



CHRONICLE OF THE
AZTEC CLUB OF 1847
Military Society of the Mexican War

Spring, 1994

Our 147TH Year

Editor: Rick Breithaupt

Greetings

Gentlemen:

It is indeed my honor to represent the Military Society of the Mexican War as your President. Lest we forget, our Society was founded in Mexico City during the occupation of 1847-1848, and is one whose membership has included no less than four American Presidents: Zachary Taylor, Franklin Pierce, Jefferson Davis and Ulysses S. Grant.

As the *Chronicle* will testify, the Society is entering a new era of Aztec expansion. Ergo, our first priority is to place our house in order, and our second priority is membership acquisition. The first is the duty of your newly elected officers; the second the mutual duty of each of us. Without relinquishing qualitative standards, I challenge each of you to solicit your sons, brothers, cousins, and apposite friends and acquaintances to join us as we approach our sesquicentennial.

Godspeed,

Richard B. Abell
President



President Richard B. Abell

LOS ANGELES MAY 21-22, 1994!

The Society will hold its Spring Meeting in Los Angeles, California, site of the signing of the Treaty of Cahuenga which ceded the western territory to the United States in 1847. Plans include a casual "California-style" luncheon on Saturday, May 21 at Campo de Cahuenga, site of the signing of the historic Treaty, followed by a black-tie banquet that same evening featuring noted author and historian Midge Sherwood. Scheduled special guests include Albert J. Pico, great²-grand nephew of both Mexico's famed General Andrés Pico and California's last Mexican governor, Pio Pico.



Campo de Cahuenga

Included on the grounds at Campo de Cahuenga is a small museum that includes original oil paintings of John C. Fremont, Gen. Pico and others, by prominent early western artist Orpha Klinker, as well as other artifacts of the California's role in the Mexican War. On Sunday, May 22, the Society will participate in an afternoon celebration and Re-enactment at the historic Campo, sponsored by the Campo de Cahuenga Historical Society.

Members are encouraged to arrive in Los Angeles on Thursday, May 19, to allow plenty of time to visit a few of Southern California's many attractions, including the Getty, Armand Hammer and Norton Simon Art Museums, La Brea Tar Pits, Disneyland or Universal Studios. Included at the Universal Studios complex is "City Walk", a unique shopping experience with over 40 stores that has been featured in several national broadcasts, including "This Week With David Brinkley" and "Good Morning America". The Campo is located adjacent to the Studio Tour facility, so you may wish to stay at the Universal City Sheraton or Hilton hotels, thereby placing you near the majority of our activities as well as tourist spots.

THE TREATY OF CAHUENGA

On January 10, 1847, the famous Treaty of Cahuenga was signed by Col. John C. Frémont, as Commander of the American forces, and Andrés Pico, Commandante of the Mexican forces in California. As John S. D. Eisenhower wrote in *So Far from God, The U. S. War With Mexico 1846-1848* (Random House, 1989):

"The Americans camped on the heights during the night of the eighth, and the next morning, with the enemy out of sight, they moved out across the wide mesa leading to the San Fernando River. Except for sporadic enemy artillery fire, which was quickly silenced, the Americans were unopposed until they neared Los Angeles itself, at which time some Californio cavalry charged halfheartedly down a hillock against the side of the hollow square. . . . The Battle of Mesa was over . . . The Americans camped for the night just outside the city.

Thus ended the skirmishes known as the battles of San Gabriel and La Mesa. . . . The next morning, January 10, 1847, a deputation from Los Angeles approached Stockton's camp. Flores, they said, would evacuate the city if Californio property and persons would be respected. Stockton agreed to those terms, but Kearny, as a precaution, disposed the troops for battle. It was well that he did, for the streets turned out to be full of hostile citizens, some of them drunk, who 'brandished their arms and saluted [the Americans] with every form of reproach'.

. . . During both battles, San Pascual and San Gabriel, Frémont's California Battalion has been conspicuously absent. Around midnight of January 14, 1847, however, Frémont and his men rode casually into the American camp, near Los Angeles, hauling several pieces of artillery, one of which, to the annoyance of Kearny's men, was the howitzer they had lost at San Pascual. But more important than the howitzer was the document that Frémont carried in his hands: the "treaty" of Cahuenga, signed between Frémont and Andrés Pico. Its existence came as a surprise to everyone.

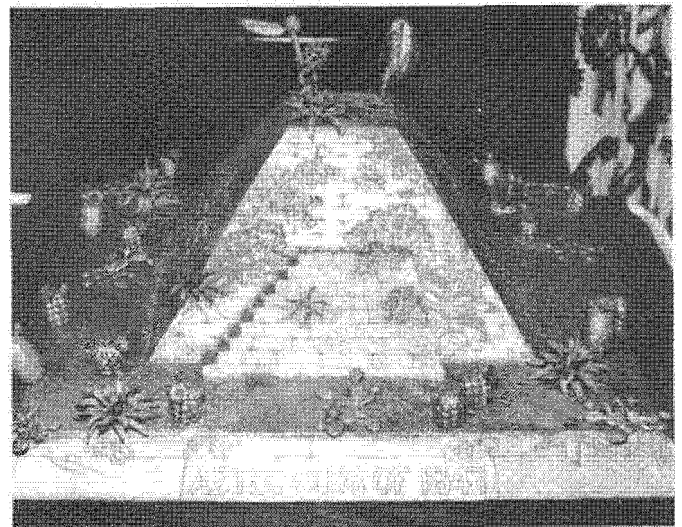
Frémont had stayed at Sacramento for about a month after deciding not to move south in October [1846]. In November he had begun the four-hundred mile journey overland. . . . At San Luis Obispo, Frémont had found a great bonanza when he captured Jesús Pico, a cousin of Andrés Pico. Like Andrés, Jesús was a parole violator, and for that crime he expected to be shot. When Frémont spared his life, it was not surprising that he became one of Frémont's devoted followers, and that he quickly arranged for Frémont to meet with his cousin. The remnants of Pico's army were straggling northward from Los Angeles, but Jesús Pico succeeded in locating him. Andrés then presented a peace proposal to Frémont, who took it upon himself to sign it on behalf of the United States. Never mind he was subordinate to both Stockton and Kearny and that they were both within communicating distance.

The Treaty of Cahuenga granted everything the

Californios could wish for, including provisions that Stockton had previously refused. It called for all Californios to lay down their arms and retire to their occupations, in return for which parole violators would be forgiven. All Californios would be granted the rights of American citizens without being required to take an oath of allegiance. The agreement was more generous than necessary, considering that the Americans now enjoyed an overpowering military advantage. Nevertheless, Stockton quickly accepted the pact, and the California conflict came to an end."

Less than one week later, on January 16, 1847, Commodore Stockton reappointed John C. Frémont as governor of California, in the face of orders from President Polk that Kearny produced directing him to assume that post. Stockton maintained that Polk's orders had been superseded by his own consolidation of power in the area and, despite Kearny's protest, Stockton refused to recognize him. Kearny stormed out of Los Angeles with his fifty men, headed toward San Diego. The matter was settled two weeks later by the arrival of Stockton's successor, Commodore Branford Shubrick, who promptly recognized Kearny's authority. Kearny then regularized Frémont's California Battalion and, after Frémont resisted violently, threatening a revolt and challenging Col. Richard Mason, Kearny's deputy, to a duel, Frémont was court martialed by Kearny.

TEOCALI



On December 13, 1892, at the Club's 45TH Annual Dinner, held at Sherry's (5TH and 37TH Streets, New York City), Col. DeLancey Floyd-Jones presented the Aztec Club a silver dining table center piece representing an ancient Aztec Teocali, or "God House". Over the years, this treasure has deteriorated and become damaged. Cost for restoration will exceed \$3,000. The Club is currently undertaking its restoration and contributions toward this effort are needed to defray the expense. *Contributions would be appreciated and may be directed to the Treasurer.*

ANCESTRAL SERVICE

A Periodic Series on Ancestors of our Members

Submitted by Philip J. Pennington, Jr.

The following are some interesting excerpts regarding my Aztec Club ancestor, Col. Pierce Mason Butler, taken from "The Chronicles of Oklahoma", Spring, 1952 issue. Shortly after the battle commences, Gen. Scott sent two brigades, under the command of Thomas Prescott Pierce and Hamilton Leroy Shields, by the left through the fields in order to attack the enemy from the rear. Shields advanced with his force of sixteen hundred through marshy ground from a long distance; but he was exposed to the entire fire of the enemy and failed to outflank the Mexicans. The Palmettos of South Carolina were badly cut up and finally took shelter in and about a large barn near the causeway where Santa Ana's reserves — four thousand foot soldiers and three thousand horsemen — were planted. Shield's called for volunteers to follow him and his appeal was instantly answered by Col. Pierce Mason Butler who cried: "Every South Carolinian will follow you to the death!"

General James Shields, writing to Gov. David Johnson on September 2, 1847, described the battle as "one of the most terrific fires to which soldiers were ever subjected." Colonel Butler was wounded in one his legs early in the battle but continued to advance until a musket ball through his head caused instantaneous death. His body was returned to Edgefield, South Carolina and many tributes in verse were written in his honor, one of them in the Cherokee Advocate dated September 30, 1847, which described Butler as "just and showed great sympathy for the Cherokees". Butler held the position of Cherokee Agent prior to his involvement in the Mexican War (1841-1845) a position Butler was appointed to by President John Tyler. Butler also served as Governor of South Carolina for one term, 1836-1838. He made no campaign for the office, saying: "the office should seek the man". Butler had a great vision for a public school system in his state which was a rare ambition in the antebellum days of the South.

A sword of spectacular craftsmanship and elegance was made and presented to Loudon Butler, one of Pierce Butler's sons, by the State of South Carolina in his memory. The sword has considerable value and was returned to the State in 1981 by pierce M. Butler (a direct descendant) of Nashville, Tennessee. Pierce M. Butler was most likely the role model for Margaret Mitchell's novel, "Gone With the Wind". In Mitchell's novel, Rhett Butler was an officer who served in the Mexican War.

Ed. Note: If you have an interesting account about your Aztec ancestor, submit it to the editor for possible inclusion in a future issue of *The Chronicle*.

INSIGNIA AVAILABLE

Show Your Colors !!



After many years of inavailability, by special arrangement with noted jeweler Bailey, Banks & Biddle, full size membership medals are once again available for purchase. Struck from a brand new set of dies engraved by artisans using an original Aztec Club medal as a model, the medal is simply exquisite. Suspended from a Mexican green and blue ribbon, the 1½" medal bears on its obverse the Mexican Eagle and wording "City of Mexico — Army of Occupation" in high relief over green enamel. The reverse depicts an American Eagle and wording "Aztec Club — U. S. Army 1847" in high relief over red enamel. (Reverse shown above.)

Members desiring to purchase a medal need to secure an authorization chit from the Treasurer prior to ordering. *By special arrangement, a consignment of medals will be available for purchase at the Spring Meeting.* Pricing:

Full Size Medal

Silver, w/Gold Plating	\$ 85.00
Gold Filled*	\$ 90.00
10K Gold	\$ 515.00
14K Gold	\$ 730.00

Miniature Medal

Bronze, w/ Gold Plating	\$ 40.00
Silver, w/ Gold Plating	\$ 45.00
Gold Filled*	\$ 50.00
10K Gold	\$ 150.00
14K Gold	\$ 180.00

*Recommended for those not ordering 10K or 14K.

AVAILABLE FROM THE TREASURER

Tie (four-in-hand)	\$ 35.00
Bow Tie	\$ 30.00
Bow Tie and Cumberbund	\$ 80.00

All made of finest silk in Aztec Club colors.

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Captain of the Color Guard Mr. Christian A. L. Abell

**Founded by the Officers of the United States Army
 Mexico City
 October 13, 1847**

ANNUAL MEETING HELD

The Society's 147TH annual meeting and dinner was held on Saturday, October 16, 1993 at the Chevy Chase Club, Chevy Chase, Maryland. Brigadier General Edwin H. Simmons, USMC (Ret.), Director of the Marine Corps Museum and Historical Section, Washington Navy Yard, was the guest speaker. Gen. Simmons gave an interesting account of the role of the Marine Corps in the Mexican War.

Included in Gen. Simmons talk was the announcement of the publishing of the Mexican War journals and other papers of 2ND Lt. Henry Bulls Watson. The three journals, covering the period from January 11, 1845 to May 5, 1848, when Lt. Watson commanded the Marine Guard on board the Sloop of War Portsmouth, give a vivid and highly interesting account of not only the shipboard and shore activities of a Marine Guard in the mid-1840's and ports of call including Rio de Janeiro, Hilo and Honolulu, Monterey, San Francisco, Guaymas, Mazatlan and La Paz, but also important events of the Mexican War in Upper and Lower California and on the west coast of Mexico itself.

All three of the journals, which had only been partially transcribed previously, were transcribed, integrated and edited in their entirety by Charles R. Smith of the History and Museums Division. Following dinner, 1994 Officers were installed. The evening was a fine affair for all and the group assembled looked eagerly upon their getting together again at the next meeting.

THE AZTEC CLUB NEEDS YOUR HELP!



The Aztec Club of 1847 is one of the oldest American patriotic societies, founded in 1847 by officers serving in the Mexican War. Original members were commissioned officers of the Army, Navy or Marine Corps, Regular or Volunteer, who actually served in some part of Mexico, Mexican territory or Mexican waters during the War with Mexico (May 13, 1846 to February 2, 1848). Membership in the Aztec Club of 1847 has been highly prized since its founding. Hereditary members are the male lineal or collateral descendants, who have attained the age of eighteen years, of such officers who were original members, or of those officers who would have been qualified to have been original members.

Members of the Aztec Club who wish to nominate someone for membership, be it a son, nephew, cousin or friend, should write the Secretary and include: name and address of the candidate, a brief biography, and the name and service of the qualifying ancestor. Application papers and information will be forwarded to qualifying candidates. Write: Nicholas D. Ward, Esq., Secretary, Aztec Club of 1847, 1616 "H" Street NW., Suite 902, Washington, D.C. 20006-4903.

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