

MARINES IN THE MEXICAN WAR



by
Gabrielle M. Neufeld Santelli

Charles R. Smith
Editor

Occasional Paper

HISTORY AND MUSEUMS DIVISION
HEADQUARTERS, U.S. MARINE CORPS
WASHINGTON, D.C.

1991

The device reproduced on the front cover is the oldest military insignia in continuous use in the United States. It first appeared, as shown here, on Marine Corps buttons adopted in 1804. With the stars changed to five points this device has continued on Marine Corps buttons to the present day.

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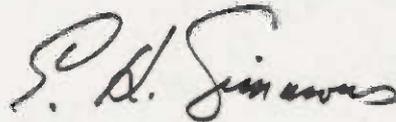
The History and Museums Division has undertaken the publication for limited distribution of various studies, theses, compilations, bibliographies, monographs, and memoirs, as well as proceedings at selected workshops, seminars, symposia, and similar colloquia, which it considers to be of significant value for audiences interested in Marine Corps history. These "Occasional Papers," which are chosen for their intrinsic worth, must reflect structured research, present a contribution to historical knowledge not readily available in published sources, and reflect original content on the part of the author, compiler, or editor. It is the intent of the division that these occasional papers be distributed to selected institutions, such as service schools, official Department of Defense historical agencies, and directly concerned Marine Corps organizations, so the information contained therein will be available for study and exploitation.

Foreword

Marines in the Mexican War chronicles the various land campaigns and seaborne landings in which Marines participated during this 19th century conflict. While it covers Marine activities within Mexico and along its eastern shore in some detail, it neglects a number of Marine activities in California and western Mexico, and is therefore meant to supplement the recently published *Journals of Marine Second Lieutenant Henry Bulls Watson, 1845-1848*, which also covers this period.

This monograph was written by Mrs. Gabrielle M. Neufeld Santelli, while head of the History and Museums Division's Reference Section. After graduating from Molloy College, Rockville Centre, New York, and Georgetown University, Mrs. Santelli joined the Division in 1969. Becoming a mother, she resigned in 1980, deciding to devote full time to her growing family.

In pursuit of accuracy, the History and Museums Division welcomes comment on this publication from interested individuals and activities.



E. H. SIMMONS

Brigadier General, U.S. Marine Corps (Retired)
Director of Marine Corps History and Museums

Preface

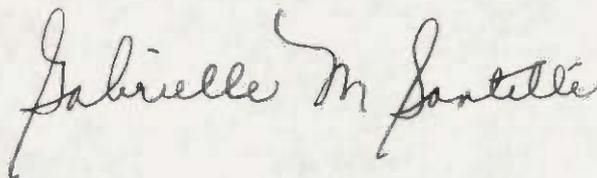
"Wars may be fought with weapons but they are won by men," claimed General George S. Patton. The victory in the Mexican War can be credited to the soldiers, sailors, and Marines who fought and died in America's first war conducted on foreign soil. Those few hundred Marines involved in the Mexican War played a small but significant role in America's final success.

This chronicle was written to give the reader a clearer idea of Marine activities in the various campaigns and landings. The original manuscript was begun by Bernard C. Nalty, who is currently a historian with the Department of the Air Force. His notes provided an excellent general outline for the first part of the story.

Official records of the Marine Corps and appropriate historical works were utilized in compiling this narrative. Marine activities in California and western Mexico, however, are not as well documented as those on the east coast, and some gaps exist in that part of the history.

Illustrations for the section on California are by Col Charles H. Waterhouse, USMCR (Ret) from his series of paintings, "Marines in the Conquest of California." The sketch maps, also by Col Waterhouse, are from BGen Edwin H. Simmons, USMC (Ret), *The United States Marines, 1775-1975* (The Viking Press, 1976), and are used with the kind permission of the author. All other illustrations are from the collections of the Marine Corps Historical Center unless otherwise noted.

In preparing the manuscript for publication, Mr. Charles R. Smith assisted in editing, layout, and the selection of the illustrative materials. In the end, however, it is the author alone who is responsible for the content of the text, including any opinions expressed and any errors in fact.



GABRIELLE M. NEUFELD SANTELLI

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Introduction

This occasional paper is intended to be a summary of Marine Corps operations in the War with Mexico. The battles and landings are not treated in a strict chronological order. Instead, the war has been divided into three parts: the conquest of California, operations in Lower California and off the western coast of Mexico, and the invasion of Mexico.

The Mexican War was an unpopular conflict, one that caused extensive dissent among the American people. President James K. Polk felt that the war would not last long and believed that the United States could win a quick and easy victory. As the fighting dragged on, public opinion, especially in the north east, demanded America's withdrawal from Mexico. In spite of the un-popularity, many heroes did emerge from this conflict. Generals Winfield Scott and Zachary Taylor later became Whig Party presidential candidates.

The United States forces fought their first war on foreign soil against an enemy that often greatly outnumbered them. They faced numerous problems particularly in the areas of communications and logistics. The war trained the leaders for the next bloody conflict, the Civil War, as the War of 1812 had trained many of the military leaders in the Mexican War.

During the 1840s, the United States was a young, dynamic republic, struggling against the bonds that prevented it from achieving its "manifest destiny" by expanding to the west coast of the continent. Hampering the expansion were the British traders in the Oregon Territory and the Mexican settlers in California and the southwest, both supported by governments vitally interested in this situation. Over the years, American diplomats had been fairly successful in bridging the traditional chasm of misunderstanding which had separated the United States and Great Britain. On the other hand, American relations with Mexico had steadily deteriorated leading the two nations to war.

The major cause of trouble between the Mexicans and their northern neighbor was the Texas boundary. During the 1820s, the Mexican government encouraged American citizens to settle in the vastly underpopulated territory of Texas. So many settlers arrived that the concerned Mexicans decided that this wave of immigrants would have to be checked. The good will that had existed between the Americans in Texas and the Mexicans worsened rapidly as (the latter imposed) constraints on the migrants. The situation finally came to a head in 1836 when the Americans rose in rebellion. Texas gained her independence, becoming the Lone Star Republic, and then petitioned the American government for admission to the union as a slave state. The United States Congress failed to act for several years since public opinion in the North was extremely vocal against the admission of another slave state.

The election of the energetic James K. Polk in 1845 as President of the United States, with the campaign promise of "reannexation of Texas, reoccupation of Oregon," was a significant victory for those who believed in American's westward expansion. The day before Polk took office, President John Tyler signed the bill annexing Texas. A few days later, after Polk had replaced Tyler in the White House, the Mexican minister demanded his passport. Since America's diplomatic representative in Mexico had been ejected from the country, this action severed relations between the two nations. The Mexican government had been threatening war if the Lone Star Republic should ever be annexed to the United States.

President Polk, however, hoped to begin serious negotiations on the Texas question. In addition to the controversy over the annexation that brought Texas into the union, there was a second part to the problem. Mexico refused to acknowledge the boundary which she herself had established. During the Texas revolution, General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna, dictator of Mexico and leader of the Mexican troops, had been captured by the insurgents. In exchange for his freedom, and probably his life, he established the Texas-Mexico boundary at the Rio Grande. The Mexican government repudiated this generous settlement on the grounds that it had been obtained under duress and continued to insist as it had since 1836 that the Lone Star Republic was bounded on the south by the Nueces River. Once Texas had agreed to annexation, the United States was bound to support its claims to the land lying between the Nueces and the Rio Grande.

General Zachary Taylor, with 38 years' service as an Army officer, was ordered to advance beyond the Nueces, a movement which began on 8 March 1846. To Polk, this was merely the rightful occupation by American troops of American territory. The new Mexican leaders looked upon this area as their domain and decided to enforce their long-standing claim to the area. On 25 April, an American patrol was attacked by Mexican troops who crossed the Rio Grande. American lives were lost. With a clear conscience, Polk was able to call upon Congress to "vindicate with decision the honor, the rights, and the interests of our country," for Mexico had "invaded our territory and shed American blood upon American soil." On 13 May 1846, Congress declared war on Mexico.

With war a reality, Congress set about authorizing an increase in the size of the Army and the Navy. The Army was increased from 8,500 to 15,000 men and the President was authorized to call for 50,000 volunteers. The Navy's authorized strength grew from 7,500 to 10,000. Plagued by a lack of enlistments throughout the war, the Navy's actual strength rarely rose above 8,000 men.

Shortly after the war broke out, the United States Marines were engaged in fighting in both Mexico and California. The Marine Corps at this time was commanded by Brevet Brigadier General Archibald Henderson. Henderson had been Commandant of the Marine Corps since 1820 and continued in the position until his death in 1859. In his 53-year career in the Corps, Henderson actively participated in the War of 1812 and

the Seminole Indian Wars and was promoted to brigadier general by brevet in 1837, the highest rank to be earned by a Marine officer up to that time.

The Marine Corps was part of the Naval Establishment. The question of who had jurisdiction over the Marines had been settled 12 years before, when Congress passed "An Act for the Better Organization of the Marine Corps." Prior to this, it was generally believed that when on shore the Marines were under the Army and when at sea, under the Navy. The Act of 1834 stated that the Marines would be under naval jurisdiction unless the President assigned them to the Army. During the Seminole Indian Wars, President Andrew Jackson, under the provisions of this act, detached the Marines for service with the Army. In 1836, two battalions of Marines were formed into a regiment under the command of Henderson and went south to join the Army. Henderson was prepared again to have Marines detached for service with the Army as well as to continue detachments with the Navy afloat and on shore.

At the outbreak of the war, the Corps numbered only 63 officers and about 1,200 enlisted Marines. Most of the enlisted personnel and company officers were on board ships of the Navy. The remaining Marines were on guard duty at various Navy yards and shore stations. During the years immediately preceding the Mexican War, Henderson repeatedly insisted that more Marines were needed to garrison properly the stations to which they were assigned and to provide the necessary ships' detachments. These pleas, however, did not sway Congress, and Marine Corps strength would remain at less than half that allowed during the War of 1812.

Many of the younger officers who served in the Mexican War would become the military leaders in the years ahead. Two Marine officers brevetted later became commandants of the Marine Corps--Charles G. McCawley and Jacob Zeilin.

It is difficult to evaluate the role that the Marine Corps would play in the Mexican War. The provisions of the Act of 1834 placed the Marines under the control of the Secretary of the Navy, but permitted the President to assign Marines to the Army. During the war, Marines would serve with both the Army and the Navy. At the outbreak of the war, the great majority of Marine officers and enlisted men were on board ships of the Navy. The Navy was tasked with the job of maintaining a strict blockade of the Mexican coast. This alone was a tremendous job since Mexico had two coast lines requiring a voyage of 14,000 miles by sea to go from one coast to the other. In addition, the Marines aided by sailors would land at the various ports and towns on the coasts. In many cases the landing was a show of force since only in rare instances could the Navy spare enough Marines to garrison the area. This rudimentary amphibious force, however, would have a flexibility the Army did not possess. The Marines' mobility allowed them to move quickly and to make their numbers appear much larger to the inhabitants and the enemy. This provided a kind of strategic leverage, where effect greatly exceeded actual force. Along the west coasts of California and Mexico the few hundred men of the Pacific Squadron would control an

area of thousands of miles. In the Gulf of Mexico the Home Squadron would neutralize Mexico's east coast, permitting the Army to land and march inland without fear of being surrounded by enemy forces.

Although Mexico lacked a navy, it did for the most part have a formidable army to face the Americans. The Mexican Army, however, had its share of problems. At times it lacked effective leaders and a cohesive central government to back its efforts. But the Mexicans were an elusive enemy who fought when they felt it was to their advantage to do so and retreated when the opposition became too great. During some landings Marines and sailors would go ashore to find that there was no enemy to fight. The Mexican troops would simply withdraw inland and wait for the Americans to leave. The fact those vast areas were effectively controlled is amazing in light of the small number of Marines and sailors assigned there.

The seizure of the Mexican capital would be essential for victory, and this operation could best be carried out by the Army. It was the Navy, however, that would safely land the Army's forces, including a small battalion of Marines, at Veracruz. Earlier, these same Marines, reinforced by sailors, had previously landed at the important coastal towns in Mexico and neutralized the enemy's troops there. A different Marine battalion would later join the Army on its march to Mexico City and would perform admirably the duties assigned to it. General Scott had an army of more than 10,000 men when he first landed in Mexico. The Marine Battalion assigned to Scott's army numbered less than 400, but when it was employed in battle or used for other duties the Marines would earn the praise of the Army's highest officers.

California

When Texas rebelled in 1836, California followed suit, raising a single-starred blue flag and driving the Mexican troops from the province. Unable to reconquer the territory from San Diego northward, the Mexican government bided its time, allowing the citizens of Upper California to do as they pleased, but not admitting their independence. Although Mexico was unable to govern this territory, the Californians themselves failed to unify. A virtual state of civil war existed as two men, Governor Pio Pico and Commandante-General Jose Castro, vied for control. The province, too weak to defend itself, seemed destined to come under the control of some nation other than Mexico; and the United States was determined that no third power, such as England or France, should bar its advance westward.¹ This determination explains the series of incidents between the Americans and native Californians in the years prior to declared hostilities.

Like most territories attempting to gain their independence, California turned first upon the foreigners living there, in this case American traders, farmers, and businessmen. In April 1840, Jose Castro, chief magistrate of the province, ordered the arrest of some 60 American and British nationals. Of these, 47 were found guilty of inciting to rebellion and were jailed. One of the prisoners, an American, died under the harsh treatment he received. To stem the wave of repression, the American sloop *St. Louis* was ordered to Monterey. The ship dropped anchor on 15 June 1840. Her captain, Commander French Forrest, lost no time in landing his Marine guard under Orderly Sergeant James Robinson. Realizing that the United States would not hesitate to use force to redress this injustice, Castro promptly backed down. Besides freeing his captives, Castro also pledged to respect the rights of foreigners in the future. With this accomplished, Commander Forrest set sail from Monterey on 5 July 1840.

Two years later another incident took place. Captain Thomas ap Catesby Jones, USN, commodore of America's Pacific Squadron, was informed by the skipper of a merchantman off the coast of Peru that the United States and Mexico had gone to war. The news came as no surprise, since rumors of impending conflict had been circulating for almost two years. Jones had drawn up a plan to meet just such a crisis and immediately ordered the *United States* and the *Cyane* to sail north for the expressed purpose of taking California before any foreign power could make a move in that direction.

Upon arriving there Captain James Armstrong, commander of the frigate *United States* (which was also Jones' flagship), went ashore at Monterey to demand the surrender of California. Early the next morning, 20 October 1842, a peace commission filed into Jones' cabin to sign the articles of capitulation. A few minutes before noon, First Lieutenant George W. Robbins, an officer with 10 years' experience in the Marine

Corps, and the squadron's Marine contingent, as part of the naval landing party, hoisted and unfurled the Stars and Stripes over the captured town.

The operation had been efficient, bold, and successful; the only difficulty lay in the fact that no state of war existed between the United States and Mexico. Captain Jones became aware of this disquieting fact on the afternoon of 22 October. The crews of the frigate *United States* and the sloop *Cyane* were mustered on deck and informed that Monterey would be restored at once to the California authorities.² Within half an hour, the American flag had been lowered and the California colors raised once again. The Mexican troops were given back their weapons and Marines and sailors returned to their ships.

Fortunately for Captain Jones, the Monterey incident did not blight his career. He was relieved of his command, but he was not reprimanded and within a few years would be restored to command of the Pacific Squadron. Nor did Mexico choose to go to war to avenge this unprovoked attack. True, she protested long and loud, but the bitter fact remained that Mexico was unable to defend California.³ This incident showed one thing to the Americans--the capture of the towns on the California coast could be accomplished with little difficulty.

Nor was the lesson lost on Mexico, which soon attempted to reassert her authority over Upper California. By emptying most of the prisons, the Mexican government managed to assemble an army, ostensibly for the purpose of subduing California's Indian tribes. Once the troops arrived in the province, they forgot about the Indian menace and turned instead to those pastimes for which they had been jailed in the first place. After a few months of murder, rape, and looting, Jose Castro declared himself commanding general of a California army and in an almost bloodless campaign sent the ex-convicts back to Mexico.

This last failure set the stage for disaster. The Pacific coast had become a power vacuum. From the United States came cries of "manifest destiny"; nothing must halt the march westward. From Europe could be heard voices of British statesmen urging that California be added to the Empire.⁴ Obviously, some nation was going to snatch up California and do it quickly.

After his inauguration, President Polk set out to acquire California. A decade before, Mexico had rejected an offer to buy the province, but this did not deter Polk. John Slidell, while on his mission to Mexico City to settle the Texas question, was authorized to offer as much as \$25,000,000 for the disputed Texas land, California, and New Mexico. With the failure of this attempt to purchase California, Polk decided on an alternate plan. If he could create a strong pro-American sentiment in California, annexation of the province might follow.⁵ Thomas O. Larkin, American consul at Monterey was, in Polk's opinion, the ideal person to serve as America's propagandist in California.

In October 1845, the President appointed Larkin his secret agent and warned him



that foreign countries were interested in gaining control over the California territory. In order to forestall such threats, Larkin was to create a bond of friendship between the United States and California. Larkin was an excellent choice in this instance because he was on very good terms with many influential native Californians.⁶ Eventually, it was hoped, the citizens would voluntarily agree to annexation, but for the time being the major threat was from Europe. An independent California would be acceptable to Polk as long as the state avoided seizure by the British, reconquest by Mexico, or outright purchase by some other power.⁷

By this time the fuse had burned much shorter. Situated off Mexico's Pacific coast were the vessels of Commodore John D. Sloat, commander of the Pacific Squadron, who already had been instructed to 'avoid any act which might be construed as aggression,' but to capture the California ports in the event of war.⁸ Mexico broke diplomatic relations with the United States before Texas accepted annexation to the

United States by a plebiscite in July 1845.

As the commodore watched and waited, First Lieutenant Archibald H. Gillespie was making his way across Mexico with secret instructions from President James K. Polk. Lieutenant Gillespie, a tall, dark-haired Marine, was being sent to California to aid American Consul Thomas O. Larkin. Polk wanted a liaison officer who spoke Spanish, knew something of the customs of Latin peoples, and above all, could be trusted. Gillespie fitted these qualifications. He had been appointed a second lieutenant in 1832 and during the intervening years had served on board several ships and on shore at Pensacola. Fresh from a cruise to the Orient as Marine officer of the frigate *Brandywine*, Gillespie, on 18 October 1845, was ordered to report to the Secretary of the Navy, George Bancroft, "for such duty as he may assign you."⁹ Twelve days later, the lieutenant reported to President Polk and learned the details of his mission. In brief, he was to work with Larkin in helping the Californians set up an independent state, all the while keeping on the alert for any signs of British political infiltration. With a copy of Polk's instructions to Larkin, a letter of introduction signed by Secretary of State James Buchanan, and a packet of personal letters written to John C. Fremont by members of his family, Gillespie left Washington on 3 November 1845. From there he traveled to New York where he booked passage to Veracruz on board the brig *Petersburgh*.

Fearing capture by the Mexicans, Gillespie memorized the contents of the dispatches and then destroyed them. Disguised as a businessman, Gillespie then made his way from Veracruz to Mexico City. A revolution against the government delayed his departure from the Mexican capital for a month, but he finally reached Mazatlan on the west coast of Mexico in February 1846. There Gillespie found some American warships of the Pacific Squadron anchored in the harbor and reported to Commodore Sloat. It is not known whether he delivered his message to Sloat, but on 22 February 1846 Gillespie boarded the *Cyane* commanded by Captain William Mervine, and continued his journey. The *Cyane* did not sail directly to California, but headed for the Sandwich (Hawaiian) Islands.

On 17 April 1846, six months to the day after he left Washington, Gillespie reached California. His next task was to deliver instructions to Larkin at Monterey. War had not yet been declared, and after locating him, Gillespie had little news to report. He secretly instructed Larkin to try to bring about the peaceful separation of California and told him the plans that would be implemented should war break out between the United States and Mexico. In the latter case Gillespie could only repeat Secretary of the Navy Bancroft's long-standing instructions that the United States Squadron would avoid any acts of aggression while remaining ready to strike at once in the event of war.

This left the Marine with the difficult problem of locating and talking with John C. Fremont, Brevet Captain of the United States Topographical Engineers. The Army officer, dubbed the "Pathfinder of the West," was reported to be at Sutter's Fort on the

Sacramento River; but when Gillespie arrived there, he found that Fremont and his men had left for Oregon.¹⁰ Unfortunately, Fremont had not left willingly.

The presence of Fremont's group of armed men in California was a tangible American asset. Fremont was in northern California on an exploring expedition financed by the United States government. Although the group numbered only about 60 men, this was a formidable band of hard-bitten mountain trappers, among them the rugged Christopher "Kit" Carson.¹¹ In the event of a European intervention, Fremont's explorers could perform an important job, but their actions would have to be coordinated with those of Larkin.

During the winter of 1845, Fremont had obtained permission from Commandante Jose Castro to camp in the interior of California. The approach of spring, however, found Fremont's explorers edging toward the coast; later, the Army officer was to explain that he was merely seeking the site for a seaside cottage for his aging mother. Whatever the reason, Castro became understandably concerned over the antics of this band of armed Americans. On 3 March 1846, a messenger appeared at Fremont's camp in the Salinas Valley near Monterey with order for the intruders to leave the province.

In one short week, Fremont was able to destroy whatever good-will Larkin had created, for he decided to resist the Californians. Having decided to resist, he raised the American flag, and vowed to fight to the last man. Exercising his unquestioned gift for pompous phrases, he informed Larkin that he would "fight to the extremity and refuse quarter, trusting in our country to avenge us."¹² Once Castro had assembled his army, the Pathfinder searched his conscience, discovered that his sense of duty would not let him fight, and on 9 March 1846 found the nearest path leading out of the province.¹³ He attributed his change of heart to an evil omen--the staff pole bearing the Stars and Stripes had fallen to the ground. Clearly it was time to move. As the exploring party moved northward, Castro claimed a crushing victory over the American invaders.

At the southern end of Lake Klamath, Oregon, near the California border, Gillespie at last caught up with Fremont's party. The day was 9 May 1846; and 1,800 miles to the southeast American cannon were roaring at Resaca de la Palma, but neither Gillespie nor Fremont knew that the war had begun. The letters delivered by the Marine, among them a message from Senator Thomas Hart Benton, Fremont's father-in-law convinced the Pathfinder that Great Britain was about to snatch up California. He decided to march southward at once.¹⁴

The column was slow in getting underway. On the night of Gillespie's arrival, a band of Klamath Indians attacked the camp, killing three of Fremont's men and wounding others. A few days were devoted to burning Indian villages to avenge the attack, but by the end of May the Americans had arrived at Sutter's Fort. Gillespie was then sent on to San Francisco to obtain supplies and ammunition from Captain John B. Montgomery of the sloop *Portsmouth*.

Meanwhile, at Fort Leavenworth on the Missouri River, Colonel Stephen Watts Kearny was assembling a force dubbed the "Army of the West." Kearny's troops were preparing to march over the Santa Fe Trail to aid in the conquest of California. On 13 May 1846, the day that war was declared, the Army of the West was ordered to New Mexico; but before the expedition got underway, Kearny's orders were modified to allow him to march on to California after occupying Santa Fe. The Americans took Santa Fe on 18 August without firing a shot. Here, Kearny left the bulk of his troops and proceeded toward California with 300 dragoons. The Mormon Battalion was ordered to follow later.

Although both Fremont and the distant Kearny were preparing to strike, Commodore Sloat, in charge of the Pacific Squadron, remained at anchor off Mazatlan, Mexico. Troubled by memories of the furor over the mistaken capture of the California ports only four years earlier, the 66-year-old commodore wanted to be absolutely certain of the outbreak of war before he moved. On 17 May, he learned of a skirmish between the Mexicans and Americans in Texas, but he waited. Not until 8 June, when he heard news of the battles of Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma fought a month before, did Sloat decide to take action.

As the commodore began making his way northward, Fremont, still ignorant of the outbreak of war, began operations against the Californians. On 10 June 1846, a handful of his mountain men stole a large herd of horses destined for the camp of General Castro. This may have been sound tactics, but to the Californians it seemed like thievery. It was hardly the type of conduct to win the native settlers to the American cause. Next the band of Americans occupied the town of Sonoma, northernmost Mexican settlement in California. A few weeks earlier, Americans and other foreigners in Sonoma had taken the fort from the Californians and proclaimed the California Republic. Fremont and Gillespie with about 90 men arrived on 25 June to relieve them. While at Sonoma, a group of the irregulars, after a round of brandies, designed and raised the "Bear Flag" of California. The crudely drawn bear resembled a hog, but the rebellion was underway. The first act of the new republic was to call upon the U.S. Navy for assistance. Captain John Montgomery, whose sloop-of-war *Portsmouth* was anchored in San Francisco Bay, was aware of the situation. He gave the rebellion tacit approval, but refused to become involved actively since he had no official word that war was declared.

With Fremont at its head, the army crossed San Francisco Bay, fought a brief skirmish at San Rafael, had three prisoners executed, then spiked the rusty guns of an abandoned fort at the Presidio near the Golden Gate. The Pathfinder and his men returned to Sonoma in time to celebrate the Fourth of July, an occasion highlighted by the adoption of the Bear Flag constitution. Actually, several constitutions were drawn up by various members of Fremont's group. Each of these was carefully studied by Gillespie, who made the final determination.¹⁵



Covered by ships of the Pacific Squadron, Marines scramble unopposed up the rocky shore below the newly-built Monterey customhouse on the morning of 7 July 1846. Following the reading of a proclamation and the raising of the American colors, Marines occupied the California capital.

On 2 July 1846, Commodore Sloat on board the frigate *Savannah* arrived at Monterey Bay, California. The sloop *Warren* remained at Mazatlan to bring any dispatches of importance. The *Savannah* found the sloops *Cyane* and *Levant* in the harbor awaiting the arrival of the commodore. Always a cautious man, Commodore Sloat first made a formal call on the port officials; then, after a discussion with Larkin, he at last agreed to the capture of the town. Sloat's decision to land troops was hastened by the fact that he had received word of Fremont's activities to the north.

Early on the morning of 7 July 1846, four Navy officers went ashore at Monterey and demanded the surrender of the town. The military commandant there claimed that he had no authority to relinquish the town. A few hours later 250 sailors and Marines landed at Monterey under the immediate command of Captain William Mervine, captain of the *Savannah*. Mervine was assisted by Commander Hugh N. Page, USN. The 85 Marines who landed with the bluejackets were commanded by Captain Ward Marston

and Second Lieutenant Henry W. Queen of the *Savannah*, Second Lieutenant William A. T. Maddox of the *Cyane*, and Orderly Sergeant John McCabe of the *Levant*.¹⁶ Landing at 10 in the morning, the forces formed and marched to the Custom House where a proclamation was read. The proclamation promised, among other things, "a great increase in the value of real estate and the products of California." Having met with no resistance, Captain Mervine then decided that established custom demanded that the Mexican flag be lowered and the American flag raised before this act became official. Unfortunately, the Mexican ensign had not been flown over Monterey for several months. A hasty search was conducted to locate the desired flag. The ceremony was finally completed to Captain Mervine's satisfaction and Monterey was in American hands. The sailors returned on board ship leaving a detachment of Marines under Lieutenant Maddox to garrison Monterey. The Marines took possession of the barracks which had been used by the forces of General Castro.¹⁷

Neither Sloat nor Larkin had forgotten his instructions to cultivate the friendship of the Californians. From the outset they vowed to be as generous as possible to the inhabitants of the occupied city. Castro was invited to cooperate in forming some sort of provisional government, but angrily demanding an explanation of the Sonoma rebellion, he refused. Pio Pico, Governor of California, and Juan B. Alvarado, an influential citizen, also balked at the thought of yielding to the Americans.¹⁸

Monterey was firmly in American hands, but enemy activity continued in the surrounding countryside. A small scouting party under Lieutenants Queen and Maddox ventured outside of Monterey and captured General Castro's son and a courier with dispatches for the general. On 12 July Lieutenant Queen was ordered to take 10 men and capture a band of Californians which was operating in the area and endangering the safety of Monterey. After lying in wait all night, the enemy force finally appeared. Although the Americans failed to surprise the Californians, they did manage to take one prisoner. The attack compelled the Californians to abandon their camp, which was about 40 miles outside of Monterey, leaving behind 10 pieces of artillery, a large supply of ammunition, and about 500 horses. At the end of July Lieutenant Queen with 10 mounted Marines proceeded to the enemy camp to prevent its recapture. Queen was later relieved by one of Fremont's officers and he returned to the *Savannah*.¹⁹

Meanwhile, Marines and sailors from the sloop *Portsmouth*, under the command of Lieutenant John S. Missroon, USN, landed at Yerba Buena (San Francisco). An unopposed landing was made, the American flag raised over the Customs House and Captain Montgomery's proclamation read to a small crowd of about 30 Californians. Leaving behind Lieutenant Henry Bulls Watson, USMC, and 14 Marines, the landing force returned to the *Portsmouth*. Watson was temporarily appointed Military Commandant and the Marines were later increased to 26 men.* On the same day Lieutenant

*Lieutenant Watson's correspondence while in command at Yerba Buena has been published in *The Journals of Marine Second Lieutenant Henry Bulls Watson, 1845-1848* (History and Museums Division, 1990).



Marines and sailors from the sloop Portsmouth, accompanied by a drum and fife, assemble at the Yerba Buena customhouse as the American flag is raised on 9 July 1846. Marines, under the command of 2dLt Henry B. Watson, who was appointed military commandant, garrisoned the town.

James W. Revere, USN, from the *Portsmouth* was sent to Sonoma with news of the capture of Yerba Buena and Monterey. The American flag was hoisted over the town thus bringing the Bear Flag republic to an end. With most of northern California under their control, the Americans turned their attention toward southern California.

While the Californians prepared to make a stand in the south, the ailing Sloat had been relieved on 23 July by Commodore Robert F. Stockton, a vigorous officer who scorned his predecessor's mild policies. (Fremont with Gillespie and 200 mounted men had arrived at Monterey on 22 July.) Among Stockton's first official acts was to receive Fremont's irregulars into the naval service. Led by Fremont and with Gillespie as second in command the California Battalion of Mounted Riflemen, as the old Bear Flag Army now was called, boarded the *Cyane* on 25 July 1846. The ship, now under the command of Samuel F. Du Pont, sailed immediately for San Diego. Many of Fremont's men, Kit Carson among them, were unaccustomed to being on board ship and became

violently ill during the voyage. Fortunately, all survived, and on 29 July arrived in the harbor of San Diego. Here they found the Mexican hermaphrodite brig *Juanita*, and captured both the ship and her cargo. The Marine guard and a few sailors landed, and the town was occupied without opposition. On 8 August, leaving Gillespie and 48 men behind as a temporary garrison force, the California Battalion began the march northward toward Los Angeles.²⁰

Meanwhile, on the first day of August 1846, the frigate *Congress* had sailed from Monterey with Commodore Stockton on board. Three days later the ship put into Santa Barbara and occupied the town. Leaving behind a small garrison, the frigate then sailed on to San Pedro, arriving there on 6 August. Under the command of Lieutenant Jacob Zeilin, the Marines landed and raised the American flag.* The town was not permanently held and the Marines returned to the *Congress*.

Los Angeles was the next objective in Stockton's plan for the conquest of California. Stockton started a second column toward Los Angeles which included the Marine detachment of the *Congress*. Stockton's men joined the California Battalion and on 13 August they trudged into Los Angeles. The provincial army dissolved upon the arrival of the Americans. General Jose Castro and his army left the area and headed south. With California seemingly pacified, Stockton next prepared to enforce a blockade of Mexico's west coast. In preparation for his departure, he drew up a plan for a territorial government headed by himself, with Fremont as "Military Commander of the Territory." In addition to being selected for the post of secretary of the proposed government, Gillespie was named "Commandant of the Southern Department." Fremont was given command of the northern area and Stockton took charge of the central area, thus dividing California into three districts. Unfortunately, the rumor of an Indian uprising near Sutter's Fort caused Stockton weigh anchor and sail northward without naming anyone to govern in his stead.

Gillespie, with a mounted detachment of the California Battalion, arrived at Los Angeles from San Diego. In his role of combined mayor, judge, and sheriff, Captain Gillespie was called upon to enforce laws which the native Californians considered tyrannical. Gillespie insisted on strict discipline from both his own men and the natives in Los Angeles. Although he had been warned by Stockton to avoid antagonizing the citizens of the town, Gillespie decreed that anyone found carrying arms outside his own home would be banished from the city. Even more galling to the citizens was the curfew which the Marine officer clamped on the town. Naturally, there were objections, and those who complained were arrested.

*Jacob Zeilin's career with the Marine Corps spanned a 45-year period. Later, during the Mexican War, he was appointed Military Governor of San Diego until the conquest of California was completed. He commanded Marines on the Perry expedition to Japan. In 1864 he became Colonel Commandant of the Marine Corps. He retired in November 1876 with the rank of brigadier general.

Trouble was now brewing. Due in part to Gillespie's lack of tact, the Californians were on the verge of open rebellion. Gillespie, fearing an attack, confiscated all of the gunpowder he could locate. During most of the month of August, there were 75 Marines on guard duty from the *Congress* and the *Cyane*.²¹ Also Fremont's California Battalion was camping 10 miles away, so any objections to the Americans' policies were kept at a minimum. The *Cyane* sailed for the Mexican ports in the last week in August and the landing force from the *Congress* went back on board ship 10 days later. Gillespie was left to hold Los Angeles with 48 men when Fremont marched north on 11 September 1846. Many of the men under Gillespie's command could not be depended upon and Gillespie had much trouble with discipline due to the amount of liquor his troops were consuming. The rude behavior of the occupying troops did nothing to soothe the Californians' wounded feelings.

Disgusted by the drunkenness of the garrison and embittered by Gillespie's inflexible laws, the Californians revolted. On 23 September a mob led by Serbulo Varela attacked the American barracks but was easily driven back. This incident, however, further inflamed the normally peaceful citizens of Los Angeles so that by the following day 500 men had taken up arms against the Americans. Gillespie and his men resisted as best they could--they even salvaged a field piece and mounted it on an axle from an oxcart. But after a week's diet of dried beef and water, they were forced to ask for terms.

Among the Californians were some irresponsible troublemakers, but the majority of the rebels were prudent men, genuinely outraged at the conduct of the Americans. To the same majority, the slaughter of Gillespie's command, something that could be accomplished only after a costly assault against a carefully prepared position, was unnecessary. His surrender would satisfy the Californians' honor; so on 30 September they permitted the Marine officer to march out of Los Angeles with his men, arms, and some \$2,500 which was to have been used to finance the American-sponsored city government.²² Gillespie and his men were then allowed to march to San Pedro on 30 September 1846 where the American merchantman *Vandalia* lay at anchor.

Another week had passed before the *Savannah*, William Mervine her captain, arrived at San Pedro. Upon learning of the revolt, Mervine assembled a force of about 300 men, among them Gillespie's force and the ship's Marine guard under Captain Marston, and started toward Los Angeles. During the march, the Californians began firing at the column as it entered a narrow valley. Gillespie and his men immediately charged up the hills and drove the enemy away. When Gillespie rejoined the column, he reported that, "Captain Mervine now began to holler after me, 'Captain Gillespie you are wasting ammunition--we can't spare the caps!' repeating this and a variety of like expressions of displeasure, discouraging to my men."²³ The march continued until the Californians fired on the Americans with a 4-pound gun. Shouting himself hoarse in the process, Mervine broke contact with the loss of 4 killed and several wounded. Subjected to constant harassment but unable to lure the enemy into pitched battle, Mervine

decided to abandon the effort and withdrew to San Pedro. Upon arriving at San Pedro, Mervine buried his dead on an island in the harbor. The *Savannah* remained in San Pedro harbor while the *Vandalia* sailed north.

Gillespie was infuriated at Mervine's actions for he felt that victory could have been theirs had the battle continued. From this time on these two men became bitter enemies. The force remained on board the *Savannah* until they were joined by Commodore Stockton with the *Congress* a few weeks later. Stockton learned of Mervine's failure to retake Los Angeles and that San Pedro was back in enemy hands. On 26 October, the Commodore ordered a detachment of seamen and Marines ashore. The Marines quickly took the summit of the hill at San Pedro and the Californians beat a hasty retreat. Once again the American flag flew over San Pedro. Stockton was unable to make the necessary preparations for another march on Los Angeles and decided to abandon the effort for the time being. Gillespie's men boarded the *Congress* and sailed for San Diego.

It was hoped that in San Diego much needed supplies and horses could be obtained. Unfortunately, there were no supplies at San Diego either. Guarded by a handful of men under Lieutenant George Minor, USN, the town was in a desperate situation. The Californians were constantly harassing the garrison at San Diego and had driven off the cattle. Gillespie and his men were landed to relieve the garrison. A company of men traveled down the coast and were able to find enough cattle to feed the garrison, and the town was again secured. Once again an expedition was planned against Los Angeles.

Commodore Stockton sailed from San Francisco for San Diego on 5 December. While entering the harbor at San Diego, the *Congress* ran aground and appeared ready to capsize. The ship was finally freed after considerable effort. At San Diego, Marines and sailors conducted extensive training operations on shore in preparation for the march on Los Angeles.²⁴

In the meantime, Kearny, who had been promoted to brigadier general in June 1846, marched west from Santa Fe. In October, Kearny met Kit Carson with his 19-man escort which was riding east to Washington with a report by Commodore Stockton on the seizure of California. Carson had left before the uprising in Los Angeles and reported to Kearny that California had been pacified. Kearny persuaded Carson to turn his dispatches over to another member of the escort and to return to California with Kearny as a guide. Since Kearny felt that there was little prospect of serious fighting and a difficult trail ahead, he ordered 200 of his 300 dragoons to remain in New Mexico, a decision which he soon regretted. On 23 November, while camped near the Gila and Colorado rivers, the general learned of the revolt in California from a captured Mexican courier. Across the parched deserts on a trail dubbed "Devil's Highway" by the Spanish, the detachment of dragoons marched on toward California. At last on 5 December 1846, they arrived at the Rancheria Santa Maria. Here they met Gillespie who had a force of his own men and 10 sailors, under the command of Lieutenant

Edward F. Beale, USN. Gillespie was under orders from Commodore Stockton to report the situation in California to Kearny and bring him to San Diego.

The thirsty, weary, and half-naked troops spent that day at the Indian village of San Pasqual soaking wet in a driving rain. The next day, chilled to the bone, they again hit the trail. A short time later, the advancing column was attacked by the California lancers led by Don Andres Pico. General Kearny ordered Gillespie to stay in the rear and protect the baggage. Although this was not to the Marine's liking, he obeyed the order. The command to "trot" was mistakenly believed to be an order to "charge" and Kearny's officers and troops galloped toward the Californians.²⁵ During this headlong charge, the enemy suddenly whirled and fell upon the scattered Americans. When it became clear that the American troops were in trouble, Gillespie raced to their aid. While trying to rally his men, Gillespie was attacked by four mounted lancers. Wounded in the chest, he was knocked from his horse; and as he struggled to rise, he was felled from behind by the blow of still another lancer. When the fighting ended, the Americans held the battlefield; but 19 of them were dead and both Kearny and Gillespie had been wounded.²⁶

The following morning, Kearny and his men pushed forward another 10 miles, but realizing that his trail-weary dragoons could not fight their way through to join Stockton, he pitched camp at Mule Hill to await reinforcements. Don Andres Pico, leader of the Californians and an acquaintance of Gillespie, took advantage of the lull to send medicine to the wounded Marine. Later he brought Gillespie to his camp for further medical care.

Gillespie was fortunate; for Kearny's troops, fresh from the burning sands of New Mexico, were freezing in the colder weather of California. For food they had stewed mule meat and some coffee. Lieutenant of Dragoons William H. Emory brought a cup of the scarce coffee to a dying man and in return for this favor was given an unleavened cake, dirty and foul-smelling--the man's most prized possession. "I ate more than half," reminisced Emory, "when, on breaking a piece, the bodies of the most loathsome insects were exposed to my view. My hunger, however, overcame my fastidiousness."

At midnight on 8 December, Kit Carson, who arrived with Gillespie, embarked on an adventure that was to prove him as adept in the wilderness as he was inept on board ship. With Navy Lieutenant Edward F. Beale and an Indian scout, he attempted to slip through the Californians' lines to obtain help from Stockton. The three took off their shoes, tied them around their necks, and crawled on their stomachs through the inky blackness. At times they were inches from discovery, but Carson got them past the Californians. Unfortunately, they lost their shoes in the process and had to walk barefoot through the cactus. The men then separated in the hope that one would get through to Stockton's headquarters. All three, exhausted and foot-sore, arrived safely at San Diego.

In the meantime, Pico stampeded a herd of wild horses into Kearny's camp; but the

maneuver caused no casualties, providing instead some fat horses' carcasses which quickly found their way into the soup cauldrons. Despairing of Carson and his companions, Kearny planned to force his way out through the ring of Californians. Before dawn on 11 December, the hour Kearny had selected for his desperate gamble, 80 Marines and 120 sailors sent by Stockton and led by Lieutenant Andrew Gray, USN, and First Lieutenant Jacob Zeilin, USMC, arrived on the scene. Because of these reinforcements, the Californians decided not to fight and the dragoons were able to march unchallenged to San Diego.

At long last, Stockton's forces were strong enough to attempt the recapture of Los Angeles. Before the march began, Commodore Stockton decided to form a corps of horse Marines by mounting the Marines in his command. The Marines did not relish this plan but they nevertheless obeyed orders. One eyewitness later stated:

The crowd was waiting with gaping mouths to see how the Horse Marines would work. 'Mount' was the word and they did mount, and no sooner were they mounted, than a number were dismounted again. Then commenced a scene which soon convulsed the bystanders with Laughter, and convinced the Old Commander that his scheme would not work. 'I have said a number were dismounted. I might have said a great number, but shall not, nor shall I say they were not at all particular how they dismounted, nor shall I say that some came over the head, and some over the stern of the Horses, some on the right, and more on the wrong side, nor how many legs were seen at once in the air, as their owners were describing involuntary sommersets, nor how muskets flew in all directions nor how some of the Horses ran away with their Riders and more without their Riders, how Marines, Muskets, caps and Horse Equipage was strewed in promiscuous heaps from one end of town to the other.'²⁷

This idea was quickly scrapped and Commodore Stockton decided that the Marines should march to Los Angeles. Acting under orders from the Commodore, Kearny led a mixed force of dragoons, Marines, sailors, and volunteers toward the City of the Angels. There were approximately 600 men in the expedition. The Marines came from the ships' detachments of the *Congress*, *Cyane*, and *Portsmouth*, with a few sailors and Marines from the *Savannah*. Lieutenant Jacob Zeilin commanded the detachment of Marines and also acted as adjutant of the expeditionary force; Gillespie, still recovering from the wounds he received at the battle of San Pasqual, led the volunteer riflemen. After two weeks of rest, the dragoons were again ready to meet the enemy. The sailors and seagoing Marines behaved like veteran infantry as they marched toward Los Angeles. On 8 January 1847, the force reached a ford at the San Gabriel River. As Kearny's men began to ford the stream, enemy snipers and artillery opened fire. In



Commo Robert Stockton, sword drawn and waiving his chapeau, orders Marines and sailors to charge up the banks of the Rio San Gabriel on 8 January 1847. Defeating the California lancers in a 90-minute battle, the Americans resumed their march to reoccupy Ciudad de Los Angeles.

spite of the fact that Kearny and Stockton had failed to resolve fully which of them was in command, the Americans quickly formed a square with their supplies and cattle in the center. Stockton, with some difficulty, moved the cannon through the sand and successfully knocked out one enemy gun. The Americans then made the crossing in good order. When the Californians temporarily ceased firing their cannons, a bayonet charge by Stockton's men sent the Californians fleeing for their lives.

Again, the following day, Kearny's column had a brush with the enemy. At La Mesa on the outskirts of Los Angeles, Gillespie was slightly wounded in what proved to be the last engagement of the California campaign. During a three-hour skirmish, the Americans repulsed several charges of the California lancers and finally defeated the enemy. On 10 January 1847, Los Angeles was again occupied and Gillespie helped raise the American flag over the city which had been taken from him only three months before. Ten days later, the Marines and sailors pulled out of Los Angeles leaving Fre-



Marine Capt Ward Marston orders his small party of Marines, sailors, and buckskin-clad volunteers forward. With the defeat of the Californians south of the Santa Clara Mission, hostilities in the north drew to a close.

mont in charge. Lieutenant Zeilin and his men from the *Congress* returned to San Diego where Zeilin was appointed Military Commandant of San Diego. He remained in command until early March 1847 when he was relieved by a detachment of the 1st Regiment of U.S. Dragoons. The *Congress* then sailed north to San Francisco.

Meanwhile, at Yerba Buena (San Francisco), Captain Marston received word that a group of Californians were in rebellion and were holding some American prisoners in a village near Santa Clara. Leading about 100 Marines and volunteers he set out to investigate, only to encounter an enemy force on 2 January 1847 near the Mission of Santa Clara. Marston's men sank knee-deep in the mud as they struggled to free their only cannon from the mire. As this occurred, the slightly larger enemy force was preparing to attack. The Californians began the attack by stampeding a herd of frightened cattle toward the Americans and then started their own advance.

The Marines freed the cannon and swung it around to meet the charge of the

enemy's lancers. The Americans fired a single round of artillery and along with accurate rifle fire were able to turn the enemy and his animals. The Californians were driven back after a brief skirmish and withdrew into the Santa Cruz Mountains. That evening, Francisco Sanchez, leader of the Californians met with Marston under a flag of truce. Sanchez claimed that the Californians were not in rebellion but had taken up arms in protest against the actions of a few irresponsible Americans. After listening to their grievances, Marston agreed to an armistice. The following day, Second Lieutenant William A. T. Maddox arrived with his company of Monterey Mounted Volunteers. Maddox, hearing of the rebellion to the north, had raised a company of 50 settlers and marched 200 miles in 11 days from Monterey under the most difficult circumstances. As Maddox and his men neared Santa Clara they met another force of Californians. Both sides were drawn up and ready for battle when they were informed of the armistice. Although Marston was later criticized by his superiors for being too lenient, the Californians laid down their arms and released all of their prisoners.²⁸

California had been pacified in a little over six months by a relatively small number of Marines, sailors, dragoons, and volunteers. The Pacific Squadron encountered virtually no opposition from the impotent Mexican Navy. The squadron had unrestricted movement of the California coastline which enabled them to move the Marines to wherever the opposing forces were. Navy ships gave the Americans a mobility that the land-bound Californians lacked.

A total of 402 Marines served on the West Coast, but all these officers and men did not serve together at any one time.²⁹ The Marines involved performed a variety of duties. They were primarily used for amphibious landings and garrison duty, but were called upon to act as infantry on a number of occasions. Although Archibald Gillespie's name has long been remembered for his exploits in California, a number of other heroes did emerge and several Marine officers were awarded brevet ranks for their actions.* With the province from San Diego north firmly under American control attention was now turned to Lower California.

*Archibald Gillespie returned to the east coast after becoming embroiled in the conflict between Kearny and Stockton over the control of California. He eventually resumed his duties as a Marine Corps officer. Ill health plagued him continually and he was forced to turn down several assignments. He finally was given the billet of senior Marine officer with the Pacific Fleet. Before he sailed he was accused by Captain William Mervine, his old enemy, of swindling money from some other officers. Gillespie resigned from the Marine Corps in 1854 and returned to California, but this accusation continued to haunt him for the rest of his life. On 14 August 1873, Archibald Gillespie died in San Francisco at the age of 61.

Lower California and the Western Coast of Mexico

By January 1847, the situation in Upper California was relatively stable. The ships of the Pacific Squadron were patrolling these waters and bluejackets and Marines were being used for garrison duty on shore. Commodore Stockton's next objective was Baja California and the ports on the western coast of Mexico. This arid, mountainous country had a very small population with most of its inhabitants located along the coast. Several months prior to this, Stockton had proclaimed a paper blockade of the Mexican ports, but, since it could not be enforced it was largely ineffective. When word of the blockade reached Washington, Stockton was curtly informed that there could be no blockade unless he had a sufficient number of ships to maintain it. At the same time, he received orders to occupy at least one port in Lower California to give the United States control of the entire west coast of Mexico and California. As plans were being formulated, Stockton's replacement, Commodore William B. Shubrick, on board the razeed *Independence*, arrived in California to take command of the Pacific Squadron.

Shubrick faced many problems upon taking command, but one of the greatest was supplying the squadron during the new campaign. A few items could be obtained in the Hawaiian Islands, but they were a good distance away from California. Most supplies had to be transported from the east coast of United States. The lack of provisions became so serious in the early months of 1847 that only one or two ships could be outfitted and sent to Lower California. Any full-scale operations had to wait until the store ship *Southampton* arrived from the United States.

During this time most of the Marines with the Pacific Squadron were performing garrison duty in California towns. Barracks were set up in San Diego under the command of Captain Zeilin, who had participated in several of the major battles in Upper California and was brevetted for gallantry at the crossing of the San Gabriel River. The guard of 73 men was formed of Marines from the ships *Congress* and *Savannah*. There were also Marines stationed at San Francisco and Monterey. These men had to be relieved by soldiers from the east coast before they could return to their ships.

Captain James Biddle, USN, on board the *Columbus* arrived in California on 2 March 1847 on his way home from Japan. Since Biddle was the senior Naval officer he temporarily took command of the entire naval force. Shortly after, the *Portsmouth* was ordered to take San Jose and La Paz in Baja California. The *Portsmouth* sailed south with only 27 Marines on board under the command of Lieutenant Henry B. Watson. Upon reaching the port of San Jose, Lieutenant John Missroon, USN, delivered the proclamation for surrender to the town's authorities. They were to surrender "all public Mexican property, arms, and munitions of war in your possession

and subject to your control, to the force of the United States under my immediate command."³⁰ When this demand was refused, 140 sailors and Marines landed without incident. They raised the American flag and fired a 21-gun salute. Having met no resistance from the town's citizens, they soon returned on board ship. The entire operation took only three hours. The *Portsmouth* remained offshore for a few days and then sailed for San Lucas. No men were left to garrison San Jose for the simple reason that there were none to leave behind.

On the afternoon of 3 April 1847, the *Portsmouth* arrived off San Lucas. The Marine detachment landed and raised the Stars and Stripes again without meeting any opposition. Ten days later the *Portsmouth* arrived at La Paz, the capital of the state of Baja California. For the third time a landing force of sailors and Marines went ashore without meeting any resistance and captured the town. As before, no men could be spared for garrison duty. The *Portsmouth* returned to California shortly after being relieved by the *Cyane* and the *Independence*. There were 21 Marines on board the *Cyane* under the command of Orderly Sergeant Edward D. Forrest and 38 Marines commanded by Captain James Eledin on the *Independence*.³¹ These ships remained in the Gulf of California for about two months to enforce the blockade. Since summer hurricanes closed the ports on the western coast of Mexico from June to September, all the American ships in the area returned to Northern California. In July, Captain Biddle, satisfied with the situation on the Pacific coast, turned over the squadron to Shubrick and sailed for home on board the *Columbus*. At the same time, the store ship *Lexington* with two companies of New York Volunteers on board arrived at La Paz from Upper California. These troops went ashore and established a post in that town.

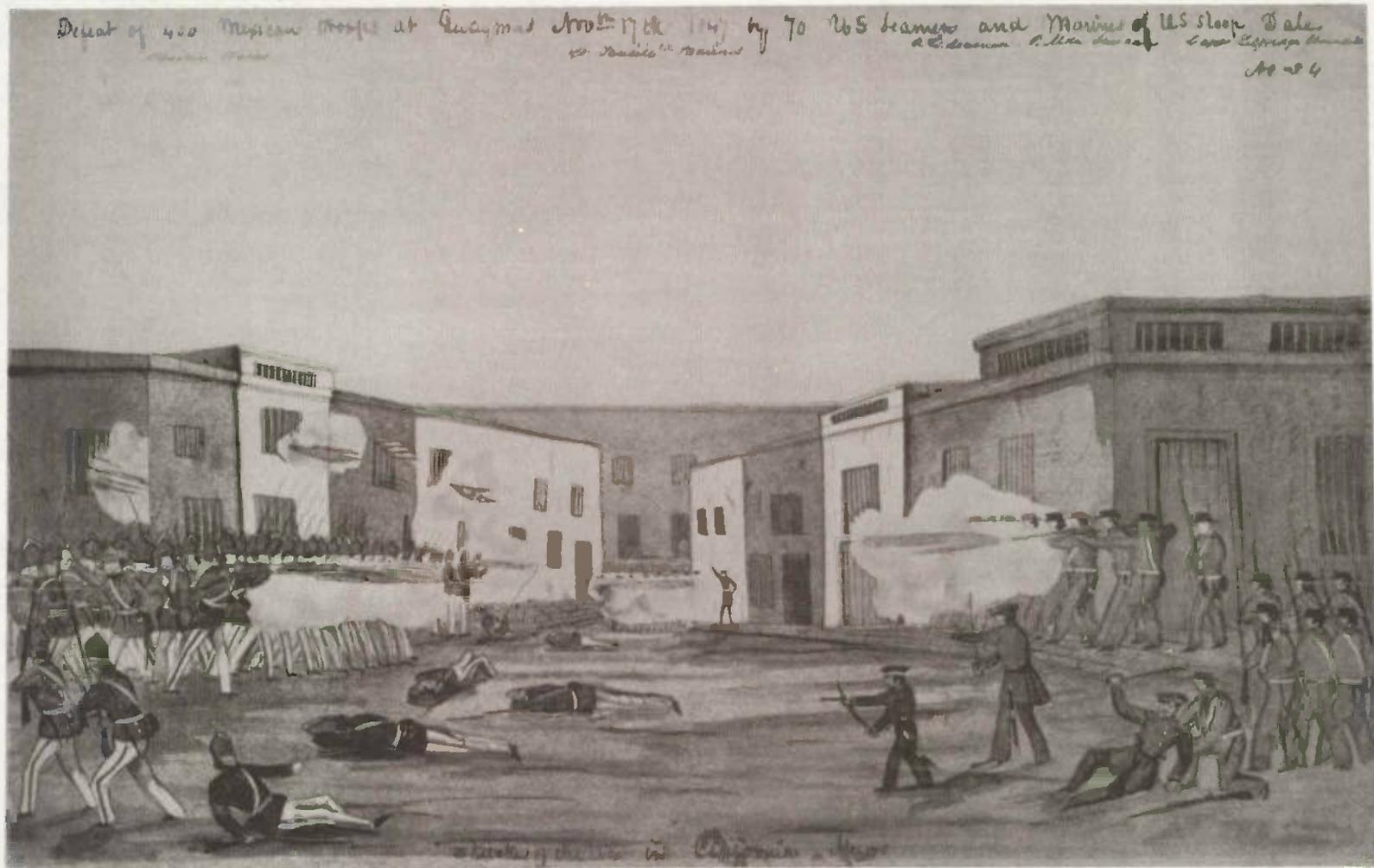
The hurricane season ended in the Gulf of California with the advent of fall and the campaign for Lower California began in earnest. The *Congress* left Monterey in early September to rejoin Shubrick's squadron. Commodore Shubrick reinstated the blockade by ordering the *Portsmouth*, the *Congress*, and the sloop *Dale* to sail south. The *Dale*, commanded by Thomas O. Selfridge, put in at La Paz. Upon learning that 200 armed Mexicans were in the vicinity of Muleje in Baja California, Selfridge decided to investigate. On 1 October 1847, Commander Selfridge sent Lieutenant Thomas Craven, USN, ashore to deliver the demands for surrender. These demands were turned down and Commander Selfridge decided to begin offensive operations. The Marine contingent on board the *Dale* numbered only 18 men and the landing party had to be reinforced by sailors. The guns of the ship opened upon the tiny village forcing the Mexican troops to retreat into the hilly area behind Muleje. For one and a half hours the *Dale* continued firing until the landing party was almost on shore.³² Since the village had been abandoned, the Marines and sailors stayed there only a short time and then returned to the ship. Selfridge had neither the forces to pursue the Mexican troops nor to occupy the village, so little was accomplished by this operation. Weather conditions began to deteriorate in the area, and Selfridge decided against another attack on

Muleje.³³ Instead, he sailed south.

A few days later the *Dale* arrived at Loreto. The Marines with a company of sailors went ashore and captured a few weapons and pieces of artillery. Selfridge made another show of strength at La Paz on 9 October 1847 where a company of Lieutenant Colonel Burton's 1st New York Volunteers were garrisoned. Selfridge next decided the communications between the peninsula and the mainland should be stopped. In order to cut these communications, he chartered the schooner *Libertad* to patrol the area between Muleje and Guaymas. Selfridge transferred part of his own crew to the *Libertad*, but there is no evidence that Marines were among them.

The next objective was Guaymas. The *Congress* recently arrived from San Francisco, anchored in the harbor on 16 October 1847 and was joined the following day by the *Portsmouth*. Both ships then proceeded to the inner harbor. When the fortress and its garrison of 600 men refused to surrender, the ships began firing. Most of the townspeople fled during the night closely followed by the garrison. Again the Marines, reinforced by sailors and one field piece, landed and raised the Stars and Stripes. Only a large American force could have occupied Guaymas and held it against any attack, but such a great number of men could not be spared and the landing party was withdrawn.³⁴ The *Congress* sailed on the 23d, leaving behind the *Portsmouth*. To prevent the Mexican troops from returning to the town, the *Dale*, which arrived on 8 November 1847, remained in the harbor almost continuously for the next 8 months.³⁵ When any attempts were made to retake the town the *Dale* fired upon the attackers and drove the Mexicans away. A week later a force from the *Dale* went ashore. This consisted of two companies of sailors (22 men each) and 17 Marines under the command of Lieutenant Robert Tansill.³⁶ Tansill, a native of Virginia, had served as an enlisted man with the Mosquito Fleet against the Seminoles some years earlier. The Americans proceeded about 40 yards from the fortress when they were fired upon. As the American troops fell back to the fort, the guns of the *Dale* opened fire driving the Mexicans away. The landing party then returned to the ship. Although the Americans claimed to have killed or wounded "a large number of the enemy," this was probably an exaggeration.³⁷

American operations increased as more ships arrived in the Gulf of California. During October 1847, the *Independence*, *Cyane*, and *Erie* (a store ship) sailed from Monterey and joined the *Congress*. While at the adobe-hut village of San Jose, the *Independence* received word of disturbances on the west coast of the peninsula. A group of 30 mounted Marines and seaman from the ship rode to Todos Santos on the Pacific coast where an armed force was supposed to be camping. The Mexican troops disappeared, having been warned that the Americans were nearing the town. Without an enemy to fight it was useless to remain and the Americans returned to San Jose. Four naval officers and 20 Marines from the *Cyane* and *Independence* were left in San Jose to garrison the town. Such a small force was left because the two ships were each



Watercolor sketch of "The Surprise Attack on the Dale's Landing Force in the Streets of Guaymas, 17 November 1847," by William H. Meyers, gunner of the U. S. Sloop-of-War Dale. Lt Robert Tansill's Marines are in the center. (Courtesy of the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, New York)

over 60 men short and the Marine guard did not reach the meager complement allowed.³⁸

On 19 November 1847, an enemy force of about 150 men appeared at San Jose. They began firing on the newly established barracks until after dark and then continued through most of the night. Three men were wounded including one Marine. The following night they attacked again. About 40 men charged the front of the building while 100 men attempted to scale the walls on the other three sides. As the charge began, the Americans opened fire killing one of the Mexican leaders. The rest of the enemy fled. Two American whalers appeared off shore the next day, and this was enough to keep the Mexicans from returning.

The *Independence*, *Congress*, and *Cyane* left San Jose on 8 November 1847 headed for Mazatlan on the mainland coast of Mexico. Located in a mountainous region, Mazatlan was a well-built town and the chief commercial port on the Pacific coast of Mexico. The American forces were under the command of Captain Shubrick. Upon arriving there on 10 November 1847, the Marine Corps' Birthday, Shubrick summoned the military and civilian authorities of Mazatlan and read the terms of surrender. In the face of these formidable opponents, the Mexicans agreed to the terms. About 750 seaman and Marines made an unopposed landing and raised the American flag under a 21-gun salute. Shubrick originally hoped to establish a garrison of 400 sailors and Marines. Unfortunately this plan presented Captain Shubrick with a unique problem. A garrison that size would reduce the number of his forces to a critical level. In desperation, he wrote to General Winfield Scott, Commander-In-Chief of the U.S. Army in Mexico and asked for a force of 500 to 1,000 men stating that the population was "so large that it requires a military garrison."³⁹ Scott refused claiming that he did not have any troops to spare. In spite of this refusal Shubrick sent most of the Marines from the *Congress* under Captain Jacob Zeilin and the *Independence* under Lieutenant W. W. Russell ashore at Mazatlan for garrison duty.

The tiny garrison at San Jose, now consisting of 27 Marines, 10 seaman, and 20 California volunteers, again came under attack in February 1848. For 10 days they survived the continuous firing from a strong enemy force. Finally, on the afternoon of 14 February, help arrived. The *Cyane* anchored offshore and at dawn the following morning landed over 100 men. There were less than 10 Marines in the group. At the time the *Cyane* had a Marine detachment numbering only 16 men under the command of Orderly Sergeant James M. Wiatt.⁴⁰ The defenders of the garrison came out to meet the force from the *Cyane* and together they drove the Mexicans out of the town. Scouting parties of Americans were sent out to the surrounding countryside to clear the area of the enemy. The *Cyane* remained at San Jose until April 1848.

On 2 February 1848, the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo ending the war between the United States and Mexico was signed. It took months for this news to reach the Pacific Squadron, but the war in Lower California was essentially over by this time. The

fighting in this area had continued for over a year with inconclusive results. The Americans took the major towns and villages in Baja California and on the west coast of Mexico but were unable to hold them. Hampered by a lack of troops and supplies, there was little more that the commanders of the Pacific Squadron could do. The Mexicans had suffered no major defeat at the hands of the Americans. They were an elusive enemy who knew that if they could retreat far enough inland they were safe from any American attack. Since the Americans could hold only a small part of the territory they had captured, the Mexicans had only to wait for them to withdraw and they could again take possession of the area.

Throughout this entire campaign there were probably not more than 300 Marines involved in the operations in Lower California. Ships' detachments were depleted before the fighting even started to garrison some of the towns captured in Upper California and were badly under-strength when the Pacific Squadron moved south to Lower California.

During the landings there, the number of sailors going ashore usually far outnumbered the Marines. Yet, the Marines' significance in the landing parties was usually proportionally greater than their numbers. Better trained and drilled in the use of firearms than were sailors, Marines often proved invaluable in skirmished against the enemy. During this time the rudimentary concepts of amphibious landings were being formulated. This amphibious capability, which the Mexicans lacked, gave the Americans more mobility and made their numbers appear greater than they actually were. The Marines played a very useful role in a campaign that was overshadowed by the events taking place in eastern and central Mexico.

Mexico

United States troops had been ordered into the disputed Texan territory between the Nueces and Rio Grande Rivers as early as January 1846. General Zachary Taylor, the future President of the United States, had a force of nearly 4,000 men, which amounted to half of the Army of the United States, in Texas at this time.⁴¹ When Mexican troops arrived at the banks of the Rio Grande, hostilities could no longer be avoided. A Mexican detachment crossed the Rio Grande on 24 April 1846 and the fighting began.

While the Army was fighting in Texas, the Navy's Home Squadron, under the command of Commodore David Conner sailed for Brazos Santiago, an inlet a few miles north of the Rio Grande. The squadron arrived there on 8 May 1846. Fort Polk, an Army supply camp, was located at Point Isabel, several miles further north. Five hundred sailors and Marines landed at Point Isabel from the frigates *Cumberland*, *Raritan*, *Potomac*, the sloop *John Adams*, and the brig *Somers*. They were assigned the task of guarding the large quantity of supplies left there by the Army while the battle of Palo Alto was raging in Texas. When the Marines first landed they were mixed in with the ships' crews. Marine Lieutenant D.D. Baker informed the senior Marine officer, Lieutenant William Lang, that he was virtually deprived of his command and Baker threatened to tender his resignation should the Navy refuse to correct this situation.⁴² Captain Francis H. Gregory, USN, who was in charge of the entire landing force, permitted the change. As a result, the Marines were formed into a battalion with three 50-man companies under the command of Lieutenant Lang and subject only to the orders of Captain Gregory.⁴³ The entire force was withdrawn from Fort Polk on 13 May 1846. A few days later, a force of 200 Marines and bluejackets from the *Cumberland* and the *Potomac* proceeded in small boats 15 miles up the Rio Grande to cooperate with the Army in establishing a post on the south side of the river at the hamlet of Burrita. This opened the way for the advance of the U.S. Army to the town of Matamoras. With the capture of Burrita, these Marines and sailors became the first troops, by a few hours, to invade Mexico. The flag they carried was the first to be raised in Mexico during the war. By nightfall on 18 May Army troops were also on the southern banks of the Rio Grande.

A lack of manpower, supplies, and equipment was now the biggest problem the government had to face. General Henderson realized that the Corps could not make an effective contribution to the war effort unless it was permitted to greatly expand its personnel. During the few years before the war General Henderson tried repeatedly to obtain an increase in the Corps' strength. George Bancroft, Secretary of the Navy, was not sympathetic toward these efforts, and the Marines entered the war with no additional allowance of personnel whatsoever. The prevailing attitude of the time seemed to have



been that volunteers made the best troops, and the regular Army fared little better than the Marines. In June 1846 there were only about 180 Marines assigned to the ships of the Home Squadron off the eastern coast of Mexico.⁴⁴

The Navy, however, faced even greater problems. At that time, the Navy had more large ships than it could man. When war was declared, the American government decided to order a blockade of the eastern ports of Mexico. Most Mexican ports, built at the mouths of rivers, were hard to blockade because they had large sand bars directly off the coast. Only ships with shallow drafts could get close enough to halt completely all blockade running. Unfortunately, the Navy had few ships that were small enough to perform this task and new ships were slow to arrive. The vessels assigned blockade duty found it an unenviable job. The time the Marines and sailors spent at sea was long and monotonous with the ships rarely coming into port. Violent storms came up frequently, and there was no natural protection for the ships. The men on board suffered from a variety of diseases including yellow fever, scurvy, and dysentery.

For a while the blockade looked fairly successful and the Americans hoped that it would be enough to force the Mexicans to surrender. During August 1846 the Mexican President was deposed and a month later Santa Anna, a man who dominated the military and political scene in Mexico for decades, assumed control of the government. Peace, for the time being, was now out of the question.

Shortly after the attempt to take Alvarado, the newly arrived brig *Truxtun* ran into trouble. During a storm the ship with a sergeant's guard of 13 Marines on board struck a bar off Tuxpan. Efforts to free the brig proved fruitless. The *Truxtun's* crew surrendered the brig and company to the Mexicans on 17 August 1846. They were taken to Tuxpan where 38 of the crew were returned immediately to American hands. Sixteen of the officers, seamen, and Marines who were sick remained in Tuxpan and were exchanged at a later date. The abandoned *Truxtun* was burned to the water line after the Americans found that she could not be salvaged.⁴⁵

Realizing that he would have to do something, Commodore Conner, in October 1846, again attempted to take Alvarado. The *Cumberland* and the *Mississippi* and several other ships sailed for Alvarado, arriving there 15 October. The heavy surf prevented the ships from crossing the sand bar and the ships' bombardment of the town accomplished very little. Conner failed to employ his strong landing force properly and this expedition also ended unsuccessfully.

While Commodore Conner was attempting to take Alvarado, Captain Matthew C. Perry, second in command of the squadron, was on his way to capture Tabasco (also known as San Juan Bautista). Perry, nicknamed "Old Bruin" by his sailors, would later conclude the first treaty between Japan and the United States. Tabasco was located about 70 miles up the shallow-draft Tabasco River from the port of Frontera. The *Mississippi* had joined Perry's force, but was too large to navigate the river. The Marine detachment on board had previously been increased when the Marine guard from the *Raritan* was transferred to the *Mississippi*.⁴⁶ These Marines were then transferred to smaller vessels to act as the landing force. Arriving off the town on 25 October Perry first tried to take it peacefully. When the officials of the town refused Perry's demand to surrender, he sent a landing force of about 200 men ashore. The Marines from the *Cumberland*, *Raritan*, and *Mississippi* numbered only 70 men and were under the command of Captain Alvin Edson, an officer with 24 years' service in the Marine Corps.* The landing force at Tabasco remained only a short time before returning to the ships. Perry did not have the forces necessary to hold Tabasco so he set sail for Frontera the following day. Several Mexican steamers and schooners captured at Tabasco were taken to Frontera by the Americans.

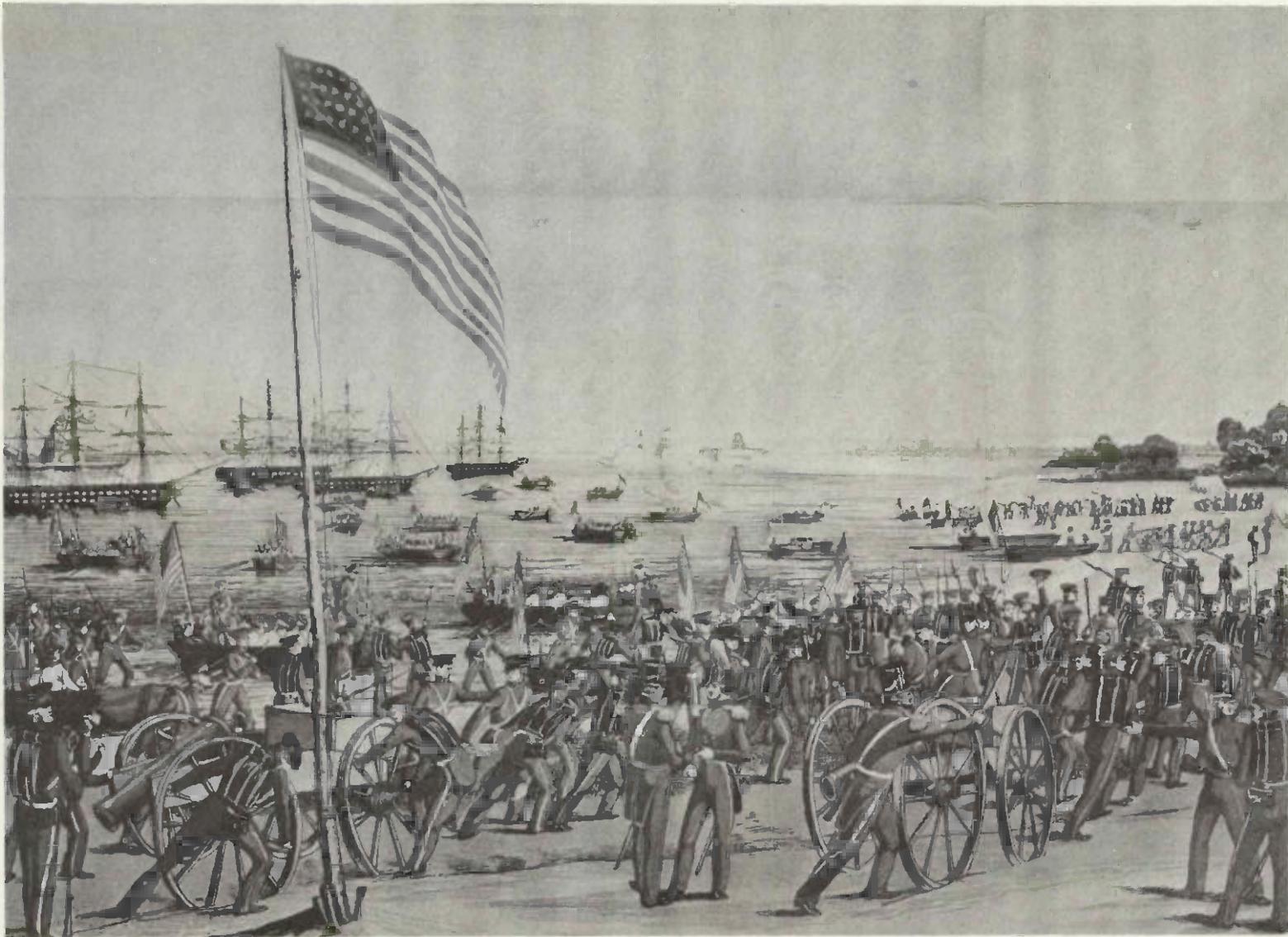
*A collateral descendant of Captain Edson would also become a famous Marine. Major General Merritt A. ("Red Mike") Edson, an aviator and infantryman, commanded the 1st Raider Battalion and was awarded the Medal of Honor for the defense of Henderson Airfield on Guadalcanal in September 1942.

Conner and Perry then began preparing for the attack on their next objective, Tampico. The Army felt that the capture of this town would be beneficial for its operations in Mexico. The naval expedition arrived off the coast of Tampico early in the day on 14 November 1846. After firing on the town for a few minutes, the Americans saw a white flag being raised. Only about 150 to 200 men were garrisoned there to defend the town--most Mexican troops had been evacuated before this. Marines from the *Potomac*, *Cumberland*, *St. Mary's*, *Mississippi*, and *Raritan* were involved in this operation.

A landing party of 20 Marines, under Captain Edson, and 12 sailors went on board the steamer *Spitfire*, and schooner *Petrel* and traveled 25 miles upstream from Tampico to capture the town of Panuco.⁴⁷ After arriving there, these troops took possession of Panuco and destroyed a large number of guns and ammunition. Two days later they returned to Tampico. Other Marines went ashore at Tampico to occupy the town but it had already been planned that Army troops would garrison the area. On 21 November the steamer *Neptune* with about 500 Army troops arrived at Tampico and relieved the Marines. Captain Edson later reported that during the entire Tampico operation "marines have frequently been placed in situations to test their courage and steadiness and in every case have acquitted themselves as marines should."⁴⁸ With the capture of Tampico the ships of the Home Squadron resumed their blockade of the Mexican ports.

In the meantime, plans were being formulated in Washington for the invasion of the interior of Mexico and the march on its capital. General Winfield Scott, USA, was assigned the task of leading the expedition on Veracruz. Commodore Conner offered 600 seamen and Marines for a landing force.⁴⁹ The troop situation seemed to be the greatest problem Scott faced. Most of the volunteers in the Army were due to be discharged having signed up for only a year. As the necessity of replacing these troops became apparent, Congress finally authorized an increase of both the Marine Corps and the Army. This act, passed in March 1847, allowed the Marines a temporary increase of 12 officers and 1,000 enlisted men. With this increase, General Henderson made plans for the formation of a Marine regiment, but delays prevented the organization of this unit until May 1847. The month of March brought other changes to the Marine Corps. Men from the Marine Barracks, Brooklyn, were transferred to Gosport, Virginia. A large number of men from the barracks at Gosport went on board various Navy ships including the sloop *Germantown*, sloop *Saratoga*, and steamer *Mississippi* for service in Mexico.⁵⁰

After delays from weather and lack of supplies, the expedition to Veracruz got underway in March 1847. The city itself was strongly fortified. Protected by a seawall and forts located to the north and south of the town, the capture of Veracruz presented a formidable problem. Off its coast, on Gallega Reef, was located the Castle of San Juan de Ulloa, defended by a thousand men. During the bombardment, siege, and



During the American landing at Veracruz on 9 March 1847, the Marines of the Gulf Squadron were attached to Gen William J. Worth's 1st Division. Organized as a battalion, under Capt Alvin Edson, the Marines served with the 3d Regiment of Artillery throughout the siege and investment of the seaport.

capture of Veracruz, the Home Squadron's Marines served on board ships, ashore under the command of the Navy as infantry, and in the naval batteries, and some Marines served with the Army. To bring the troops ashore, 141 surfboats had been ordered but only 65 had arrived by the time the landings were made.⁵¹ Scott and Conner decided to land their forces on a strip of beach about two miles south of Veracruz. The operation, delayed a day by the threat of inclement weather, finally took place on 9 March 1847. Over 8,000 soldiers, sailors, and Marines landed without opposition in just a few hours. This was an amazing feat for that time and was the first major joint amphibious operation for the United States Army and Navy.⁵²

The landing at Veracruz was typical for the 19th century. While the forces ashore were preparing for the march on Veracruz, Commodore Conner ordered a diversionary attack on the Castle of San Juan de Ulloa. Although the attack accomplished very little, it did divert the Mexicans' attention from the American troops who had already landed. The Marine guards from several ships came ashore under the command of Captain Edson for duty with the Army. They were assigned to the 3d Regiment of Artillery of the 1st Division with General William J. Worth, USA, commanding. Bad weather hampered the landing of supplies and slowed the advance of General Scott's forces toward the city. As part of the first troops ashore, the Marines took an active part in the entire campaign. They fought as infantry in Worth's lines to the southeast of the city, about half a mile from its walls.⁵³ Heavy fire from the Navy's ships and the Army's shore artillery weakened the Mexicans' resistance. Finally on 29 March 1847, the Mexicans surrendered the city after the American artillery had done extensive damage. Before the month ended all the Marines who participated in the capture of Veracruz rejoined the squadron. As they returned, a reshuffling of the detachments took place. The guard of the *Princeton* and most of the *Raritan's* Marines joined the *Mississippi*. It appears that few guards were permanently assigned to any ship and were moved as needed.

General Scott in his General Order No. 80 stated that:

The general-in-chief congratulates the army he has the honor personally to command upon this brilliant opening of a new campaign, and tenders on the part of the United States immediate thanks to all the corps--regular and volunteer, including a detachment of marines, under Captain Edson--which formed the line of investment and prosecuted the siege to its happy conclusion. The troops have borne the heaviest labors in camp in trenches without failure or murmur, amidst sand-storms of distressing frequency and violence, skirmishes by day and night, and under the incessant fire of the enemy's heavy batteries of the city and castle. The steadiness and cheerfulness of officers and men under the circumstances, are worthy of all praise.⁵⁴

While the siege of Veracruz was taking place, Commodore Perry returned from a trip to the United States and relieved Conner of command of the squadron. Perry's squadron is credited with being the largest up to that time under the American flag. His first act was to aid the Army in a third attempt to capture Alvarado. General Scott assigned Brigadier General John A. Quitman and his brigade the task of taking the town. Marines on board three of the ships were also prepared to go ashore. On 1 April 1847, Commodore Perry's force arrived off the town. The day before one naval vessel had fired upon Alvarado, the garrison had fled, and the town had surrendered. The unfortunate captain of this ship was later court martialed for his overzealous but unauthorized action and dismissed from the service. After Perry's arrival at Alvarado, he sent a group of Marines ashore to occupy the town. The Army arrived a few days later and stayed only a short time before returning to Veracruz. Naval personnel were assigned the task of garrisoning the town and Sergeant John Chase and five privates from the *Ohio* were among those left behind.⁵⁵

Perry's next objective was Tuxpan, the last important port still in the hands of the Mexicans. Most of the larger ships in Perry's squadron were stripped of their sailors and Marines by his own orders. They were transferred to smaller ships that could cross the sand bar and make their way up the river to Tuxpan. There were over 160 Marines, again under the command of Captain Edson, in the force Perry gathered together.⁵⁶ The fort at Tuxpan was well fortified with guns salvaged from the brig *Truxtun* that had been wrecked on the bar a year before. When the Mexicans saw the large landing party which did not halt in spite of the heavy fire from the fort, they put up very little resistance and the fort was captured by the Americans. Since Perry did not intend to occupy Tuxpan, he destroyed as much of the equipment and fortifications as possible to render it useless to the Mexicans.

General Scott was now facing a series of perplexing problems in his drive toward Mexico City. During the spring months the American naval and land forces had successfully defeated the Mexicans in battles in the coastal areas. Now Scott had to discharge several regiments of volunteers whose enlistments were about to expire. This would leave him, after garrisoning some of the towns on his march west, with only 6,000 men--too small a number, he felt, to take the capital.⁵⁷ Scott was in desperate need of reinforcements. As a result, General Henderson met with President Polk and Secretary of the Navy Gideon Wells in May 1847 during which time he informed them that six companies of Marines could be spared for service with the Army under the Act of 1834. President Polk immediately accepted General Henderson's offer and plans were put into effect to raise a regiment of Marines. General Henderson directed that the regiment be divided into two battalions; the 1st Battalion to be composed of Companies A, B, and C under the command of Major Levi Twiggs, and the 2d Battalion of Companies D, E, and F under Brevet Major William Dulany. The entire force was placed under the command of Brevet Lieutenant Colonel Samuel E. Watson, who was

in formed by Henderson that "when this command joins the Army it may be that the Commanding General will add two or three companies either Regulars or Volunteers to each of the battalions to constitute an efficient Regiment under command of the field officer now detailed with it."⁵⁸

To gather a force of this size, Henderson stripped the barracks of Boston, Gosport, Brooklyn, and Philadelphia to a sergeant's guard. Headquarters and other commands sent as many Marines as could possibly be spared and brand new recruits were taken without any prior training. All reported to Fort Hamilton, New York, where the battalions were to be formed. Plans to add other Marines from Pensacola and the Home Squadron were also devised. Originally about 600 men were to be in the regiment. By the end of May more than 300 Marines had gathered at Fort Hamilton ready to sail for Mexico. Rather than wait until the total number of Marines could be assembled, General Henderson decided to reduce the regiment to a battalion comprised of Companies A, B, C, D, E, and F and ordered it south immediately.

On 1 June 1847 the battalion departed Fort Hamilton. Conditions on board the one troop ship were extremely unpleasant. More than 300 officers and men sweltered in the heat as the crowded ship slowly sailed south. On 17 June the ship stopped at Havana, Cuba, to purchase some necessary supplies. A landing party of four officers and four sailors went ashore, but unfortunately they failed to procure the permission of the health officer or port officials and were promptly arrested. The Cuban government agreed to free them if the officers would pay \$200.00 each. Two agreed, but the other two refused. The troop ship finally sailed two days later leaving behind an Army officer and Marine Second Lieutenant James H. Jones. The battalion finally arrived at Veracruz on 29 June. Upon landing, the Marines saw a town of low, flat-roofed houses and dirty streets.⁵⁹ The Marines then marched to Camp Vergara near the city. The battalion had sailed with 23 officers, 2 Navy doctors, and 270 enlisted men. Another 66 officers and men joined from Pensacola and the ships of the squadron.⁶⁰

Strength of Brevet Lieutenant Colonel Watson's Marine Battalion, June 1847

	Maj	Capt	1stLt	2dLt	Sgt	Cpl	Drum	Fifer	Pvt	Total
Battalion at Fort Hamilton	1	5	6	10	12	5	1	1	279	320
Unfit for service, discharged, and deserted									27	27
Total number departing Fort Hamilton	1	5	6	10	12	5	1	1	252	293
Added from Pensacola			1		2	1	1		16	21
Total	1	5	7	10	14	6	2	1	268	314*

*Marines from various ships of the squadron were added later.

While the Marine Battalion was sailing toward Mexico, Commodore Perry completed his plan for a second attack on the town of Tabasco. Located on the Tabasco River southwest of the port of Frontera, this was a well fortified and garrisoned town. Perry realized that the capture of Tabasco would require a large number of men and enough ships to transport them up the river. At the port of Frontera, Perry gathered 16 naval vessels. All the deep-draft ships remained off the shore, but as many Marines and sailors who could be spared were transferred to the smaller ships. On 14 June 1847, Perry with 10 ships and more than 1,100 men began the expedition to Tabasco. The Mexicans had fortified several places below the town and had placed obstructions in the river. Perry planned to land his men, then march overland with artillery pieces and attack the fortifications from the land side.

As the ships approached the obstructions Perry decided to land his force. The Marines, under the command of Captain Alvin Edson, numbered about 230 officers and men.⁶¹ In spite of the fact that the terrain and cactus made progress difficult, the column continued to advance slowly under a broiling sun. Charging the first stronghold, Fort Acachapan, the Americans forced the Mexican troops to flee. After only a brief pause the Americans again pushed forward. Perry's ships, after destroying the obstructions in the river, sailed for the town. Arriving at Tabasco first, the ships opened fire and the town surrendered. The column appeared a short time later.

After much thought Perry finally decided to garrison Tabasco. Unfortunately he had few troops which could be spared for garrison duty. The Mexican troops abandoned their town but they did not retreat very far. They stayed on the outskirts of the town but constantly harassing the American forces there. Perry even dispatched the steamer *Vixen* up river with 44 Marines and 50 seamen in an attempt to hold the town.⁶² The few Marines and sailors left there could only take defensive action against the enemy's assaults. On 19 July 1847, Perry realized that repeated enemy attacks and the advent of the yellow fever season could completely destroy his garrison and ordered the men down river.

Perry, throughout this time, realized the necessity of having the Marines in his squadron. In spite of continual demands to release the Marines in the Home Squadron for the purpose of joining Lieutenant Colonel Watson's battalion, Perry continued to argue that they were necessary for his operations in Mexico. He went so far as to state that the withdrawal of the Marines from the squadron would "lead to much inconvenience if not to serious consequences."⁶³ By the end of July 1847 an agreement was made in which only a few Marines from the Home Squadron were transferred to Colonel Watson's battalion. Although Perry did not lose his Marines, his squadron could do very little during the summer months since most of his men were incapacitated by yellow fever.

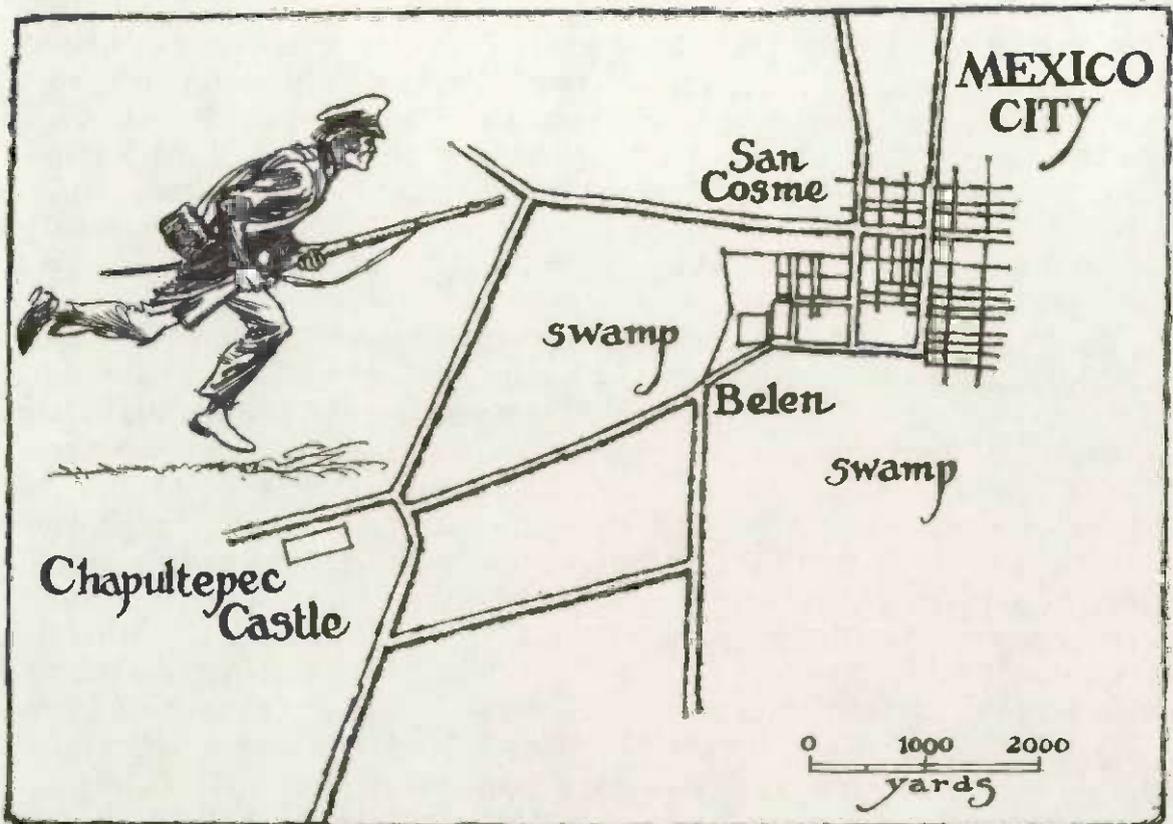
Watson's Marine battalion, which landed in Mexico in the beginning of July, remained near Veracruz for only two weeks before marching inland. Ordered to join

the main part of Scott's army, now at Puebla, the Marines were assigned to a brigade under the command of Brigadier General Franklin Pierce, later President of the United States from 1852 to 1856. Bad weather, deep sand, and enemy harassment hampered the progress of the generally inexperienced Marines on their march to Puebla. They were assigned the task of acting as the rear guard for Pierce's troops. General Pierce later commented that due to their efficiency he lost neither men nor animals enroute through the guerrilla-infested countryside.⁶⁴ On 21 July 1847, the column reached the National Bridge over the Antigua River. The Marines repulsed an enemy attack as they approached the bridge.

The entire march took three weeks and as the weary troops reached Puebla they found Scott's army ready to begin its advance on the Mexican capital. For this march, the Marines were attached to Major General John A. Quitman's 4th Division and Marine Lieutenant Colonel Watson assumed command of a brigade consisting of a detachment of the 2d Pennsylvania Regiment and the Marine Battalion. The Marine Battalion had only two days' rest at Puebla before joining the army on its march west. Scott's army was comprised of four divisions of infantry, parts of three dragoon regiments, several field artillery batteries, and a rocket and howitzer battery. The army numbered less than 12,000 men while the Mexican force under General Santa Anna had approximately 32,000 men.⁶⁵ Moreover, the Mexicans had not only fortified their capital but also the approaches to it. Scott was taking a great risk in marching inland. Outnumbered by the enemy, hampered by difficult and unfamiliar terrain, his army faced the possibility of being cut off from any retreat to the coast and annihilated.

The road taken by the Americans was almost identical to the one Cortez took when he captured and destroyed Montezuma's capital in 1519. After marching through wide valleys and scorching deserts, the troops had a steep climb to a narrow plateau which formed a summit 10,500 feet above sea level. Before them, encircled by rugged mountains, was the valley of Mexico.

The army moved toward Mexico City fighting a series of skirmishes on the way. On 20 August 1847, the Mexicans were defeated at Contreras and Churubusco and fled towards the capital. Throughout most of the march the Marines were given the unenviable chore of guarding the army's supply train and during this series of pitched battles, Watson's troops, including the Marines, did very little fighting and were basically kept in reserve. An armistice was agreed upon by both sides on 23 August 1847; and a peace commission met in an attempt to bring an end to the fighting. The Mexicans, feeling that the truce was a sign of American weakness, used this time to reinforce their positions. This fragile cease-fire lasted only until 6 September 1847 when General Scott informed the Mexican commander that the armistice would end the following day. Scott claimed that the Mexicans had violated its terms several times and that the peace commission had been unsuccessful. While the armistice was in effect the Marines were encamped at San Augustine. The Marines left San Augustine on the



morning of 8 September 1847 and arrived at the village of San Angel on the evening of the same day. Three days later they marched to Tacubaya, a town a short distance from Mexico City.⁶⁶ There General Scott called a conference of some of his officers. After hearing his subordinates' opinions, Scott decided that the army should first assault the Castle of Chapultepec before they attacked Mexico City. American batteries began shelling the fortress on 12 September 1847 and continued on the morning of the 13th.

The Fortress or Castle of Chapultepec, used as the National Military Academy of Mexico, was regarded as the key to Mexico City. Built on the crest of a hill overlooking the city, Chapultepec had been strongly fortified just prior to the war. About 800 men, including 100 young Mexican cadets from the Military Academy, defended the castle. On 12 September 1847, Major Levi Twiggs, a native of Georgia and a veteran of the War of 1812, with a detachment of Marines, reconnoitered the area to see exactly where the enemy was concentrated. The Marines came under heavy fire, but they accomplished their task by drawing the Mexicans out of their fortress. Some army troops under General Quitman fired upon the Mexicans who then retreated back into Chapultepec. General Quitman, advancing along the road leading from Tacubaya, directed the attack against the southern side of the fortress. Leading the attack on the



The Place d'Armes, Havana, in 1825, by the late Mr. J. M. W. Turner, R.S.A. The scene is taken from the hill of the Cathedral of the Holy Spirit.

western side, General Gideon J. Pillow marched his forces from Molino de Ray through a cypress grove to Chapultepec. Watson's troops were assigned the mission of storming the castle. In preparation, several storming parties were formed with Major Twiggs commanding 120 Marines and soldiers in the lead party. Marines were also assigned to some of the other storming parties. The bulk of the Marine Battalion remained under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Watson.

Twiggs and his men advanced up the Tacubaya causeway until they were about 200 yards from the gate of the castle. He was followed closely by Captain John G. Reynolds, a man with 23 years' experience in the Marine Corps and a veteran of the Seminole Indian Wars, and a group of pioneers with scaling ladders and pickaxes.⁶⁷ The remaining Marines under Lieutenant Colonel Watson acted in support. The land around Chapultepec and Mexico City was extremely swampy and the Americans had to stay on the causeway to make any progress. A deep ditch ran along either side of the road. When the firing from the fortress became extremely heavy, Twiggs' storming party was forced to take shelter in the ditch and return the fire. At the same time, Lieutenant Colonel Watson's troops and a couple of other storming parties also took cover in the ditch. It appears that Major Twiggs then attempted to regroup his party and advance toward the castle. As he stood up the gallant Major Twiggs was blown away by rifle fire from Chapultepec.*

Conflicting stories exist as to the conduct of the Marines during the battle of Chapultepec. One version claims that the Marines skulked in a ditch until the fighting was over.⁶⁸ Another states that the Marines had advanced too far before turning in the direction of Chapultepec and had halted when they realized this.⁶⁹ The truth appears to lie somewhere in the middle. General Quitman ordered Watson to halt there, and Watson was determined to remain there until he received further orders. In spite of the urging of other Marine officers to move forward, Watson followed orders and refused to budge. The Marines returned the extremely heavy fire coming from Chapultepec.⁷⁰ Chapultepec later fell to American forces when Pillow's men assaulted the fortress' western walls. The Mexicans lost many brave officers and men in the battle including several of the young cadets from the military academy who have been immortalized in Mexican history as "Los Ninos Heroes." Located on a hill, Chapultepec gave the Mexican troops within a tremendous advantage. They had a panoramic view of all that was taking place below and those Americans attempting to storm the castle were exposed to heir murderous fire. The fact that Lieutenant Colonel Watson was obeying orders by remaining where he was cannot be denied. His most serious fault was probably over-cautiousness, but had he been more reckless, the loss of life among the Marines could have been great.

*Twiggs' son, Lieutenant George Decatur Twiggs, USA, had been killed a month earlier at the Battle of National Bridge.



Maj Levi Twiggs, who began his service in the Marine Corps during the War of 1812, was second in command of the Marine Battalion at the storming of Chapultepec Castle. While leading a 120-man storming party he was hit by enemy rifle fire from the castle and mortally wounded.

There were smaller detachments of Marines separated from the main body during the battle for Chapultepec. Captain George Hunter Terrett, whose illustrious career with the Marine Corps included service at Quallah Battoo and the Seminole Indian Wars, led one of these detachments with some Marines from Company C. When General Quitman ordered his troops to halt, Terrett and his men were situated well ahead of most of the other Marines. Acting without direct orders, Captain Terrett with Lieutenants Rich, Young, Simms, Reynolds, McCawley (who later became Commandant), and Henderson (son of the Commandant) advanced and captured an enemy battery. Several of Terrett's men were killed but stragglers joined his force as he moved forward. Immediately in front of them, Terrett spotted a large number of Mexican soldiers retreating from Chapultepec on the Veronica causeway. The Marines pursued the Mexicans up the causeway leading to the Garita de San Cosme at Mexico City.* A short distance further up the road they came under heavy fire. Only about 15 or 20 men remained in Terrett's command at this point. An army battery supported Terrett and after a few well placed shots caused the enemy to retreat, once again with the Marines in pursuit. Enemy fire continued from the breastworks near the road. About 30 yards from the breast-works Terrett halted his small band of men. He realized that he had too few men and the enemy fire was too heavy to consider charging the breast works. First Lieutenant Jabez C. Rich and Second Lieutenant John D. Simms with seven men were sent to turn the left flank of the enemy. This they accomplished in a few minutes but with the loss of four men wounded.⁷¹ While Rich and Simms assaulted the enemy on the left, Terrett attacked in front, forcing the Mexicans back to Garita de San Cosme. As they approached the garita, the Marines encountered some 20 soldiers under the command of Army Lieutenants U. S. Grant and John Gore of the 4th Infantry. The two forces joined together and attacked the Garita de San Cosme. They took the garita and entered the city of Mexico, thus becoming the first Americans to enter the capital. Here, they remained for about 15 minutes when they received orders to retreat before the American batteries opened fire on the city.

Captain Terrett and his men returned down the causeway under heavy enemy fire until they met General William J. Worth, commander of the 1st Division. After reporting the situation, Terrett asked if he should rejoin his division. Instead Worth turned Captain Terrett and his command over to General George Cadwallader and ordered them to report to the 11th Infantry.⁷² A short time later, they attacked and captured the enemy's outlying picket position at Los Huertos where they remained for three days. When Terrett was finally relieved, he and his men rejoined the Marines in Mexico City.

As Terrett was leading his heroic attack on the Garita de San Cosme, the Marines

*The garitas were stone buildings housing customs agents and police who checked all travelers entering the city. Prior to the battle, Santa Anna had fortified these garitas and stationed troops nearby.

in Lieutenant Colonel Watson's command entered the Castle of Chapultepec. Once inside, they captured about 20 to 30 Mexicans who had been firing on the American troops. The Marines, still a part of General Quitman's division, were then ordered to proceed down the other causeway in support of the batteries assaulting the city. Throughout the afternoon the fierce fighting continued as Quitman's force advanced toward the Garita de Belen, the main entrance to the city. Other troops attacked the Garita de San Cosme which had been taken earlier by Terrett and Grant. These troops successfully entered Mexico City before nightfall. Meanwhile, the Marines were slowly advancing up the causeway under continuous enemy fire. Watson and his Marines were in the vanguard as the Americans took the gate shortly after one o'clock in the afternoon. They bravely held this position against repeated Mexican attacks until dusk. Darkness brought an end to most of the fighting, but there was little opportunity for rest.

On the morning of 14 September 1847, the Marines received orders to advance into the city to the Grand Plaza. Prepared for increased enemy attacks, the Americans were surprised to learn that Santa Anna and his remaining troops had evacuated the city during the night. The Marines' work, however, was not yet over. Mexican robbers and thieves infested the National Palace in the capital. Watson's battalion was ordered to drive the plunderers out and guard the palace from any further looting. Major General Quitman later reported that by Watson's "active exertions it was soon cleared and guarded from any further spoilation."⁷³ Thus, the Marines became residents in the "Halls of Montezuma." On the day the Marines entered Mexico City, Major William Dulaney assumed command of the Marine battalion, while Lieutenant Colonel Watson was given command of the Army's 1st Brigade, 2d Division. The rigorous campaigns in Mexico weakened Lieutenant Colonel Watson's health and he left Mexico City for the United States in the beginning of November. He died at Veracruz on 16 November 1847. Watson and Twiggs were buried in the same grave at Veracruz. When General Henderson heard of Lieutenant Colonel Watson's death he wrote, "The Commandant of the Corps cannot but feel deeply the loss of a brother officer with whom he had served harmoniously for more than thirty-five years. . . ."⁷⁴

Sporadic fighting continued for a while, but the campaign for Mexico City was the last decisive battle of the war. Even so, in the months that followed the Army continued to send reinforcement to Mexico. In December 1847, the Marine Battalion which originally consisted of six companies was reorganized and consolidated. Under General Order No 382 dated 23 December 1847, personnel of Companies A, B, and F were assigned by transfer to Companies D, E, and C--and these latter companies were then redesignated A, B, and C.⁷⁵ Plans were also being formulated to organize another Marine battalion. It had already been decided that this battalion would go to Yucatan, although that area had remained basically neutral during the war. The 2d Battalion was activated at New York. As they had once before, the various barracks on the east coast sent their Marines to New York to join the battalion. Many new recruits from the

Marine rendezvous at New York were dispatched to the battalion on the day of their enlistment.⁷⁶ The battalion, commanded by Major John Harris, totaled 378 Marines when it finally sailed for Mexico in March 1848. After it arrived at Veracruz, the plans were changed and Harris' battalion was sent to garrison the towns of Alvarado and Laguna. The 1st Battalion still under command of Major Dulaney, marched from Mexico City to Veracruz and eventually joined the 2d Battalion at Alvarado. Here the two battalions were organized into a Marine regiment under Dulaney.

With the capture of their capital in September 1847, the Mexicans had been left without an effective government to sue for peace. One had to be established before peace negotiations could ever begin. Even with Scott's decisive victory, the unpopularity of the war had become so great that President Polk realized that peace treaty would have to be concluded as soon as possible. Opponents of the war in the Whig-controlled House of Representatives threatened to cut off all funds for the troops in Mexico. Northern newspapers harshly condemned the war and its leaders with the hope that "the hordes under Scott and Taylor were every man of them, swept into the next world."⁷⁷

The Mexicans finally formed a provisional government and set up a temporary capital at Queretaro. The President of the Supreme Court of Justice appointed Pedro Maria Anaya as President ad interim until a new Congress could be elected and appoint a president. Anaya quickly picked three men to meet with the American envoy, Nicholas Trist. Trist, although he had been recalled by the State Department, decided to stay and conduct the negotiations with the Mexicans.

Finally, on 2 February 1848 Trist and the Mexican government signed the peace treaty in the village of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Although President Polk was unhappy with the terms, he sent the treaty to the Senate. The Senate ratified the peace treaty on 10 March 1848, officially bringing the war to an end. During June and July 1848, the battalions of the Marine regiment which had been garrisoning the towns of Alvarado and Laguna began their deployment back to the United States. The Marines boarded transport ships and returned to various barracks on the east coast. The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo gave the United States vast areas of land which included the present-day states of Utah, New Mexico, California, Arizona, and western Colorado. It also clearly established the Texas border at the Rio Grande. In return, the United States had agreed to pay \$15,000,000 indemnity to Mexico and to assume all claims by Americans against Mexico which amounted to another \$3,250,000.

As with most wars fought by the United States, the peace was greeted with the belief that this country would not be involved in any wars again. As a result, the military services were to undergo extensive cutbacks in strength. The Act of Congress of 2 March 1847, which had permitted the Marine Corps a large wartime increase of men, had also decreed that at the termination of the war there must be a reduction "both in officers and men, to a number not exceeding the number in service at the date of the Act."⁷⁸ The secretary of the Navy, John Y. Mason, felt that this reduction was a

mistake and that these extra Marines could be put to very good use as Marine guards on board ships and at Navy yards. This would decrease the number of civilian watchmen and sailors which were now assigned to tasks that could be performed by Marines. Twelve new second lieutenants had been added during the war and several Marine officers had received promotions as a result of the temporary increase in the size of the Corps. Mason did not want to lose these extra officers either. He also felt that every ship of war going to sea should have a commissioned officer and the necessary noncommissioned officers with the Marine guard on board. This would explain the fact that the Marine Corps needed a higher proportion of officers to men than did the Army. Unfortunately, Mason's pleas had little effect and a cut in the size of the Marine Corps was ordered. In addition, Mason lost his argument to keep the increase of 12 lieutenants.

The Marine Corps had activated two battalions to form a regiment but there were no plans to make it a permanent organization in the basic force.⁷⁹ The only permanent organization in the Corps at this time were barracks and ships' detachments. To form the battalions to fight in Mexico, Henderson had to strip the various barracks and ships of Marines. Since the strength of the Corps was reduced after the war to about 1,100 men, there was no thought of maintaining the regiment on a permanent basis.

Enlisted personnel returning from Mexico were discharged when they arrived back in the United States. The reduction in the number of officers posed a greater problem. Four captains, four first lieutenants, and four second lieutenants--12 officers in all--were to be dropped from the rolls. General Henderson convened a board of three officers, Lieutenant Colonel Samuel Miller, Major Thomas A. Linton, and Major James Edelin, to choose the men who would be separated from the Marine Corps. This can be considered the forerunner of today's selection boards. The cutback could have been handled in either of two ways. This board could either drop the 12 newest second lieutenants in the Corps and demote four first lieutenants and four captains to the next lower grade or it could remove those officers that the board felt could best be spared from active duty. The latter plan was chosen when the board met at the Marine Barracks, Washington, in August 1848. After reviewing the available records, the board recommended the following officers be dropped:

From the rank of captain, Ward Marston, Richard Douglas, Job Williams, and William Lang.

From the rank of first lieutenant, Jabez C. Rich, Thomas T. Sloaf, Edward West, and John S. Devlin.

From the rank of second lieutenant, F. Grundy Mason, James H. Jones, William Butterfield, and J. H. Strickland.⁸⁰

The Commandant approved the decision of the board and those 12 officers were

dropped. The officers involved in this reduction protested loudly and vehemently. First Lieutenant Edward West was particularly incensed over his dismissal. Believing that his next assignment would be at sea, Lieutenant West had just purchased a brand new set of uniforms when he learned that his name was on the list. The fact that he spent this money for uniforms seemed to upset him more than the fact that the board had met "for the purpose of lacerating and wounding the feelings and taking away the small support allowed to some few."⁸¹ Congress finally restored these 12 men to their former positions by authorizing the Marine Corps an increase in officers on 3 March 1849. Their names appear once again in the 1849 Navy register with the explanation that they had been dropped and later reinstated. After many more months of wrangling, they had this footnote removed in the 1851 register.

The Marine Corps felt the repercussions from the Mexican War well into the 1850s. A series of courts-martial took place involving some of the officers with the Marine Battalion in Mexico. The first sign of trouble began immediately after the capture of Mexico City in 1847. First Lieutenant John S. Devlin, a hot-headed, hard-drinking native of Ireland, accused Captain John G. Reynolds of cowardice during the storming of Chapultepec. Trouble broke out when Devlin's derogatory remarks about Reynolds provoked a fight between the two men. Devlin then sent Lieutenant Jabez C. Rich to deliver a challenge for a duel to Reynolds. Reynolds refused the challenge and Devlin was court-martialed for his actions. Among the charges leveled at Devlin were drunkenness on duty and conduct unbecoming an officer and gentleman. The court martial was held in October 1847 in Mexico and Devlin was found guilty of the charges and ordered to be cashiered from the Marine Corps. The Commanding General in Mexico mitigated this sentence to a 12-month suspension from duty. Unfortunately, Devlin did not stay out of difficulty for very long. In August 1852 he was again brought before a general court martial. The charges this time stemmed from a letter which appeared in the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* concerning the conduct of some officers at Chapultepec. The letter praised Devlin for the role he played but accused other officers of refusing to advance and attack the castle.⁸² Although the letter was signed "An Observer," Devlin was accused of writing it.⁸³ Throughout the trial he never claimed that he had no knowledge of the letter; he only denied its authorship. The court martial board found Devlin guilty and sentenced him to be cashiered from the service. This time no one in authority decided to intervene and pardon him. President Millard Fillmore approved the sentence on 18 September 1852 and Devlin left the Marine Corps. Following Devlin's dismissal, the controversy surrounding the attack on Chapultepec died.

As in most other wars, the Mexican War produced its share of heroes. The two Army generals who commanded the American troops in Mexico had ambitions for national office. Both Scott and Taylor ran for the presidency in 1848. In spite of all the opposition to the war, Taylor won the election, but died before completing his term.

The Marine Corps, too, had its heroes although they were not nationally known. In the days prior to the Civil War, no awards such as the Medal of Honor or the Navy Cross existed. Promotions among the enlisted men seemed to be the only means of recognizing bravery in combat. The reward for heroic action among the officers was a brevet commission. This was an honorary promotion for gallantry or meritorious conduct. The officer received neither badge nor medal and the honor only entitled him to be addressed at the next highest rank with the "brevet" in front of it. Twenty-seven brevets were awarded to 26 Marine officers (Archibald Gillespie received two) for their bravery during the Mexican War. It is interesting to note that Marine officers received more brevets during the Mexican War than during the Civil War.

Notes

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Appendix A

Deaths in the Marine Battalion in Mexico, 1847

Pvt George C. Baxley	Co D	Died at Veracruz 26Jul1847
Pvt Charles Jacobs	Co D	Died at Puebla 26Jul1847
Pvt Joseph Myers	Co D	Died at Veracruz 26Jul1847
Pvt Caspar Brent	Co D	Died at Veracruz 24Aug1847
Lt Henry Welsh	Co E	Died at San Augustine 28Aug1847
Pvt Nicholas Fleming	Co B	Died at Perote 5Sep1847
Maj Levi Twiggs		Killed in action at Chapultepec 13Sep1847
Cpl Hugh Graham	Co B	Killed in action at Chapultepec 13Sep1847
Pvt Thomas Kelly	Co E	Killed in action at Garita de Belen 13Sep1847
Pvt Andrew McLaughlin	Co E	Killed in action at Chapultepec 13Sep1847
Pvt Andrew Egbert	Co D	Killed in action at Chapultepec 13Sep1847
Pvt Matthew Banks	Co B	Died of wounds received at Chapultepec 19Sep1847
Pvt John Herbert	Co E	Died of wounds received at Chapultepec 22Sep1847
Pvt Francis Quinn	Co D	Died of wounds received at Chapultepec 5Oct1847
Pvt William Thompson	Co E	Died at Mexico City 11Oct1847
Pvt Elmer Wallace	Co B	Died at Mexico City 11Oct1847
Pvt Michael Brady	Co D	Died at Perote 12Oct1847
Pvt Caspar Wallers	Co F	Died at Mexico City 13Oct1847
Pvt David Murphy	Co B	Died at Puebla 13Oct1847
Music William Dennison	Co A	Died at Mexico City 14Oct1847
Pvt Elias Davis	Co C	Died at Mexico City 18Oct1847
Pvt Cornelius Hanly	Co C	Died at Mexico City 18Oct1847
Pvt William Barndollar	Co B	Died at Puebla 18Oct1847
Pvt Hugh Creamer	Co A	Died of wounds received on liberty in Mexico City 20Oct1847
Pvt Henry Stoddard	Co B	Died at Perote 4Nov1847
Pvt James Dresser	Co B	Died at Puebla 8Nov1847
Pvt James Hannah	Co C	Died at Puebla 9Nov1847
LtCol Samuel E. Watson		Died at Veracruz 16Nov1847
Pvt Oscar Ticknor	Co C	Died at Mexico City 23Nov1847
Pvt Maynard Quackenbush	Co D	Died at New Orleans 30Nov1847

Appendix B

Marine Officers Brevetted During the Mexican War

2dLt George Adams	Brevet 1stLt	For gallantry and meritorious conduct at the National Bridge 12Aug1847
1stLt D. D. Baker	Brevet Capt	For the storming of Chapultepec and capture of Mexico City 13Sep1847
Maj William Dulany	Brevet LtCol	For the storming of Chapultepec and capture of Mexico City 13Sep1847
2dLt Thomas Y. Field	Brevet 1stLt	For the storming of Chapultepec and capture of Mexico City 13Sep1847
1stLt Addison Garland	Brevet Capt	For meritorious conduct at the bombardment and capture of Veracruz 18Mar1847
1stLt Archibald Gillespie	Brevet Capt	For meritorious conduct in the defense of Ciudad de Los Angeles 30Sep1846
Capt Archibald Gillespie	Brevet Maj	For gallantry at San Pasqual, California 6Dec1847
2dLt Charles A. Henderson	Brevet 1stLt	For the storming of Chapultepec and capture of the San Cosme Gate 13Sep1847
1stLt William A. T. Maddox	Brevet Capt	For gallantry and meritorious conduct in the Battle of Santa Clara, California 3Jan1847
Capt Ward Marston	Brevet Maj	For gallant conduct at the Battle of Santa Clara, California 2Jan1847
2dLt Charles G. McCawley	Brevet 1stLt	For the storming of Chapultepec and capture of Mexico City 13Sep1847
2dLt A. S. Nicholson	Brevet 1stLt	For the storming of Chapultepec and capture of Mexico City 13Sep1847
2dLt J. Stricker Nicholson	Brevet 1stLt	For the storming of Chapultepec and capture of Mexico City 13Sep1847
2dLt Freeman Norvell	Brevet 1stLt	For the storming of Chapultepec and capture of Mexico City 13Sep1847
2dLt Edward McD. Reynolds	Brevet 1stLt	For the storming of Chapultepec and capture of Mexico City 13Sep1847
Capt John G. Reynolds	Brevet Maj	For the storming of Chapultepec and capture of Mexico City 13Sep1847
1stLt William W. Russell	Brevet Capt	At Mazatlan, Mexico 10Dec1847
1stLt W. L. Shuttleworth	Brevet Capt	For meritorious conduct at the bombardment and capture of Veracruz 10Mar1847
1stLt John D. Simms	Brevet Capt	For the storming of Chapultepec and capture of the San Cosme Gate 13Sep1847

1stLt William B. Slack	Brevet Capt	For gallantry and meritorious conduct at the bombardment of Veracruz 10Mar1847
1stLt Daniel J. Sutherland	Brevet Capt	For the storming of Chapultepec and capture of Mexico City 14Sep1847
1stLt Robert Tansill	Brevet Capt	For the defense of Guaymas, Mexico 17Nov1847
1stLt Algernon S. Taylor	Brevet Capt	For gallantry at the bombardment of Veracruz 27Mar1847
Capt George H. Terrett	Brevet Maj	For the storming of Chapultepec and capture of the San Cosme Gate 13Sep1847
1stLt Henry B. Watson	Brevet Capt	At Mazatlan, Mexico 20Nov1847
1stLt William L. Young	Brevet Capt	For the storming of Chapultepec and capture of Mexico City 13Sep1847
Capt Jacob Zeilin	Brevet Maj	For gallantry in action at the crossing of the San Gabriel River, California 9Jan1847

Appendix C

Ships of the Pacific Squadron With Marines on Board, 1846-1847

Frigate Congress
Sloop Cyane
Sloop Dale
Razee Independence

Sloop Levant
Sloop Portsmouth
Frigate Savannah
Sloop Warren

Ships of the Gulf Squadron With Marines on Board, 1846-1847

Bomb Vessel Aetna
Sloop Albany
Frigate Cumberland
Sloop Decatur
Sloop Falmouth
Sloop Germantown
Bomb Brig Hecla
Sloop John Adams
Steamer Mississippi

Ship of the Line Ohio
Brig Perry
Frigate Potomac
Steamer Princeton
Frigate Raritan
Sloop Saratoga
Steamer Scorpion
Sloop St. Mary's
Brig Truxtun

Appendix D

Composition of Scott's Army During the March on Mexico City

Cavalry

Elements of three dragoon regiments.

Artillery

A rocket and howitzer battery, several field batteries, and a siege train.

Infantry

1st Division: Commanded by Brevet MGen William J. Worth, consisted of Brevet Col John Garland's brigade of the 2d and 3d Artillery (used as infantry); the 4th Infantry and a light battalion; Col N. S. Clark's brigade of 5th, 6th, and 8th Infantry.

2d Division: Commanded by BGen David E. Twiggs, consisted of Brevet BGen Persifor F. Smith's brigade of mounted riflemen, 1st Artillery (used as infantry) and 3d Infantry; Brevet Col Bennet Riley's brigade of 4th Artillery (used as infantry), 2d and 7th Infantry.

3d Division (Division of Volunteers): Commanded by MGen Gideon J. Pillow, consisted of BGen George Cadwalader's brigade of 11th and 14th Infantry with the Volunteer Regiment; BGen Franklin Pierce's brigade of 9th, 12th, and 15th Infantry.

4th Division (Division of Volunteers): Commanded by MGen John A. Quitman, consisted of BGen James Shield's brigade of New York and South Carolina volunteers; Brevet LtCol Samuel Watson's brigade of a detachment of the 2d Pennsylvania Regiment and a battalion of Marines under the command of Maj Levi Twiggs.

Appendix E

Number of Marines Attached to Vessels of the Gulf Squadron, June 1847

	Capt	1stLt	2dLt	Sgt	Cpl	Drum	Fifer	Pvt	Total
<i>Raritan</i>	1		1	3	6	1	1	53	66
<i>Potomac</i>		1		3	4	1	1	39	49
<i>John Adams</i>			1	1	3	1	1	22	29
<i>Albany</i>		1		1	2	1		21	26
<i>Germantown</i>			1	2	2	1	1	20	27
<i>Saratoga</i>		1		1	2			20	24
<i>Decatur</i>				1	2			20	23
<i>Mississippi</i>		1		3	4	1	1	35	45
<i>Scorpion</i>				1	1	1	1	14	18
<i>Perry</i>				1	1			6	8
Total	1	4	3	17	27	7	6	250	315

*The *Ohio*, *St. Mary's*, and *Princeton* had been withdrawn from the Gulf Squadron. However, parts of the Marine Detachments on board were retained by Commodore Perry.

Appendix F

Officers of the Marine Battalion, September-October 1847

Field and Staff

LtCol Samuel E. Watson, commanding officer until 14Sep1847
Maj William Dulaney, commanding officer after 14Sep1847
1stLt D. D. Baker, Adjutant
David S. Edwards, Surgeon
Richard McSherry, Assistant Surgeon
1stLt John S. Devlin
Maj Levi Twiggs, killed at Chapultepec

Company A

Capt Benjamin Macomber, sick in hospital at Perote
2dLt Daniel J. Sutherland, commanding
2dLt Freeman Norvell
2dLt John S. Nicholson

Company B

1stLt William L. Young, commanding
2dLt Augustus S. Nicholson

Company C

1stLt Jabez C. Rich, commanding
2dLt Charles G. McCawley

Company D

Capt John G. Reynolds, commanding
2dLt Edward McD. Reynolds
2dLt James H. Jones, not at Mexico City

Company E

Capt George H. Terrett, commanding
2dLt Thomas Y. Field

Company F

1stLt William Lang, sick in hospital at Perote
2dLt John D. Simms, commanding
2dLt Charles D. Henderson