

## EARLY MILITARY POSTS IN ARIZONA

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In 1849, Fort Defiance, the first military post in Arizona, was established in the extreme northeastern corner of the state for the purpose of quelling and controlling the fierce and troublesome Navajo nation. All the early army posts in Arizona were well located with reference to water, grass, and wood. Almost always the climate is referred to as delightful, and the location as healthful. The buildings at the post were usually either of adobe or logs, and consisted of quarters, store-houses, hospitals, guard-house, and supply depot. At many camps there were corrals, at others work-shops, and at Camp Lowell there was a magazine of adobe, 19 by 39 feet. Six months subsistence was usually kept on hand. Camps were located, of course, with reference to operations offensive and defensive against hostile Indians. One is bewildered with the kaleidoscopic changes in these camps, posts, and forts. Today a camp is here, tomorrow it is there. Now it is called one thing and anon it is called another.

In 1859, Fort Breckenridge was located very near the junction of the Aravaipa Canyon with the San Pedro, in the midst of the Pinal, and Aravaipa Apaches. In the report of 1870, this post appears under the name Camp Grant. The location was bad and the living conditions wretched. The officers did not have enough room either for comfort or health. All the buildings were leaky and required frequent repairs. There were two corrals of good capacity, built of logs on the plan of a stockade, in order to protect the horses from Indian raids. Good water was to be had nearby, and was hauled in water wagons. There was, too, good grazing for the animals. But, at best, this camp was a hot, dreary, unsavory station; and was eventually moved to the southwestern slope of the Graham Mountains and called Fort Grant.

Fort Buchanan was, possibly, the first post established after the American occupancy of the Gadsden Purchase. It was in the Sonoita Valley, twenty miles north of the Mexican boundary, and about twenty-five miles east of Tubac. Fort Buchanan was commanded, successively by Major Enoch Steen, Captain E. H. Fitzgerald, Captain I. V. D. Reeve, and Captain R. S. Ewell. When the Civil War broke out, there was at Fort Buchanan only a company of infantry and a troop of dragoons. Colonel McClintock, in his "**Arizona the Youngest State,**" affirms that, at

the beginning of the war there was more than a million dollars worth of military equipment and provisions at this point. "Fort Buchanan was made the depot of stores to be used by a Confederate Column that was to march from Texas to seize the silver mines of Arizona and the gold fields of California." The location did not prove very healthful, and in 1868 a much better site was selected on the beautiful plain above and a half-mile to the east of the old location. The post was now named Camp Crittenden, in honor of General J. L. Crittenden, who then commanded the military district. The extensive ruins of Camp Crittenden are still plainly visible, though scarcely a vestige of old Fort Buchanan remains.

Camp Mohave, established in 1858, abandoned in May, 1861, and re-garrisoned in May, 1863, was a few miles above the present Needles, on the Colorado River. Mail was carried on horseback. Sometimes a steamer came up from Yuma. The nearest Indians were the Mohaves, though the Hualpais, and Piutes sometimes appeared at the post. The camp was supplied with water from the Colorado by means of a steam pump, and from a tank holding six thousand gallons the water was piped to all parts. As in the time of Jedediah Smith, the first American trapper to cross the continent, the Indians raised beans, grain, and melons on the rich bottoms below the post. The location was healthful, except that the heat was great, the report of the officer in command stating that "troops should not remain more than two summers at this post, and cannot do so without permanent injury to the constitution."

The first American soldiers to enter the territory acquired by the Gadsden Purchase marched into Tucson in 1856. The command consisted of four troops of dragoons. They soon departed to the southward, where for awhile they took up their station at Calabasas, and then moved on up the Sonoita Valley and built Fort Buchanan. But Tucson was always an important military point. Camp Lowell, at Tucson, was not formally established until 1866, but on May 20, 1862, the California Column occupied the city and unfurled the Stars and Stripes. Tucson was continuously occupied by troops until September 15, 1864, and during this time was the base of military supplies for Southern Arizona. It was abandoned in the fall of 1864 but was re-occupied the following May.

On August 29, 1866, it was declared a regular military post under the name of Camp Lowell. The nearest Indians were the friendly Papagoes, but the irrepressible Apaches were at no

great distance, and from the neighboring mountains to the north and east they would enter the town to murder and steal. By means of irrigation, almost anything could be raised on the fertile soil adjacent to the town. The climate was reported as "hot during most of the year, evenings and nights usually cold." March 19, 1873, the post was transferred to a location seven miles northeast of Tucson.

Camp Bowie was established under the name of Fort Bowie by the California Volunteers, in August, 1862. It was located in Apache Pass, on the Overland Mail Route, at an elevation of almost five thousand feet. This pass had been and for years continued to be the most dangerous point on the southern route to California. Excellent water was to be had five hundred yards from the fort. Wood was furnished by contract at nine dollars and fifty cents a cord. Neither grain nor garden stuff could be raised anywhere within thirty miles of the post. Close by rich deposits of gold and silver were known to exist, and when the station of the Overland Mail Route was maintained here, before Cochise went on the war-path, the Indians used often to bring in nuggets of gold. The nearest Indians were the Chiricahua Apaches.

Fort Whipple was established December 21, 1863, fifteen miles northeast of Prescott. In 1864, the troops were removed from that point to Granite Creek, a mile above Prescott, and thereafter this station was designated Fort Whipple. The climate was delightful; there was abundant wood, water, and grama grass; grain and vegetables could be raised, and the location was healthful and picturesque. The nearest depot of supplies was at Yuma. Freight came by boat to Ehrenberg and from that point was hauled by way of Camp Date Creek by wagon. Marauding Indians, belonging to the Hualpais, and the Mohave, Tonto, and Pinal Apache tribes committed frequent depredations in the region about Fort Whipple.

Camp Verde was originally known as Camp Lincoln. It was established in the spring of 1864 at a point five miles south of the location later chosen. It was moved to its present site in 1866, and was then named Camp Verde, since there were two Camp Lincolns in the Division. It was situated forty miles east of Prescott, very near the junction of Beaver Creek with the Verde. The supply depot was at distant Yuma, and supplies came by way of Ehrenberg and Prescott. Good water was available, and wood was secured by contract at nine dollars a cord. The Indians in the neighborhood were wandering bands of Tonto

Apaches and Coyoteros. The location of the camp was healthful and the surroundings delightful. A post garden had been set aside on Clear Creek, five miles to the south, and three men were kept busy tilling this extensive allotment.

Camp Date Creek was "a going concern." Established in the first place by the California Volunteers at Date Creek, in 1864, the troops, in 1866, moved twenty-five miles to the north to protect the settlers of Skull Valley. At that time the post was known as Camp McPherson. The following year the command returned to Date Creek, but in 1868 it was again removed and given its final station on the south bank of Date Creek, twenty-six miles from Wickenburg, the nearest town, and on November 23 was officially renamed Camp Date Creek. The climate was mild; the locality was pronounced healthful; grass was plentiful; wood near at hand, and there was a good post garden in the creek bottom. Lest the situation should seem to the reader to have been altogether Elysian, I should add that in the region were many Yavapais and Apache Mohave Indians.

Camp McDowell, established in 1865, on the west bank of the Verde River seven miles above its junction with the Salt River settlement, was an important post. Incidental reference is made to "a farming settlement called Phoenix that is growing up at Salt River, about thirty miles southwest from here." The friendly Pima and Maricopa Indians lived about fifty miles distant on the Gila, but the immediate region teemed with warriors of active, wily, hostile tribes—the Apache Mohaves, the Tonto Apaches, Pinal Apaches, and Coyotero Apaches. These bands lived in the neighboring Sierra Ancha, Pinal and White Mountains, and in early spring and late fall, about harvest time, they made bold and destructive raids throughout the country adjacent to Camp McDowell. The temperature in summer sometimes reached one hundred twenty degrees; snow never falls, but "the vicinity of the post is occasionally visited by terrific storms of wind, rain and hail, accompanied by thunder and lightning."

Camp Hualpai, originally known as Camp Toll Gate, was established in 1869, a mile and a half southeast of Aztec Pass, and forty-five miles northwest of Prescott. The post was situated on a Mesa at six thousand feet elevation. There were deep canyons, both above and below, and the camp was located between these two canyons for the purpose of guarding the road against Indian attacks.

November 27, 1850, Major S. P. Heintzelman arrived at the junction of the Colorado and Gila rivers to establish a garrison

for the purpose of protecting the thousands of emigrants who were crossing the Colorado at this point on their way to the California gold fields. The post was called Camp Independence. In March, 1851, the location was changed to the high ground on the west bank of the river where Garces had built a Spanish Mission in 1779. The post was now renamed and called Fort Yuma. It was very difficult to transport supplies to this remote camp. At that time the Yuma Indians were not hostile, though soon after this date they became so. In the summer of 1851 they killed a number of emigrants and attacked the fort, left temporarily under command of Lieutenant L. W. Sweeney with a force of only ten men. Soon after this, sickness and lack of supplies necessitated the withdrawal of the troops. From December, 1851, to February, 1852, the camp was deserted and the ferry left unprotected. Heintzelman returned in February, rebuilt the fort and established a permanent garrison. At the same time that Camp Independence was established in 1850, the army was looking into the possibility of transporting supplies by water from the Pacific Coast to points on the Colorado River. As a result, the schooner *Invincible* sailed from San Francisco November, 1850, and during the month of January, 1851, made attempts to ascend and chart the river, but without much success.

The Fort Yuma Reservation, declared January 22, 1867, included both Fort Yuma, California, and the Yuma Depot, Arizona. Both the fort and the depot were in the military department of Arizona. The fort was extensive, and for a good many years had been well-provided with everything requisite for an exposed army station. The heat at Yuma injected into literature a certain degree of profanity, and in the early days the remark was common that the army officers "raised the temperature of the place thirty degrees" in order to escape post duty there. The fort was only three hundred and fifty-five feet above sea level; the sand-flats were extensive, and the desert pressed in from every side, yet the location was healthful and to visitors who had just crossed the dreary wastes either east or west, and to voyagers who had spent weeks on a crowded, ill-smelling ship from San Francisco, the comforts of Fort Yuma, and the hospitality of the Commandant were memorable. The adobe walls were thick; broad verandas surrounded the various buildings, and water was piped to every part of the post. The great Yuma depot, where supplies were received to be distributed to the camps throughout the territory, was on the Arizona side, as was the postoffice, both for the fort and the depot. For a good many

years before there was any permanent town on the present site of Yuma, the place was very important—full of stirring activity.

When the report of 1870 was issued, Camp Apache was just being placed on a permanent basis. It had previously been occupied, and had been known successively as Sumner in 1869, Camp Ord, Camp Mogollon, and Camp Thomas. It was located in the heart of the Coyotero Apache country, on a beautiful mountain stream, with the lofty peaks of the White Mountains as a background. It was an important post during the period of Apache warfare, and at present the region is sought every summer for its historic associations and as an ideal summer playground. The postoffice used to be at Fort Bowie, one hundred and eighty miles distant, and Tucson, two hundred and thirty miles away, was the supply station and nearest town. The valleys around were very fertile; there was fine grazing for the animals; magnificent forests of pine were close at hand, and there was an abundance of fish and game—trout, deer, mountain quail and wild turkey.

Ft. Thomas, located on the Gila River and within a few miles of the San Carlos Indian Reservation, was established in the early 70's at a strategic point midway between Ft. Apache and Ft. Bowie, and directly on the road over which the post at Ft. Apache as well as the City of Globe and the San Carlos Indian Reservation received all supplies. This was also the route over which the Apache travelled on his many forays to Mexico.

So important and permanent was this post considered that very substantial and comfortable quarters of adobe were built in the 70's for the officers, enlisted men, supplies and live stock.

Many early posts were as transient as the camp of the Arab, who folds his tent and silently steals away. It is tantalizing to find mention of places that had a name, yet seem to have had no "local habitation." A few of these evasive locations I have run to earth; and such knowledge as I have, I will share with my reader. Camp Supply was a temporary military station established by Colonel Kit Carson on the Little Colorado not far from Holbrook, during his campaign against the Navajos. Camp Reno was established as a sub-station of Camp McDowell, in Tonto Basin, at the foot of Reno Pass, in order to hold the Tonto Apaches in check. Old Fort Goodwin, named after the first active governor of the territory, was about thirty miles from Safford, three miles south of the Gila River. It was established by General Carleton in 1864 both as a protection for that region against the fierce and destructive attacks of the White Moun-

tain, Pinal, and Chiricahua Apaches, and as a safe place for resort for Indians who desired to come in and give themselves up. In 1865 there were three companies of soldiers at Fort Goodwin under command of Colonel Pollack, and in 1866 there were nine hundred Indians there under guard of the troops. In anticipation of the arrival of the civil officers who had been appointed to set up a territorial government in Arizona, Major Willis in command of a detachment of the California Volunteers, established a camp at Chino Valley about twenty miles northeast of Prescott, December 21, 1863, and named it Fort Whipple. The civil government was set up here in January, 1864; but in May, Capitol and Camp were both moved to Granite Creek, near the present site of Prescott, and, thereafter, for a considerable time the original location at Chino Valley was called Camp Clark, in honor of the surveyor-general of New Mexico. At the time that America took possession of the Gadsden Purchase there was a Mexican fort about two miles south of Calabasas with substantial buildings of stone and adobe. In June, 1856, the dragoons under Major Steen came on from Tucson, and occupied this old Mexican fort for some months before taking up a permanent location at Fort Buchanan. Later, near the close of the Civil War, this old fort was again occupied by American troops, and was then named Fort Mason, in honor of the then commanding officer in Arizona. May 10, 1866, Camp Wallen was established on Babacomari Creek in a well-watered picturesque grazing region. Henry I. Yohn, who had been a soldier in Arizona in 1866, told me in an interview December 17, 1925, that he was with the command that established Camp Wallen. They took possession of old Babacomari Ranch. He said: "The buildings were in excellent condition. The main building was just like a castle, with towers on two corners—one toward Tubac, and one toward the San Pedro. We lived in tents, and used the buildings for a corral at night. We built an addition to the old house about one hundred feet square, and kept our stores and grain." In 1868 Camp Wallen gave place to Fort Huachuca.