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# NEVADA HISTORICAL SOCIETY QUARTERLY

Colonel Samuel Youngs' Journal

Carleton's Empty Fort



Spring Issue  
April-June 1959

Volume 2  
Number 2

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# COLONEL SAMUEL YOUNGS' JOURNAL

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Commentary, Notes, and Transcription

By ETHEL ZIMMER

Samuel Youngs came to Nevada Territory to prospect for gold and silver; he found neither in great amounts, either as a prospector or as a business man; indeed he probably gave more to Nevada than he ever received from her: He helped to establish Aurora; he served as a delegate from Esmeralda County to the Constitutional Convention of 1863; and he served as a county commissioner of Esmeralda County. The role of public servant was not a new one to Youngs; in his native state of New York he had served as a supervisor of the Town of Oyster Bay; he was a member of the State Assembly, 1843-1844; and he won his colonelcy in the 117th of the New York State Militia. But it was his public service in Nevada—particularly as a delegate to the Constitutional Convention—which won him fame of a dubious kind: In Carson City he commanded the attention of a former fellow-townsmen of Aurora, a journalist, a local editor who had recently taken the name Mark Twain, and who was now taking everyone's name in vain—including the name Samuel Youngs. In reporting the proceedings of the Convention, Twain wrote that financial problems facing Youngs in his position as Chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means—"to pay expenses"—had caused Youngs to go "blind and baldheaded," and, Twain reported, Youngs was "degenerating into a melancholy lunatic."<sup>1</sup>

When Twain lampooned the Convention in "The Third House," Youngs was one of the conventioners whom the presiding officer (Mark Twain) called: a "snuffing old granny!"<sup>2</sup> And when Twain anticipated the conclusion of the convention, Youngs, again, found his name in Twain's column in the *Enterprise*:

The Convention will probably complete its labors about Wednesday. The members are growing restive and impatient under this long exile from their private business, and are anxious to finish their work and get back home. Three of the Esmeralda delegation . . . being imperatively called away by the necessity of attending to their private affairs, have been granted indefinite leaves of absence. These gentlemen have been constantly at their posts, and unremitting in the discharge of their duties, and well deserved this kindness at the hands of the Convention. And between you and

me, if there were no ladies in Carson, my estimable old fossil, Colonel Youngs, would ask permission to go home, also. Now, why will a man, when he gets to be a thousand years old, go on hanging around the women, and taking chances on fire and brimstone, instead of joining the church and endeavoring, with humble spirit and contrite heart, to ring in at the eleventh hour, like the thief on the cross? Why will he?<sup>3</sup>

Youngs was sixty years old when he served in the Convention. He had come to Nevada by way of the gold fields of California, to which he had rushed in '49. And from Nevada he returned to his native state and died there in 1890, at the age of 87.

As we can see from the entries, Youngs was not the best of diarists; yet those entries that we do have, give a picture of the rigors facing the early comers to the new camp. Not satisfied with pioneering in California, Youngs pioneered on the Comstock and at Aurora. It is the details of climatic conditions, the costs of materials, of food, of lodgings, of transportation, and the hundred and one items attendant to living, along with the occasional entry concerned with social, cultural, and political events which make the *Journal* readable. The one thing in which he played an important role—the Constitutional Convention—is minimized into nothingness. And he never mentions Mark Twain.



# THE JOURNAL<sup>4</sup>

## 1853

SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA

### AUGUST

- 31 Sent letters to Sister, W. E. Howell, A. K. Benton, Wm. Kennedy.

### SEPTEMBER

- 9 Sent letters to Anne, A. K. Benton. Vestry Episcopal Church authorized Rev. Wm. Wyatt to offer Wm. Stewart, N.Y. 1500 doll[ars] to come to this city.
- 14 Slept first night in new store.

### OCTOBER

- 4 Planking street in front of our store, commenced at levee and working up. It looks nicely.
- 24 Thanksgiving Day  
Eat dinner Oriental Hotel, San F[rancisco]  
Roast and Boiled turkey

### DECEMBER

- 8 Very foggy . . . Yesterday steamers did not get here [Sacramento] until after 1 P.M.

## 1854

SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA

### JANUARY

- 1 Sunday  
A warm pleasant day. I made 30 calls.
- 16 Rec[d] six wh[ite] shirts per Adams Co. Express from Sister.  
Pd 16 doll[ars]

### FEBRUARY

- 12 Rains very heavy  
Bishop Kipp preached in Church. First Episcopal service since the fire Nov. 1852.

### APRIL

- 1 Commenced pumping water in Reservoir at water works.

14 Ther[mometer] 82° north side store at 3 P.M.

18 A. K. Benton arrived by Nic[aragua] Route

#### JUNE

2 First new barley in market. Sold for 2<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>¢ #

21 Sold out Goods [\$]7797.53

26 Pears in market from Los Angeles 4/—#

27 Corn for dinner

#### JULY

3 Water melons in market.

13 Fire broke out half past 12. All the wooden houses burned. No brick except Court House and one or two others. We were in our brick building the whole time. Iron shutters red hot. Had water and vinegar used freely. Heat and smoke intense & oppressive, lost our store house, stable, on rear of lot. Cost 2000 doll[ars]

#### AUGUST

15 Grapes in market 12.5¢ #

2[?] Left Sac[ramento] City by stage for Junction Ranch 3m. above Auburn, kept by F. A. Parker. Passed Auburn. Arrived 3 P.M. Went to Illinois Town, Iowa Hill, Yankee Jims, Greenwood Valley, Murderer's Bar, and Ione. 8 days Cost 16 doll[ars]

#### NOVEMBER

15 Sent letters to Sister & Daguerotype . . . Daguerotype Cost 3<sup>00</sup> Doll[ars] Postage 55¢

About a month since Rufus Wattles gave me a "Grease wood" cane cut near the top of the Sierra Nevada Mountains and H. A. Chase had it varnished. A gold duck's bill on head, & presented [it to] me.

17 Rev. Horace L. E. Pratt, Episcopal Clergyman arrived.

19 Rev. Pratt preached first sermon. Was well rec'd.

29 Went to San Francisco

#### DECEMBER

3 Rode with J. N. Brooks to Mission, Race Course, Ocean House, Lake House, Fort Presidio, and home to City. The City is so



changed I could not tell where Happy Valley was in 1849 where we camped in our canvas tent, dug clams where the heart of the City now is and cooked them at our camp.

- 9 Started for San Jose with Rufus Wattles. Steamboat to Oakland 50¢ stage to Union City 8/. The country is as dry as mid-summer.
- 30 This has been the warmest winter since 1849, only frost not freezing hard enough for ice to freeze the ground. River as low as summer. Wells dry. Road very dusty. Farmers cannot plough. Miners cannot work for want of water. Money very scarce and the dullest and hardest times known in Cal. All expected a wet winter after the dry one last winter and all disappointed.
- 31 Commenced raining about daylight  
Rain[ed] fast during the day. A Joyful Blessing.

## 1855

### SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA

#### JANUARY

- 1 Made 28 calls.
- 23 There has not been as much rain in the mountains as supposed, and the Sac[ramento] River is within a few inches as low as ever in Summer. Very dull and hard times.
- 29 Attended funeral procession [of] bodies by explosion of Steamboat Pearl!! The largest procession ever in Cal. Over 3000.

#### FEBRUARY

- 8 I have worn flannel drawers and undershirt this winter but last week had to change to cotton. Flannel is too warm.
- 22 I had 15 teeth and roots extracted by Doctor Ball in about half an hour.
- 23 Adams Co. shut up. Great excitement. A run on Wells Fargo & Co. . . . A Great panic in the City and all over the country. Only three Banks paying in this City, D. O. Mills, B. F. Hastings & Co. [and] Rhodes & Co.
- 25 Rain night previous & rainy day. Great joy. With plenty of rain the Banks may go to their end. Cal. can do better without them.

- 27 Rain fast all day & for the last 24 hours. The farmers & miners must now have plenty of water. It appears a timely God send. Now business will revive. All have more confidence and a better state of things previous to the 25 [February]. We have had no rain of consequence. Roads dry and dusty. River as low as in summer. Teams have forded the Am[erican] River all winter rather than cross Lisle's Bridge. The Banks Credit System and all branches have gone through a severe trial.

**MARCH**

- 2 Rain in night. The Sac[ramento] River has risen 14 feet and now about  $6\frac{1}{2}$  [feet] lower than the highest known.
- 6 Rain part of day. River [the Sacramento] full up to its natural banks, and only 22 inches lower than highest for years.
- 9 Showery morning. The Sac[ramento] River flood from above came down, and here rose higher than before. The old levee below R St. had to be repaired & keep water from flooding the gardens. Water over in many places.
- 15 Very heavy rain in morning, fairly poured down for about an hour. Great quantities of rain has fallen. Plenty for all.

**JUNE**

- 29 Grasshoppers are very plentiful & doing much damage. The first I have seen.

**JULY**

- 3 Went to San Francisco. Cool weather there. Had fires morning and evening.
- 7 A very hot day for San F. The sun's reflection upon the land and brick make a burning heat, different from Sac. San F. is a Very unpleasant place for ladies. Wind blows their dresses sometimes over their heads.

**AUGUST**

- 17 Rail Road cars first started. Made several trips from levee to 17th St. during the afternoon. Quite a jolly time.

**DECEMBER**

- 15 Gas lights in Sac. City. Many persons having never before seen gas made queer remarks. The Chinamen were astonished to see fire from no wick.



- 25 Dined at Mr. & Mrs. Whippley's. . . .
- 26 In morning 8 A.M. ground covered with snow, and falling fast in large flakes, about 10 [o'clock] hail & cold. Two sleighs out. Many enjoyed a snowballing. Turned to rain. . . .

## 1856

### SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA

#### JANUARY

- 1 A fine day but cold. A very general turnout among the citizens making calls. Some very handsome tables set. Calling was continued until 10 P.M. I made about 60 calls.
- 5 Chinese New Year. They commence firing crackers the afternoon of the 4th and keep up a continual cracking during the afternoon & eve for 3 or 4 days. Our boys on 4th July are a pop gun compared with them.

#### FEBRUARY

- 20 Four of us went to Judge E. L. Brown in Yolo Co. shooting geese & ducks. Almost millions of geese sitting about the Prairie & low ground.  
We killed a goodly number. Returned the next day. I have been several times this winter across the Sac[ramento] & Am[erican] Rivers and killed geese & ducks.  
Peach trees in gardens in flower.

#### APRIL

- 4 Gave Gov. Bigler letter of introduction to Sidneys. Had full set of upper teeth made by Dr. J. Ball. Feel very queer. The saliva starts freely & have to take them out often. Talk as if mouth was full of pudding.
- 8 Set of under teeth. The whole cost 150 Doll[ars].

#### MAY

- 14 James King of Williams, Editor of the Evening Bulletin was shot by James P. Casey in San F. A Vigilance Com. organised Wm. T. Coleman, Pres. On Sunday the 20th I was in San F. and coming out of Church I saw a sight, never to be forgotten, which gave me renewed confidence in the Am[erican] people, as no other people could accomplish such results without getting up an enthusiasm, music, shouting, Hurrahs & other noises. Here all was quiet, order, and cool determination. Not

a smile on a man's face. Once or twice a hurrah was started by the crowd, which was at once quieted by a wave of the hand from one of the crowd. There were 3000 men well organised & armed, some with bright muskets & bayonets, common two barrel shotguns, sharps rifles & other variety of arms. Old men & young, rich & poor, youth & gray headed, Americans & Foreigners, the streets filled as one mass of human beings. They surrounded the Jail, planted a brass cannon in front of the door, demanded Casey which the sheriff gave to them. He was placed in a carriage & marched to the Com. [Vigilance Committee] rooms. They returned & took out Gora who shot Gen. Richardson. On the 20th Wm King died. His funeral was on the 22nd. The Com. have a guard from 100 to 500 in constant duty. About one o'clock P.M. while the funeral was at the Church, Casey & Gora were hung both at the same moment from windows of the Com. rooms. The funeral was the largest ever attended before in San F. No music at all in the same quiet order previous. As soon as Wm. King's death was known all stores & public places were closed & draped in mourning. Flags of the shipping Companies at half mast, and all vessels stopt discharging, something never before done in S.F.

#### JUNE

- 10 Left Sac. City with B. F. Hastings for White Sulphur Springs, Napa Co. Slept at Benecia. Left 11th 8 A.M. in stage. Fare 4 Doll[ars] passed Vallejo, Napa City 20 m. to dinner. Arrived at the Springs 4 P.M. 36 m. from Benecia. Took a warm Sulphur Bath. . . . There are 150 to 160 Board at the House. . . . an addition of 40 rooms is to be done by 1st July. . . . decidedly most satisfactory place in the State. Messrs. Brewster & Taft have expended about \$80,000. Billiard & Ten Pins for amusement. In the eve music & dancing & cheerful mirth with the ladies. Prices board & lodging 3.00 doll[ars] per day. Bath 50¢
- 16 Took the stage at 7½ A.M. for Sac. 85 miles. 8 doll[ars] passed through Napa Valley, Surcol, Suisun, Lagoon, Barker's & Yolo. Arrived in Sac. at 7 P.M. Large fields of wheat, barley, & rye. Napa Valley the prettiest in the State, having so many large oak trees all through it, which make a fine shade, and resemble an orchard.



SEPTEMBER

- 7 Attended first service in Grace Church, Episcopal corner 8th & I sts. A neat Gothic building, large Gothic windows front & rear diamond shape & stained glass. 66 pews hold about 350 persons. Rev. Wm H. Hill, Rector & very popular.

OCTOBER

- 17 Sent certificates of Vigilance Com. to Sister by Rich. Elliott.

NOVEMBER

- 9 Bishop Kipp consecrated Grace Church 10<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> o'clock in the morning. The first Episcopal Church built & consecrated in this City. In the eve 7<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> o'clock I was confirmed with eight others. The Bishop first laid his hand on my head, I being the first confirmed in the Church.

DECEMBER

- 23 Commenced partnership with Ludchens Vesaria. Went to San Fran.

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

- 29 . . . during the morning snow fell in large flakes & fast. The hills back of the City and across the Bay were covered with snow. The first snow I had seen in San Fran. The snow lay on the hills across the Bay until after New Year.

1857

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

JANUARY

- 5 About 7 o'clock in the eve. a regular shake of an earthquake, the first I had felt in San F. I was at Capt. G's. His wife jumped up & was much frightened. It appeared as if a cart was driving rapidly over a wharf standing on piles.

MARCH

- 20 . . . Went aboard the Clipper Ship "Great Republic." Since the 23rd Dec. last have resided in San Fran. Like the climate better than Sacto. The salt air being more healthy. Board at International Hotel—14 doll[ars] week for room in fifth story.

## APRIL

- 19 Strawberries on the table at International Hotel for dinner.
- 21 Bought box raspberries about half pint. Paid \$1.50.
- 25 Bought half pound cherries for Mrs. Harmon. 2 doll[ars] pound.

## OCTOBER

- 20 About 20 minutes past one in the morning another & still more severe shock, being the heaviest I have yet felt in Cal. I was in the 5th story of the International Hotel sound asleep when awakened. Many were much alarmed in a brick building & up so high. In the frame buildings in the City it rung the door bells, stopt clocks.

## 1858

## SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

## MAY

- 26 6000# new wheat sold in Sacramento market for 3¢ #

## OCTOBER

- 5 The most brilliant & largest Comet I ever saw is now visible in the N.W. & sets about 8 P.M. Its tail is apparently about 4 yards wide & length about one third across the Sky. [According to Dr. Vincent Gianella of the Univ. of Nevada this was the Donati comet. It has a 2000 year cycle.]

## NOVEMBER

- 25 Thanksgiving day went to Oakland. Spent day at M. Harmon. Called [on] Rev. Wm Akerly, J. Ross Brown.
- 26 About 20 minutes before one o'clock the morning the heaviest shock of an earthquake I ever felt & lasted longer about twenty seconds. Nearly all in the International Hotel got up & went down stairs. I did not leave my room, yet the sensation of an earthquake is terrible. Man feels his littleness.

## DECEMBER

- 9 Cold. The longest cold I have known in San Francisco.
- 11 I have a very severe cold, sore chest. Put on two undershirts & drawers cot[ton] flannel. Another year I must put on flannel.



1859

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

JANUARY

- 1 A pleasant day. I made about 40 calls.
- 14 The weather has been so cold we have had no mosquitoes.

JUNE

- 1 Rec'd from Sister by [Richard] Kelsey large cloak & dress coat I left at home in 1849.

JULY

- 4 Spent the day quietly in the City S.F.

SEPTEMBER

- 13 D. G. Broderick U. S. Senator shot in duel with David L. Terry Judge Sup. Court.
- 15 D. G. B. died 20 min. to 8 o'clock A.M.
- 18 Buried. The largest funeral ever before in Cal.

OCTOBER

- 15 Church trial for D. L. T.

NOVEMBER

- 24 Thanksgiving Day. Went to Oakland. Called on Mrs. Harmon & Rev. Wm. Ackley.

DECEMBER

- 26 Steamer Jno. L. Stephens arrived 20 days 23 hours from N. Y.

1860

WASHOE

JANUARY

- 13 Left S. Fran. 4 P.M. Steamer to Sac. Passage 5.00. Berth 1.50 Supper 1.00.
- 14 7 A.M. Cars to Folsom 22 m. Stage to Placerville 28 m. 3.00 Arrived at 4 P.M. Went in Tunnel quartz mine 600 ft in, 200 ft. under ground. 15.00 Took mule for Genoa (about 100) miles 25 doll[ars] Guide to feed the mules. Started at 8 A.M. 16 in train, one woman on a mule. Fonda & John Van Bergen from San F. others from Nevada arrived at Dicks 41 m. 5½

P.M. Next morning 7 A.M. started 12 m. to Strawberry Valley first saw men on snow shoes. to Lake Valley 12 m. The last 10 m. crossing the summit had a fine view of Lake Bigler. Stopt at Woodford 35 m. Crossed both summits, Lake Bigler & Lake Valley are between them. The road is very good except about 3 m. from the summit down to Lake Valley. There the trail is narrow along the side of a high mountain. We began to see snow about 25 m. from Placerville but did not see much until at Strawberry Valley and then good sleighing way into Genoa, Utah Territory. We had three pleasant days. We were told it was freezing cold and I bought woolen leggings to wear over my boots, but did not put them on. Did not put an extra handkerchief about my neck. Wore an old pair of gloves with the fingers out, was in a perspiration half the way from riding a lazy mule. Arrived at Genoa 16 m. from Woodford 11½ A.M. did not unroll my blankets as we slept in a bed each night. There are houses each 5 to 10 m. across the mountains.

#### FEBRUARY

- 18 Left at 8 A.M. Stage to Carson City 15 m. arrived at 10 A.M. The whole country around is covered with snow.
- 19 Sunday. Left Carson City at 11 A.M. for Virginia City & the Silver Mines. Arrived at 2 P.M. 16 m. Snow squalls night of 17th & afternoon of 18th. Passed Silver City 2 or 3 board shanties & as many cloth tents. Passed Gold Hill, Devils Gate. A short distance from Genoa are Warm Springs. The smoke arises from the water like a steam engine. At Virginia slept on the floor of Epstein's Store covered with blankets. Very nearly frozen. About 12 at night a man came for the Doctor. One man killed, another badly cut at a gambling house.
- 20 Very cold & freezing
- 22 Stage to Carson City. Bought a cooking stove pd \$54.50
- 24 I lost my memorandum book up to March 3rd, the first night we slept in tent. A severe snowstorm wind blowing a gale. About 12 at night blew down a pair of rafters & stove pipe, tore the canvas roof of the tent in two. We got up & went to stone building, Gambling Saloon, & sat by the stove until four o'clock in the morning. Wind lulled. We went back to tent turned in our blankets. In morning got up covered with snow next day mended tent in snow storm. Nearly froze our fingers

## PROSPECTING IN WASHOE

## MARCH

- 3 Left Virginia with M. A. French, prospecting. We were on foot, had a "Jack" loaded with blankets & provisions. Crossed desert, mud, snow, & water. Went down Emigrant Road & Carson River. Camped at Gurley's 18 m.
- 4 Followed down road & River 18 m. to Bucklands. See no human being. Every short distance through the Valley & desert are carcasses of dead oxen, cows, horses, emigrant stock.
- 5 Gave a PahUte Indian 25 cts & 3 biscuits to lead our Jack across the River. It is about 3 ft deep & 4 rods wide. He did not appear cold. Ice on both sides of River. He was well pleased with the biscuit, bare foot & legs. Took road to Walker's River. Camped with four young men [at] Geo. Olds, Jr. About 15 miles from Walker's River.
- 6 Recrossed River Ind[ian] led Jack. We walked across on a log.
- 7 Back to Gurley's.
- 8 Prospected across the River.
- 9 Home.
- 15 With M. B. French started prospecting. Crossed desert. Camped at Gurley's. Snow is down 2 to 4 feet deep.
- 17 Prospecting & traveled to range of mountains below Virginia. Camped after dark. Got to water. Slept on ground. No tent.
- 18 Sunday. Went up ravine about 5 m. Set tent.
- 19 Went out prospecting. Located 3 Companies in earthquake district.
- 20 Located one Co. Evans joined us.
- 21 Traveled in sight of Truckee River. Camped near Little Truckee. In night a pattering [of] rain. No clouds. Stars shining brightly. About half an hour cloudy & snow on ground & our blankets.
- 23 Passed near Steamboat Springs. There are many boiling up through fissures in the rock. Some 8 ft. in diameter. Some long & narrow. Smoke like a high pressure engine. Water boiling hot. A very interesting place.
- 24 Home. Got baggage left at Placerville.



- 26 Started with M. A. F.—Evans & Jack packed with provisions & blankets. No tent. Goodrich, Havens & Smith with old horse packed for sink of Humboldt. Camped edge of desert about 8 m.
- 27 Crossed desert & down Carson River near Williams. 30 m.
- 28 Down River near Ragtown prospected on the way. 15 m.
- 29 Started for Sink of Carson after about 4 m. turned back to River & camped. Light snow . . . passed down the River . . . saw Lake in Desert about 3 acres. Said to have been regular ebb & flow of tides & salt as ocean.
- 30 Havens & I started back. Camped at Williams.
- 31 Walked across desert. No water for 26 m. to Gurley's

**APRIL**

- 1 Sunday. Crossed River. Went to Butte Dist. Camped with Stevenson. No tent.
- 2 . . . Made coffee, walked back to Gurley's.
- 3 Crossed desert. Walked Home. In night wind tore end of tent out. A severe snow storm afternoon & all night.
- 5 Snow storm still raging.
- 6 . . . An awful climate. Flour 25 Doll[ars] sack 50# Ice froze an inch in tent.

**MAY**

- 2 Started prospecting with David McGowan on horse back. Camped at Gurley's.
- 3 Crossed River in boat. Swam the horses. Went to Butte Dist. Wind blowing a gale. Snow & Hail nearly cut through the skin. Almost blew us off our horses. Turned & went back to Gurley's.
- 4 3 hours in finding our horses.
- 6 Morning head & blankets covered with snow. Whole country white with snow. Started back. Swam horses across River. Very cold. [Got] to Virginia [at] 5 P.M.
- 10 Wind blew a hurricane in night. Blew down Rasset's two story frame house. Broke down two tents. Broke rafters of

our store tent badly. Many tents & houses blown down. Wonder people are not hurt or killed. 12 at night went to Saloon & staid till day light.

- 13 News came in that the party of over 100 men that left here to fight the Indians for burning Williams house & murdering 4 men. Were defeated and about 50 killed. In eve fixed stone building as Fort.
- 14 About one o'clock at night all the camp was aroused. Report that Indians were at hand. Women & children taken to Stone building as Fort. Reported guard till daylight. I went home. I had no arms but a pick.
- 16 . . . In afternoon Nevada Volunteers arrived. 280 stand of arms arrived yesterday from Sacto. 18th Company went to Camp, below Sugar Loaf. Cap't. Johnny Cap't. In town Martial Law. Jack Hays Col. of Volunteers.
- 26 . . . rough looking morning. Rain [had] washed mud & water in kitchen. Could not cook. Made fire in ground in middle of tent & cooked breakfast.

#### JUNE

- 4 Bahney came in from Army. Had a skirmish with Indians near Pyramid Lake. 2 or 3 whites killed; about 25 Indians [killed].
- 6 Went to top of Mount Davidson. Could see 12-26 and 40 miles deserts, Carson, & Truckee River, Washoe Lake, Steamboat Springs. Snow 10 to 12 ft. deep on north side of mountain.
- 10 Sunday funeral of Capt. Storey shot by Indians in last battle. The burial by Masons & Military. Each Company fired 3 volleys over grave.
- 19 Fine weather for ten days. Went to Gold Hill, located claim with Judge Watson & others.

#### JULY

- 12 . . . pd 75 cts recording Buffalo Co. Gold Hill dist. Assessment \$1.00
- 25 Went to Carson River took a good swim. Truly refreshing. Swimming across River with a strong current is very fine.

#### AUGUST

- 1 Located Compy with Jas. White called Alta Co. Desert Ledge. Went to Silver City, located two companies.

- 11 Camped with Wm Piper & Wm Ricketts. Claims in Palmyra Dist., Saginaw, Phoenix—one other.
- 15 Silver City. located Extension of Nominee Ledge. Named it Bloomer Co. 9 names. Located at Silver City Almyra Co. Revenue Ledge. 9 names one for discoverer 2000 ft.
- 20 Walked to Carson City 17 mile. Baggage expenses 14/ supper 8/ lodgings 8/
- 21 Left Carson City 3½ A.M. Four of us. Extra waggon 25 doll[ars] each. Breakfast at Genoa 6/ Dinner Lake House 6/ Lodging 4/.
- 22 Started 4½ A.M. Breakfast at Dicks 11 m. 6/ Dinner 12/ Arrived at Placerville 100 m. 7½ A.M.
- 23 Started at 6 A.M. \$2.00 to Sacto. 50 m. Supper lodging coffee 2.25 fixing watch \$5.00 passage in "Chrysopolis" to San Fran \$5.00 Supper \$1.00 International Hotel San Fran 10½ P.M.

**SEPTEMBER**

- 18 Left San Fran. Steamer to Sacto. Passage \$5.00 Supper \$1.00 In Sacto went to State Fair.
- 20 Left Sacto 6½ A.M. \$2.00 to Placerville. Thence 25 doll[ars] to Virginia. Arrived at Grippins 25 m. from Placerville 8 P.M. left 21st one o'clock in morning for Virginia. Stage all the way. Arrived at 8 P.M.

**OCTOBER**

- 16 A severe gale of wind from South almost blew the Catholic Church over which they are building. Have the siding on but not the roof. Canted over & bent the side or middle very badly.
- 17 Gale continued. Severe. Blew out the east end & about 15 ft. of the sides of the Church.
- 28 Wind blew a gale every day & night. Catholic Church enclosed all but shingles on roof. Blew down about 11 at night flat to the ground.

**NOVEMBER**

- 2 Before the day the Catholic Church blew down we had for about ten days the finest weather I had ever seen in the Territory.
- 14 Pony Express arrived 4 days 22 hours news from St. Louis.



OCTOBER

- 9 Started for Carson to attend the first State Convention as a delegate. Returned 16th.
- 24 No water in well since 1st of month.
- 31 A Telegraphic Dispatch was rec'd from Gov. Nye that President Lincoln had telegraphed that he had admitted Nevada as a State into the Union. All the Flags were hoisted and 36 guns were fired, one for each state.

NOVEMBER

- 7 A cold night. Ice froze in cabin. In eve'g the largest torch-light procession ever in Town. Very enthusiastic united & firm.
- 8 [Election Day in Nevada] Esmeralda Co. gave Union Majority.
- 23 I have bought 5 cord [of] wood. Paid \$8.00 I have today finished cutting up about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  cord of it for my cooking stove & to see how long it will last.  
Weather cloudy & cold for 2 days past. I have written & rec'd very many letters but have not written a notice of them in this book.
- 27 It has been cloudy & blowing South. Commenced raining about 10 o'clock A.M. Rain fast all day. At Eve'g the water was rushing down Esmeralda & Willow Gulches & through the Town, a torrent like a roaring river. Washed down the stone Blacksmith Shop on Pine St. opposite the Court House. Filled the cellars on the West side of Pine. Had to bring the arms of the Esmeralda Rifles out of their Armory & put them in the Court House. 2 ft. water in their Armory. I did not come down Town all day until in eve'g for the Stage, but it did not come in. The road [was] washed out so that it could not. Water rushing through the Democratic Headquarters and Fashion Livery Stable. Water up to the floor in Schoomaker Saloon, Cor. Pine & Antelope Sts. etc. 10 o'clock in eve'g turned to snow. Snowed all night.
- 29 . . . Rev. Mr. Reilley, Episcopal Minister, left Stage last night at 9 Mile Ranch & came in here to preach. Got in about 11 A.M. No service in morning. Engines pumping water out of cellar on Pine St. Snowing . . .

Snow about 8 to 10 inches deep. Very cold day & night. Ice froze solid in basin in cabin.

#### DECEMBER

- 1 Very cold. Water froze in all pails in cabin in night.
- 12 Left Aurora 7½ A.M. for Carson.
- 13 Arrived at Carson. Snow falling . . .
- 14 Stages [having] great difficulty in getting to Virginia in all the mud.
- 17 A very cold day. Roads frozen & very rough.
- 24 Christmas Eve'g—two Christmas Trees [one] at Presbyterian one at Episcopal. A merry time for children  
"Life is Young and Hope is Bright"
- 25 Christmas. A perfect gale of wind blew down the Flag staff in Carson about 8 A.M. Drizzling rain all day. No Church. Ladies could not get out. Streets muddy.
- 26 Left for Aurora—Passage 20 dollars . . .
- 16 [While Sam'l Youngs was in Carson City] A very cold snow storm at Aurora. Many persons caught out & [got] badly frozen feet.

## 1865

### AURORA, NEVADA

#### JANUARY

- 3 Wrote Wm. M. Stewart.
- 21 Coldest night I have known in the Camp. Ice froze hard in all the water pails in cabin. Snowing . . .
- 30 Very cold days. Water froze hard in cabin [in] night.
- 31 Snowing, blowing heavy day & night . . . Cold hard winter . . . Parties of ladies & gents sleigh riding last Friday & Sunday. The Jingling of the bells helps to cheer.
- 27 [This entry entered later evidently is not in proper place.] Sent box to Wm M. Stewart, U. S. Senator [Nevada] by Wells Fargo containing following quartz & other specimen—
  1. Chalcedonia—rough boulders hollow inside when broken. Coated with a variety of beautiful colors resembling agate. Found in large quantities in Esmeralda Co., Nevada.

2. Gypsum—Found in large quantities near Walker River. Some clear & transparent.
3. From Mono Lake found in large quantities & curious shaped [gypsum?]
4. Obsidian.—Found in large quantities in Esmeralda Co.
5. Fire brick—said to be as good as the English - do -
6. Melted quartz—found 12 ft. down in the rock in large & curious shapes.
7. Quartz from Young Am. Ledge - Esmeralda Dist. Very rich in gold & silver.
8. Wide West - do - do - do [Quartz]
9. Utah - do - do - do [Quartz]
10. Golden Age & Empire - do - do - do, etc. [Quartz]
11. New Mexico - Bodie Dist. do - do [Quartz]
12. Isabella - do - do [Quartz]
13. Comstock Ledge, Montgomery Dist. - Rich in gold & silver.
14. Magnesia - do - do - do
15. Salt - found in large quantities Esmeralda Co. Some more pure than this.
16. Decator Ledge, Montgomery Dist. - Rich in Silver.
17. Montezuma - do - do - do
18. Dubuque - do - do - do
19. Mountain Queen - do - do assayed 3000 dollars to ton.
20. Isceola - do - do assayed 6000 to 8000 dollars to ton.
21. Gen'l Jackson - do - do Rich in Silver.
22. San Tantrione - do - do - do.
23. Eclipse - do - do - do.
24. Cerro Gordo in Columbus Dist - do - do in Gold & silver.
25. Antelope in Esmeralda Dist. - Rich in gold & silver.
26. Washington in Montgomery Dist., - Rich in silver.
27. Cedar Esmeralda Dist. - Rich in gold & silver.
28. Compromise - do - do - do.
29. Biston - do - do - do
30. Ontario Ledge - Esmeralda Dist. Rich in silver & galena.
31. Del Monte - do - do Rich in gold & silver.
32. Sterling - do - do - do

## FEBRUARY

- 22 Cold & snowy. Flags hoisted & cannon fired. Heard of the capture of Charleston & 200 guns by Sherman. Hurrah!!!

## MARCH

- 3 Bought a thermometer. Weather getting warmer.



- 2 [Out of sequence] Weather very cold. Ice froze hard in Cabin in night. Freezes in wash basin all the morning & has been the same for more than a month. More cold weather than any previous winter.
- 4 A Glorious Day for the Inauguration of Pres't Lincoln & the Country. Flags flying & all rejoicing.

## APRIL

- 5 Snow . . . Cold . . .  
Great rejoicing at hearing the night previous of the capture of Richmond. Rejoicing all night previous & Ball on occasion of it this eve'g.
- 8 Snow squalls during day.  
News came in the mon'g that Lee and all his Army had surrendered to Gen'l Grant unconditionally. Great rejoicing in Town. Flags flying & cannon firing. In the afternoon the Telegraph informed us that Johnson & his Army had surrendered to Sherman & Jeff Davis was a prisoner. The Town almost [page ends here]
- 10 Wild with enthusiasm & Joy. (in 'Graph as he is called) is as Happy as man can be. He is the Telegraphic operator. Many [are] happy & drunk. Last week in the rec't of the news of the Capture of Richmond & surrender of Lee the boys run all night both nights.
- 11 Severe snow squalls . . .  
A grand jollification meeting in the eve'g. Speeches & music. Sherman presented Lincoln with Savanna[h] as a Christmas present & the Union Army celebrated Washington's birthday in Charleston. Lee & all his Army surrendered to Grant on the 8th Apl.
- 15 About 10 o'clock A.M. The Telegraph brought the astounding news of the assassination & death of Pres't Lincoln & Sect'y Seward on the previous eve'g. Sadness & gloom pervaded the whole Union People. Tears pushed from the eyes of young men & old. All the flags were hoisted at half-mast. Stores & business houses closed & buildings trimmed in mourning. A. G. Judy a Secessionist saying Lincoln was a tyrant & ought to have been dead long ago. Cap't Kelly was in town & on hearing of it called the Esmeralda Rangers who escorted him in making his arrest. He will be taken to Fort Churchill & put to packing sand. His wife interceded earnestly for him

but to no effect. Rec'd two packages of seeds from Gov. Nye, from the Patent Office for distribution.

- 16 A. G. Judy weakened. Took the oath of allegiance & was discharged.
- 17 A large meeting in the Dist. Court Room to make arrangements for observing the funeral of Pres't Lincoln.
- 18 Heard surrender of Gen'l Johnson to Sherman—Lincoln's funeral to be on the 18th. Sect'y Seward is recovering. Pres't Lincoln was assassinated on the eve'g of the 14th about 10 o'clock & died next mon'g about 9.
- 21 Heard of capture of Mobile, Montgomery, & Columbus Geo. Surrender of more by guerilla.
- 19 Had a large procession & funeral address on Pres't Lincoln. Business houses all closed & houses all draped in mourning. Dr. Mason & W. T. Gough spoke—the latter was beautiful.
- 30 Ther. 76 - 3 P.M. East side cabin.

#### MAY

- 6 Ther. has been from 70 to 76 each day at 2 P.M. in shade. Started water power & commenced crushing rock. Will commence tomorrow or next day to run day & night. It works well.
- 9 Run water power & battery all night.
- 10 Forenoon fixing to keep water off of belts etc. At noon started it running all right. Can crush & amalgamate  $\frac{1}{3}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  ton in 24 hours.
- 18 Sent power of att'y & papers to J. F. Larrabee & Walter Van Dyke to collect Judgment of Bond—G. F. S. M. Co. Stockholders also copy for Co. Bonds.

#### JUNE

- 5 Ice along brook, 11 A.M. Lee caught a speckled trout. Caught in Walker River. Brought in Town—2 ft. 11 inches long, weighed 12#.
- 15 Water so low in brook. Not enough running for mill to work.
- 18 Sent 31 dollars to Gov. Blasdel, contribution of this Co. [Esmeralda] to Geo. F. Robinson for saving life of Wm. H. Seward, one dollar subscriptions.

20 Putting mill up to run by Alturas Engine.

30 Ther. 87. - 2 P.M. hottest day of season.

#### JULY

1 Started engine.

4 Cloudy. Rain very fast. Had Declaration Independence read, speaker & singing, firing cannon sunrise, noon, & sunset. Few people in town. Dull times or more would have been done. The Most Glorious of all 4th—Country Is Free.

14 Went to Bodie Dist.

18 Commenced running Mill nights.

#### AUGUST

7 Sent by Mr. Lee to Judge Wells, Carson City for Nevada Historical Society specimen from Mono Lake, Christals, Obsidian, Gypsum, Chacedonia, Natural Peach Seeds.

9 Wrote Sac. Union & sent report for this Co. to Agricultural Department, Wash'n for June & July.

14 Sent to Hon. Isaac Newton, Commissioner of Agricultural Department, Washington, a package of native clover, blue flower furnished me by John Arken, Sweetwater in Esmeralda Na. It grows three feet high & very thick on the ground. It is very nutritious & cattle fatten rapidly on it.

Also some natural peach seed furnished by Geo. A. Green, Sweetwater. The tree & leaf resembles the peach, grows about two feet high. The fruit resembles the peach, but is almond shape & about the size of a large gooseberry. The fruit is eatable but no flavor. The pit similar to the Peach. The seed precisely the flavor of a peach seed. I think the stock grown from the seed would be good for me. The Indians gather them for winter wood. Hogs are very fond of them. This year the bushes are loaded with them. Persia has the credit of the native peach but we have them here in Nevada in abundance. Also some seed of the wild tobacco. The Indians use it. Also seed of mountain mahogany. The tree is an evergreen, grows very scrubby owing to the rocky dry soil, grows about 2 or 3 ft. in diameter. The wood is of the mahogany color. Very handsome for making fancy canes but too brittle. It is used by millmen for gudgeons [?] & to run iron shaft in & wears as well as iron.

16 This has been the dryest summer since 1841.



**SEPTEMBER**

- 1 A cold night. Ice froze  $\frac{1}{4}$  in. thick in gulch . . . Have worn flannel underclothes all summer.

**OCTOBER**

- 23 Set out 4 pine trees in front of cabin about 1st Oct. others all dead. [this is the 4th time he has done this]
- 27 Telegraphed Dr. Ives, N. Y. "mines rich. Come and see. Will accept any fair offer." \$9.75

**NOVEMBER**

- 9 Wrote to brother Henry. Wrote Mineral & Agricultural Reports for Esmeralda Co. for Controller. Sent to Agricultural Department at Washington report of this Co. for Oct. Send monthly reports.
- 12 Sent to Isaac Newton seeds of the Buffalo Berry Tree. It grows 12 to 15 ft. high. Is superior to the currant for pies, cooking, etc. Indians gather them in large quantities for food.

**DECEMBER**

- 31 Cold . . . Ther.  $12^{\circ}$  to  $15^{\circ}$  every night.

1866

AURORA, NEVADA

**JANUARY**

- 1 A bright clear day. Same as others in this place.
- 6 A fire broke out at 3 o'clock in morn'g. All frame buildings on both sides Antelope St. between Pine & Aurora. More damages than all fires heretofore to Aurora. Loss about 40,000. dollars. Wind S. blowing. Snow storm during day, fell about 3 inches deep. Wind blowing a gale South.
- 9 Ther.  $3^{\circ}$  below zero 7 A.M.
- 14 Ther.  $8^{\circ}$  below zero.
- 18 Ther.  $12^{\circ}$  below zero 10 P.M. Coldest night of winter.
- 28 & 29 Started mill. It froze water in boiler & machinery about the 8th & again on the 13th. Much trouble to thaw out. Boiler leaked. Now in good order.

**MARCH**

- 11 Snow in morning about 10 in. deep.

## APRIL

- 10 Rec'd letter from Sister dated May 7th 1865. Where it has been I know not.

## MAY

- 1 Set out 6 trees in front of cabin yesterday.  
21 Planted sunflower seeds in front of cabin.  
27 Ther. 32° 7 A.M. Clear bright day. Snow. Cold. Rec'd letter from Sister.

## JUNE

- 15 Indians bring brook trout in Town from Walker River. Sell them 4 - 5 & 6 for 25¢. Gulls eggs from Mono Lake 50 cts. a doz.  
30 Rec'd letter Emma McGoun. Sent seed native bunch grass to Agricultural Department. It grows 5 to 18 inches high & full of seeds as it can grow. Very nutritious.

## JULY

- 4 Ther. 80° 2 P.M. . . . Oration by Judge L. H. Chase & ball in eve'g. Wild roses in bloom.

## AUGUST

- 15 A water cloud burst & fell near Pine Creek Mill about 3 m. from Town. The water came rushing down the mountain tearing up the rocks, rushing through the mill. Not much damage.  
16 . . . A water cloud burst near Walker River . . . came rushing down the mountain, filled up the bed of the River & changed its course.  
24 Good Radical Union Speech from Thos Fitch in eve'g. Large meeting of ladies & gentlemen. Ther. 76° 2 P.M.

## NOVEMBER

- 20 I weighed 143# a gain of 5 pounds in last month.  
25 Bought a quart of pine nuts for 25 cts & sent to Sister by Jas. H. Smith.

## DECEMBER

- 20 Wind blowing a gale from S.W. Blew down the walls of two brick dwellings Hon. J. Preble's & Mr. Smith on the 18th several wooden buildings & roofs off. Snowing in afternoon

& evening until 12 at night. One of the most severe snow storms we have had for 3 years past . . .

- 22 Ther. 26° 8 A.M. Gov. Nye, Dr. Ives, & R. M. Howland came in Town. The Gov. addressed a large & respectable audience of ladies & gents in the eve'g. Walking as bad as possible about a foot of snow cut up by travel during the rain & froze hard.
- 28 Ther. 17° 8 A.M. Plenty of water in well. There has been but little in it since the 1st Nov. Have had to go up to the Gulch to a tunnel for water.
- 31 [The final entry in the Diary.] Ther. 26° 10 P.M. Jas. Downey stabbed & killed Martin Doran at Merchants Exchange Saloon about 2 o'clock morning of 26th.

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Henry Nash Smith, ed., *Mark Twain of the Enterprise* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1957), p. 88.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 103.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 93.

<sup>4</sup>Mary F. Youngs, a niece of Samuel, has furnished the writer with numerous details of the Youngs family and of Samuel in particular. *The Journal* was found lying open, face down in an abandoned stable in Carson City by the late Walter Wilkinson.



## CARLETON'S EMPTY FORT

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By GEORGE RUHLEN

Colonel, U. S. Army, Retired

A stone monument stands in the northern part of Las Vegas, Nevada, on the east side of U. S. Highway No. 91, where the road crosses Las Vegas Creek, marking the site of the Old Mormon fort. Partial restoration has been made of this historic landmark which commemorates the first white settlement in what is now southern Nevada; at that time it was part of New Mexico Territory. The settlement was abandoned in 1857 and 1858, the Mormon brethren being recalled to Salt Lake to add to the military strength of that city.<sup>1</sup> The fort was never garrisoned again, and yet it played a role—a spear-bearing part—in the Civil War. The story, even though revealing but a minute facet of the great struggle, might well have taken on major proportions had the plans of Southerners been accomplished. The story is complicated, but it tells the hitherto ignored role of the old fort.

In February, 1861, prior to the outbreak of the Civil War. Bvt. Major General David E. Twiggs, commanding the Department of Texas, surrendered all troops and military stations in that state to Confederate commissioners. After the outbreak of hostilities the forts in Arizona were abandoned and the troops concentrated at Forts Fillmore and Craig, on the Rio Grande, in New Mexico. Fort Fillmore and its garrison were captured in July, 1861, by Texas forces under command of Lieutenant Colonel John R. Baylor. An advanced post under command of Captain Sherwood Hunter, 2d Texas Mounted Rifles, was established at Tucson, where it could scout westward towards Fort Yuma, at the Southern Overland Mail route crossing of the Colorado River.

Brigadier General Edwin V. Sumner, U. S. Army, acting on secret orders from Lieutenant General Winfield Scott, commanding the army, arrived at San Francisco, California, April 25, 1861, and relieved Bvt. Brigadier General Albert Sidney Johnston from command of the Department of the Pacific.<sup>2</sup>

The first call for volunteer soldiers from California was made by Secretary of War Cameron, July 24, 1861, for one regiment of infantry and five companies of cavalry to guard the Overland Mail route from Carson Valley to Salt Lake and Fort Laramie. Under this call the first complete regiment of infantry of ten

companies was raised, which became the First California Volunteer Infantry, the five companies of cavalry were designated the First Battalion of the First California Volunteer Cavalry. Captain James H. Carleton, First U. S. Dragoons, was made colonel of the infantry regiment. Carleton had served with distinction during the Mexican War, having been breveted major for meritorious conduct at the Battle of Buena Vista. Afterwards he served in Arizona, New Mexico, and while stationed at Fort Tejon, California, had subdued the Mojave Indians and built redoubts on the desert at Camp Cady and Soda Springs. Also, he had marched over the San Bernardino-Salt Lake road and had more than a speaking acquaintance with the southwest.<sup>3</sup>

A second call for volunteers was made three weeks after the first one. California's quota was four regiments of infantry and one of cavalry.

It had been the intention to use the volunteer troops first called to serve to guard the overland mail route via Salt Lake. Afterwards, it was decided to use them, together with regular troops stationed on the Pacific Coast, for an invasion of western Texas, to regain the lost military stations in that state and to draw off Confederate forces in Arkansas and Missouri. This expedition, under command of General Sumner, consisting of cavalry, infantry, and artillery, regulars and volunteers, amounting to a strength of about 5,000 men, was to land at Mazatlan, Mexico, on the Gulf of California and march across country to its objective. Permission to use Mexican territory for this purpose had been obtained from the Mexican government.<sup>4</sup>

It did not take long for news of this military movement to become public property. Protests were circulated, instigated, and excited by newspapers with secessionist leanings, to the authorities in Washington, D. C., demanding that the troops be held on the Pacific slope where it was alleged they were needed much more to keep wild Indians and lawless elements of the population under control.<sup>5</sup>

Military activities and operations were reported by newspapers and correspondents to southern contacts. A considerable portion of the populations of California and Nevada were southerners or were partial to the South. This was especially so in southern California where the *Los Angeles Star* was one of the most vociferous journals supporting the Confederate cause—so much so, that finally it was forbidden use of the mails and expresses. It is said that the authorities in Richmond received word of doings in California as early as those in Washington.<sup>6</sup>

In September preparations for the Western Texas expedition were suspended. General Sumner and nearly all of the regular troops on the Pacific coast were ordered east. As far as practicable the stations vacated by the regulars were filled with volunteer troops. Colonel George Wright, 9th U. S. Infantry, shortly afterwards promoted to brigadier general, became commander of the Department of the Pacific, which office he filled with ability, efficiency, and distinction for three years.

General Wright recognized the threat presented by Confederate military forces in Texas and Arizona against Sonora, Mexico, and the ease with which the port of Guaymas, on the Gulf of California, could be seized. Capture of this place would give the Confederacy a seaport on the Pacific Ocean, destroy Federal commerce on the West Coast, and interrupt water transit in and out of Arizona and Fort Yuma. He submitted a proposal to the War Department on October 31, 1861, that a force consisting of one regiment of infantry, one regiment of cavalry, and a battery of artillery, be landed at Guaymas and occupy Sonora. The governor of Sonora was reported to be agreeable to this move. From Sonora the occupation of Arizona would easily be accomplished.<sup>7</sup>

On December 7th, General Wright notified the War Department that he had made satisfactory plans for the protection of the Overland Mail route and proposed a modification of his plan, previously submitted. Instead of Guaymas, Fort Yuma, on the Colorado River, would be used as the base of operations of the expedition to move across southern Arizona—along the route of the Butterfield Overland Mail—to recapture the forts in Arizona and New Mexico. All of the troops required, 1,500 in number, were then in southern California under command of Colonel Carleton.<sup>8</sup>

Confederate spies were active. Word of Wright's plan may have leaked out. On December 16th, Brigadier General H. H. Sibley, commanding the Confederate Army of New Mexico, from his headquarters at Fort Bliss, Texas, addressed a letter to the governor of Sonora protesting the approval of the Mexican authorities granting permission for the movement of Union troops across Mexican territory and suggested that he be given equal rights and be allowed to establish a depot at Guaymas.<sup>9</sup>

On December 17, 1861, Wright received telegraphic approval of his modified plan. Immediately, steps were taken to put it into execution. Supplies were ordered shipped to Fort Yuma; arrangements made to transfer troops to southern California to replace



those designated for the expedition; orders to Carleton to submit, without delay, requisitions for his command.<sup>10</sup>

With all these activities suddenly set in motion and the number of persons involved, there could be little doubt that some vital information of confidential nature would be disclosed. Prudent counter measures were essential. Current events played into Carleton's hands.

Meanwhile, the newspapers of the northern and southern parts of California were conducting a contumelious editorial campaign concerning the overland mail routes. The approach of winter hampered service over the Central route across the Sierra Nevada and Nevada to Salt Lake, but the northern press stoutly maintained that the route was practicable for year-round service.

The Los Angeles *Star*, champion of the southern route, on the other hand, declared: "The Daily Overland Mail is a failure—a gigantic humbug and swindle—yet the papers up there will not say anything on the subject. While the southern route was a complete success, that same miserable sectional jealousy that has brought ruin upon our country, would not let it live, because it happened to pass south of Mason and Dixon's line . . . If the Mail Company cannot perform the service let the steamers bring us our mail."

The *Star*, in its issue of December 21, 1861, recommended the route by Mojave and Santa Fé, or at least a diversion south from Salt Lake City, via Las Vegas, during the winter months.<sup>11</sup>

This editorial appears to have presented a fortuitous opportunity to Carleton in helping him conceal the real objective of his mission, conducting an expedition to New Mexico across southern Arizona. On Monday, December 23, 1861, he issued the following bulletin:

HDQRS. FIRST CALIFORNIA VOLUNTEER INFANTRY,

*Camp Latham, near Los Angeles, Cal., December 23, 1861.*

All persons who have been arrested or who may be arrested in this State as secessionists or traitors to the country will be kept in confinement at Fort Yuma until final action is had on each case. The garrison of that fort will be at once increased to nine companies—one of artillery, six of infantry, and two of cavalry. Its defenses will be strengthened and some heavy guns mounted, and it will be well supplied with ammunition, provisions, and forage. It is reported that the Navajo Indians obstruct the route from Albuquerque to Los Angeles, now important as the only one

on which the daily mail from the States can be carried, that of the north being blocked up with snow, that of the south being in possession of the rebels at its eastern end and on the Rio Grande. These Indians are therefore to be brought to terms. An expedition, consisting of seven companies, will move up the Colorado on Colonel Hoffman's trail. Three of these companies (infantry) will reoccupy Fort Navajo (*sic*) and re-establish the ferry. The other four—three of cavalry and one of infantry—will proceed on to Las Vegas, near the Potosi mines, on the Salt Lake road, and establish a post at the old Mormon fort. This is preliminary to the movement, already ordered, of troops next summer to Fort Crittenden, near Salt Lake. The new post at Las Vegas will be known as Fort Baker.

JAMES H. CARLETON,

*Colonel First California Volunteers, Commanding.*<sup>12</sup>

The release of this bulletin conveyed the impression that the military authorities intended to act along the lines suggested by the *Star's* editorial. Troop movements and large shipments of supplies to Fort Yuma should cause no unusual comment as they would be in accordance with the announced intentions of opening the Albuquerque-Mojave mail route and establishing a depot at Las Vegas for the future movements of military forces during the following summer along the San Bernardino-Salt Lake road. Ammunition for editorials was being doled out to the press as camouflage for the real design in store.

The enumeration of companies accounts for Carleton's entire command: one battery of artillery, three companies of infantry, and two of cavalry, at Fort Yuma; three companies of infantry at Fort Mojave; one company of infantry and three of cavalry at Fort Baker; in all, one battery of artillery, one regiment of infantry, and five companies of cavalry. Any movements of these organizations would be in accordance with the plans expressed in the bulletin.

Carleton also requested that shipment made to Fort Yuma be marked: "one half for 'Mojave Expedition' and the other half 'Fort Baker, Las Vegas, Salt Lake road'." These shipments weighed over 750 tons and, with the addition of the necessary ammunition, would require a train of 150 wagons for transport.<sup>13</sup>

To further becloud the issue and confuse the enemy, orders were issued to Captain T. L. Roberts, commanding Company E, First California Infantry, stationed at San Diego, California, as



follows: "Have your company got in perfect readiness for important field service connected with the re-establishment of Fort Mojave and of Fort Baker at Las Vegas, on the Salt Lake road . . ." Company E never did arrive either at Fort Mojave or Fort Baker, but became part of the Column from California, marching to New Mexico where it served until mustered out at Los Pinos, N. M., August 31, 1864.<sup>14</sup>

The military authorities had no intention at this time of garrisoning Forts Mojave and Baker. Carleton's mission and objective had been determined, confirmed, and established. All efforts were concentrated on organizing, equipping, supplying, outfitting, and training the soldiers who would march across the deserts to the Rio Grande and take back the territory and forts that had been captured by the Confederates.<sup>15</sup>

It would appear that the term "Mojave Expedition" was a code designation used to indicate the Column from California. During the following months Carleton, in his correspondence with Major Edwin A. Rigg, commanding at Fort Yuma, frequently referred to the "Mojave Expedition." Sometimes the route it was to take was covertly indicated, again it would not be mentioned. Rigg, who was wholly in Carleton's confidence, was directed to make inquiries about and send reconnaissance parties up both the Colorado and Gila Rivers, but it was only along the Gila River that forage was to be distributed. It was the way taken by those sent out to spy the land towards and around Tucson.<sup>16</sup>

In February, 1862, a censorship was declared and writing to the press about military matters and movements of persons in the volunteer service in the District of southern California was prohibited.<sup>17</sup> Shortly afterwards advance detachments of the Column from California began moving from Fort Yuma up the Gila River, to be followed later by the main body. Soon all of Carleton's original command was east of the Colorado River. Forts Baker and Mojave were still awaiting their garrisons.

In 1864, after Fort Mojave had been reoccupied by troops, Indians began to interfere with travel along the San Bernardino-Fort Mojave road. To keep the Indians under control soldiers were posted at Camp Cady, on the Mojave River, and at Rock Springs, where detachments remained for several years.<sup>18</sup>

During the summer of 1864 an exploring expedition under command of Captain George F. Price, Second California Cavalry, was sent out from Camp Douglas, Utah, to determine whether a route could be found from the Colorado River to Salt Lake City, for



transporting supplies to the latter place, which was better than the one being used from Carson City.

The column moved south along the San Bernardino road, exploring the country as it advanced. The animals began to fail rapidly. At Muddy River a sergeant and fifteen men were left with thirty days' rations, two wagons and forty broken down animals.

Captain Price left Muddy River on the evening of June 7, 1864, with the rest of his company carrying reduced equipment and short rations. They crossed the sixty miles of desert without much trouble and at Las Vegas found plenty of water and grass. No mention is made in his report of seeing or meeting anyone, nor is there any reference to Fort Baker. It is probable that Price never had seen nor heard of Carleton's bulletin giving the Mormon fort a name. Had there been soldiers at Las Vegas, Price would have dispatched assistance to the detachment left at Muddy River, also, he would have obtained rations and remounts for his company. He moved out the day after arrival; an exhausting march in summer heat brought him to El Dorado Canyon, on the Colorado River. From there the way led across the desert to Lewis Springs, where more men and animals were left; to Rock Springs, Piute Springs, and on to Fort Mojave, arriving there June 16th, completely worn out and exhausted, half of the men barefooted. Orders were sent to the detachment at Muddy River to return to Fort Douglas.<sup>19</sup>

Fort Baker waited through four years of the Civil War for a garrison which never came. However, it performed a service by diverting attention during a critical period while the Column from California was being assembled for duty in another part of the southwest. It stands today as a fort never occupied by troops, named by the officer who first erected a monument to the victims of the Mountain Meadow massacre.<sup>20</sup>

No record can be found of any strength return or report that indicate Federal troops established a garrison at Fort Baker, Las Vegas, Nevada, or were ever stationed there during the period of the Civil War. It was a fort in name only.<sup>21</sup>

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>JENSEN, ANDREW. "History of Las Vegas Mission," *Nevada State Historical Society Papers*, vol. V, 1925-26.

<sup>2</sup>*War of the Rebellion: Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*. (Washington, 1880-1901). Series I, volume L, part I, pp. 455, 456, 469.

<sup>3</sup>HEITMAN, FRANCIS B. *Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army, 1789-1903*. (Washington, 1903), volume I, p. 282.

HUNT, AURORA. *The Army of the Pacific*. (Glendale, 1951), pp. 105-7.

<sup>4</sup>*War, Reb. Ser. I*, vol. L, pt. I, pp. 572, 626-7.

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 589-91.

RICE, WILLIAM B. *The Los Angeles Star, 1851-1864*. (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1947), p. 227.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 233.

<sup>7</sup>*War Reb. Ser. I*, vol. L, pt. I, pp. 690-1.

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 751, 752-3.

<sup>9</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 766-8.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 771, 772.

<sup>11</sup>HAFEN, LE ROY R. *The Overland Mail*. (Cleveland, 1926), pp. 224-5.

RICE, *op. cit.*, p. 109.

<sup>12</sup>*War. Reb. Ser. I*, vol. L, pt. I, p. 782. This reference has been quoted by a number of writers as authoritative source for the statement that Fort Baker, Las Vegas, Nevada, was garrisoned and occupied by U. S. troops during the Civil War.

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 773-80.

<sup>14</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 772-3.

ORTON, RICHARD H. *Records of California Men in the War of the Rebellion*. (Sacramento, 1890), pp. 331-2.

<sup>15</sup>*War. Reb. Ser. I*, vol. L, pt. I, pp. 792, 873-4, 922-3.

<sup>16</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 781, 809, 849, 869, 884, 911, 917.

<sup>17</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 851, 858-9.

<sup>18</sup>*Ibid.*, pt. II, pp. 920, 1150, 1153, 1163, 1197, 1274, 1292.

<sup>19</sup>*Ibid.*, pt. I, pp. 355-60.

<sup>20</sup>HUNT, *op. cit.*, p. 107.

<sup>21</sup>National Archives, letter to author, August 2, 1957. August 31, 1957.

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## CONTRIBUTORS

ETHEL ZIMMER, a native of Reno, Nevada, brings us *Youngs' Journal* which she has in the original as part of her library. The task of deciphering Youngs' penmanship was an hours and hours-long task; we have seen the original manuscript and marvel at Mrs. Zimmer's splendid job, for when you hold her manuscript against the original, the latter becomes immediately intelligible.

COLONEL GEORGE RUHLEN, a resident of San Diego and there active in an historical society, promised us the *Empty Fort* article before Vol. 1, No. 1 went to press. He shortly fulfilled his promise, and at last we are able to bring his detailed account to our readers. He has furnished the Society with highly documented materials on the forts of the old West.

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