

Head Quarters of the Marine Corps,

ADJUTANT AND INSPECTOR'S OFFICE,

Washington, April 6th, 1848.

To the

*Commissioned and non-commissioned Officers of
the Corps of Marines, and others interested.*

It is considered incumbent on the officers of the U. S. Marine Corps to have a faithful and impartial history written of the services of that portion of the corps which has been on active duty with the Army and Navy during the existing war with Mexico. Justice alone to the corps, particularly to that part of it engaged in this arduous service, would require a record of this nature. It is therefore requested that each member of it will contribute, without delay, such notes and documents as may in his opinion tend in the least to its promotion, addressing the same to Brigadier General Henderson, commandant of the corps: provided that such notes or documents be not incompatible with existing regulations upon the subject of officers corresponding while on service with the Army or Navy.

By order of the Brevet Brigadier General Commandant:

After-action reports are nothing new to the Marine Corps as this 1848 order attests. This is the directive which resulted in Zeilin's report of his operations in California.

After Action Report ca. 1848

The story of Marine operations in California, 1846-47, is recounted by a future Commandant of the Marine Corps in a report that has been located in the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, N.Y.

A five-page hand written manuscript, the report



Jacob Zeilin

is that of Capt and Brevet-Maj Jacob Zeilin, USMC, commander of several operations in the conquest of California and later the Seventh CMC, 1864-76. In it he describes his participation in the landing at Monterey on 15 July 1846 and subsequent actions at Santa Barbara, San Pedro, and Los Angeles. After the ouster of the Americans from Los Angeles in October 1846, he tells of returning to San Pedro and then San Diego preparatory to the campaign to retake Los Angeles. Before this movement, however, he commanded the Marines who joined with sailors to relieve BGen Stephen Kearny at the Battle of San Pasqual (noted in his report as "at San Bernardo, 30 miles from San Diego").

The campaign toward Los Angeles began on 29 December 1846 and Zeilin describes the Battles of San Gabriel and of the Mesa, near Los Angeles. He ends his report with the occupation of Guaymas and Mazatlan, Mexico. One portion was lined out, as is done in the copy reproduced here, both in the photo facsimile of the last page of the report and the typeset version.

The little-known report was obtained by Charles R. Smith while he was researching for *Marines in the Revolution* (see page 5). He noted

it and 59 other items of Marine Corps interest in the Naval Manuscript Collection calendar at the library and the division has now acquired copies of all 60. The Zeilin report follows.

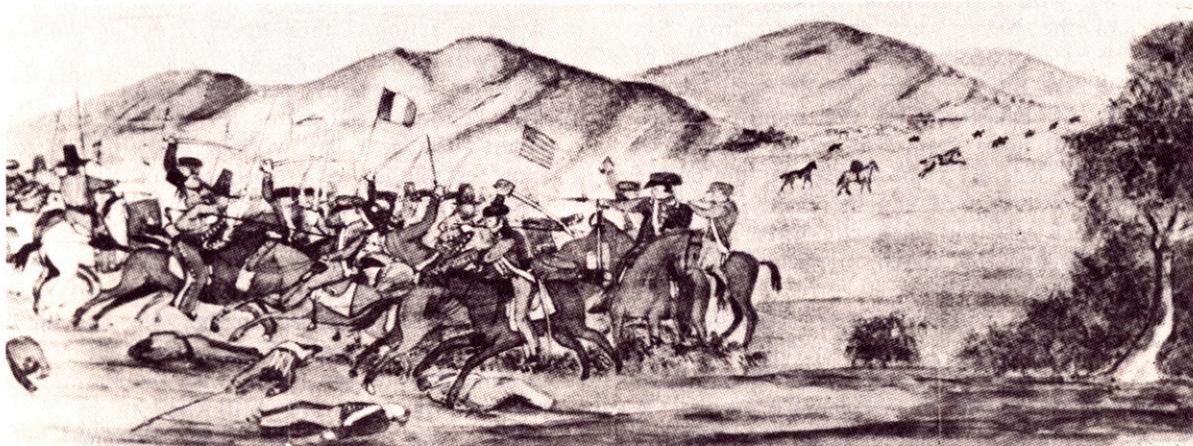
Sir,

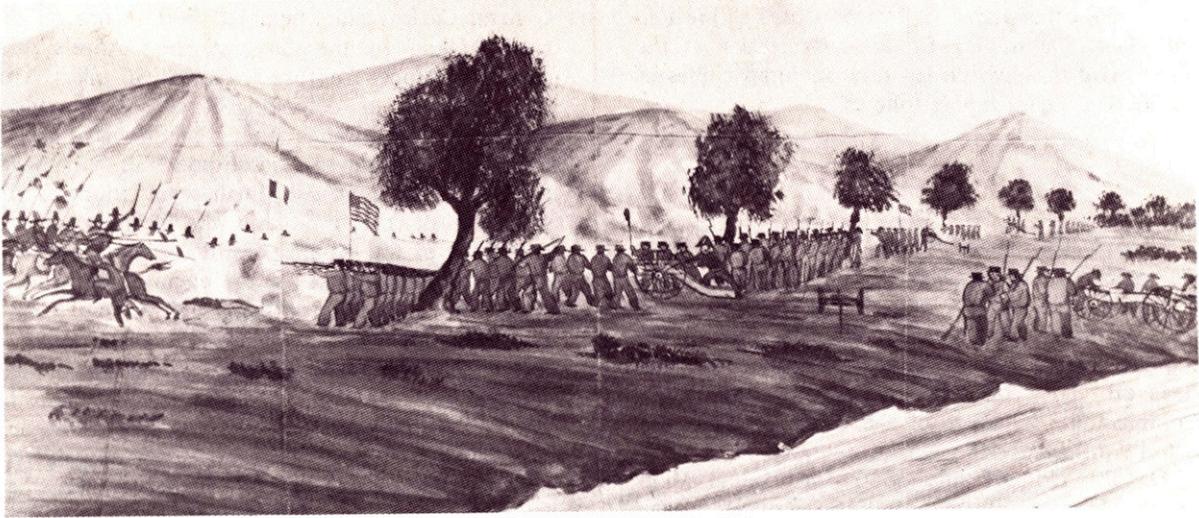
I have the honor to transmit the following statement of the Services of that portion of the Marine Corps which I had the pleasure to Serve with during the War with Mexico, according to the request contained in your communication addressed to the "Commissioned and Non-Commissioned Officers of the Corps of Marines," dated April 6th 1848.

On the 15th of July 1846, I landed at Monterey, Upper California, with the Guard of the U.S. Frigate Congress, to assist in the defence of that place, where we found Captain Marston and Lieut Maddox, of Marines, stationed with the Guards of the Frigate Savannah & Sloop Cyane. We remained here until the end of the month, when we embarked on board the Congress, Sailed for and arrived at Santa Barbara on the 3rd of August. The next day the Marines with a small company of Riflemen, composed of Seamen, were disembarked, took possession of the town in the name of the U.S. and hoisted our Flag over it. Leaving the Rifle Company the duty of defending the place, we sailed the same day for San Pedro, and arrived there on the 6th. The Marines were immediately landed and took possession of this place also. Here we received information that

General Castro had assembled 500 troops on the road leading to the City of the "Angels" the capital of Upper California, distant 30 miles, with the intention of defending it. The Commodore determined to advance upon the City give Castro battle, and decide the question of Supremacy by the Sword. Having made Such preparations as the shortness of the time and the Scarcity of our munitions of war would permit, we left San Pedro, on the 11th in Search of the enemy, with a force about 300, consisting of Seamen & Marines. Castro retreated, however, as we approached and we entered, without opposition, the City of the "Angels", on the 13th of August 1846, and elevated our Flag in the capital of California, and established the authority of the U.S. therein. We remained here until the 3rd of September when we returned to San Pedro, and embarked again on board the "Congress", leaving Capt Gillespie, of Marines, a Company of the Californian Battalion, the honor of defending the city. From San Pedro we sailed for San Francisco. Shortly after our arrival at the that place, we received information that Capt Gillespie who had been charged with the defence of the City of the Angels, was closely besieged by the enemy with an overwhelming force. On receiving this news the Commodore instantly put to sea with the Congress, and proceeded to San Pedro for the purpose of relieving Capt G. and his companions. But on reaching that Port on the 25th of Ocotber, we found that Capt G. had surrendered the city in the enemy & was then on board the Frigate Savannah, laying in that harbour, with his command, & the enemy had

Battle of San Pasqual, 1846, was near-defeat for BGen Stephen Kearny's outnumbered troops until landing party of Marines and sailors arrived from San Diego to reinforce them. This sketch was made by Gunner William H. Myers, assigned to the sloop Dale, contemporary with the action. It is one of a series, Naval Sketches of the War in California, now in the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, N. Y.





Beginning of end for the Mexican control of California was signalled by their defeat at Battle of San Gabriel, near Los Angeles, 8 January 1847. When the Mexicans regrouped on a nearby mesa, but were unable to repulse advancing Americans, they dispersed and the war was over in California. This sketch was made by Gunner Myers at the time; it is part of the collection in the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Library.

possession of San Pedro itself. A detachment of Seamen & Marines were then landed, by order of the Commodore, & the place was retaken in a few minutes, the Marines being the first to spring on the shore & gain the summit of the hill occupied by the enemy, who fled as the Marines advanced. Our Flag was again hoisted over San Pedro. Not being able at this place to make the necessary preparations for another expedition to the City of the "Angels". We proceeded to San Diego, in the Congress, where we arrived in a few days, garrisoned the place with a party of Seamen & Marines, and immediately commenced making arrangements for an expedition to the City of the "Angels". On the 9th of December 1846, at 10 P.M. a detachment of 90 Marines, under my command, with one hundred Seamen, under Lt. Gray, of the Navy, were dispatched from San Diego, by Commodore Stockton, to the relief of Brig. General Kearny, who was besieged with a company of Dragoons, by the enemy, at San Bernardo, 30 miles from San Diego. This force reached the General's camp & relieved him on the 11th at 2 O'Clock A.M. and the enemy retreated. At 9 O'Clock A.M. the whole command, under the General, resumed its march for San Diego, and arrived there on the 12th.

On the 29th of December, the preparations for the expedition to the "Angels" having been completed, a force of 600 men, under Commodore Stockton, composed of Dragoons, Marines, & Sailors, commenced to advance on the "Angels".

After a tedious & laborious march of ten days, we arrived on the left bank of the River San Gabriel, and found the Californian Army, 650 strong, all mounted, on the opposite side, ready for battle. We immediately prepared for action, & commenced to cross the River, which we accomplished under a heavy fire of Artillery, and after an action of one hour & a half, defeated the enemy & encamped on the field of battle. I was sent during the night, with a company of Marines, to make a reconnoissance of the enemy, and returning at 7 A.M., the Command resumed its march for the "Angels", at 8 A.M. Having advanced about Six miles we again found the enemy in our front in order of battle, on the plains of the "Mesa". Our dispositions being made for the combat, we advanced upon the enemy & the action commenced. After an action of three hours, & during which we repulsed several charges of the lancers, we again defeated the enemy with considerable loss. We then continued our march for the city, which we entered the next day without opposition & once more established & proclaimed our authority in the Capital of California. On the 13th Lt. Col. Fremont entered the city, with his battalion, & we left on the 20th leaving Lt. Col. Fremont in command with his Battalion, and returned to San Diego, where we arrived on the 24th, and on the 28th of same month I was appointed Military Commandant of San Diego, with the Marines, and remained in command until the 6th of March, when I was relieved by Lieut. Stoneman, U.S.

Support Given Associations

Army, with a detachment of the 1st Regiment of the U.S. Dragoons. We sailed from San Diego, in the Congress, on the 27th, and after touching at Monterey and San Francisco, we left the former place on 6 September 1847, for Mexico, and arrived at Guaymas the 16th of October, with the Sloop of War Portsmouth. The 20th the Ships, being in position, the town was bombarded, the enemy 600 strong, evacuated the city & took up a position about 3 miles from it. The same day I disembarked with the Marines of the Congress and Portsmouth & one field piece manned by Seamen, accompanied by Lt. H.B. Watson, of Marines, and took command of the place, & hoisted our flag. The enemy marched upon the town the night after our landing, to retake it, but finding we were all ready for them, they retired without making the attempt. On the 23rd we put to sea, the Portsmouth, remaining in command of Guaymas. Arrived off St. Joseph's on the 30th where we joined the U.S. Ships Independence & Cyane. Lieut. Heywood, of the Navy, was placed in command of St. Joseph's with a party of thirty Marines, which command he retained to the end of the war. Lt. Heywood, with his little party, defended the town, on two different occasions, for Eight or ten days, against a force of 300 Californians. The Independence, Congress & Cyane, sailed from St. Joseph's on the 8th of October for Masatlan, where we arrived on the 10th, and landed the next day with a force of 700 Seamen & Marines, & took possession of the town, which we held until the 17th of June 1848, when we surrendered it to the Mexican authority, having received officially the news of peace between the U.S. and Mexico. During the period we were stationed in Masatlan, the command had several skirmishes with the enemy, in which we always defeated them.

In conclusion, I would remark, that I had the honor to command the Marines in person, on every occasion referred to, except St. Joseph's, ~~and the skirmishes that occurred in the vicinity of Mazatlan, (when I was too unwell to accompany them)~~ and it affords me great pleasure to bear testimony to their steady discipline & noble daring in their encounters with the enemy, which will serve to add another page in the bright history of our little Corps.

I am with respect
your most obdt. Servt
J. Zeilin
Capt. & Brvt. Major U.S.M. Corps.

Brig. Genl. A. Henderson
Commandant U.S.M. Corps

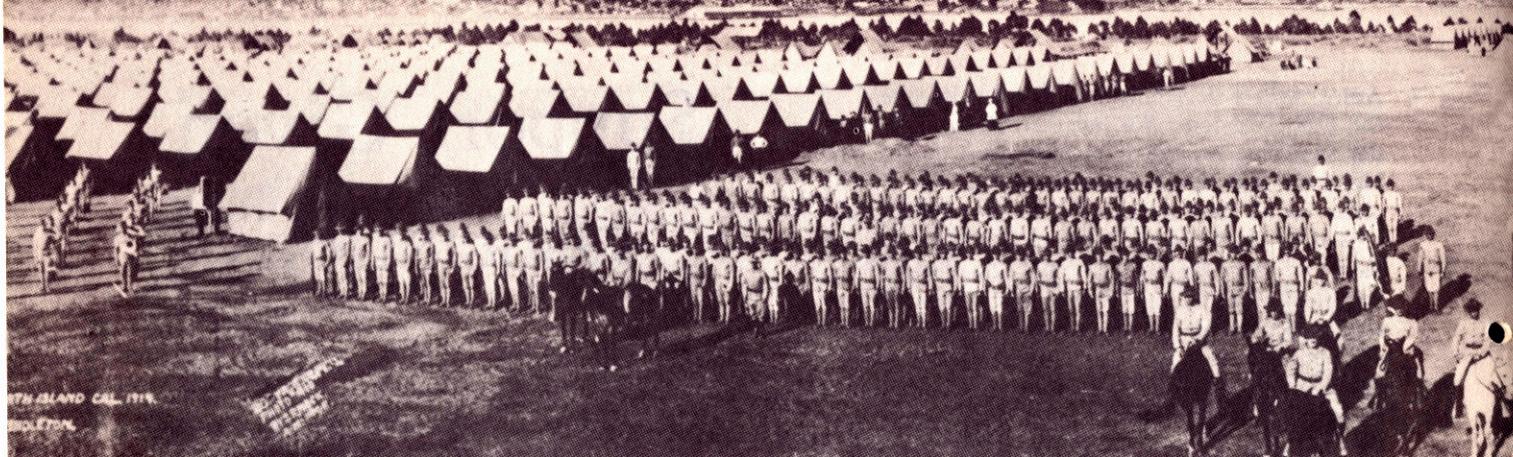
Last year, in time for the summer's annual reunions, the Historical Branch prepared a brief history of the 1st Marine Division and its regiments and republished a 1945 history of the 4th Marine Division in World War II, both primarily for the benefit of veterans and members of those organizations. Demand for these publications continues to be brisk.

This year the 3d Marine Division Association asked that the Historical Branch prepare a history of its major units for distribution at its reunion in July at Little Rock, Arkansas. The resulting booklet, *The 3d Marine Division and Its Regiments*, covered the division's present-day regiments, the 3d, 4th, 9th, and 12th Marines. Veterans of the World War II 21st Marines and the Vietnam-era 26th Marines, deactivated regiments once part of the 3d Division, were quick to note the absence of accounts of their units. These are now being prepared and a new publication covering all six regiments will soon be available.

Also made available to the 3d Marine Division Association was a video tape program on the battle for Iwo Jima which had been prepared this year by KPOC, Houston, Texas. The tape, which relied heavily on Marine Corps still and motion picture footage obtained through the History and Museums Division, was shown on local TV in Little Rock. It had also been seen earlier by 4th Marine Division veterans at their reunion in Louisville, Kentucky in June.

The Detroit Marine Reserves are organizing a reunion of members of the 17th Infantry Battalion, USMCR, which was mobilized in 1950 for the Korean War. The division has provided the sponsors with rosters of the battalion at the time to aid in locating the 490-odd men who were called to active duty.

The History and Museums Division is most interested in assisting Marine veterans' organizations in any way that its resources can be of value. Since many requests require a considerable amount of time and effort to be expended, adequate lead time is essential and authorized representatives should contact the division (Code HD, Headquarters Marine Corps, Washington, D.C. 20380) well in advance of any meeting or occasion where historical or museum support is desired.



1914 ISLAND CAL. 1114
1914

Examples of a once common photographic technique have come to the History and Museums Division recently, each of them providing views of little known pages of Marine Corps history.

Apparently the photographs shown here were made with portrait cameras that operated by rotating either the camera or the lens on a half circle, giving a finished product that could be a half a foot high but several feet wide. The technique was used in photographing large groups or camp scenes, as demonstrated here, and was known by several names, including circuit or panorama photography.

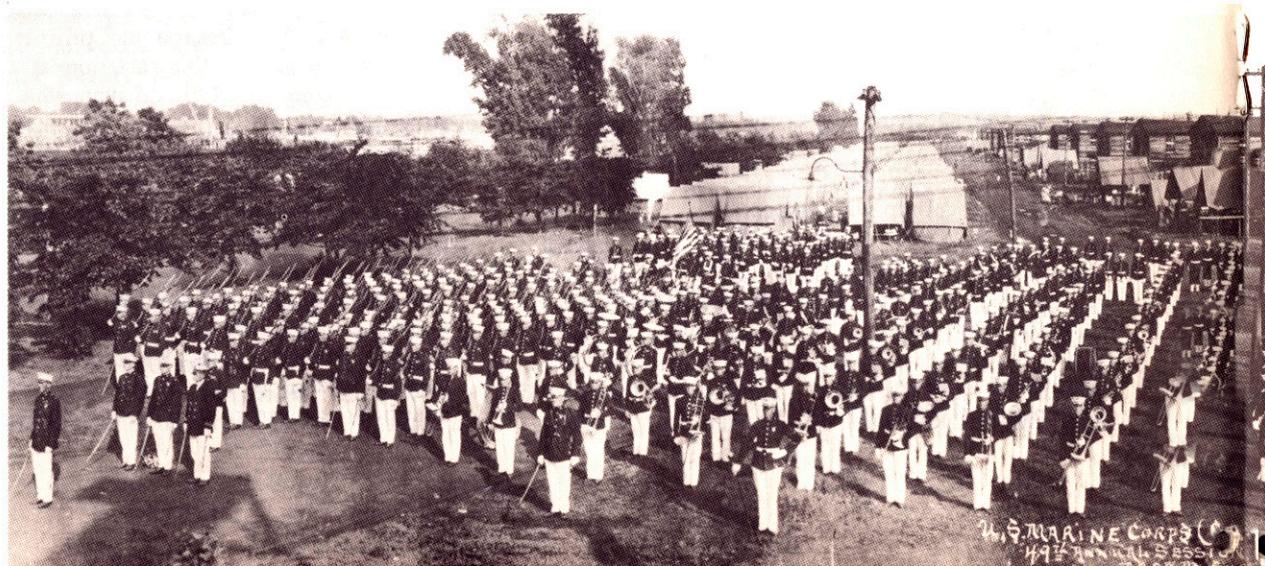
These views came from different sources. The camp scene above was located by Maj Charles C. Krulak, USMC, commanding officer of the Marine Detachment, Naval Air Station, North Island, Calif., and was submitted as part of the station's nomination of Camp Howard to the National Register of Historic Places. The camp was an advanced expeditionary outpost for the 4th Marines, located in

Panorama

1914-1916 at what later became the airfield at North Island.

With the 4th Marines in formation in the foreground, apparent in the photograph are the tents of the camp at the left and rear and Col Joseph H. Pendleton, in front of his staff, in the center. San Diego's 10th Avenue pier is at the extreme left background and Coronado's Hotel Del Coronado at right rear.

The camp was named after RAdm Thomas B. Howard, then CinCPacFlt. It included 1,128 Marine officers and men who had been on board USS *South*



U.S. MARINE CORPS
44th ANNUAL REPORT