in the outer darkness and a ball whistled through the American camp, injuring no one.[129] It was the final, defiant gesture of a disappointed enemy. The next day the Californians faded into the landscape.

The action of San Pascual and San Bernardo was over. Kearny and his tattered dragoons, hauling with them their lone, battered howitzer, limped into San Diego with their liberators. Yet, incongruous as it may seem, to Kearny this sorry ending to a great march was a glorious triumph. A tactical victory had been gained and, seemingly, that was all that mattered. In his official account to Brigadier General R. Jones, Adjutant General, U. S. A., in Washington, he wrote: "... The great number of our killed and wounded proves that our officers and men have fully sustained the high character and reputation of our troops; and the victory thus gained over more than double our force, may assist in forming the wreath of our national glory."

Judge Benjamin Hayes, who studied the action and listened to the accounts of many participants, apparently did not share Kearny's attitude.[130] "I am satisfied," said Hayes, "that it will require considerable attention and labor, to ascertain all the truth of this lamentable affair."

In retrospect a century later, one cannot help but wonder whether the wounded and the dead, if they could have spoken, would have considered the battle worth while. Certainly, with all of the knowledge of warfare that he must have had, Kearny could not have been so blind as not to foresee the results of such a poorly conceived action. One wonders why he did not take the open or at best poorly guarded road into San Diego via El Cajon, or why he did not wait until daylight when he could see the terrain and the forces arrayed against him. There can be no answer to these questions. The battle was fought and the action has taken its place in the history of the winning of California.

Salud, soldados! Viva California!

NOTES

36. The letters of the Warner-Kewen political feud were published in the *Southern Vineyard*, edited by J. J. Warner, on Aug. 2, 9, and 19; and on Sept. 2 and 6, 1859. The Los Angeles *Star* of Sept. 3, 1859, printed Gillespie's letter, giving his version of Warner's arrest in 1846.

37. *See* Los Angeles *Star* of Aug. 20, 1859, for Sexton's statement. In after years Sexton was an inventor living at San Gabriel.

38. Wilson's letter appeared in the *Southern Vineyard* of Aug. 9, 1859. For a resumé of Wilson's life, *see* Benjamin David Wilson, *Observations on Early Days in California*

and New Mexico, with foreword by Arthur Woodward, *An. Publ.,* Hist. Soc. Southern Calif. (Los Angeles, 1934), pp. 74-150.

39. Alex. Bell's letter was printed in the *Southern Vineyard,* Aug. 9, 1859.

40. Abel Stearns' letter, *idem,* Sept. 2, 1859.

41. John Reed's letter, *idem,* Aug. 19, 1859.

42. Johnston, *op. cit.,* p. 614.

43. Emory, *op. cit.,* pp. 106-07.

44. Griffin, *op. cit.,* p. 44.

45. Emory, *loc. cit.*

46. 30th Cong., 2d sess., S. Exec. Doc. 31 (1849), pp. 26-27.

47. This account was written by Gillespie in a report to Commodore Stockton in San Diego, Dec. 25, 1846. The original was among some Gillespie documents which I consulted when they were the property of Mr. Jake Zeitlin of Los Angeles in 1937. The collection is now in the possession of Mrs. Wayne Morrison of Monrovia.

48. *See also* Gillespie's letter, dated from Los Angeles, Feb. 16, 1847, to Hon. George Bancroft, in "Gillespie and the Conquest of California," introduction by G. W. Ames, Jr., this QUARTERLY, XVII (Dec. 1938), 340-41.

49. The Santa Maria Rancho was the property of Eduardo Stokes and José Joaquín Ortega in conjunction with the Rancho Santa Ysabel. For further information concerning this valley, *see* Arthur Woodward, "Out of the Past," in Ramona *Sentinel,* issues of Oct. 3, 1935, through March 5, 1936.

50. "Recuerdos de un Viejo," dictated by Pablo Véjar to Tomás Savage, Dec. 14, 1877 (manuscript in Bancroft Library). Savage took the dictation when Véjar was seventy-five and was living with his wife on his brother's rancho, about four miles from Spadra in Los Angeles County. Savage described Véjar as being about 5 ft. 10 in., straight and lean, with a fresh clear memory. He was poor and had a large family, and according to Savage was inclined to take credit for deeds that belonged to others.

51. The San Pascual road was traveled by most of the parties leaving San Diego for the southern overland route during the 1850's and 1860's. In the 1870's another road was constructed through the back country to Julian, and the old steep San Pascual hill trail was abandoned.

52. Eduardo Stokes' son, Adolphus, and later his grandson, Aristides (Reestis) Stokes, occupied the old adobe in the Valle de los Amigos (colloquially contracted to Goose Valley) the first two decades of the 19th century; then Aristides sold out and moved to San Luis Rey Valley.

53. Santa Maria Creek is dry for the greater part of the year. It has a certain amount of water in the canyon to the north of the Stokes' adobe, but the stream sinks into the sand before emerging into the Santa Maria Valley. When Kearny marched through the region, the river was probably dry.

54. These houses were occupied by Indians who had settled there from Mission San Diego in 1835. Mrs. Elizabeth Judson Roberts in her little book, *Indian Stories of the South West* (San Francisco, 1917), pp. 220-24, 229, describes the village at the time of the battle, the battle itself and the aftermath, through the eyes of old Felicita, who claimed to be the daughter of "Pontho," leader of the ranchería—probably Panto, head man at San Pascual. Practically every point in her story can be corroborated through other sources; and it is interesting since it is the only extant Indian version of the battle and the subsequent removal of the American dead from San Pascual to San Diego.

The last of the Indian adobe huts was ploughed under some fifteen or twenty years ago. The crumbling walls, which stood in the open on a small knoll south of the point of the hill whereon the battle monument stands, were a community legend and for years they were known, erroneously of course, as "Frémont's Fort." Why Frémont,

it is difficult to say, except that community legends frequently distort the truth about the occurrences in a neighborhood.

55. Copy of letter in Judge Benjamin I. Hayes' *Scrapbooks* (in Bancroft Library), consisting of "California Notes," "Emigrant Notes," "Indians," etc.

56. Hayes, *ibid.*

57. Hayes, *ibid.* The site of the chapel at present is so covered with grass that it is virtually lost to view, and unless one looks closely the low mounds will pass unnoticed. The compound of the asistencia can be traced in the open pasture immediately east of the neat white chapel that was erected here a few years ago. The bells, which once hung on a beam outside the old chapel, disappeared during an internecine fight among the Indian factions of Santa Ysabel and Mesa Grande a number of years ago, and their hiding place has never been discovered. The only picture of the old asistencia which I have been able to discover is the pen sketch in *Reports of Explorations and Surveys . . . for a Railroad from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean* (Washington, 1856), V, 125. The sketch shows a number of buildings then standing but in a ruined state.

58. Emory, *op. cit.*, p. 107.

59. The bulk of the Indians in the vicinity of Santa Ysabel lived on the hills of the Mesa Grande, south and west of Santa Ysabel, and on the volcán to the north of the asistencia. Others, who had never knuckled under to the Spaniards, lived in their rancherías on the lower slopes of the Cuyamacas, to the east of the little valley; and, of course, there were Indian houses and fields extending along the valley floor and into Carrizito Canyon to the west. The Indianada of the back country had no cause to love the Mexicans and were, on the whole, happy to see the Americans come in, although in subsequent years they were not justified in this feeling. They were a peaceful folk but could fight if need arose.

60. Griffin, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

61. Gillespie's report (unpublished; *see* Note 47, above). *See also* letter to Hon. George Bancroft, in "Gillespie and the Conquest of California," *op. cit.*, pp. 340-41.

62. The flat below Stokes' adobe is in the broad sandy river-bed. Here the crisp salt grass grows under large cottonwoods, while back on the bench land, east and west of the house, are thickets of brush. The hill which rises steeply at the back of the house is covered with thick dry shrubs and rocks, unfit for grazing animals.

63. The exact site of Kearny's last camp, prior to engaging the enemy, is somewhat in doubt. Judging by all accounts, the open area under the huge live oaks at the head of Clevenger Canyon would be the logical place for the camp. However, there is also the possibility that Kearny moved along the base of the hill westward of the Stokes' house, and went into camp in a place known in later years as "Tent City," a temporary summer resort, about two miles from the spot where Gillespie pitched his camp. At the Tent City site there is a huge grove of live oaks but no water. There is a spring at the head of Clevenger Canyon which in a sense offsets the description of the last camp, since Griffin says (*op. cit.*, p. 45): "We encamped, in a grove of live oak but no water except that which was falling from the heavens—and the rain did come down most severely."

Emory (*op. cit.*, p. 108) does not mention the lack of water at the camp. He states: "Our camp was in a valley, overgrown with live oak trees and other shrubbery; but it was too dark to distinguish their character." The description fits either site, but the Tent City grove is, in my estimation, a little too far to the west and too far off the main trail to San Diego via San Pascual.

64. These were some of Frémont's men. In later years, Frémont, for some reason, stated that none of his men wore buckskins. Just why he should repudiate them, at least by inference, on page 563 of his *Memoirs*, is difficult to say.

65. Lieut. E. F. Beale later became General Beale, and as such was surveyor-general of California and owner of the great Tejon Rancho. Stephen Bonsal, *Edward Fitzgerald Beale* (New York, 1912). *See also* Helen S. Giffen and Arthur Woodward, *The Story of El Tejon,* Los Angeles, 1942.

66. The Sutter gun came in for its share of fame and controversy. According to Charles M. Weber, when Castro left Los Angeles in August 1846 he buried all of his artillery, including the Sutter gun which had been brought down from Sutter's Fort the previous year. Later, "... Weber, learning that the [American] forces were searching for it, told Fremont that if he were provided with a detachment of men and some money, he thought he could find it. These were provided, and finding a number of his California friends who were in Castro's army, Weber handed them a little money, and the artillery was found. Among the cannon was the brass field piece of Captain Sutter; this, together with the other brass pieces, was taken on board the vessels, and at the close of the war the Sutter field piece was given to its owner. Sutter in after years presented it to the California Pioneers of San Francisco." George H. Tinkham, *The History of Stockton* (San Francisco, 1880), p. 102.

Sutter himself, writing to *The Pioneer* from Lititz, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, Aug. 13, 1879, said that information concerning the "Sutter gun," which had been published by Gillespie in the *Daily Alta California* of July 3, 1866, was erroneous. Gillespie claimed this piece had been on the walls of Sutter's Fort, July 11, 1846. This statement, according to Sutter, was untrue. The gun had been taken to Los Angeles during the revolt against Micheltorena. It had been used at the battle of Cahuenga early in 1845 (Feb. 20-21) and was captured by Castro's forces at that time. Sutter also said he had described this cannon in a previous article *(The Pioneer,* San Jose, Aug. 30, 1879). The same error that Gillespie made was repeated by Judge J. H. McKune in *Themis,* Oct. 5, 1889, and reprinted in *The Life and Times of General John A. Sutter,* by T. J. Schoonover (Sacramento, 1907), pp. 31-32. A sketch of the famous little cannon, the only one I have been able to locate, was made while the piece was in the Society of California Pioneers, and was published in connection with the article, "Fort Ross and the Russians," by Chas. S. Greene, *The Overland Monthly,* XXII (July 1893), 10.

67. According to Philip Crosthwaite, the only Californians with Kearny were Rafael Machado, Antonio María Ortega, Mascio Alvarado and Eduardo Stokes. Crosthwaite was one of the party that accompanied Gillespie to reinforce Kearny. Hayes, *op. cit.,* "Notes on the Battle of San Pascual."

68. See life-sketch of George Pearce in *History of Sonoma County* (San Francisco: Alley, Bowen & Co., 1880), pp. 580-85. Pearce was born in Louisville, Ky., Jan. 5, 1822. He went to Missouri in the summer of 1845 and in the spring of 1846 enlisted in Co. C, First Dragoons, Capt. B. D. Moore's command. Later he was assigned to Kearny's personal bodyguard, and was the messenger sent by the general to assemble his officers on the night of December 5th for a council of war. He stated that he was in the fight and was but a few feet from Kearny when the latter was wounded "in the loin" by a lance. When Kearny ordered a retreat, Pearce says that Captain Turner cried out: "No, never, men! Never turn your backs on these men, or you will all be cut down. Dismount!" Pearce's statements concerning the fight are substantially those made by other participants.

69. Hayes, *idem*—a resumé of a conversation held with Don Lorenzo Soto and Don Juan Alvarado on the field of San Pascual, some years subsequent to the battle.

70. Véjar, *ibid.*

71. Stephen Watts Kearny was born at Newark, N. J., in 1794. He attended Columbia but left it at the outbreak of the War of 1812, secured a commission as first lieutenant in the 13th Infantry and served under Capt. John E. Wool. He was captured at the

battle of Queenstown Heights and had a brief taste of a British prison, but was soon exchanged and served throughout the war, emerging as a captain. In 1823 he was made a brevet major and as such was in command of four companies of the 1st Infantry at Bellefontaine, near St. Louis. With these troops he accompanied General Atkinson on his exploring expedition up the Missouri River. Upon his return from this long 2,000-mile journey via keel boat, he was promoted to a majority in the third regiment, and later (March 4, 1833) was commissioned lieutenant colonel of the First Dragoons, in their expedition under Colonel Dodge against the Comanche. In 1835 Kearny went with four companies among the Sioux on the upper Missouri. The next year he assumed command, in the capacity of colonel, of the dragoons at Fort Leavenworth. In 1842 he was given command of the third military department, headquarters at St. Louis. He went among the Indians again in 1845, going west as far as South Pass and returning via Bent's Fort. He was ordered west in 1846 to occupy New Mexico and California, and while en route (June 30, 1846) his commission as brigadier general overtook him. After his trip to California and his subsequent embroilment with Frémont and Stockton, Kearny returned to St. Louis, Aug. 26, 1847. He died at St. Louis, Oct. 31, 1848. (William E. Connelley, *op. cit.*, pp. 225-26; 636-38. *See also* Francis Heitman, *op. cit.*, I, 586.)

It will be seen from the above biographical account that General Kearny had been a soldier since the War of 1812, at which time he was eighteen years old. He had fought Indians for nearly a quarter of a century before he went into action at San Pascual. It is difficult to understand why a man with such a long record of frontier fighting should choose the hard way out at San Pascual when, instead, all common as well as military sense should have told him that it was folly to commit his starved, poorly mounted and half-frozen men to a battle on unfamiliar terrain against an unknown number of the enemy in the semi-darkness of a rainy day. Moreover, it is likewise difficult to understand why such a veteran leader should have sent his men into battle without the simplest precaution of seeing that all the firearms were in working condition. He knew the howitzers were useless and that the little Sutter gun was the only piece of ordnance in battle condition, yet he deliberately sent that gun to the rear and refused permission to Gillespie and his company to take the lead, when he must have known that the latter party was in much better shape than the dragoons. There is no doubt that Kearny was a brave and determined man, but, judging by all the evidence obtainable at this late date, he made a needless sacrifice of his men at San Pascual that day.

73. Captain Johnston in the last entry of his "Journal" (p. 614) stated that one informant said there were 80 Californians awaiting the Americans. Robert C. Duvall ("Extracts from the Log of the U. S. Frigate *Savannah* . . ." this QUARTERLY, III, July 1924, 122) reported 93 men under Pico. William H. Davis (*Sixty Years in California*, San Francisco, 1889, p. 420) said that Lieutenant Beale told Kearny there were 90 men in the enemy ranks. Dr. E. D. French ("Battle of San Pascual," manuscript in Bancroft Library) said that the enlisted men in Lieutenant Hammond's patrol gave the number as 300 to 400. Kearny himself reported in a letter from San Diego to Brig.-Gen. R. Jones, dated Dec. 13, 1846, that Pico's force was ". . . a party of 160 Californians . . ." Thus, with the exception of Captain Johnston, whose estimate of 80 men was probably more nearly correct, the American reports all tended to overestimate the number of Californians in the fight.

As to the figures furnished by the other side, Véjar, who was in the action, said that at the outset, before Pico divided his men at Rancho Soledad, there were 112 horsemen who marched down from Los Angeles. Of this number, some 75 men went on to San Pascual. The remaining 37 were sent to El Cajón Rancho in pursuit of Gillespie. Antonio María Osio, in his "Historia de California, 1815-1848" (manuscript in Bancroft Library),

said the Californians were "sesenta hombres" (60 men), fifteen less than those mentioned by Véjar. Bancroft (*History of California*, San Francisco, 1884-90, V, 342), after analyzing the various figures given by the contestants, said that Pico's forces numbered about eighty, but that most Californians made it considerably less.

74. Hayes, *op. cit.*, "Indians." The account, "The Pueblo de San Pascual," was written in Spanish by S. Argüello from his rancho, San Antonio Abad y Ti-Juan, Jan. 2, 1856. *See* Hayes, *op. cit.*, "Emigrant Notes," for an item on Santa Ysabel and San Pascual.

75. Hayes, *ibid.*, "Notes on Battle of San Pascual."

76. Juan B. Moreno, "Vida Militar . . ." (manuscript in Bancroft Library). The author of this "Military Life" was born in Sonora, Mexico, June 24, 1822. He was the son of Don Luis Moreno, captain of a regiment of cavalry in Sonora, and Doña Gertrudis Lesna y Urea of Sonora, daughter of General Urea. When he was twenty-two, Juan left Sonora and came to California. As a lad of seventeen he had seen service in the 5th regiment of cavalry in Sonora. Five years later he deserted from the Mexican army and rode to California with two companions. He was a saddle-maker in Los Angeles when the war broke out in 1846, at which time he went to San Diego in Leonardo Cota's company to harass the Americans.

77. Moreno, *idem.*

78. Hayes, *op. cit.*

79. Véjar, *op. cit.*, pp. 69-70.

80. Véjar, *ibid.*, p. 70.

81. Véjar, *ibid.*, pp. 1, 44 ff.

82. Coronel, *op. cit.*

83. Coronel, *idem.* These lances were the favorite weapons of the Californios and had been since the days of the first entrada in 1769. No hafted lances seem to have survived in California, but two or three of the thin lance blades (long and leaf-shaped, of the size given in the text) have been found. In the Convento de Churubusco near Mexico City are a number of hafted lances which were used against the Americans in Mexico, 1846-47. They are similar in appearance to those used in California. After the capitulation at Cahuenga, Jan. 13, 1847, the Californians, according to Andrés Pico, held on to their lances; said he in a letter dated Apr. 5, 1847, to his brother, Governor Pio Pico: "Likewise there remained in our hands, in spite of the fact that it is not expressly so declared, all of the arms that were considered personal property, which consisted mainly of lances that, with a great deal of effort, had been made in this same country during the rule of Señor Flores." ("Pio Pico's Correspondence with the Mexican Government, 1846-48," edited by George Tays, this QUARTERLY, XIII, June 1934, p. 133.) The last lances made in Los Angeles were used to equip a party of lanceros who went out against the Indians during the Garra uprising in 1851. These weapons were manufactured at public expense and cost something like $3.50 each.

84. Some of the Americans—". . . my poor fellows," as Dr. Griffin says (*op. cit.*, p. 47), "have as many as 8 wounds on a side; 3 are run through the arm—generally they seem to aim their lances so as to strike a man near the kidneys." One of the victims, Pvt. Joseph B. Kennedy, died in the hospital at San Diego the night of December 19, almost two weeks after the battle, from five lance wounds in the head and one in the arm. Four of the head wounds showed that the lance had penetrated through the bone into the brain. (Griffin, *idem*, p. 50.)

85. Coronel, *ibid.*

86. Alexis Godey, a young mountain man, was known among the Californians as Alejandro Godoy. He accompanied Frémont in 1849 and supplanted the veteran guide, old Bill Williams, on that fatal expedition. Bryant listed him as an officer in the Frémont battalion and assigned to southern duty, i. e., with Stockton at San Diego. In after years

Godey settled in California and was Indian agent at the Tejon during 1862-64, supplanting Theodore Boschulte. Godey settled in the Cuyama Valley, married María Antonia Coronel in 1862, but divorced his wife in May 1869, obtaining most of her property.

87. Abraham Robinson Johnston, the son of Col. John Johnston of Piqua, Ohio, was born at Upper Piqua, May 23, 1815. He was the seventh of fifteen children born to the doughty old frontier soldier and Indian fighter and his wife Rachel. To the Johnston's commodious farm house, to which his father had moved from Fort Wayne, came many honored guests, both Indian and white, and from it young Johnston went to study at West Point, entering that institution at the age of fifteen. In 1832, after two years at the Point, he wrote to his sister, Julia: "Like all the others no doubt, I am rapidly advancing to the Johnston size. I am now five feet ten. You can, of course, judge how much I have grown. I, like all I have left behind, am prone to play tricks, so I have altered as much as Nature would allow." At this time Johnston had as his favorite studies drawing, mathematics, and French. His flair for sketching is revealed in the little thumbnail sketches which he made in his journal, en route from Santa Fe to Warner's Ranch.

Johnston was graduated from West Point on July 1, 1835. He was promoted in the army to second lieutenant of the First Dragoons and was soon thereafter transferred to the frontier. He saw service at Fort Leavenworth, Fort Gibson, Fort Wayne (where his father had served as U. S. factor in the early 1800's), and at Fort Washita. He was acting-commissary at Fort Leavenworth in 1837 and three years later was recalled to Washington to settle his accounts during that period. In 1843 Johnston accompanied Capt. Nathan Boone's detachment of dragoons from Fort Gibson to the Santa Fe trail. Captain Boone was a son of Daniel Boone, a friend of old Col. John Johnston. Abraham Johnston was promoted to first lieutenant on June 15, 1837. At the outbreak of the Mexican War he was stationed at Fort Leavenworth, the headquarters of his regiment. Colonel Kearny appointed him regimental adjutant June 16, 1846. Two weeks later the War Department promoted Johnston to captain, but he did not receive his commission until Aug. 15, after his march across the plains to Santa Fe. He was made aide-de-camp to Kearny Aug. 17, and continued as such until his death at San Pascual, Dec. 6, 1846.

Charlotte R. Conover, *Concerning the Fathers*, Dayton, 1903; also, "Marching with the Army of the West," ed. by Ralph Bieber, Southwest Hist. Ser. (Glendale, 1936), IV, 19-21.

88. One of the main objections to the adoption of percussion lock firearms for use in the U. S. army, as voiced by the board of officers appointed by the Senate, Jan. 21, 1837, was the inability of half-frozen men to cap their pieces. The board, after witnessing trials of the weapons manufactured by Hall, Colt, Cochran, Hackett, Fisher and Leavitt, summed up their findings thus:

"The application of the percussion primer to arms for the use of troops has not yet been made with success. They may, with improved means of attaching them to the nipple or cone, be used by light troops in extended order; but the difficulty of placing an object so small as the cap, during the excitement of action, in excessively cold weather, and in the dark nights, has prevented this improvement in fire-arms (for sporting purposes) from being generally adopted in any service." (*American State Papers*, 1837-38, 24th Cong., 2d sess.; 25th Cong., 1st and 2d. sess., Class V, "Military Affairs," Washington, 1861, VII, 471.) The action at San Pascual would no doubt have justified these claims had the board been aware of the difficulties of the dragoons at that time. As it was, many of the troops during the Mexican War were armed with flintlocks but the U. S. Dragoons were equipped with the Hall breech-loading carbine with the improved side lever which tilted the breech block up to receive the paper cartridge and thus made loading much easier.

89. Véjar, *ibid.*

90. The story of the duel between Pico and Moore was related by Lorenzo Soto and Juan Alvarado to Judge Hayes. Shortly after Moore fell and Pico retreated with his men behind the rocky point, Alvarado got a musket ball through his neck. López also stated that Pablo Apis, an Indian from Temécula, a half-breed son of Machado of San Diego, was in at the death of Moore. *(See* Note 106, below.)

91. Dr. Griffin's entry of Dec. 6, describing the battle *(op. cit.,* p. 46), is most graphic, as he seems to have noted more of the little incidents in the fight than did many of the other Americans who recorded the event.

92. The sandy river bed was at that time probably about as it is now. The river shifts in its channel from time to time and has, during the course of years, meandered all over the flat. The fight began somewhere between the base of San Pascual hill on the east side of the valley and the brush and boulder strewn upland on which Kearny took refuge later, and was a cavalry action between these two elevations. There were no fixed lines of battle and in the half-light of a murky dawn it was difficult to tell friend from foe, as Dr. Griffin pointed out in his diary. Judge Hayes *(ibid.,* "Notes on the Battle of San Pascual") said:

"Don José María Alvarado and Don José Antonio Serrano were present at San Pascual. The former may have fought. The countrymen smile when they tell of the latter gentleman riding through the strife with no weapon but his reata—as if he had gone out to pasear at a rodeo rather than to take a hand in carnage.

"He always has been a prudent man and proved so on this occasion. He kept his own horse saddled and tied up on this night; put spurs to the animal at the first hostile shouts, to get away. Finding himself presently in the midst of the Americans, whom he could faintly distinguish and seeing the capture and death of Lara, he bore off on the hillside out of danger.... 'Don Tonito' (so he is familiarly called) was one of those who lacked confidence in the power of California to worst the American arms; and who, if they could not avow themselves neutral strictly, kept as much as possible out of the vain contest. If Gen. Kearny had appeared in open daylight in compact force, San Pascual might have had as happy a result as that of Cahuenga without striking a blow."

93. Hayes, *idem.*

94. Gillespie, letter to Hon. George Bancroft, dated from Ciudad de los Angeles, Feb. 16, 1847, in "Gillespie and the Conquest of California," *op. cit.* (Note 48, above), pp. 342-43. ". . . I left the Howitzer and moved towards the second, about which the force had begun to rally." Gillespie's account I interpret to refer to the firing of the Sutter gun during this action. Lancey in his "U. S. Ship of War Dale . . ." *The Pioneer,* San Jose, Dec. 6, 1879, also refers to the firing of the artillery, but his version had Gillespie firing off the second howitzer with his mecha prior to discharging the Sutter gun. It may be that either, or possibly both, Gillespie and Lancey were confused over who fired which cannon. Bancroft, *op. cit.,* V, 353 (note), does not believe that any cannon was fired in the fight.

95. Dr. E. D. French was born in New York State on June 20, 1822, where he resided until 1835. He then went with his father to Michigan, studied medicine in Hillsdale County, and was engaged in private practice until 1845, when he went to Fort Leavenworth, enlisting in the army as hospital steward. He served with the First Dragoons in this capacity during their expedition from Fort Leavenworth to San Diego. After the Mexican war, Dr. French remained in California, settling on the Tejon. For an account of his experiences in 1850, and again in 1860, while searching for "gunsight lead" in Death Valley, *see* Carl I. Wheat, "Pioneer Visitors to Death Valley after the Forty-Niners," this QUARTERLY, XVIII (Sept. 1939), 197-200. Later Dr. French went to San Jose, married Miss Cornelia S. Cowles, daughter of Judge Cowles, on Jan. 12, 1858, and

reared two sons, Alfred C. and Addison. Still later Dr. French moved to San Diego, where he became a member of the Board of Supervisors and a property owner in Poway Valley, not far from San Pascual.

96. Referring to Kearny's wounds, Dr. Griffin in his diary, Dec. 20, 1846, *op. cit.*, p. 51, remarks: "The Genls wound has almost entirely cicatrized–the punctured wounds through the arm have become better under the use of pressure judiciously applied–There is one punctured wound through the nates that is not improving so fast as I could desire." *See also* Kearny's letter to his wife, Mary Radford Kearny, dated San Diego, Dec. 19, 1846, making light of his wounds, ". . . which bled very freely, which was of advantage to me." (Quoted by Valentine Porter, in "Gen. Stephen W. Kearny and the Conquest of California, 1846-7," reprint from *An. Publ.*, Hist. Soc. Southern Calif., VIII, 1911, p. 10.)

97. William H. Dunne, "Notes on San Pascual" (manuscript in Bancroft Library).

98. *See* Note 11, above.

99. French, *see* Note 73, above.

100. Griffin, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

101. "Journal of John McHenry Hollingsworth," introd. by Robt. E. Cowan, this QUARTERLY, I (Jan. 1923), 240-41.

101*a*. Quoted in John T. Hughes' *Doniphan's Expedition* (Cincinnati, 1848), pp. 226-27.

102. This man was referred to as Beatitude, "Godey's half-breed," by Philip Crosthwaite (Hayes, *idem*). He was probably one of the French Canadian voyageurs whom Frémont had engaged for his third exploring expedition in 1844, and was with Godey in the relief party under Gillespie. So far, the roster of the Gillespie party has not been found among the latter's papers.

Crosthwaite settled in San Diego and lived for a time at the old mission. Hayes obtained his information from Crosthwaite in April 1856, when the latter was living at Panasquitos. Judge Hayes (*idem*) visited the battlefield of San Pascual on this same trip. Said the judge: "On the San Diego side, Panasquitos cañada opens out into Soledad Valley. Leaving the houses for San Pascual, a lofty hill–the whole route abounds with wild oats–gives a fine view westward of the Soledad hills and of the ocean at the mouth of the San Bernardo river; descending a succession of hills eight miles, San Bernardo valley opens to the eye–the Snooks house the only object indicating social life, amid the hilly points of varied shapes, with the peaks of Santa Ysabel and Cuyamaca in the background to the eastward and soon then we are upon 'the second battle-ground'."

103. Antonio María Osio, "Crónica de los Acontecimientos Ocurridos en California, desde 1815 hasta 1846." (Written c. 1850, copied 1876.) Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery, San Marino, Calif.

104. *See* Note 92, above.

105. Panto was a noted leader of the Diegueño Indians at San Pascual. In Hayes, *op. cit.*, "Indians," is the following item:

"*Panto*. This is the well known old chief or Captain of the Indians of San Pascual. Don José Serrano tells me that in the Mexican times he was held in great estimation for his fidelity in complying with the orders of the authorities–his pursuit of robbers and general good conduct. On one occasion a borreguero in charge of some sheep in the vicinity was murdered by Indians. Panto raised his men, followed the culprits by their tracks to their hiding place on the heights of San Alejo, set fire to the brush and weeds and burnt them alive. He was afterward saluted as 'Quemador de los Indios'."

This same Indian leader also supplied Stockton with horses and mules for his march on Los Angeles, and ten years later he was still complaining that he had never been paid for them. When Hayes visited the battlefield, he made it a point to visit Panto.

"We found this old Indian captain," wrote Hayes, "chasing a horse—mild and courteous, and prompt when he understood our object. At once he led me to a place about fifty yards toward the hill, from the rocky rise on which his own house stands to the edge of an Indian corral, near which three cows were grazing, and pointed to the exact spot where Moore fell.

"He would be apt to remember this from the fact that nothing is more talked of still among Californians and Indians than the bravery displayed by this officer.

"Directly opposite to the southeast and at the distance of half a mile—a patch of mustard and weed and dry river bed intervening—you see the road descending the steep San Pascual hill: precipices on either side. To the left is the cañada through which the river runs and up which the Californians had their horses grazing."

Panto died from the effects of a fall from his horse in March 1874.

106. Benjamin Daviess Moore, killed in the early morning mists of Dec. 6, 1846, was born in Paris, Ky., on Sept. 10, 1810. Little is known of his boyhood. In 1820, after his father's death, his mother moved to Shelbyville, Ill., where her two sons, Matthew Duncan and Joseph Duncan, by a previous marriage, were living. Young Moore received the best education to be had in those days. At the age of eighteen he was appointed midshipman in the navy and cruised the Caribbean and the Mediterranean. When the Black War broke out in 1832, he was home on leave, and through an exchange was able to resign from the navy in order to join a company of volunteers under the command of one of his step-brothers.

The U. S. Dragoons were formed in 1833, with Henry Dodge as colonel; S. W. Kearny, lieutenant-colonel, and R. B. Mason as major, Jefferson Davis being adjutant. Moore joined it and became a first lieutenant in Company C.

In 1839 Moore married Martha, daughter of Judge Matthew Hughes. Two children were born to them, Matthew Joseph and Martha—"Patsy," nicknamed after her mother. Mrs. Moore died in 1843. According to Judge Hayes, Moore was kind and genial but a stern soldier and good officer with pride in his regiment. (*See* M. J. Moore, "Sketch of Captain Benjamin Daviess Moore," *An. Publ.*, Hist. Soc. Southern Calif., VI, 1903, 10-13. Information was also furnished me by Mrs. Alexander, granddaughter of B. D. Moore, Los Angeles. In after years M. J. Moore, son of Lieutenant Moore, moved to California and settled in Ventura Co., where the family home is still maintained, and where an oil portrait of Moore and several of his personal belongings are preserved.)

107. Moses Mannasse obtained "the North half of the Southwest quarter and the East half of the Northwest quarter of Section thirty three in Township Twelve South of Range One West in the District of lands subject to sale at Los Angeles California containing one hundred and sixty acres according to the official plat of the survey of said lands returned to the General Land Office by the Surveyor General which said tract has been purchased by the said Moses Mannasse." The patent to this tract of land in San Pascual was issued at Washington, D. C., under President U. S. Grant, Jan. 30, 1874, and was recorded by Mannasse in San Diego, May 2, 1874. (Book 1, Patents of San Diego County, pp. 180-81. No map.)

108. This story of Serrano's is a little difficult to explain. It is not quite clear how Pico and his two leaders could be found in a house when they were supposed to be on the battlefield. Apparently Serrano confused some of the details of the skirmish.

109. Gillespie manuscripts (*see* Note 47, above).

110. Dunne, *op. cit.*, said the Indians provided the command with poles, with which to carry the wounded. This is in accord with the tale told Mrs. Judson by Felicita, *op. cit.*, pp. 226-27.

111. The lone willow tree seems to have struck a romantic chord in the hearts of the survivors of the action, particularly in Dr. E. D. French's, who wrote a poem entitled

"The Battle of San Pascual." The last few lines of some fifty are as follows:

> "We laid the brave men that so suddenly died
> Ere they marched o'er the land they had barely espied.
> Then peaceful their sleep in the lone grave shall be . . .
> No foe with their chargers and lances draw nigh—
> No grief o'er their graves but the zephyrs soft sigh.
> Farewell: we have left thee: companions in arms;
> Our lives may be joyful or filled with alarms,
> Whatever our joy or our sorrow may be,
> We'll remember the graves by the lone willow tree."

112. El Rancho San Bernardo, consisting of two square leagues at the outset with four leagues more ultimately granted, was first given to Capt. Joseph F. Snook by Gov. J. B. Alvarado, Feb. 16, 1842. The additional four leagues were granted to Snook by Gov. Pio Pico, May 26, 1845, thus giving the captain some 17,763 acres in all. The ranch house, toward which Kearny directed his march, was the home of Snook and his wife, the former María Antonia Alvarado. Captain Snook was an English seaman, naturalized in California as José Francisco Snook in 1833. He was master of the brig, *Jóven Guipuzcoana,* which sailed along the coast carrying cargoes between the Californian and Mexican ports. Eventually, however, Snook abandoned the sea and settled down on his Rancho San Bernardo. (Guard D. Gunn, "El Rancho San Bernardo," *The Southern California Rancher*, Feb. 1945, p. 12.)

113. Accounts vary on this point. Crosthwaite stated that there was no water in the river. Dunne *(op. cit)* said, "I believe the river was dry then." Emory wrote *(op. cit.,* p. 110) that they had to bore holes for water on the hill and that they crossed the river bed, without mentioning its condition. It seems unlikely that there was water in this stream, whose course lay on the little flat between the base of Mule Hill and Snook's rancho, otherwise a few bold troopers could have reached it under cover of darkness. The account by Sen. Thomas H. Benton, delivered in the U. S. Senate, concerning the dramatic meeting between Lieutenant Beale and Pico's men (John C. Frémont, *Memoirs of My Life* . . . Chicago & New York, 1887, I, 87), refers to Beale's dashing through the river without pausing either to take a drink himself or to water his mount. The ensign who met him directed that he be given a drink of water. Beale merely moistened his lips, intimating that the Americans had plenty of water. Whether Benton was drawing upon his imagination for this scene, in an effort to paint his protegé, Beale, in a more heroic light, or whether such was the actual case, is difficult to say.

114. Few people have visited the site of Kearny's last stand. The old barricade of boulders should be marked in some manner, since it is by far the most tangible evidence of those stirring events that still remains in southern California. On the maps a sharp peak, usually called Battle Mountain, is erroneously pointed out as the spot where Kearny and his men made their forlorn camp. This hill is southeast of Lake Hodges and in full view of the rude entrenchment on Mule Hill. The enclosure was 50½ feet in length and 14 feet wide. Along the south side were natural boulders ranging up to 9 feet high, while along the north and west sides they were lower. Here Kearny's men filled in the gaps with loose stones to form parapets 2½ to 3½ feet high. The point was protected on all sides by open ground, except to the northeast where the ground was higher, and had Pico's men possessed cannon they could have made it decidedly unpleasant for the Americans.

115. Although Emory *(loc. cit.)* said he was the one who treated with Pico for the return of the American captives, Senator Benton related that the emissary sent from Kearny's camp was Lieut. E. F. Beale. Benton gives a very circumstantial account of this meeting (Frémont, *op. cit.,* p. 87), derived no doubt from Beale himself. The latter,

armed with a saber and a six-barreled revolver concealed under his jacket, rode full-tilt across the Rio San Bernardo with a flag of truce and was met by the alférez (*see* Note 113, above) and two men. After the offer of water, the following conversation took place:

"How do you like the country?" inquired the alférez.

"Delighted with it," responded Beale.

"You occupy a good position to take a wide view."

"Very good: can see all around."

"I don't think your horses find the grass very refreshing on the hill."

"Not very refreshing, but strong."

Soon Andrés Pico and his attendants rode up. The Californian dramatically hurled his sword twenty feet one way. Beale, not to be outdone, unbuckled his saber and tossed it in the opposite direction; then, ashamed of carrying a concealed weapon at a peaceful parley, he drew it from his bosom and threw it to one side, an act which the Californians allegedly ignored.

Pico then spoke of the exchange of prisoners. He held three, Alexis Godey, Thomas H. Burgess, and a French Canadian by the name of Jean Batiste, *alias* "Canada Jack." Of these three, Pico would only release Burgess, whom the Americans considered the least intelligent of the three and who, as it subsequently developed, had very little to report and could not furnish Kearny with any news of the hoped-for relief party. Just prior to this exchange of prisoners, Pico had sent a flag into Kearny's camp with some food and clothing for Gillespie, which had been captured by Pico along with the three men already named.

116. John Bigelow, *Memoir of the Life and Public Services of John Charles Frémont* (New York, 1856). p. 179.

117. Bigelow, *idem*, pp. 179-80.

118. John W. Davis, "Statement of the Battle of San Pascual" (manuscript in Bancroft Library); Frémont, *op. cit.*, p. 588. *See also* James Madison Cutts, *The Conquest of California and New Mexico* (Philadelphia, 1847), p. 174, where it is said that Carson and Beale were ". . . accompanied by a Delaware Indian who was attached as a spy to Gen. Kearny's command."

119. Blanche Grant, *Kit Carson's Own Story of His Life* (Taos, 1926), p. 83. *See also* Charles L. Camp, "Kit Carson in California," this QUARTERLY, I (October 1922), 142-43, 147.

120. Frémont, *op. cit.*, p. 588.

121. Frémont, *ibid.*, p. 589.

122. Bancroft, *History of California* (San Francisco, 1884-90), V, 329 (note 4); W. H. Davis, *op. cit.*, p. 418.

123. Griffin, *op. cit.*, p. 48, says: "They mustered two hundred strong, 80 marines & 120 sailors." Emory (*op. cit.*, p. 112) mentions ". . . a detachment of 100 tars and 80 marines under Lieutenant Gray . . ." Duvall, *op. cit.*

124. Griffin, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

125. Emory, *op. cit.*, p. 111.

126. Emory, *loc. cit.*

127. Crosthwaite's statement in Hayes, *op. cit.*, "Notes on the Battle of San Pascual"; Asa M. Bowen of Co. C, First Dragoons, differs slightly in the matter of appendages: ". . . mules with sheepskins tied to their tails . . ." ("Statement," manuscript in Bancroft Library).

128. John S. Griffin, "Documents for the History of California, 1846-7, and Especially of the Battle of San Pascual" (manuscript in Bancroft Library).

129. Crosthwaite, *op. cit.*

130. Hayes, *op. cit.*