

Desert Tracks

Publication of the Southern Trails Chapter
of the Oregon-California Trails Association

June 2012



The Confederate Retreat from New Mexico

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the Oregon-California Trails Association*

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Death on Cooke's Canyon Trail.
photo by John and Thelma Fromm

**Front Cover: Members of the Southwest Civil War Association reenact the 1862
Confederate retreat from New Mexico by hauling a 300-pound replica cannon through
La Jencia Gulch.**
photo by Paul Harden

From the Editors

This year marks the 150th anniversary of key battles of the Civil War in the Southwest. Paul Harden of Socorro, New Mexico, has spent many years finding sites on the “Texas Trail” – the route through the mountains west of Socorro followed by the Confederates as they retreated back to Texas after the loss of their supply wagons at Glorieta. Harden, who is an expert on pioneer trails in the area around Socorro and a member of the board of directors of El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro Trail Association, has contributed an article to this issue on the historic retreat of 1862. He also helped a group of Civil War reenactors to design and execute a recent trek along a portion of the Texas Trail, and he reports here on the commemorative event.

At the same time that the Texans retreated from New Mexico, the California Column entered Arizona and an advance party skirmished with the Confederates at Picacho Pass, north of Tucson. The Trail Turtles began their spring mapping trip in this area, which was also the site of the Southern Emigrant and Butterfield Trails. As they report below, they continued by mapping west of Gila Bend. While development has removed all traces of the trail in certain sections of these two areas, the Turtles were able to find considerable evidence for the trail and a number of artifacts.

Together with Jack Beale Smith, David Miller continues exploring trail sites in Oklahoma, the Texas Panhandle, and eastern New Mexico. Having presented an earlier article on their work in the November 2009 issue of this publication, we offer their current findings as Part II of what we hope to be a continuing article on the Fort Smith-Santa Fe Trail. The report includes the story of Rock Mary, a geological feature in Oklahoma named after a young woman who traveled the trail in 1849 with Marcy and the goldseekers and who excited the interest of several young soldiers. The article also discusses other landmarks along the trail in Oklahoma, as well as a fascinating petroglyph site in the Texas Panhandle.

We recently watched the Coen brothers’ film *True Grit* and decided to review it, comparing it to the delightful novel by Charles Portis and to the 1969 film version that starred John Wayne. We also review Brian DeLay’s *War of a Thousand Deserts*, an important award winning book on the highly destructive Comanche raiding into northern Mexico that preceded the Mexican/American War. Our friend Walter Drew Hill of Sacramento reviews Genaro Padilla’s *The Daring Flight of My Pen*, a literary critique of Villagr a’s epic poem on the O ate expedition.

“News from the Trail,” provides brief accounts of the recent Southern Trails Chapter’s symposium in Las Cruces, New Mexico, and the OCTA symposium in Austin, Texas. We include news about the effort to establish National Historic Trails status for the southern trails network and an announcement of a new book on the Carrizo Stage station, available from the California State Parks.

Deborah and Jon Lawrence

Back Issues of Desert Tracks Available

A limited number of back issues of *Desert Tracks* from 2003 through the present are available for purchase. The cost is \$3 each for any of the eight white paper issues from January 2003 to June 2007; \$4 each for any of the three tan paper issues from December 2007 to January 2009; and \$5 each for any of the six color-covered issues from May 2009 through December 2011. The money will be used towards printing and mailing costs of future issues of this publication. To obtain copies, contact us by regular mail or e-mail at one of the addresses on the inside cover.

News from the Trail

Southern Trails Chapter's 2012 Winter Symposium

This year's chapter symposium was held in Las Cruces, New Mexico, from Thursday, February 23, through Saturday, February 25. A reception was held Thursday evening in the J. Paul Taylor Home on the Mesilla plaza, with a self-guided tour (assisted by members of local historical groups) through the historic adobe. On Friday morning, Rose Ann Tompkins spoke on the Southern Trails Complex and David Miller presented a paper by Tom Jonas concerning the location of key events of Kearny's march to California. Jonas' paper, "Last Day with the Wagons: Stephen Watts Kearny on the Rio Grande," has been published in the Spring 2012 issue of OCTA's *Overland Journal*. On Friday afternoon, Miller gave a Power Point presentation about the trail that certain forty-niners followed through northern Mexico and Tracy DeVault presented a paper by historian Don Couchman on emigrant travel over the southern trails. We plan to include the paper in an upcoming issue of this publication. Talks were also given by Ben Brown on El Camino Real and by Aaron Mahr on the NPS perspective on the National Historic Trails. On Saturday, DeVault and Tompkins led a field trip to the Cooke's Canyon area. (See inside back cover.) Those in attendance learned of the rugged backcountry travel that is routine during the Trail Turtles' mapping trips.

Joint OCTA/El Camino Real de los Tejas Spring Symposium

The symposium was held in Austin, Texas, on Friday, April 27, and Saturday, April 28. Several talks focused on sites and routes of El Camino Real de los Tejas during the Spanish era. Two presentations focused on the southern trails complex: Claude Hudspeth gave a presentation on his work locating the Chihuahua and the San Antonio-El Paso roads in west Texas, and Albert Eddins spoke on the effort that he is spearheading to gain National Historic Trail (NHT) recognition for the southern trails complex, as outlined below.

Southern Trails Study Proposal

OCTA's Southern National Historic Trail Project, headed by Albert Eddins, has issued a proposal to obtain congressional authorization for a Feasibility Study to determine whether the network of southern emigrant trails meet the criteria for designation as a National Historic Trail (NHT). The proposal points to the economic benefits, in the form of increased tourism, that would be brought about by recognition of the southern trails as an NHT. The trails include the Southern Trail, the Apache Pass Cutoff, the Fort Smith-Santa Fe route, feeder trails in Texas, and the road from Salt Lake City to Southern California. Eight of these trails were listed as "additional routes" recommended for further study in the Comprehensive Management Plan for the California Trail issued by the National Parks Service (NPS) in 1999. However, these southern trails were omitted from the 2009 Omnibus Land Bill which authorized the NPS to perform feasibility studies of most of the trails recommended in 1999 for further study.

Report on the Carrizo Creek Stage Station Now Available

The Carrizo Creek Stage Station is the topic of a recent report, *An Isolated Frontier Post: Historical and Archaeological Investigations of the Carrizo Creek Station*, by Stephen R. Van Wormer, Sue Wade, Susan D. Walter, and Susan Arter. The report, which was recently published by the California State Parks as Volume 29 in the series *Publications in Cultural Heritage*, includes a chapter on the historical background of the station from the Spanish/Mexican era, through the Gold Rush, the Overland Mail, the Civil War, and into the 20th century. Other chapters discuss the methodology and results of the archaeological investigation of the site. We will review the book in an upcoming issue of *Desert Tracks*. Those wishing to obtain a copy can do so by sending \$15.00 to the following address: California Parks and Recreation, P.O. Box 942896, Sacramento, CA 94296. For further information, contact Sue Wade at swade@parks.ca.gov.

Reviews

War of a Thousand Deserts: Indian Raids and the U.S.-Mexican War

Brian DeLay

New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008.

ISBN-10: 0300119321.

496 pages, illustrations, maps, tables.

Paperback, \$25.00.

Brian DeLay's *War of a Thousand Deserts* is a history of the Indian raids into Mexico that preceded the U.S.-Mexican War. The focus is on the Apaches and Kiowas, but especially the Comanches. DeLay discusses the cultural and economic geography of these indigenous people and examines their pervasive raiding and violence. Comanche attacks were so destructive that they may be described as a war. DeLay argues that during the 1830s and 40s this war created a man-made wasteland across parts of ten Mexican states.

DeLay begins his study with a discussion of Article 11 of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848), in which the United States promised to curtail Indian raids into Mexico and to rescue Mexican citizens who had been captured by Indians and brought into the United States. Mexico's minister to the United States called Article 11 "the only advantage" of the treaty, which otherwise gave a devastating blow to Mexico (xiii). According to DeLay, the article is a prism through which the reader can appreciate the significance of Indian raids both before and during the United States' war with Mexico.

DeLay compares Mexican and Comanche cultures and discusses their economic and political connections prior to the 1830s when Indians and northern Mexicans had a workable trade relationship. As Mexico's economy and political stability weakened, so did the fragile connections of peaceful relations with the Indians. Comanches and their allies began attacking Mexican ranches and towns from Chihuahua to San Luis Potosi. DeLay refers to these raids as "the War of a Thousand Deserts" because a region of once-thriving Mexican settlements became

an empty and desolate wasteland. The Mexican response to these raids was ineffective for several reasons. One was the ongoing conflict between the states, which favored federalism, and Mexico City, which favored nationalism. Another was the disagreement whether to treat the Indians by all-out war or by negotiation and trade. According to DeLay, by the time the Indian violence became a concern to the central government in Mexico City, the northern region was so depopulated that it was unable to withstand the Americans in 1846.

Politicians in the United States argued that the emptiness and desolation of the northern Mexico provinces were evidence that Mexicans were unable to control the increasing violence. The trouble with the Indians became the U.S. government's justification for annexing sections of northern Mexico and waging war. Americans were confident that they would be better able to control the Indians than the Mexican government. Thus, DeLay argues, the War of a Thousand Deserts indirectly led to the U.S.-Mexican War in 1846 and 47 and Mexico's loss of much of its northern territory.

DeLay's extensive research – his sources include personal letters, captivity narratives, and archival documents – is impressive. In a 28-page appendix, he records a table of Indian raids into Mexico, with dates, locations, human and animal casualties, captives, and number of assailants, breaking down these numbers into charts and pie graphs.

War of a Thousand Deserts lays bare the violence of the borderlands. Americans, Mexicans, and Indians were perpetrators of bloody interethnic conflict: torture, rape, scalping, and mutilation. Significantly, DeLay does not depict the Indians as victims, helplessly pushed off their land. Instead, he provides the reader with an appreciation of the ways in which Indians actively directed their fate, destabilizing the borderlands and influencing relations between the United States and Mexico in the process. DeLay asserts that that Comanches and Kiowas went to Mexico not only to steal but to kill. In addition to robbing northern Mexicans to better themselves economically, Indians raided for vengeance. And vengeance, according

to DeLay helps explain why the raids were so destructive (135).

The book is designed for an academic audience and can be an exhausting read; the reader can easily become bogged down in detail and forget the thread of DeLay's argument. But given the complexity of the topic and its enormous scope, DeLay has succeeded in providing an excellent transnational study that connects the history of the Comanches and the early Mexican republic with that of U.S. expansion.

In the last ten years, there has been considerable scholarship on the American Southwest. Works by authors like James Brooks, Pekka Hämäläinen, and Juliana Barr have contributed immensely to our understanding of the history of the region. Brian DeLay's *War of a Thousand Deserts* must be added to this list. Well researched and imaginatively written, DeLay's prize-winning study deepens our understanding of Comanches and their Plains Indian allies during the first half of the nineteenth century. It should be required reading for anyone interested in southwestern borderlands history.

Deborah and Jon Lawrence

The Daring Flight of My Pen: Cultural Politics and Gaspar Perez de Villagrà's Historia de La Nueva Mexico, 1610

Genaro Padilla

Albuquerque: University of New Mexico, 2010.

ISBN: 9780826349705.

153 pages. Hardback, \$29.95.

Published in 1610, Gaspar Pérez de Villagrà's epic poem *Historia de la Nueva México* relates the tale of Juan de Oñate's exploration and settlement in the northern regions of New Spain from 1595 to the Battle of Acoma in 1599. A member of the expedition, Villagrà incorporated oral accounts, dramas, and legal documents to dramatize the story he wrote in retrospect nearly ten years after he returned to Spain. Ever the loyal soldier, Villagrà viewed the colonial venture as doomed from its onset.

According to Genaro Padilla, Villagrà's 32-canto epic has for too long been read as a history. In *The Daring Flight of My Pen*, Padilla posits that the poem, written in hendecasyllabic form, subordinates history to the play of language – i.e. to metaphor, poetic diction, and formal meter, as well as to frequent allusions to myth and fable stories of earlier Spanish exploration. In so doing, Villagrà is able to critique the colonization process of the empire that he seems to be endorsing.

A professor of English at UC Berkeley, Padilla brings his knowledge of the Greek and Roman classics (especially Homer's *Odyssey*, Livy's *Annals*, and Virgil's *Aeneid*), as well as his familiarity with early Latin American literary epics (i.e. Saavedra Guzmán's *El peregrino indiano*, 1599; Lasso de La Vega's *Mexicana de Gabriel*, 1594; and Alonso de Ercilla's *La Araucana*, 1569), to his analysis of the work. Padilla claims that by incorporating references to classical works, Villagrà filters historical consciousness through the poetic imagination, creating an expansive reading of the poem's dialectics. To Padilla's mind, this process allows Villagrà to chronicle the events, like the massacre at Acoma, in such a way that he can detail the injustices committed against the Indians by the Spanish conquistadores and still escape the eyes of the court censors.

Villagrà opens his poem with the Aztec origin myth, a story that he equates with the founding of Rome. He details the early Aztecs' settlement of what would become one of the greatest indigenous civilizations in the Americas. By comparison, he reveals that from the beginning, the Oñate expedition was one of confusion and failure, concluding in the Acoma massacre. Villagrà characterizes Oñate as vainglorious, self-indulgent, and confused, wanting to garrote his mutinous soldiers shortly after their arrival at Ohkay Owingeh. One example of Villagrà's disdain of Oñate is evidenced by Villagrà's inclusion in the *Historia* of the complete text of Oñate's "Act of Possession," a document that acts as a dramatic soliloquy in which Oñate claims the territory for the King, the Church,

and himself. In the epilogue, Padilla includes the document of Oñate's order of February 1599, in which he details the punishment of the Acoma people who survived the battle. In 1607, Oñate resigned as governor and returned to Mexico to face allegations of misconduct. Ending as it does with Oñate's cruel sentence, *The Daring Flight of My Pen*, like *Historia de la Nueva México*, exposes Spanish viciousness and greed, albeit 400 years later. Similar to Villagrà, Padilla romanticizes neither Oñate's heroism nor Spanish New Mexico.

Padilla fashions his three-chapter book after the tripartite structure of the *Historia*. Through his scholarly study, Padilla intersperses stories of his own years as a boy growing up in Albuquerque's South Valley. He compares Oñate's colonizers to today's working class people who, duped by dreams of wealth, gamble what little they have at the Ohkay Casino Resort and Hotel. He describes the annual Española Fiesta, which celebrates the first Spanish colonial settlement at Ohkay Owingeh in what is today the United States, and he asks why we continue to glorify an outpost that by 1600 was in shambles, ravaged by anger, fear, and alienation. Padilla offers a way of reading Villagrà's poem that reveals a deliberate juxtaposition of competing discourse, narrative strands that include contemporary New Mexican voices. His skillful incorporation of the work of Acoma poet Simon Ortiz, for example, reinforces for the reader the ways in which the devastation of the Indians by the Spanish conquistadors continues to have a profound effect on Puebloans today. This dialogue makes *The Daring Flight of My Pen* more accessible to beginning students of the Spanish colonial period of the American Southwest.

Padilla has written a book that is essential to our understanding of Villagrà's *Historia de la Nueva México*. One hopes it will bring the epic poem to a wider audience.

Walter Drew Hill

True Grit: The Novel and the Films

While *True Grit* is best known to many as the 1969 movie starring John Wayne, the novel by Charles Portis (Simon & Schuster, 1968) is widely considered to be one of the best modern Westerns – well written, imaginative, and ironic. In 2010, a new edition was published by Overlook Press (New York) and a new film version directed by the Coen brothers was released. This review treats the novel and the film versions together.

The narrator of the novel is Mattie Ross, a cranky spinster of practical intelligence and independent thinking. From her perspective as an older woman, Mattie recounts her attempts as a 14-year-old in the late 1800s to avenge her father's murder. A man calling himself Tom Chaney, hired to work on the Ross family's ranch in Yell County, Arkansas, has robbed and killed her father, joined Lucky Ned Pepper's outlaw gang, and ridden out into Indian Territory. Leaving her mother at home with her younger siblings, Mattie hires the one-eyed Reuben J. "Rooster" Cogburn to find Chaney. Cogburn is a marshal reporting to Judge Parker's court in Fort Smith and although he is an aging, overweight heavy drinker, Mattie believes that he has the "grit" required to help her bring Chaney to justice. As they prepare for the trip, a vain and handsome Texas Ranger named LaBoeuf (pronounced "La Beef") arrives. Chaney had killed a senator and his bird dog in Texas and LaBoeuf has been tracking him for months to get the reward. Cogburn and LaBoeuf join forces, and although they decide to leave Mattie behind, she insists in following them in order to guard her investment. When they realize her determination, she is allowed to join them. The three ride into Indian Territory to confront Lucky Ned Pepper's gang. During their journey, Cogburn, LaBoeuf, and Mattie develop an appreciation for one another.

Mattie is identified by her ties to civilization, her father's right to justice, and the Presbyterian Church, but most of all by her language. Her speech is formal, Bible-quoting, and platitudinous, in contrast to Cogburn's shoot-first-ask-questions-later style.

Rooster Cogburn: What do you want, girl? Speak up. It is suppertime.

Mattie Ross: I am looking for the man who shot and killed my father, Frank Ross, in front of the Monarch boardinghouse . . .

Rooster Cogburn: What's your name, girl?

Mattie Ross: My name is Mattie Ross. We are located in Yell County. My mother is at home looking after my sister Victoria and my brother Little Frank.

Rooster Cogburn: You had best go home to them. They will need help with the churnin'.

Mattie turns down Cogburn's offer of a shot of whiskey: "I would not put a thief in my mouth to steal my brains." Later, she says with disgust: "But I had not the strength to bandy words with a drunkard. What have you done when you have bested a fool?"

Bluntly and factually, Mattie describes hangings, stabbings, and murder. She is resolute in her determination to control both her legal and her financial rights. When she learns that Cogburn and LaBoeuf have agreed to split the Texas reward for Chaney, she accuses Cogburn of fraud and threatens to have him arrested for breaking their agreement, which specified that she accompany him on the manhunt. "Why do you think I am paying you," Mattie asks Rooster, "if not to have my way?" Mattie even carries her father's gun, albeit in a sugar sack. After the gun misfires, she admits that she doesn't "care a thing in the world about guns. If I did, I would have one that worked."

Although the novel is rich with deadpan humor, the violence is graphic. The plot turns on the external conflicts in which men prove their courage and risk death at every turn. Science, technology, and Christian dogma won't help them here. This is a do-or-die environment where the hero proves his moral superiority with his gun and his "true grit." The book is mythic, but it does not romanticize the West, having a realistic but humorous view of human nature. Unlike most Westerns, the protagonist is a strong young woman. Despite the fact that Mattie Ross is self-righteous and without humor, she is a likeable and admirable character. Aggressive, tough, and vengeful, she exhibits the "true grit" that she seeks in Cogburn.

In 1969 *True Grit* was adapted for the screen. John Wayne won the Academy Award for Best Actor for his role as Rooster Cogburn. For a western movie of that era, the film is surprisingly faithful to the book, both in sequence and in dialogue, but it differs from the novel in several regards. Kim Darby, who plays Mattie Ross, is too old and too sweet for the role, Glen Campbell turns the Texas Ranger into a goofball, and, as Cogburn, John Wayne is too good-natured for a man who rode with Quantrill. The costumes are too colorful, the scenery is too gorgeous, and the ending is Hollywood at its most syrupy. Unlike the novel, there is no retrospective narrator; indeed, the film focuses on Cogburn, whereas Mattie's character in the novel is what resonates in the reader's memory.

In 2010 *True Grit* was again adapted to film. The remake was written and directed by Joel and Ethan Coen and stars Hailee Steinfeld as Mattie Ross, Jeff Bridges as Rooster Cogburn, and Matt Damon as the Texas Ranger. The Coens stay very close to the dialogue in the novel, although the speech is if anything more formal than in the novel. Where the 1969 film romanticizes the novel, the Coens tend to do the opposite, as appropriate for the directors of *No Country for Old Men*. The acting in the new version is superior; Steinfeld is outstanding as Mattie Ross, Bridges captures the spirit of Portis' alcoholic Cogburn much better than Wayne, and Damon gives a better rendering of LaBoeuf's defensiveness. The Coens present a violent Arkansas-Oklahoma frontier. Whereas the 1969 film's beautiful landscape scenes were set in the San Juan Mountains of Colorado, the 2010 film was filmed in Texas and the landscape is often threatening and harsh. The danger is palpable. And most importantly the protagonist of this film, like in the novel, is Mattie Ross. This is her story: she sets it in motion and she narrates it.

Readers of disparate age groups and literary tastes are certain to take delight in Portis' novel *True Grit*. It is simultaneously a thoroughly satisfying Western and a parody of one. Both film versions interpret the novel differently, and both are well worth watching.

Deborah and Jon Lawrence

The Confederate Retreat from New Mexico

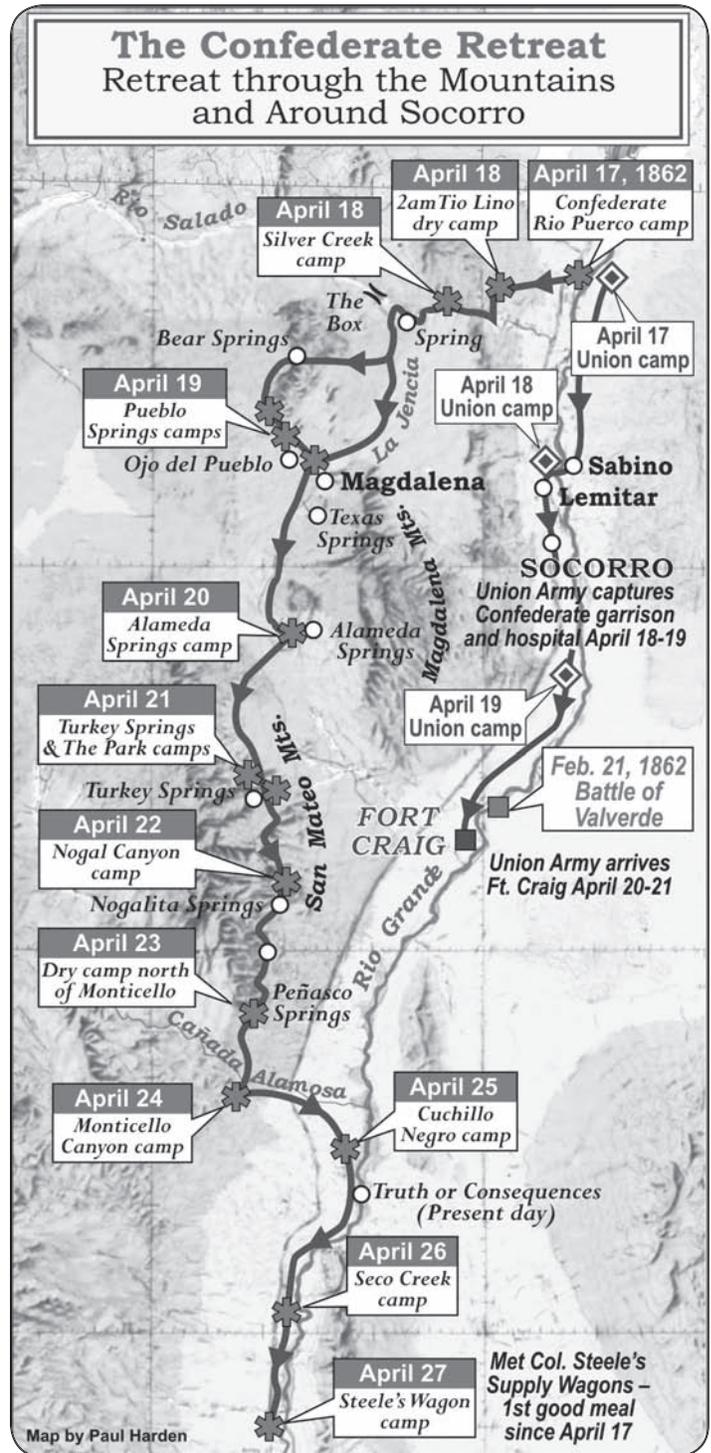
by Paul Harden

Background: The Civil War in New Mexico

This year marks the 150th anniversary of the Civil War in New Mexico. From February to April 1862, Confederate Brigadier General Henry Hopkins Sibley invaded the northern New Mexico Territory in an attempt to gain control of the far western territories, including the lucrative gold fields of Colorado and the ports of California.

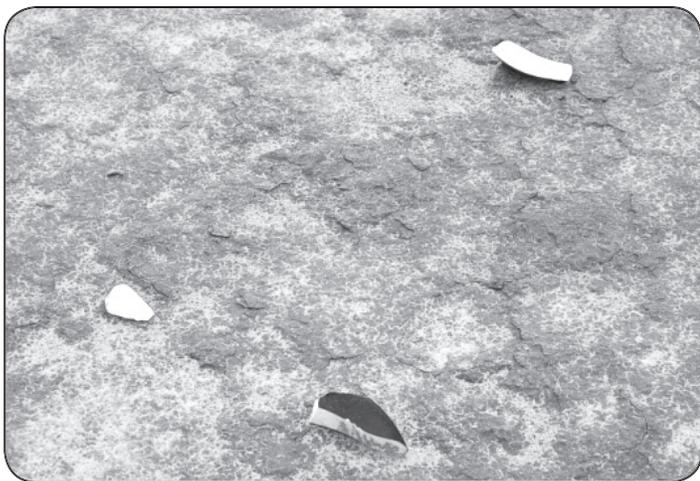
In early February 1862, General Sibley and approximately 2,500 Confederate troops moved north along the Rio Grande from Fort Bliss in Texas. Learning of the campaign, Union forces gathered at Fort Craig under Colonel E. R. S. Canby. On February 20 and 21, Sibley met Union resistance at Valverde, and although the Confederates won the battle, they failed to capture Fort Craig. Hoping to confiscate supplies during the march north to feed his army, Sibley's troops captured Socorro, Albuquerque, and Santa Fe, only to find most federal supplies had either been removed or destroyed. On March 28, the Union and Confederate forces met at the Battle of Glorieta Pass. The Confederates were able to push the Union force through the pass, but during the battle, Colorado Volunteers destroyed the Texans' wagon train, which contained nearly all of their supplies and ammunition.

The loss of the supply wagons and most of the horses at Glorieta decimated the Confederate Army of New Mexico and brought their campaign to an abrupt end. Without food, Sibley's troops had no choice except to begin a long and arduous 800-mile retreat back to Texas, with most of the men on foot. Discovering the weakness of the Confederates, Canby ordered the main Union forces to rendezvous near Albuquerque. Sibley's troops, outnumbered and with limited supplies and ammunition, left Albuquerque for Texas on April 12.



The Retreat Begins

One of the Confederate soldiers was 22-year-old Alfred Peticolas, a private in the 4th Regiment of Texas Volunteers, Company C, who kept a daily diary of the campaign (*Rebels on the Rio Grande*). This diary serves as an irreplaceable eye-witness



Broken dishes, earthenware, and even whiskey bottles can still be found at the site of the Texans' Rio Puerco camp – if you know where to look. *photo by Paul Harden*

account of the New Mexico campaign and the Texan retreat from a Confederate soldier's point of view.

By April 15, the brigade had reached Los Lunas. Peticolas described their departure from Los Lunas on April 16: "The dust and sand has been extremely distressing all day as it blows over us in clouds and almost blinds us as we struggle along through the heavy sand" (107). The soldiers traveled through the New Mexico dust storm to camp near the village of Jarales, south of Belen. The wind and dust blew all night long. The next morning, April 17, Peticolas recorded their shock: "We discovered that confounded cavalry of the enemy right opposite to us on the other side of the river this morning, and later we found that the whole force of the enemy had gained on us during the night." (107). With no visibility in the dust storm, the two armies had camped next to each other!

Understanding the predicament, Peticolas penned the following:

The novel spectacle was here exposed of two hostile armies marching side by side down on opposite sides of the same river and in full view of each other . . . I judged them to be between 2000 and 2500 men and a splendid train of about 100 wagons. . . . We know that [Col. Christopher] Carson has 600 mexicans [sic] at Craig. We are about 1500 or 1800 strong, and think we can get through to our supplies in the lower country. (107)

By "supplies," Peticolas is referring to the last of the command's provisions – Col. William Steele's remaining supply wagons at Mesilla. If they could travel the 200 miles to Mesilla, the men would have a bedroll to sleep in and would enjoy full rations once again.

The soldiers marched 15 miles that day and camped in a flat meadow between the Rio Grande and a small stream – today called the Rio Puerco – which had flowing water. Their campsite was located just east of where today's I-25 crosses the Rio Puerco, with a commanding view of Ladron Peak to the west.

Canby's forces continued to follow the Confederates, and camped in full view of the Texans' Rio Puerco camp, but on the east bank of the Rio Grande near the village of Contreras. Furthermore, Sibley's spies discovered an additional 2,000 soldiers – the Colorado Volunteers – camped several miles up the river. Peticolas expressed his fears, and likely that of many of the Texans, when he wrote:

And now our position begins to be quite critical, and the object of the enemy begins to be apparent. They intend to surround us and hem us in our every side and compel us to surrender, and we are in a fix: 6000 in the rear, 2000 on our flank, and 600 in a strong fort in front, and but one way to get out . . ." (108)

Although Sibley's command was now clearly outnumbered by the enemy, Peticolas' estimate of 6,000 men was an exaggeration. The Texans were also wrong in assuming Canby was about to launch an attack to demand their surrender. Canby was marching down the Rio Grande with nearly 4,000 mouths to feed every day but with a limited supply train. Demanding the surrender of the Texans was not an option. Canby could not afford to feed another 1,800 men. He just simply wanted to keep them moving out of New Mexico.

Council of War

Sibley did not know Canby's plan. From his viewpoint, he saw a well-supplied superior enemy force compared to his own poorly provisioned army of demoralized men. About sundown, General Sibley called a council of war with his senior officers to decide what to do. Peticolas had gotten it right: they were nearly

surrounded by the enemy. Boxed in to the north, east and south, there was only one way out – to the west. Unfortunately, the looming Ladron Peak, the Magdalena, and the San Mateo Mountains lay in that direction, and there were no trails for the wagons or artillery.

During the Battle at Valverde, Captain Bethel Coopwood had remained in Mesilla, sick with smallpox. After recovering, Coopwood took a circuitous route through the San Mateo Mountains to join the command at Albuquerque. Recalling how Coopwood had bypassed Fort Craig a month earlier, Sibley summoned the captain to his tent. Coopwood described his route to the council of war, expressing his uncertainty as to how suitable the route would be for the wagons and artillery. They reasoned, however, that if Coopwood had made it from Mesilla to Albuquerque without detection, they could return to Mesilla by following the same route in reverse.

The council of war issued their orders to the men. About 7 p.m., the entire force departed the Rio Puerco camp under the cloak of darkness in an effort to follow Coopwood's route through the mountains. The men took only what they could carry and headed for the towering nighttime silhouette of Ladron Peak. Nearly everything else – tents, cookware, and wagons – was discarded at the Rio Puerco.

Along Coopwood's Route

Peticolas wrote in his diary: "After some trouble we all got fairly started and marched till two o'clock [in the morning] up a gradual slope over rough uneven ground and then down a cañon [sic] till we reached the hilly cedar country of the mountains" (109). Their route passed through today's Sevilleta National Wildlife Refuge, as shown on the accompanying map. They camped "in the cañon" of the waterless Tio Lino Arroyo, north of the Rio Salado. (With an historical permit in hand, the author found this campsite in 1989.) In all, the retreating men marched 29 miles that day, half of it in the pitch dark. They must have been utterly exhausted as they made their waterless camp at 2 o'clock in the cold morning.

Meanwhile, back at the Rio Puerco, the sick and injured men who had been left behind kept the fires burning all night, giving the illusion of a brisk camp. This stratagem worked: the nighttime departure of Sibley's Brigade went unnoticed by the Union forces on the other side of the river. The following morning, the abandoned camp and the absence of 1,800 enemy soldiers must have been quite a sight.

At the Tio Lino camp, the exhausted Texans were informed they would get breakfast about four miles ahead where there was water. The command broke camp, and as Peticolas noted, the four miles became eight. He wrote: "We then came to salt water sink and camped for the remainder of the day . . ." (110). The men had marched down the Tio Lino Arroyo and then west along the Rio Salado to Silver Creek. This creek is located about 11 miles west from today's I-25 Rio Salado bridge, a bit behind the Polvadera Mountains. Even today, a trickle of water flows almost constantly through the Rio Salado around Silver Creek. It emerges out of the sand and flows for a half-mile and then disappears back into the sand to reappear again some distance later. Is is a very salty water, almost unfit to drink. Peticolas noted: "This water we found extremely unpalatable and salty, and the coffee made from it was hardly fit to drink at all, and as we had nothing but coffee and bread, we had pretty hard fare" (110).



The meager flow of water along the Rio Salado was so salty that the brigade found it unfit to drink. *photo by Paul Harden*



“The Box,” a narrowing of the canyon of the Rio Salado filled with boulders the size of houses, forced the Confederates to travel down La Jencia Gulch. *photo by Paul Harden*

Along the Rio Salado

On April 19, the men continued west along the Rio Salado, which winds for several miles through a narrow rock canyon, somewhat like a miniature Grand Canyon. It gives the appearance of being the most desolate place on earth. And to the Texans, it was. After five or six miles, they found a spring near the confluence of La Jencia Gulch and the Rio Salado to moisten their parched lips. Men on horseback scouted ahead to find the best route. They reported the Rio Salado was impassable about a mile ahead due to a rock-filled narrow passage called “The Box” on most modern maps.

The decision was made to follow the fairly large arroyo leading to the south – La Jencia Gulch. Back on the trail, the troops journeyed down the sandy canyon another five or six miles. At this point, there is a fork in La Jencia. One branch to the south has a slight flow of water, while the other branch to the southwest is dry and dusty but more suitable for the wagons. At this point, military order was falling apart. Peticolas noted, “[E]very man for himself, upon the way” and later, “No order was observed, no company staid together” (112). Some of the men took the left branch, following the trickle of water. The bulk of the command, however, continued up the dry fork of the canyon with the wagons and artillery. After several miles, the deep canyon eventually led to a substantial spring near

today’s La Jencia Ranch. Artifacts, including two cannonballs, have been found at this spring in recent years.

Peticolas remained with the wagons and artillery. He wrote: “When we got to the point where you must leave the canon, the hill was extremely steep and high. [Colonel William] Scurry got down from his horse, called for volunteers to help the artillery up the hill . . . Then away, away, southwest across a vast plain, the way picked by our pilot (Capt. Coopwood) led” (111). This quotation perfectly describes the geographic features where the men emerged from La Jencia near Ligon Ranch and then marched across the Water Canyon plains towards today’s Magdalena. As the artillery was hauled out of the canyon, one of the cannons suffered a broken axle and was buried to conceal it from the enemy. In the 1930s, it was found by a ranch hand; it currently resides in a private collection in Socorro.

While the men suffered on the trail with little water or food, a select few seemed to be traveling in relative comfort. Peticolas remarked, “We have quite a number of women along, the wives and daughters of Mexican citizens who have thought it most prudent for them to leave because of their southern principles” (112). Another soldier, Private W. R. Howell, was a bit more pointed when he wrote in his journal, “My health is very bad, yet I am compelled to walk while mean Mexican women ride (Howell, 101).” Some of these



Some of the Texans found this hidden water hole, La Jencia Springs, north of today’s Magdalena. *photo by Paul Harden*

New Mexico citizens “along for the ride” may also have served as guides – hunters and trappers who knew the waterholes in the Magdalena and San Mateo Mountains. Once a Union officer in New Mexico, General Sibley may also have been familiar with some of the sources of water.

Arrival in Magdalena

By the evening of April 19, the Texans arrived near present day Magdalena. It was not yet a community – the ranching and mining town was not founded until 1884. In 1862, the area was known as Ojo del Pueblo, or Pueblo Springs. Named for the nearby ruins of an Indian pueblo, it had an ample source of water. Pueblo Springs is located to the northwest of today’s village.

By late afternoon, Sibley’s brigade was scattered over miles. Many of the foot soldiers had made their way along La Jencia Creek to Ojo del Pueblo. Those who were traveling with the wagons and artillery had found water many miles to the north at Bear Springs. Others found themselves wandering lost and in severe want for water. As the sun set, these men began to see the camp fires miles ahead and eventually arrived at the main camp at Pueblo Springs. From Silver Creek to Pueblo Springs was a march of 26 miles, mostly through sandy arroyo bottoms and the waterless “Water Canyon” basin.

It was dark when Peticolas found the rest of his company at the camp. That evening, he wrote: “We supped heartily of bread and coffee, our only diet now, and fell asleep. The supply of water is plentiful here, but it was all soon muddied up by the rush of horses into the spring” (113).

Meanwhile, Back in Socorro

As the Texans were headed toward Pueblo Springs, Canby’s Union Army arrived in Socorro and recaptured the town. The small Confederate garrison of about 200 men were captured as prisoners of war. From April 19 to 21, the sick and injured Confederates were taken to the Fort Craig

hospital for medical care. About a week later, the captured Texans who were able to travel were given 10 days of rations and paroled. Most of these men rejoined the Texans on the trail.

There is little documentation to suggest that the Confederate hospital in Socorro received any support from Sibley’s command. The Confederates there were living off what little they had or could obtain, no doubt reluctantly, from the people of Socorro. When they were sent to Fort Craig to be fed or to receive medical care, the Texans were apparently treated better by the enemy than by their own army.

Tragically, 27 Confederate soldiers are known to have died in the makeshift Socorro hospital from wounds sustained at the Battle of Valverde. The local priest would not allow these fallen Southern men to be buried in the church cemetery west of town. This demonstrates how isolated the Texans were from the people of Socorro. Instead, these fallen men were buried somewhere west of town. Some evidence of old, unmarked graves have been found in the vicinity of today’s Peralta Street. Paupers’ graves from those who perished in 1918 from the Spanish influenza are also found in this area. While no proof has as yet surfaced that the Confederate were buried at this site, it is likely to be their final resting place.

Through the San Mateos

Back at Pueblo Springs, the exhausted men awoke on April 20 to prepare for another long and thirsty day on the trail. There were no established wagon trails for them to follow. Since departing the Rio Puerco camp, they had been making their own road through the mountains, where few men had been before, let alone an army of some 1,800 men. From Pueblo Springs, according to Peticolas, the men “started about 9 a.m. this morning and traveled 15 miles over a rolling country to the next water ... our road lay over a broad stretch of rolling country, destitute of timber but affording a pretty good road” (113). The Texans headed south, roughly following the route of today’s NM-107. They camped “at the

next water,” which was at Alameda Springs in the Magdalena Mountains. The small canyon shielded their campfires from being seen at Fort Craig, less than 20 miles away.

The next morning the soldiers crossed the valley to the protection of the San Mateo Mountains. For hours, Fort Craig was clearly visible in the distance. The wagons and artillery traveled slowly, careful not to raise dust and alert the troops at the enemy fort of their presence. Once in the mountains, the troops continued to travel slowly as they hauled their wagons and cannons up one hill and down, then over another.

The group finally found water at Turkey Springs, where they camped for the night. Some of the men crossed a ridge into a meadow of grass, today called “The Park,” to graze the draft animals. Once again deep in a canyon, their campfires were well shielded from the prying eyes at Fort Craig. So far, their plan to evade detection by the enemy was working.

The next day, the men continued up steep ridges and down into small canyons. Pulling the wagons and cannons was punishing on the men and animals. Peticolas’ company was given one of the cannons to get through the mountains. On April 22, he recorded: “We traveled some 5 or 6 miles, helping our gun up the worst hills, when we suddenly came on to a vast cañon running directly across our direction and seemingly impassible” (114). This was East Red Canyon. After spending hours getting the guns across the deep ravine, the men continued another ten miles before finding water at Nogalita Springs, near the head of Nogal Canyon. Peticolas closed his diary that evening with “Oh,

the water, the good water!! Here we camped as we did last night, with no guard, and our artillery 1/2 mile from the water” (115).

The grueling march through the San Mateos continued on April 23. The only water that the men found that day was the small waterhole at Peñasco Springs. They marched and marched, as Peticolas described it, “till late at night and found no water, and so we made a dry camp with nothing to eat or drink, and slept all night” (116). Captain Coopwood went exploring in the middle of the night for water, returning to camp with good news. At the crack of dawn, the command marched to Coopwood’s water, four miles away. “We reached it about 9 o’clock and found it to be a small rapid stream of water in the valley of an immense cañon, 800 or 1000 feet



On April 24, 1862, the retreating Confederates finally found the refreshing water of the Cañada Alamosa in Monticello Canyon.

photo by Paul Harden

deep . . . We laid over on this creek, which is called the Hondo” (116). Peticolas was describing the long awaited water of the Cañada Alamosa – today’s Monticello Canyon. His misidentification of this creek as the Hondo River has made many historians believe that Sibley’s command was no longer being led by native scouts. After resting by the flowing stream, the men were ordered to wrestle the

artillery out of the canyon before sunset. Once this was done, they made camp. They could now see the Rio Grande and the Fra Cristobal Mountains to the east.

As the sun rose the next day, the partially rejuvenated men set off following the Cañada Alamosa toward the Rio Grande. They were finally free of the mountains, and the enemy force at Fort Craig was far in the rear. They camped on the Cuchillo Negro Creek, near present day Truth or Consequences. Although their travel was now along the river with an established

road, the men still suffered for want of food. They pushed to the south in the hopes of reaching Mesilla, where Colonel Steele's supply wagons would hopefully feed them.

On April 27, ten days after departing the Rio Puerco, Peticolas finally reported: "[We met] the provision train Steele had started up to us. We ate for breakfast this morning a rib or two of an old broke-down work ox we had along, without salt . . . We all ate heartily of bread and coffee, but got nothing else brought up" (118). This description, makes one wonder exactly what supplies were in Steele's wagons. Obviously, there was very little food. Still, it was a feast compared to the past ten days through the mountains.

Peticolas also sadly reminisced:

Yesterday two men were left on the road, too sick to be moved. We also left two in the mountains near Craig. They were thrown out of the wagons by Major Brownrigg and one out of the end of Sibley's wagon. Sibley is heartily despised by every man in the brigade for his want of feeling, poor generalship, and cowardice. (118)

Theophilus Noel, a member of the 4th Regiment, Texas Mounted Volunteers, Co. A, wrote in his memoirs regarding Sibley: "The only thing I ever regretted was that the drunken individual who was the cause of all our misfortune was also kept from starving . . ." (Noel 63). Several of the retreating men perished on the trail through the mountains. Union scout Captain Paddy Graydon retraced the route a month after the retreat. His report indicates he found and buried the remains of several Confederate soldiers who had fallen along the route.

On the road they deserted one wagon and a camp and left three dead bodies half buried. In another place found bones of a man's arm, half eaten by wolves. I had all buried. . . . The road from Ojo del Pueblo is strewn with old harness, iron ovens, and in fact everything but small ammunition. . . . Left dead on the road about 60 or 70 mules and horses. (Graydon 671-672)

End of the Journey

The remnants of Sibley's brigade arrived at Mesilla and remained there and at Fort Bliss regaining their strength. Upon learning of the approach of General

James Carleton's "California Column" of some 2,300 soldiers, the Texans departed the El Paso region in June. They arrived in San Antonio, Texas, in several waves throughout August and September. The majority of their prized cannons were intact.

Thus ended one of the most tortuous retreats of an American army – over 800 miles, mostly on foot, from Glorieta, New Mexico, to San Antonio, Texas. These men continued to fight for the Confederacy, with some losing their lives, in the Louisiana campaigns.

These were brave young men, loyal to the Southern cause. Their failure in New Mexico was not due to any lack of desire by these men. It was due to poor leadership, a series of misfortunes, and the lack of food and supplies for the majority of the campaign. According to most historical literature, the majority of the participants summed it up: "We were starved out of New Mexico – not run out."

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Retracing the Confederate Retreat

by Paul Harden

In commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the events of the Civil War in New Mexico, a group of 30 reenactors associated with the Southwest Civil War Association (<http://www.swcwa.com>) made plans to re-enact a portion of the Texans' retreat that followed the Battle of Glorieta. The group chose to follow the segment of the route from the Rio Puerco camp where the Confederates departed the Rio Grande on April 17, 1862, through the mountains and deep canyons, and on into Pueblo Springs – the site of today's Magdalena, New Mexico – a total distance of about 42 miles. One of the organizers, Phil Gregory, built a facsimile of a 300-pound Howitzer cannon, in recognition of the fact that the Confederates hauled over a dozen pieces of artillery from Rio Puerco to San Antonio, Texas, on their retreat. Gregory's cannon would add historical accuracy to the retreat reenactment.

The route traversed private property, and permission was obtained from the landowners of the huge Ligon and La Jencia Ranches for 20-30 "soldiers" to march through their land and camp overnight. Several individuals from nearby Socorro, New Mexico, volunteered to assist the re-enactment by helping scout the route in advance and by driving "shadow vehicles" during the event to provide communication and assistance in case an emergency evacuation became necessary. The initial portion of the planned march – which includes the route west from Rio Puerco, the dry camp at Tio Lino arroyo, and the well-documented Silver Creek camp – is located on today's Sevilleta National Wildlife Refuge (NWR). No public access is allowed on the NWR without formal permission, so a Special Use Permit was submitted to the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the administrating agency for the refuge. After several months of negotiations, the permit was denied. Silver Creek was where the Texans camped overnight on April 18, 1862, awaiting the arrival of Colonel Thomas Green's supply wagons; it was a key highlight of the proposed trip. Disappointed by the rejection of the permit, most of the participants dropped out.

The event began on April 19, 2012, with only four participants: Phil Dodd, Phil Gregory, and his two sons, Rob and Phil "PJ" Gregory. With the help of Sy Benjamin, manager of the La Jencia Ranch, the four were transported to the west gate of the Sevilleta NWR. From the locked gate, a refuge ranger escorted the vehicles to the dry river bed of the Rio Salado arroyo and on to the Silver Creek camp. The retreat march began at Silver Creek about noon. Immediately to the west, the route wound through the deep, narrow canyon of the Rio Salado. Taking turns, the men hauled the cannon through the relatively smooth, sandy bottom of the arroyo, which was peppered here and there with a slight trickle of flowing water. By late afternoon, they reached the confluence of La Jencia Creek with the Rio Salado. After a mile-long walk to visit "The Box," the narrow rock filled canyon that stopped the Texans, the group returned to march south into La Jencia gulch. About a mile into the canyon, they stopped to make their first night's camp near a spring where the Texans had moistened their lips 150 years before. In 1862, Private Albert Peticolas recorded that the water at the Silver Creek camp was so brackish that even the coffee was unfit to drink. Using water from the Rio Salado, the reenactors made a pot of coffee that evening, only to verify that Peticolas' description of the salty coffee was "spot on."

The cannon had been made with the expectation that there would be many retreat participants who could help haul the 300-pound object. The four men now wondered how they would haul the cannon through La Jencia, the roughest arm of the journey where even the Texans had horses, burros, and oxen to assist with the chore. They decided that they needed help. Climbing out of the canyon to get cell-phone reception, they called a friend in Los Lunas who agreed to provide an ATV to haul the cannon. Sy Benjamin helped escort the truck carrying the ATV to a high overlook above the canyon and the ATV was then driven down into the canyon to the reenactors.

Even with the ATV hauling the cannon, it was still a struggle through La Jencia gulch and canyon. At

the fork in the canyon, the reenactors took the left branch which was the route taken by many of the Texans. (During the 1862 retreat, the wagons and most of the artillery followed the right fork, a much longer route to Magdalena via Bear Springs.) Several miles farther, the men encountered the “water fall,” a 30-foot rocky drop in the floor of the gulch. At the bottom was a small pond, formed by the constant trickle of the water. It took the men and the ATV about two hours to get the cannon past the waterfall obstruction. Moving the cannon enhanced their appreciation for the hardships the Texans endured in 1862.

While driving the emergency shadow vehicle, I learned from Sy Benjamin of the arrival of the ATV. I drove along both rims of the canyon looking for the modern day “Texans,” but to no avail. Finally, I spotted them through my binoculars as they rounded a turn in the canyon about two miles away. I drove to the location on the west rim and began an hour-long hike into La Jencia, meeting the men about half-way up the steep canyon walls. Phil Dodd was driving the ATV with the cannon and the other three were walking along side. They were tired and exhausted. Once they were out of the canyon, their view extended for miles across the La Jencia basin to Magdalena. The men decided to make this open spot, with a cluster of piñon trees, their camp for the second night. Shortly before sundown, Phil Dodd’s grandsons, Rob and Tim, joined the retreat.

The hardest part of the retreat was now behind them. Saturday’s route went west over sandy hills and through thickets of piñon to the Ligon Ranch road, which they followed to its junction with Forest Road

54 at the base of the Bear Mountains. They were about eight miles northeast of Magdalena. Having been given prior permission from the U.S. Forest Service, the reenactors made this their Saturday night campsite. The six men erected tents and built ample campfires for an authentic Civil War period camp.

On Sunday morning, April 22, the group broke camp. With all six wearing period Confederate dress, they began the last leg of the retreat towards Pueblo Springs. About noon, the small company marched down the hill with their cannon and entered the village of Magdalena. With permission of the village marshall, Phil Gregory discharged his cannon (using empty charges) to the

delight of a small crowd of onlookers. The crowd included John Larsen, editor of the town’s newspaper, *The Mountain Mail*, who obtained several good photos of the event.

After 32 miles and four days on the trail, the men had arrived close to where the Texans had camped on April 20, 1862. The Texans had completed this grueling leg of their retreat in a single day, and furthermore they continued their journey for another

120 miles and eight days before finally reaching the supply wagons north of Las Cruces. The six reenactors had gained a true appreciation for the hardships the Texans endured and the experiences documented in the Confederate diaries penned at the time.

A similar reenactment, following the Texan retreat trail around Fort Craig through the San Mateo mountains, is planned for next year. This is mostly through U.S. Forest Service and B.L.M. land, and the appropriate permission has already been granted. The re-enactment is being coordinated by Phil Dodd and Phil Gregory, who can be contacted at dawnellen45@q.com. No word yet if they’re bringing their cannon!



The reenactors shoot their cannon in the streets of Magdalena.
photo by John Larsen

Sites Along the Fort Smith-Santa Fe Trail Part II

by David Miller and Jack Beale Smith

Marcy, the Emigrants, and Rock Mary

Forty-niners starting out over the Fort Smith-Santa Fe Trail in the spring of 1849 had one great advantage over their counterparts who traveled the California-Oregon Trail through Kansas and Nebraska: the southerners had a military escort as well as a road-building crew to pave the way.

Promoting the Arkansas River towns of Van Buren and Fort Smith as the best jumping off places for gold seekers from the southern states, the Arkansas congressional delegation gained passage of a \$50,000 congressional military appropriation to fund the improvement of the road to Santa Fe. The bill also provided a military escort for the hundreds of forty-niners who were congregating in Van Buren and Fort Smith while making preparations to head out through Indian Territory for California.

Josiah Gregg and Lieutenant James Abert had already pioneered a wagon road along both banks of the Canadian River between Fort Smith and Santa Fe in the late 1830s and early 1840s. They had in effect laid out a southern alternative to the Santa Fe Trail, a feat that the Texan-Santa Fe Expedition failed miserably to accomplish in 1841. The 1844 publication of Josiah Gregg's *Commerce of the Prairies* with its detailed map played a significant role in promoting the Canadian River route. Gregg's book was the most up-to-date guide available to forty-niners on the overland trails. The information Gregg provided to

emigrants heading west from Fort Smith compares favorably to the information in John C. Frémont's *Reports* about the Platte River route. Lieutenant Abert's illustrated *Journal . . . from Bent's Fort to St. Louis, in 1845*, was published as a Congressional document in 1846. It also provided useful up-to-date information about the Canadian route between Fort Smith and Tucumcari, New Mexico.

The published accounts of Stephen Long's 1819 expedition down the length of the Canadian were less useful, since Long's men did not use wagons and were disoriented, believing that they were traveling down the Red River when in fact they were

on the Canadian. They did not discover their error until they reached the confluence of the Canadian and Arkansas, a few miles upstream from Fort Smith.

Captain Randolph B. Marcy of the 5th Infantry and Lieutenant James Hervy Simpson of the Topographical Engineers were assigned the task of mapping, improving the road, and escorting emigrants to Santa Fe.

Departure from Fort Smith was scheduled for the first week of April, 1849. Marcy's troops included about 80 soldiers from the 1st Dragoons commanded by Lieutenant John Buford and 5th Infantry troops commanded by Lieutenant Montgomery Pike Harrison. Simpson's assignment was to write an itinerary and publish a series of detailed maps of the route. During the ensuing three months' travel, Marcy's command layed out and/or improved the wagon road along the south side of the Canadian through Oklahoma and Texas, and across eastern New Mexico to Santa Fe.

Traveling west through a woodland environment, forty-niners struck the eastern edge of the Cross



Rock Mary. photo by David Miller



Mary Conway. from the author's collection

Timbers about 175 miles west of Fort Smith. The Cross Timbers are composed mainly of dense scrub oak forests of blackjack and post oak with occasional open savanahas. The Cross Timbers extend in a north-south orientation for over 300 miles from central Texas across central Oklahoma and into southeastern Kansas. These dense thickets formed a serious obstacle to the western migration. Although Washington Irving may have been the first to publicize the dreary scenery of the cross timbers in his *Tour of the Prairies*, Josiah Gregg popularized the concept in his *Commerce of the Prairies*. Gregg's map delineates the Cross Timbers as an enormous "X" or cross, hence the name. The first 250 miles west of Fort Smith were tough going due to frequent storms, boggy terrain, and the dense scrub oak thickets, but there was plenty of forage, wood, and water.

The trail improved dramatically a few miles west of modern Oklahoma City, where it emerged from the Cross Timbers out onto the Great Plains near a cluster of small red sandstone outcroppings known today as the Caddo County Buttes. Some have intriguing names such as Dead Woman Mound, but the most significant feature was a turret-shaped mound which Lieutenant Simpson described as "like a pound-cake

(Dott, "Lt. Simpson" 176)" with "two turret-like projections protruding from its top." The soldiers named it Rock Mary.

Dr. John Conway was among the most prominent Arkansas emigrants to set out for Santa Fe in the spring of 1849. Two of his brothers served as state governors. Educated at a medical college in Kentucky, Conway served a stint as army surgeon before pursuing a career as surveyor and civilian physician. Upon hearing news of the gold discovery in California, he decided to move west. He put together an impressive outfit of several wagons to transport his wife and their ten children to California, including a spacious army ambulance to haul his children and their nurse maid. His 17-year-old daughter Mary was the belle of the emigration; she was an absolute sensation on the southern trail. Mary created quite a stir astride her black horse. As word of her beauty spread from camp to camp, young forty-niners waited in anticipation to get a glimpse of her as she rode by on her spirited horse. The hype that preceded her was enormous.

Rock Mary is located in Caddo County on a tributary of Sugar Creek in a small basin about five miles southwest of the modern city of Hinton. It is the least prominent of the Caddo County Mounds, but even a casual examination of Rock Mary's features makes it clear why Marcy's soldiers named the rock after Mary's alluring charms. Topographical Engineer James H. Simpson described the naming of the rock.

Nearing the first of these singularly formed hills . . . I started off alone to ascend it – reaching it just in time to scare up a wild turkey; and tying my horse to a black-jack tree at its base, I scrambled up to its summit. The novel character of the hill; its contorted appearance; its sudden emergence from the plain around it; my having reached its pinnacle; it being an object of interest to beholders in the distance; – all this had its complex influence upon me, and I felt correspondingly elated. Captain Marcy seeing me near the apex, suggested to me to unfurl (what I was about to do) a flag, and give it to the breeze. This I did, and soon I could see some person after another, Lieutenant Harrison and Dr. Roberts among them, leaving the train to get a look from its summit. A person present suggesting that it be named after

an Arkansas young lady, (as much esteemed by the emigrants with whom she is in company, as she is by the officers,) I immediately fell in with the suggestion, and thereupon, with waving flag, proclaimed it to all concerned, that henceforth, in honor of the said lady, the rock should be known as Rock Mary. (Dott, "Rock Mary Report" 130)

Two love-struck officers in Marcy's Command, Lieutenants John Buford and Montgomery Pike Harrison, engaged in a spirited competition for Mary's hand in marriage. Both were recent West Point graduates from prominent families. Harrison was a grandson of President William Henry Harrison and the older brother of the future President Benjamin Harrison. Buford came from a distinguished Illinois family. After an impressive military career in the West, he rose to the rank of Major General during the Civil War, following his distinguished service at the Battle of Gettysburgh.

The two young lieutenants courted Mary all the way to Santa Fe, where they arrived on June 28. Faced with making a decision between her two suitors, Mary finally accepted Harrison's marriage proposal. Shortly after their arrival in Santa Fe, the unfortunate Lieutenant Buford and his dragoons were sent out on a three-week expedition against the Navaho Indians. Upon his return to Santa Fe, Lieutenant Buford was transferred to California. He never saw Mary again. The triumphant Harrison asked Dr. Conway for permission to have the marriage performed before the Conways left Santa Fe. Dr. Conway demurred, insisting that the wedding be postponed until after the emigrants reached California. He suggested that Harrison seek a leave of absence in order to travel to California for the nuptials. Fate had other plans.

After a few days rest, the Conways left Santa Fe and headed south down the Rio Grande with the Fort

Smith and California Emigrating Company. Mary had to leave her fiancée behind. Harrison, hoping that he might see Mary again on the trail, volunteered to join a dragoon reconnaissance through Apache country. Commanded by Major Enoch Steen, the dragoons traveled down the Rio Grande to Doña Ana, where they established a temporary military base. We will never know whether Lieutenant Harrison was able to catch another glimpse of his fiancée, but it seems unlikely since Mary's one extant letter written from a camp near Socorro makes no mention of the young lieutenant. By the time Harrison returned to Santa Fe in early August, the Conways were hundreds of miles away, traveling through northern Chihuahua and Sonora on Cooke's Wagon Road.



On June 28, 1849, New Yorker Lorenzo Aldrich carved the initials "L. A. N. Y." on one of Rock Mary's turrets. A growth pattern of lichens covers the inscription.

photo by Jack Beale Smith

After escorting the forty-niners to Santa Fe, Marcy gave considerable thought to the logistics of the emigrant road to California. Most forty-niners upon reaching Santa Fe chose to head south down the Rio Grande to southern New Mexico over a road pioneered by the Mormon Battalion in 1846 and known as Cooke's Wagon Road. Marcy wondered if it might be possible to blaze a shortcut which would connect directly with Cooke's Wagon Road. After giving the matter much thought, Marcy concluded that he could bypass Santa Fe by laying out a road directly across Texas from Fort

Smith to Doña Ana. It was a simple matter of plain geometry: a road laid out on the hypotenuse would be more direct than a road that followed both the adjacent and opposite sides of the triangle, which was the case with the road he had just laid out to Santa Fe. Marcy calculated that this direct route across Texas might save emigrants a couple of hundred miles compared to the Santa Fe-Rio Grande route. But in order to lay out this route, Marcy would have to travel down the Rio Grande to Doña Ana and then head out on a northeastern diagonal across Texas to the town of Preston on the

Red River, where it would meet up with the military road running from Fort Washita to Fort Smith. The Butterfield Overland Mail eventually followed much of the new route Marcy laid out across Texas.

Captain Marcy and Lieutenant Harrison's infantry escort headed out from Santa Fe on August 14, and after an uneventful ride along the Rio Grande, reached Doña Ana two weeks later. On the first of September, Marcy's command headed east from Doña Ana, crossing the Organ Mountains via San Augustine Pass. The escort then dropped southeast to Hueco Tanks east of El Paso, around the southern edge of the Guadalupe Mountains, and down Delaware Creek to the Pecos River crossing. They crossed over the southern edge of the Llano Estacado and by October 4 had reached the vicinity of Big Springs, Texas. On the evening of October 7, while encamped on a small tributary of the Colorado River situated a few miles northeast of Big Springs in modern Scurry County, Lieutenant Harrison rode off alone to examine a nearby ravine. He never returned. Marcy sent out a search party the following day. They found Harrison's mangled body a few miles away. He had been shot in the back of the head with his own rifle and then scalped, presumably by a band of Kiowa warriors. Marcy had Harrison's body placed in a wagon bed and then packed in charcoal to preserve the body for the journey back to Fort Smith for interment.

Meanwhile the Conways were traveling down the Gila River unaware of poor Lieutenant Harrison's fate. They arrived at the Yuma Colorado Crossing on October 24, a little over two weeks after Harrison's death. Lieutenant Cave Johnson Couts was there to greet them. Couts had learned of Mary's impending arrival a full three weeks before the Conways reached Yuma. The gallant lieutenant, serving as escort for the U.S. Mexico Boundary Survey, was biding his time

while the surveyors mapped the confluence of the Gila and Colorado Rivers.

Dr. Conway, (with his family, wife and 10 children), came up on 24th, and on 25th, 26th and 27th I had a delightful time with the interesting Miss Mary, for whom I had been saving a bottle of molasses, and a lump of sugar since three weeks. I found more than anticipated, though she had been so highly spoken of by all who had passed. Had the pleasure of her and her mother's company at dinner with me on the 25th, and on the 27th, could not tear myself away until seeing them some miles from camp. An angel in such wilds! May you wed your true love, and the Lord take a liking to you. (Foreman, *Marcy and the Goldseekers* 306)

The Conways continued on to Southern California without incident. A few months after their arrival in

Los Angeles, Mary wed a sea captain named Robert S. Haley. There is no record of when she might have learned of Lieutenant Harrison's fate.

Sandstone Columns

Ten miles west of Rock Mary, forty-niners passed a low sandstone mound that had eroded into a series of columns.



Sandstone columns, Caddo County, Oklahoma.
photo by David Miller

Expeditionary artist Balduin Möllhausen made a sketch of the columns when he served as artist for Captain A. W. Whipple's railroad survey in the summer of 1853. They were now in buffalo country, and although Whipple did not mention seeing any buffalo at this particular site, artist Möllhausen added a few shaggy beasts and a couple of antelope to represent the animals that were native to this area. The Prussian artist also confused his geography. When he published his lithograph of the columns in his *Diary of a Journey from the Mississippi to the Coasts of the Pacific*, he entitled it "Sandstone Formations in the Prairie Northwest of Texas," which would have placed them in New Mexico. These columns are actually almost a hundred miles straight east of the



Antelope or Boundary Buttes.

Lithograph based on a sketch by Lieutenant James Abert, 1845.
from the author's collection

Texas border in western Caddo County, Oklahoma, a few miles south of the Canadian River.

Antelope Hills

In 1819 Secretary of State John Quincy Adams negotiated the Adams-Onís, or Transcontinental Treaty with Spain. In addition to providing for the American purchase of Spanish Florida, it also defined the western boundary of the Louisiana Purchase and established a boundary between the United States and Spanish America which extended from the Gulf of Mexico to the Pacific Ocean. The section of the boundary running north from Red River to the Arkansas followed the 100th meridian. It is the modern boundary between Oklahoma and the Texas Panhandle.

The Antelope or Boundary Hills are situated on the south bank of the Canadian, half a dozen miles east of the 100th meridian. When Americans traveling west passed these low buttes, they knew that they were entering Spanish, Mexican, or Texan territory depending on the year of their travel.

Bluffs along the Canadian

In western Oklahoma the road to Santa Fe ran along the dividing ridge between the Canadian and Washita Rivers. After crossing into the Texas Panhandle, the road ran close to the southern bank of the Canadian. Although the river's southern banks were relatively low, bluffs lined the north bank through much of the Texas Panhandle. Richardson Bluffs northwest

of Canadian, Texas, are typical of this terrain. Both Möllhausen and Abert published views of the trail in this vicinity.

Rocky Dell

Rocky Dell, or Agua de Piedra Creek as it is known today, is one of the more significant Texas Panhandle sites on the overland trail. Rocky Dell is situated on private ranchland in western Oldham County, Texas, about eleven miles east of the Texas-New Mexico line and about two mile north of Interstate 40. The site made an excellent campground due to a spring-fed creek, timber, forage, and a large alcove worn into the high sandstone bank which provided shelter from the elements. In recent years the spring is usually dry due to a drop in the water table caused by extensive pumping from the Ogallala aquifer. Locally the site is known as Paint Rock due to the large number of rock art images which are painted and etched onto the alcove's smooth surface. The pictograph panels were painted using red, black, white, and yellow pigments. The more recent panels include representations of mounted horsemen and cattle, and date from the historic period. The petroglyphs are from an earlier date.

The most striking painted panels depict two anthropomorphic figures. They were heavily chalked by archaeologists in the 1930s and have deteriorated dramatically in the intervening decades. The largest painting in the alcove is a 13-foot rendition of a water monster. Some anthropologists argue that this



Comancheros.

courtesy Oklahoma Historical Society

monster was painted by Puebloan traders known as Comancheros, who ventured out onto the plains to trade with the nomadic Plains Indians. Lt. Whipple's railroad surveyors met a small party of Puebloan traders at Rocky Dell in the summer of 1853. Whipple noted that these Comancheros hailed from Santo Domingo Pueblo near Santa Fe.

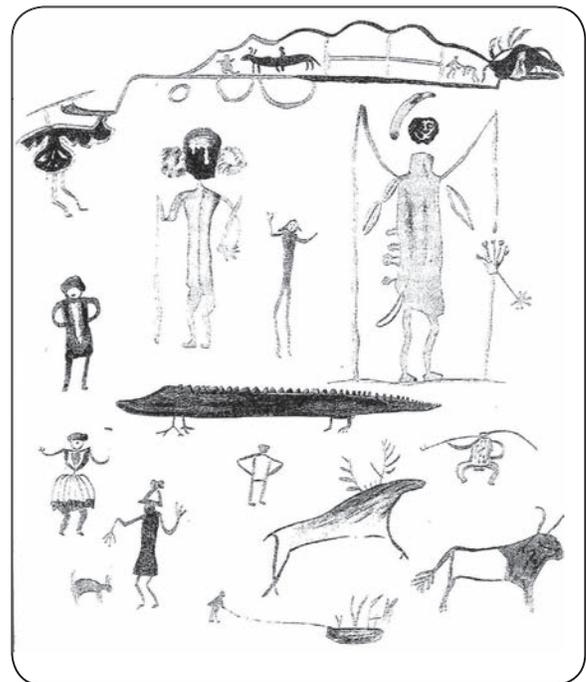
Some of the images at Rocky Dell may well have been painted by indigenous people. The Kiowas, who frequented the Panhandle on their buffalo hunts, believed in the existence of a water monster that looked something like a large Alligator Gar fish with antlers. In the 1890s Kiowa artist Silverhorn painted several images of the Kiowa water monster while illustrating Kiowa folk stories. Although the two renditions have little in common, it is still possible that the Rocky Dell water monster had Kiowa origins.

Other significant historical features at Rocky Dell include a series of parallel grooves etched into the bedrock by hundreds of wagon wheels as they rolled down to the spring. There is also a well-worn buffalo trail leading down to the spring over the "slick rock," as well as several Indian mortar holes.

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Lithograph of Indian pictographs at Rocky Dell.
from the author's collection

Trail Turtles' Spring 2012 Mapping Trip

by Richard Greene, Tracy DeVault, and Rose Ann Tompkins

During this trip, the Trail Turtles mapped in two areas. The first was in the vicinity of Picacho Pass north of Tucson. Picacho Peak is mentioned in a number of trail diaries; the emigrants encountered this landmark as they traveled the long, dry miles between Tucson and the Pima villages on the Gila River. It was also the location of one of the Butterfield stage stations. During the Civil War, a skirmish – now called “The Battle of Picacho Pass” – occurred in the area.¹ The second mapping area was along the Gila River north of Dateland, about 50 miles west of Gila Bend.

Mike Volberg² performed pre-trip research on the Picacho Peak area and Tracy DeVault researched the Dateland area. In performing this historical research, the two relied heavily on several existing books: the Conklings' classic work on the Butterfield Trail,³ Gerald Ahnert's books on the Butterfield Trail in Arizona,⁴ and Dan Talbot's work on Mormon Battalion and Butterfield sites in Arizona.⁵

Talbot offered to show Volberg and DeVault some trail sites that he had discovered over the years, so a short trip (with Carol Brooks and Mark



Marie and Richard Greene.
photo by Rose Ann Tompkins

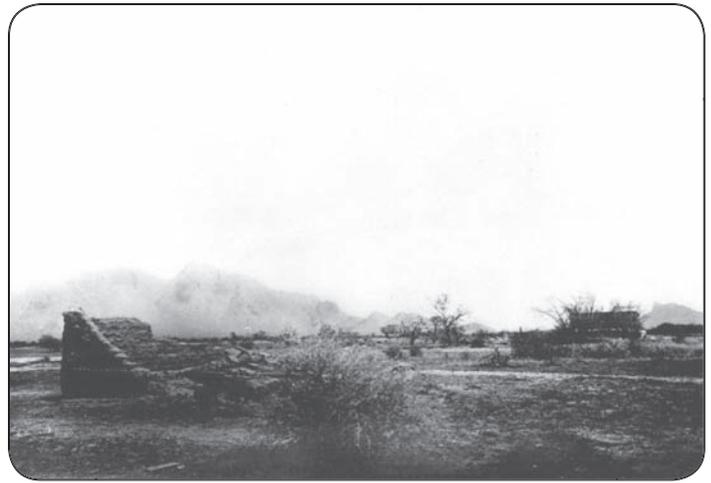


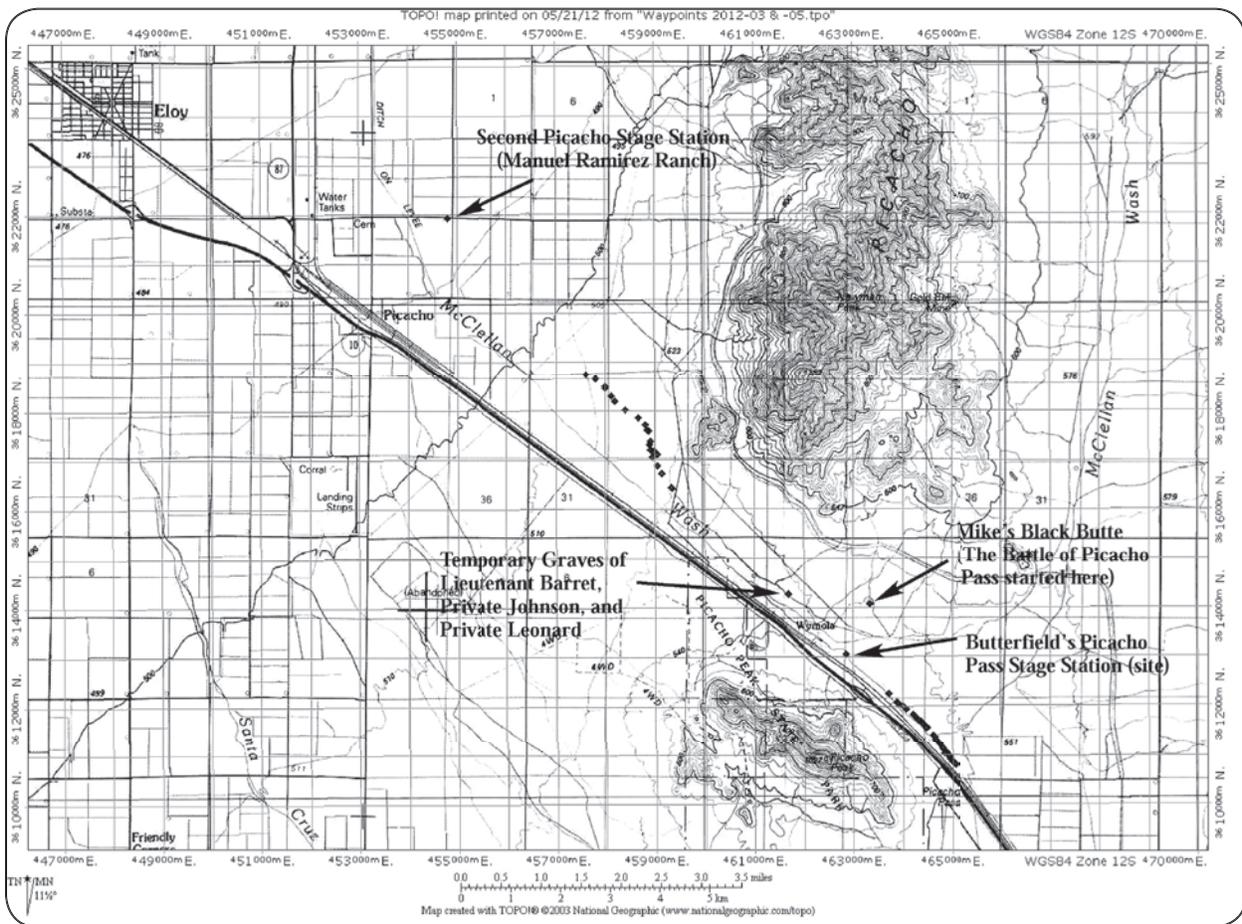
Photo from 1934 of the ruins of the stage station at the Ramirez Ranch. *courtesy Arizona Historic Society*

Haynes from the Arizona Historical Society also in attendance) was conducted in late March to perform preliminary field work. The area where Ahnert's map locates the Picacho Stage Station was found to contain historic artifacts, but none that could be dated definitely to the Butterfield era. (We later concluded, based on a passage in a recent book on the Civil War in Arizona⁶ as well as our mapping in the area, that the trail runs closer to the modern railroad than is shown in Ahnert's books.) The group visited the vicinity of the Blue Water Station (the next Butterfield station north of Picacho) but found that the area is now under cultivation, with a modern well on the site of the stage station. They also found no evidence for trail in the vicinity of the Stanwix Stage Station site near Dateland.

The formal mapping trip occurred during the period May 1 to 5. Those who attended were Don and Vilma Buck, Tracy DeVault, Richard Greene, Mark Haynes, Neal Johns, Greg McEachron, Dan Talbot, Mike Volberg, and Ken and Pat White.

Tuesday, May 1

Ken and Pat, Don and Vilma, Tracy, Neal, and Richard met at Picacho Peak State Park, which is located on the west side of I-10 between Phoenix and Tucson. It has very nice campsites, each with a ramada to provide shade. The sun was intense but it was pleasant in the shade. After a beautiful sunset, the evening ended with a cool breeze. A full moon⁷ lit up



The area near Picacho Peak.

map adapted by Tracy DeVault

the campsites and there wasn't the usual display of stars. The freeway traffic was just a hum. A wind that was strong enough to rock our vehicles picked up during the night.

Wednesday, May 2

We left for the ruins of the Manuel Ramirez Ranch. This was the site of a stage station that was established in the late 1860s after the Butterfield line through Arizona had shut down. Although the Ramirez Ranch is on the Butterfield Trail, the Picacho Pass Stage Station site is several miles to the south, with no direct access.

Although the area that we intended to map is almost directly across the freeway from the campsite, getting there is complicated. After leaving the campground, we headed northwest on I-10 for about ten miles, exited on the east side of the freeway, and headed north on Hwy 87. Due to a road resurfacing

operation, the caravan initially missed the turn east towards the Butterfield Trail. After backtracking, we arrived at the Ramirez Ranch, where we met Dan and Mike.

Dan gave each of us a copy of a 1934 print showing the adobe ruins of the stage station with a stone building in the background. While nothing is left of the station, the remains of the stone building can still be seen. Using the 1934 photo, the location of the stone building, and other landmarks, we determined the location of the adobe structure with reasonable accuracy. All that remains today is a large field containing old glass and soldered-construction cans. Although cultivated fields surround the site, the section corner where the Ramirez Ranch house and adobe station building were located has not been plowed under.

We next headed north and east on dirt roads and eventually passed through the Juan Verdugo



Swale in the Picacho Peak area, along a trace near the telegraph line.
photo by Mike Volberg

homestead. In 1870 the Southern Pacific Mail and Stage Line Company built a one-room adobe station and mesquite corral as a horse-changing and water stop on a branch of the stage route that ran from the railroad station at Picacho to Florence (Arizona) and beyond. In 1913, rancher Juan Verdugo recorded it as a homestead and converted the station into his family home. In 1917 he added a room and raised the roof. At about the same time, a country school was built to the north. In 1920, the property returned to the state. Later, area ranchers leased the land, using the buildings as bunkhouses and storage until the late 1980s. At this location, there is also an unusual circular corral that was made by filling the space between posts with wooden branches. Dan told us that such circular corrals were used to prevent horses from crowding other horses into a corner.

It is difficult to get vehicles into the area where we planned to look for trail. From the Verdugo Ranch we continued east towards the base of the nearby mountains where the Central Arizona Project (CAP) canal provides water to Tucson. From here we turned south on a good paved road. The pavement ends at a CAP pumping station. We turned off the pavement and made our way to a north-south running power-line service road. We followed this very rough service road several miles farther south to get into the area where we intended to begin mapping. We were now very close to the railroad tracks and I-10. We

could see Picacho Peak State Park on the other side. We could have avoided the long, arduous drive by parking on the frontage road, jumping the fence, and walking, but we needed our vehicles to move around.

Mike had used Google Earth satellite images to identify potential trail traces and we began checking them out. One track led to an abandoned shack. Along the way we found some debris and glass but no trail-era artifacts. Dan led us to a debris field he had seen many years ago. We found early railroad artifacts, and nearby we found evidence of an early wagon road and telegraph line. Along the old road swale were uniformly-spaced telegraph pole stumps made from old railroad ties. After establishing the distance between the stumps, we were able to find quite a few of them. Next to the stumps we found pieces of early telegraph line insulators⁸ and the tie wires used to attach the telegraph line to the insulators. Along the road trace, we also found two unusual collections of rocks that might have been graves. The north end of this section of the telegraph line veered towards the railroad and a pipeline right-of-way; we mapped until the trace was lost due to development. Mike explored in the area of Black Butte – a solitary volcanic hill in the flat east of Picacho Peak that was the site of a skirmish in the battle of Picacho Peak.



Black Butte. *courtesy Tracy DeVault*

By 3 p.m. we were finished for the day. We again had to endure the rough power line road, but once

we were on the pavement we found a paved shortcut (Houser Road) back to Hwy 87. This shortened the route we took in the morning by several miles and eliminated another stretch of dirt road. We were back at camp by 5:30 p.m. Marie Greene and Harland and Rose Ann Tompkins joined us for dinner, and then returned home. A cool breeze blew, and the moon was even fuller and brighter than the night before.

Thursday, May 3

We met Dan and Mike and drove north of where we had worked the day before but we were still quite a ways south of the Ramirez Ranch. The railroad veered west in this area while the Butterfield Trail continued north. Although evidence for the trail was scarce, we did find enough to give us a good idea of the location of the route.

Checking rocks for rust and examining trail artifacts involves a lot of kneeling down and getting back up. By 10:30, Pat's knee was bothering her, so Ken



According to Mike Volberg, this cup found along the Gila River during the mapping trip is very similar to the regulation army cups of the trail era. It has the flat bottom and wire-rolled lip typical of cups of the Civil War/Indian War era, but it lacks the stamp "U S" on the handle, making it older than those issued after the Civil War. It is probably of early Civil War issue.

photo by Mike Volberg



Hand-forged hook found in the area north of Dateland.

photo by Mike Volberg

and Pat decided to head for home. The rest of us were done mapping this area by 11:15 a.m. Mike, Tracy, Richard, and Neal moved on to the area of the Oneida Stage Station. While the others checked out a trace that ran north from the Oneida Station site towards Thin Mountain, Richard followed a trace south towards the station site, finding solder-top cans, debris, and old glass. The debris area where we think the Oneida Station was located has been well picked over and most recognizable artifacts have been removed, but old glass and cans, square nails, and even a few wagon parts remain.

In the early afternoon we headed to Gila Bend. By sunset, we were all together at our camp site, a gravel pit on the edge of the Gila flood plain north of Dateland. Greg McEachron, who had driven from Florida, joined us for his first Trail Turtle outing. Tracy uploaded waypoints into our GPS units for the next day's mapping.⁹ It was a cool evening with another bright moon.

Friday, May 4

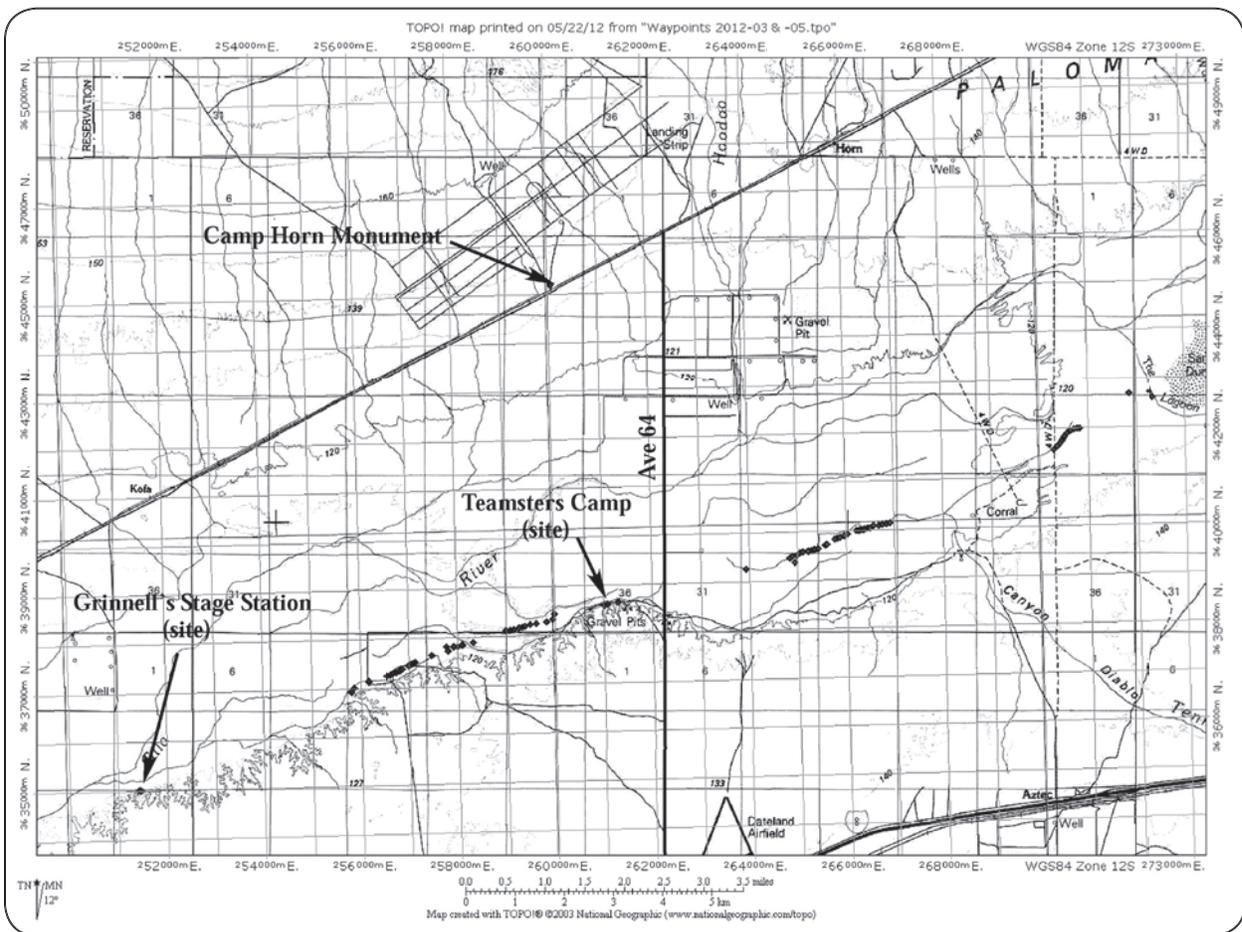
By 6:30 a.m. we were ready to begin mapping. The trail was just beyond the gravel pit. Richard headed west and found a broken bottle but not much else. Tracy, Don, and Greg went east. Greg found a beautifully made hand-forged hook which had been

attached to a wagon at some time in the past. Mark Haynes, who joined us while we were working this section of the trail, brought his Polaris Ranger – a go-anywhere off-road vehicle. Our 4x4 vehicles had a great deal of trouble traveling in the sandy river channel, but the Ranger moved across this terrain with no difficulty whatsoever. Mike and Dan checked out locations that Dan had discovered in times past.

We drove back to the highway (Ave. 64E), turned south, and then took the County Road 2N west. A mile or so past a land fill, we drove down a steep access road back into the Gila flood plain. Greg and Richard walked west and found swales but no artifacts. Mark drove Tracy and Don east to where the mapping had ended earlier in the day. They then walked west back towards the vehicles, recording trail evidence along the way. They found a number of artifacts including part of an old

shovel. Mike, Dan, and Mark roamed the area in their vehicles.

Several of us left for the Texas Hill Telegraph site and Grinnell's Stage Station, about three miles west of where the vehicles were parked. Dan and Greg, Mike and Richard, and Mark in his Ranger began working their way down the Gila River channel. Traveling in the deep sand and through dense tamarisk was difficult and very hard on the vehicles, so eventually everyone transferred into Mark's vehicle. However, even the Ranger was stopped by the dense brush so that the last 150 feet to the site had to be traveled on foot. In the distance, Texas Hill loomed high above the cultivated fields. The site had many artifacts, such as broken bottles, glass, a harness ring, and rocks with rust. Dan told us that Roy Rogers and Dale Evans used to own a ranch in the vicinity.



The area north of Dateland.

map adapted by Tracy DeVault



Texas Hill seen from the site of Grinnell's Stage Station.
photo by Greg McEachron

We returned along a BLM road and then followed the railroad past Camp Horn – one of 15 camps established in 1943 to train troops for desert warfare in Africa – and on to Palomas and Ave. 64E. This is an easier way to get to and from Grinnell's.

Our camp that evening was in an area east of Ave. 64E. It was very windy. We tied Mark's pop-up canopy to Tracy's van so that we could get some shade and protection from the wind. Once again, we had a pleasant and cool evening with incredible moonlight.

Saturday May 5

This was our last mapping day, and we got off to an early start. Mike and Dan drove to check out certain sections of the trail, while Mark drove Tracy, Greg, and Richard to a starting waypoint. We worked our way east following intermittent swales and guided by waypoints that Tracy had uploaded into our GPS receivers. We found artifacts along the way, including a disintegrated mule shoe, a harness ring, and horseshoe nails. Richard speculated that the soil must be incredibly acidic to destroy iron artifacts like mule shoes.

Mark drove us back to our vehicles. We all went in Richard's truck to meet up with Dan and Mike at a power line road. The terrain in this area is rough. There had been a brush fire sometime in the past and the burned out and dead bushes were a danger to our tires. Mike and Dan drove their cars around, looking

for trail and telegraph lines. Mark ferried Tracy, Greg, and Richard to a section of trail close to a waypoint farther east that we wanted to check out. We were in an area known as the Lagoon where the river floods from time to time and that is filled with dense vegetation. We did not find any evidence of the trail in the Lagoon, but shortly afterwards we climbed up the west bank and came across a well-defined swale. We walked the swale back to the vehicles but did not see any artifacts along the way.

There was a two-mile stretch between the power-line road and the parked vehicles that had not been mapped. While others drove, Richard walked this stretch to see if any trail evidence could be found. Unfortunately, years ago a fish farming operation had developed earthen tanks over much of the area, so that if there had been any evidence for the trail, it was now lost. At 2 p.m. the mapping trip was over.



Don Buck, Harland Tompkins, Neal Johns, and Vilma Buck.
photo by Rose Ann Tompkins

Postscript: Dateland in June

Tracy, Richard, Neal, and Mike returned to the Dateland area in early June in order to revisit several areas where the Turtles had found little evidence for the trail on earlier trips. They were able to find one section of the trail that had been missed earlier where they found artifacts including a cartridge case and two hand-forged ax heads. They also visited the



Tracy DeVault and Ken White.
photo by Rose Ann Tompkins

purported site of the Stanwix Stage Station, but they found no evidence in the vicinity for either the trail or the station. During this trip, the group began work at 5:30 a.m. and stopped at 10 a.m. when the temperature on the desert became excessive; they returned to mapping at 5:00 p.m. when the desert cooled down. According to Tracy, during the afternoon “it was 116° in the shade, but there was no shade.”

Endnotes

1. For an account of the battle, see Masich’s *The Civil War in Arizona*.
2. Mike Volberg was a member of the crew who performed the archaeological excavation of the Carrizo Creek Stage Station at Anza Borrego State Park in California.
3. The Conklings began writing their history in 1920, and upon publication in 1947, it became the primary source of information for the Butterfield Overland Mail. The couple allegedly traveled over 65,000 miles in preparation for their book, *The Butterfield Overland Mail*, interviewing everyone they could find associated with Butterfield’s operation and taking over 6,000 photographs.
4. In his two books, *The Butterfield Trail and Overland Mail* and *Retracing the Butterfield Overland Trail*, Gerald Ahnert provides detailed maps of and directions to the locations of the various sites associated with the trail in Arizona. He promotes the use of metal detectors to locate artifacts.
5. Historian Dan Talbot has been researching Butterfield and Mormon Battalion history and trail sites in Arizona for decades; he is the author of *A Historical Guide to the Mormon Battalion and Butterfield Trail*.
6. Masich 333-335.
7. A perigee moon (“Super Moon”) occurred every night during this mapping trip.
8. The insulator pieces appeared to be Brookfield Type CD-126 in aqua green color. These generally date from the early 1880s (the beginning of the railroad era) and are not the same as the EC & M Co. insulators often used for

military telegraph lines. The early GLO maps for this area show that the telegraph line in place at the time of the GLO survey (after the advent of the railroad) was owned by Western Union. It is believed that after the railroad was established, the military removed their telegraph line and salvaged the wire.

9. Tracy has developed a process to automatically upload a file of potential trail sites into each of our GPS units. Mappers can then use the GOTO feature on their GPS to lead them to each of these waypoints.

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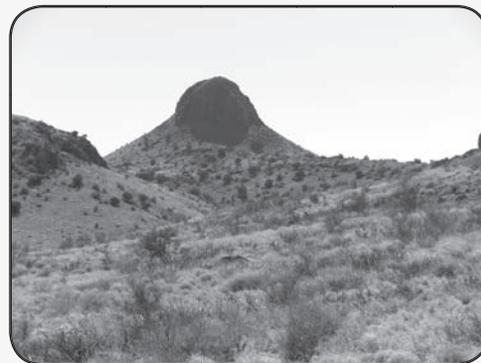
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Don and Vilma Buck discuss an artifact with Dan Talbot.
photo by Greg McEachron

The Cooke's Canyon Field Trip February 25, 2012

As part of the Southern Trails Chapter's symposium in Las Cruces, a field trip to the Cooke's Canyon area was conducted by Rose Ann Tompkins and Tracy DeVault. In attendance were Judy and Tracy DeVault, John and Thelma Fromm, Elaine and Gene Hill, Deborah and Jon Lawrence, Greg McEachron, David Miller, Dick and Jennifer Schmidt, and Rose Ann Tompkins. The group visited Fort Cummings, the Butterfield site nearby, Cooke's Spring, the John Chaffin grave, the site of the Freeman Thomas Massacre, and a petroglyph site associated with the Desert Mogollon culture.



Upper left: Fort Cummings.

photo by Deborah Lawrence

Upper right: The tour group at Cooke's Spring. *photo by Rose Ann Tompkins*

Lower left: John Chaffin's grave. *photo by Greg McEachron*

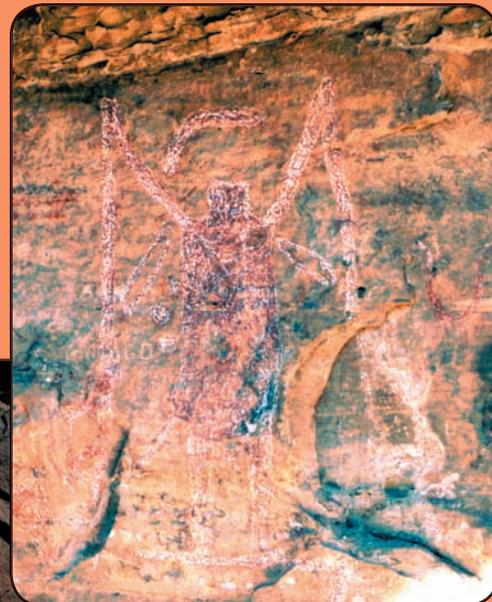
Lower right: Cooke's Peak. *photo by David Miller*

Southern Trails Chapter

Oregon-California Trails Association



OCTA:
The Oregon-California
Trails Association



Rock art on the southern trails.

Upper left – Mask, Hueco Tanks.

Center right – Anthropomorph, Rocky Dell.

Lower left – Petroglyph panel, Cooke's Pass area.

photo by Deborah Lawrence

photo by David Miller

photo by Greg McEachron