THE MAKING OF A MASSACRE: THE ESCALATION OF FILIBUSTERING IN SONORA, 1850-1857

By

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Abstract

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Between 1850 and 1857 six separate filibustering attempts left from San Francisco in hopes of conquest in Sonora, Mexico. Three U.S. citizens and three Frenchmen, all being drawn to California during the gold rush, failed to have their fortunes materialize. These adventurers desired more than California could offer and each organized groups to travel south in search of land, fame, and fortune in the northern Mexican state. Each group had its own motivations and designs on Sonora. Some simply wanted to colonize, others to conquer, but each failed in their attempts. In a time when all of Mexico, including Sonora, was suffering from political division and turmoil, these foreigners believed they could take advantage of the situation. In each instance, the Mexicans were able to maintain their soil and deal with the invaders. As each new filibusterer arrived, the Mexicans increased the aggression of their response, leading to military engagements in which men on both sides gave their lives. The battles would not be the end of the violence. After the fifth filibustering attempt, Mexico executed its leader, Raousset-Boulbon. Ongoing filibustering prodded Mexico into increasing levels of violence to quell these invasions. Filibustering concluded in 1857, when the Mexicans battled with the Crabb Expedition, forcing its surrender. Finally, Henry A. Crabb and all his men, save one, were executed on the orders of the local military commander to send a message to all future filibusters that they would be dealt with similarly.

To Rosa, Bella, and Victoria for your support of my dream, never allowing me to give up on that dream, and most importantly your love.

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I would like to thank Laurie Boone for pointing me towards this topic. This began as a monumental task, but quickly became an intriguing exploration of local history that brought me joy and knowledge.

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Introduction

The 1850s was a turbulent time in both the United States and Mexico, regardless of which side of the border one found themselves. Both nations faced national turmoil that threatened to tear the nation apart.

In the United States, the debate over slavery was reaching a fevered pitch threatening the fragile national union. The Compromise of 1850, followed closely by the Kansas-Nebraska Act and Bleeding Kansas, produced a range of violent acts which increased sectionalism and weakened the Second Party System. The euphoria following the U. S.-Mexican War yielded to irreconcilable division over the future of slavery in those lands the United States acquired by war. By April 1861, the dispute over slavery in Alta California and the Mexican Cession resulted in the secession of the Lower South and the opening salvos of the Civil War.

South of the border, in Mexico, the struggles were just as consuming, but had no connection to the slavery issues of their northern neighbor. The nation was just finding its feet as a republic at the outset of the war with the United States. The defeat continued divisions in Mexico between republican sentiments and *caudillo* rule, augmented by other fissures of inequality and ethnicity. After the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, Mexico ceded a massive portion of its northern territory and had only a semblance of control over the border region. Throughout the 1850s Mexico struggled with political instability at both the national and regional levels. From 1846 to 1863 Mexico had fourteen different presidents and the failed republic transitioned to a monarchy under the Second Mexican Empire, ruled by Maximiliano I. Even a new constitution, ratified in 1857 as part of the

ambitious *Reforma*, to quell the political unrest could do nothing more than prolong the suffering of the nation which eventually led them to Maximiliano's short rule.

Perhaps the monumental events that bookended this time period eclipsed events in the far west. Between these great national struggles engulfing the countries in the 1850s, the western border region was emerging as a hotbed of activity due to the discovery of gold and other minerals. Mining in region exploded with the California Gold Rush of 1849, but it was often more bust than boom for many who staked a claim. California was not alone in its mineral deposits as the western reaches of the New Mexico Territory, today's Arizona, and the Mexican state of Sonora also offered potential deposits. As Mexico struggled to maintain control of its northwestern states, enterprising and ambitious men whose riches had failed to materialize in California began to cast glances at the riches to be had just beneath the tenuous border line that lacked any real obstacle to movement in or out of either nation.

It would not be long before daring, if not wholly honorable, men would begin using San Francisco as their base of operations to flow freely into Sonora in search of the fame and fortune that surely awaited them. These men set out to master the harsh Sonoran landscape with almost no opposition. Whether the intent was to colonize or conquer, each of these expeditions were unsuccessful. Each attempt became larger and more concerning to the Mexican government and to a lesser extent the U.S. government, but they continued relatively unchecked until the grand finale that left men American and Mexican dead.

From 1850 to 1858, at least 6 expeditions departed from San Francisco to Sonora. All eventually failed, but each failed in its own way. Each of these expeditions strained

the already tumultuous U.S.-Mexico relationship and enhanced a dangerous and toxic atmosphere along the border. These expeditions were viewed differently depending on nationality and interest in their success or failure. The men of these expeditions believed themselves on missions to colonize the unused land in northern Sonora. However, to Mexico they were filibusters intent on conquering Sonora and either forming a new, independent nation or allowing the newly conquered land to be annexed by the United States.

In the years since these events literature has been published sporadically. There are myriads of texts about the national struggles of both nations during this period, but little time or ink has been dedicated to the filibustering expeditions into Sonora. In the late 1800s, there was some resurgence of these events as historians such as Hubert Howe Bancroft and Theodore Hittell were writing the histories of California and other areas in the West. The filibustering endeavors from San Francisco into Sonora marked the history these early Western history books, but as the century turned little was written on the topic in the United States.

In the early 1900s there was another resurgence as ill-founded rumors circulated that the United States was going to attempt to purchase Sonora and Lower California (Baja) from Mexico. In 1919, Miss Fanny Juda published an elegant article in *The Grizzly Bear* that described in limited detail the 1850s filibusters into Sonora. This article gives an overview, but lacks detail and insight into the events and focuses a great deal on the exploits of William Walker and terribly neglects the later expedition of Henry A. Crabb.[1] Shortly after Juda's work, J. Fred Rippy published several works on the relations between the United States and Mexico. His works use these filibustering expeditions as a

foundation for U.S.-Mexican relations during the 1850s, but covers them with even less detail that Juda. Rippy also reaches further beyond Sonora to events affecting the entire U.S.-Mexican border. When the rumors of U.S. interest in Sonora proved false, interest again waned.[2]

In recent years there have been books written which touch on the filibusters, but usually as a side note to other adventures. An example would be the focus on William Walker, who filibustered in Lower California and Sonora in 1854, but was most famous for his later filibustering in Nicaragua. The culminating filibuster, by Henry A. Crabb is covered in chapters of larger texts. The only book to tackle his expedition was a short text published in 1952. This short tome was published by J. Y. Ainsa, *History of the Crabb Expedition into N. Sonora*, is a story passed down within his family from one of the members of Crabb's expedition. It was put into writing after nearly 100 years after the conclusion of the expedition. Due to the lack of supporting documentation and reliance on second hand memory it is difficult to determine the validity of all of the book's claims. The main story of Crabb's expedition, as presented by Ainsa, matches other documents and texts, but he provided details that could not be corroborated using other sources. It is difficult to verify the authenticity of the details because oral histories passed from generation to generation can be changed or embellished.[3]

The more modern books have focused on wider geographical regions or longer periods of time, but there have been no modern texts that cover solely the actions from San Francisco to Sonora during the 1850s. Robert E. May's *The Southern Dream of a Caribbean Empire 1854-1861* did an exceptional job of describing the Southern desire for expansion which could easily be termed filibustering. His work gives detail into

William Walker's actions in both Sonora and Nicaragua, but uses the Sonora expedition as reference with much of the focus on Walker's actions in Nicaragua. He gives passing interest in other filibusters in Sonora, such as Moorehead and Crabb, but entirely ignores the Frenchmen because they had no connection to the American South. May also focuses a great deal of attention on Southern attempts to annex and use southern portions of Mexico for economic gain, such as a railroad across the strait of Tehuantepec, and the possibility of spreading slavery.[4]

In more recent works, several authors have explored the changes that were brought on upon the people of the U.S.-Mexico border region during the mid-19th century. Andrés Reséndez's *Changing National Identities at the Frontier* and Anthony Mora's *Border Dilemmas: Racial and National Uncertainties in New Mexico, 1848-1912* both describe the new identities that were formed with the often uncomfortable overlap of three distinct groups: the Americans, Mexicans, and Native populations. Neither of these books explores the western reaches of the border, instead focusing on the Rio Grande regions of Texas and New Mexico. While these books provide insight into the cultural, economic, and racial tensions that were exploited by filibusters further west, neither offers insight into the actual filibustering that became prevalent in Sonora in the 1850s.[5]

One of the more recent books that tackles filibustering along the U.S.-Mexican border is *Line in the Sand: A History of the Western U.S.-Mexico Border* by Rachel St. John. St. John covers the region of Sonora, in addition to Baja California and Chihuahua, over the span of nearly 80 years from the borders current inception in 1848 through the 1920s. St. John dives into the issues of the frontier region between both countries and expressly singles out Walker and Crabb for their actions in Sonora. The other filibusters

that entered Sonora in the 1850s are lumped together without as much as a descriptive sentence regarding the details of their forays into Mexico. St. John's work covers a far wider range than Sonora and stretches for more than a half century beyond the Sonoran filibusters.[6]

From the Mexican perspective there have been texts written, but as with the American texts, sparingly. A play was published about the Frenchman Raousset in 1897, titled *Heroina*, which gave dramatic styling to the Mexican memory of the French filibuster. This play weaves some history into the story of Raousset's Sonoran filibustering, but it is predominantly a love story about his infatuation with a Mexican woman in Guaymas. The play maintained filibustering in the memory of Sonoran Mexicans at the turn of the century, but did little to outline or detail the history of such events.[7]

Most of the literature about these events were published in 1954 and 1957 to celebrate the centennial of the events and to celebrate the Mexicans' success at fending off foreign invaders. Sonora remembered its successful resistance of both the Raousset and Crabb expeditions with centennial celebrations. In 1954 a short pamphlet with the very long title of *Detall: Algunos documentos relativos al triunfo alcanzado en el puerto de Guaymas el 13 de julio de 1854*, or in English *Detail: Some Documents Relative to the Triumph Reached in the Port of Guaymas on July 13, 1854*, was published to commemorate the event. It provided detailed lists of those involved on both sides in addition to a description of the events. A similar pamphlet was produced in Caborca to commemorate the 1857 centennial of victory over Crabb's filibuster. This pamphlet, titled *Reseña historica: Conmemorativa de la derrota de los filibusteros norteamericanos*

en Caborca, Sonora, el seis de abril del año de 1857, or *Historical Review: Commemorating the Defeat of the North American Filibusters in Caborca, Sonora, April 6, 1857*. This pamphlet offers some information in regards to the events that occurred at Caborca but also focuses on the men involved with long sections about some of the more prominent Mexicans involved.[8]

In regards to the final filibuster, Crabb's, one text was published in 1976 in Mexico that gives a very detailed account of the event. Juan Antonio Ruibal Corella's *"¡Y Caborca se cubrio de gloria...!"*, or *"And Caborca was Covered in Glory...!"*, gives a detailed account of the Crabb Expedition's final days at Caborca. Corella used many of the same sources available for this text, but also had access to the Sonoran and Mexican Archives. He takes a strong Mexican nationalist tone throughout the book and sees the Mexicans as heroes who defeated hostile invaders. Ruibal Corella's book is focused on a single event and does not take into account the filibustering attempts that occurred prior to 1857.[9]

There seemed a great lack of modern material looking at just Sonora as the destination of these filibustering attempts. Nowhere else in Latin America were there more frequent attempts at filibustering in the 1850s than Sonora. Filibustering occurred in other places in Mexico and the Caribbean during the 1850s, but not at alarming rate seen in Sonora. In the end, it took a horrifically violent ending and the inquest of the American President to quash the filibustering there. If events such as the American Civil War and the French Imperial conquest of Mexico overshadowed the filibustering of the 1850s, it is possible that tensions between the U.S. and Mexico could have escalated beyond localized filibustering.

There also appeared to be a lack of even-handedness in the conversation. Either one viewed the Mexicans as heroes for defeating the invading hordes or the Americans were simply victims of Mexican bloodlust while attempting to settle and begin lives in the one of the most untamed sections of North America. As the memory of these events is mostly stuck in the dusty pages of old books, it shows how a small event unpunished can lead to an escalation of hostilities. In these cases of Sonoran filibustering, the series of invasions lead to an escalation in violence.

The expeditions, or filibusters, started benignly in 1850, but picked up in intensity over the next seven years. With each new expedition tensions escalated between the foreigners and the Mexicans. The expeditions prior to 1856 were handled differently than the final expedition in 1857. In 1856, a shift in attitude occurred in Central and South American as the result of U.S. President Franklin Pierce's recognition of the successful filibuster in Nicaragua by William Walker. This recognition led to a backlash of discontent throughout Latin America. In his essay "The Invention of Latin American," Michel Gobat argues that the threating Anglo-Saxon Manifest Destiny threatened all of Latin America and those non Anglo-Saxons residing in the Western Hemisphere "increasingly viewed their relations with the United States as a race war."[10] Members of the "Latin" race rankled at the thought that U.S. citizens could freely make claims on their lands and rebuked the view of many U.S. citizens that they belonged to a "lower white race."[11] The U.S. government's recognition of the Walker regime in Nicaragua was unpopular throughout Latin American which "deemed filibusterism a flagrant violation of international law."[12] Small filibustering bands of men prior to 1856 were seen as a nuisance and dealt with accordingly, but after 1856 Mexico took a more aggressive

stance as "the filibuster no longer represented a small, crazed group but instead embodied the expansionist spirit of the U.S. people"[13]

The tensions between Mexico and the United States, after 1856, culminated with one of the most violent responses in the history of the Mexican republic towards nonmilitary foreigners in their land. With the change of tone throughout Latin America, was dealt with like any invading army would be dealt with after violating another nation's sovereignty. The outcome of this final filibuster even prompted the President of the United States, James Buchanan, to ask Congress to review the matter in 1858.[14]

Both nations had little control over the actions of individuals on a local level far removed from the national seats of power. As a consequence, the federal governments did little to curb the events in Sonora. Instead, the local leaders, filibuster leaders and Sonoran officials, were left to seek their own solutions to problems real or imagined. The filibusters grew more daring in each attempt and the Mexican response summarily grew in violence. The filibusters culminated with a week long battle in the Sonoran town of Caborca which concluded with the execution nearly 60 Americans and the possibility of an international incident between the two countries. Americans styled the executions as a massacre, but Mexicans viewed it as a justified defense of their soil. The mass execution of the Crabb Expedition may have been an overreaction from the American viewpoint, but the instability of Sonora and the continued escalation of filibustering in the state created an environment that led to an escalation of violence that would dissuade any future attempts.

This snapshot of foreigners entering Sonora in the 1850s may not have garnered the national attention in either the United States or Mexico. It lacked the success of

William Walker's Republic in Nicaragua or the great national victory Mexico would have at the Battle of Puebla in 1862. It was too far removed from the national powers. The 1850s in both nations were quickly replaced by a much more eventful decade in the 1860s. These events led to extreme interventions from Mexico to defend its territory against foreign invaders as it would do on a much larger scale against the French during the 1860s. These filibustering raids eventually even required the intervention of President James Buchanan to send a message to Congress about the events. No book has done a successful job at linking these filibusters together as a chain of cause and effect that escalated in both the intent and the response. Here, these events are not placed as separate events or standalone stories. They are a narrative, each built upon the one before. These filibustering attempts are not placed as an aside or snapshot in a greater argument about racial tensions, national identities, economic differences, or border disputes. They stand together as the storyline, an ebb and flow of foreign invaders and the Sonoran defenders.

Chapter 1

Filibustering

The phrase *filibuster* has a very different definition today than it had in the mid-19th century. Its current iteration is a politician standing in the House of Representatives or Senate delaying action on some bill or other. However, the historical definition of the word is quite different. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, a filibuster is "a person engaging in unauthorized warfare against a foreign country".[1] The word itself is derived from the Dutch word *vrijbuiter* which emerged as a term for pirates in the late 16th century and translates into English as freebooter. The term *filibuster* actually derives from the French *flibustier*, which the French borrowed from the Dutch to label pirates during the 18th century.[2] Regardless of the term, *filibuster* or *freebooter*, this was a common concept in the United States during the 1850s.

William O. Scroggs described "the phenomenon of filibustering" in the 1850s as "a natural outgrowth" of events preceding the period.[3] The act of filibustering in the Americas dates back to the earliest European setting foot on the continents of the Western Hemisphere and as far back as history allows, there has been filibustering. Merritt Parmelee Allen wrote, "A filibuster is technically a person who outfits at private expense a body of armed men for operations in a foreign country with which his nation is at peace."[4] This has been the case throughout history and cannot be separated from many of the actions that led to the creation and expansion of the United States. It is not beyond reason to claim that our nation was founded on filibustering.

The first inhabitants of Jamestown or Plymouth could be viewed as the first filibusters of the United States. They arrived armed on another people's land with the

intention carving their own piece out of that already occupied by Native Americans. William O. Scroggs encapsulated the argument for this behavior. He wrote that with filibustering "we see human hordes, prompted by wanderlust, land hunger, pressure of population, religious zeal, or what not, move out from their ancestral dominions and despoil some weaker peoples of their fields and flocks and homes."[5] This interpretation made clear that all the land taken since the foundation of Jamestown in 1607 has been the direct result of filibustering in some form or other. Land shortages, increasing populations, and the desire for religious freedom drove many Europeans out of their birth nations and into the waiting arms of the American colonies. Yet, arriving on American shores to take land from those deemed lesser beings can be nothing less than a filibuster. Over the next two centuries filibustering was a central theme of America, but it was called pioneering as expansion creeped further and further westward until it would eventually reach the Pacific Ocean.[6]

During the first half of the 19th century, the march of expansion moved steadily westward. First, with the Louisiana Purchase in 1803 that opened a massive swath of territory to be explored and settled. This was followed closely with the purchase of Florida from Spain in 1819. The relentless expansion continued with each newly acquired area being settled and quickly brought into the fold of the United States. The acquisition of Texas in 1845 was gotten by means closely resembling filibustering.[7] Finally, Manifest Destiny was completed with the Mexican-American War. Each new expansion offered room for the westward movement of people to fill in these sparsely populated regions.

The 1850s were a turbulent time in United States history for a host of reasons. The end of the Mexican-American War in 1848 had completed Manifest Destiny for the

expanding nation. Almost immediately after, the discovery of gold in California created a frenzy of westward movement through and into a land little explored or understood. Merritt P. Allen described California at the time as "the Mecca of adventurers the world over" as it drew men from Europe, Latin American, and across the United States.[8] The boom and bust that was the 1849 Gold Rush left a great many young men stranded in the west without their long-sought riches and glory. It took very little to turn the attention of these men towards any adventure or undertaking in which riches and fame were a likely outcome. It was with this end in mind that expedition after expedition in the 1850s attempted to stake a claim on the riches that might be found south of the border. These men that sought to make themselves wealthy and powerful not in the United States, but in Latin American countries such as Cuba, Nicaragua, and Mexico. These men and their expeditions became known as filibusters.

At the close of the Mexican American War in 1848, the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was signed. With this treaty, the United States agreed to forgive $15,000,000 and other Mexican debts in exchange for the Mexican Cession which contained California, Arizona, New Mexico, and parts of Nevada, Utah, and Colorado.[9] Over the next ten years, six separate filibustering expeditions would head into the northern Mexican state of Sonora, just to the south of Arizona. As the nation was focused on greater issues such as the Compromise of 1850, the Kansas-Nebraska Act, and the boiling sectional tensions back east, the newly acquired southwest was not given much of a second thought. Some men saw their opportunity in Mexico and the view from the United States was that of a weak and attainable Sonora. After the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was signed, "the politicians halted, but the men who bore the rifles only paused to look around."[10]

Once Manifest Destiny was completed, new expansion had to either come to the north or the south. While turning north may have been a more favorable location, it was by far the more difficult location to filibuster. The 1844 James Polk campaign slogan, "fifty-four forty or fight!" had been seen as the bluster that it was by Great Britain who was watching its territorial claims in the northwest carefully.[11] With the constant threat of an international incident with a world power such as Great Britain the most likely outcome of filibustering in their territory, it is evident that the only viable option was south.

Sonora became a prime target for these filibusters for a variety of reasons. After the Mexican-American War there was nearly constantly political turmoil throughout Mexico, but it was more pronounced in the states like Sonora furthest from the dictatorial regimes of the Mexico's national leadership in Mexico City. Local political leaders were constantly either rising to or falling from power, the national treasury was nearly bankrupt, the national army was in complete disarray, and allegiances were shifting by the day.[12] Additionally, constant Apache attacks drove alliances between the Mexicans and other Native tribes. These reasons combined to give some adventurous types the faint hope that it could be used to their advantage. While the 1850s offered a plethora of choices throughout the western hemisphere, Sonora held the greatest hope for filibustering. Its close proximity and shared border along the United States southwest gave filibustering expeditions access to it more quickly and cheaply than places further afield. It also had the advantage of numerous willing young men with a penchant for adventure staged nearby in the San Francisco area, left looking longingly around for success as their dreams failed to materialize during the gold rush. Additionally, Mexico

was open to colonization plans in the northern reaches of the country to put agricultural land and mineral deposits to work as the population lagged far behind their possible economic output. The stage was set for many of these men to try their hand at filibustering in the isolated northern state of Sonora.

Between 1850 and 1857 there were numerous filibustering expeditions, but the United States government turned a blind eye until the Crabb Expedition. After the Crabb Expedition, an end to these militia style raids on Mexican territory was ordered and no other serious filibuster occurred in Sonora. Despite what appeared as an easy prize, not one of these expeditions was successful and all were eventually deemed failures, but the outcomes of each were staggeringly different with some ending with little fanfare as the Americans returned to California, while others ended in a great deal of bloodshed. While the early filibustering expeditions into Sonora between 1850 and 1854 were noteworthy in that armed militias from the United States entered Mexico, the Crabb Expedition of 1857 triggered strong responses on both sides of the border and contrasting legacies for the two nations involved.

During the 1850s, the American border region with Sonora was a dangerous and hostile area, but it also contained arable and grazing lands with mineral rich mountain ranges. Sonora is the northern Mexican state that lies just south of current state of Arizona. It contains a diverse regional landscape that includes arid deserts, rocky mountainous regions, over 500 miles of coast, and lush inland valleys. In the mid-19th century it boasted the small, but active seaport of Guaymas which would connect the Mexican state to California. Roughly 80 miles directly north of Guaymas was the burgeoning inland capital in Hermosillo which one American visitor described the town

"with nothing, however, remarkable about it, excepting that, for an inland town, it is an unusually active and stirring place".[13] While the area around Hermosillo was bestowed with large, plentiful farms of wheat, much of the trade flowed south to the port of Guaymas. In the other directions, there was little excitement and much danger. For hundreds of miles north of Hermosillo there was little to see with many of the towns and villages being small and isolated. Within these Sonoran villages, small homes were built of adobe and people survived as best they could in one of the most dangerous regions of North America.[14]

T. Robinson Warren, whose uncle was a custom-house official in Guaymas, visited Sonora in the early 1850s and lived there for more than a year. He noted that the characteristic most concerning to visitors of the area was the heat. "The heat during the summer is most oppressive" wrote Warren describing summer days over 100°F with wind "charged with caloric as to be absolutely unbearable" called "*los vientos calientes* or hot winds".[15] Warren found the heat so "debilitating" that he struggled to work during the day and instead would attempt to sleep throughout the day and work through the night.[16] Traveling in the region or spending excessive time outdoors led to dehydration and was a serious health risk. For this reason travel needed to be conducted at night. When John Russell Bartlett traveled through border region between Sonora and Arizona as part of the boundary commission in 1852, he remarked that in order to travel safely they would decamp in the late afternoon or early evening to begin their travels which would culminate around two o'clock in the morning.[17]

The heat was not the only danger in which Sonora could present an intrepid expedition; the fauna being equally dangerous. Sonora hosts several creatures that were

"sometimes fatal, but always attended by the most unpleasant consequences."[18] Amongst these were scorpions which found their way into boots, clothing, bedding, and other locations throughout the house. One particularly dangerous insect was the centipede which produced a bite that among children was often fatal.[19] Numerous varieties of poisonous spiders lurked nearly everywhere, while rattlesnakes were prevalent throughout the region. The final animal danger was provided by bats. One species in particular dropped a fluid while in flight that if landing on the skin would cause a great blister or if contacting the eye would cause blindness.[20] This would not have been a serious issue in other circumstances, but most people slept outside several months of the year because the extreme heat. While the heat and animal life were at best a nuisance and at worst fatal, the greatest threat to Sonorans came from Native Americans.

Raids from Native Americans was the most feared aspect of life in Sonora. It was not uncommon to hear the shout of "Indians, Indians" with women and children running for cover while the men armed themselves in defense of the village.[21] Much the country north of Hermosillo was left uninhabited by 1850 due to the constant deadly Native attacks. Warren wrote, "Mexicans dare not occupy the land, from a dread of the Indians, who infest the entire northern part of the state, and when the poor farmer is least thinking of them they bear down in overwhelming numbers upon him, massacring him and all his family, carry off his stock, leaving his plantation a mass of ruin."[22] The Native Americans showed little fear of the Mexican people or government and, at times, could be seen within a short distance of major towns such as the capital. The smoke from distant burning homes was often the only warning for local residents that Native Americans were raiding nearby. T. Robinson Warren illustrated this point, remarking

"that an aunt…who resided there, lost twenty near relatives by Indian assassination!"[23] This threat drove people from their homes to the safety of the larger towns, but left large swaths of the countryside devoid of civilization. As Americans pushed further into what would become Arizona, the Native Americans found greater success in raiding south of the border. Native Americans may not have had such an opportunity had the Mexican government maintained the same level of security in Sonora that the Spanish had prior to the Mexican Revolution. Much of the Sonoran land was fertile, but as the people could not look to their government for protection from Native attacks the terrain was left wanting for production.

Prior to the Mexican Revolution, which began in 1810 and culminated with Mexico's independence in 1821, Spain had attempted to create organized system in place throughout the nation for protecting its people. The Spanish encouraged people to settle the northern sections of Mexico and offered them some protection. The richness of the available land, which was given by grant, drew people to the area for farming and ranching.[24] The Spanish government in Mexico built forts, known as presidios, across the region and garrisoned them with federal troops that would provide protection to the citizens who resided in these northern reaches. T. Robinson Warren wrote of Sonora, "Secure in the protection of the government, land was tilled, towns built up, and a chain of outposts established, such as kept the savage in check."[25] Additionally, the government was providing the Apache tribes in the region with weekly supplies such as "beef, corn, sugar, and other foodstuffs from presidial commanders" which many groups had been receiving since the 1790s.[26] These government protections allowed the area to begin

flourishing in the first decades of the 19th century, but the transition to an independent Mexico would quickly overturn the works of the previous few decades.

The governmental changes were immediately felt by those in the northern regions of the nation. As the new Republic of Mexico took control, "every institution that had held the Spanish frontier together disintegrated."[27] Prior to independence from Spain, the power in the northern areas was placed under the authority of a *comandante general* who maintained a centralized power over both political and military power in the region. The new Mexican government began making changes in 1824 and dismantled many of the Spanish political and military structures in the northern areas. These areas were reorganized into the states which, despite being neighbors, began looking after their own state self-interest without any national cohesion.[28] Lack of leadership in the new northern states, a lack of solidarity amongst the northern states, and lack of support from the federal government in Mexico City all factored into the disintegration of the landscape and a reversal of growth that had occurred only a few years before.

One prominent feature of the new northern Mexican states, such as Sonora, was the introduction of *caudillos*. These strong-men were often far more concerned with enriching themselves and staying in power than making any positive gains for the people they governed. This plagued the nation of Mexico from top to bottom. It was also a rare sight for them to endanger themselves or their men to offer protection to the people of the region with them rarely leaving the comforts of whichever location they called home. These state governors, or *caudillos*, were a revolving door during the 1830s and 1840s. Any man in the region who could hire a few men to posture for him could make an attempt at seizing control of the state. This happened so frequently that attempts often

occurred at least yearly and was "always accompanied by a local civil war."[29] It became so common, that this was a known feature of the new northern states. Political instability in these states became a punchline even in the earliest years of the Mexican Republic.

Each northern Mexican state felt abandoned by the federal government residing so far away. This in turn led each state to look out for its own interests, often at the expense of its neighboring state. Regional *caudillos* struggled for supremacy, which put them at odds with other *caudillos* in the northern expanse. In order to gain the upper hand, one would make peace treaties with one tribe of Apaches which would unleash them on another state.[30] The victimized state would then reciprocate and it devolved the region into an almost unimaginable chaos of shifting treaties, alliances, and violence. To compound these issues, local troops were siphoned off from their posts to act as surrogates in the interregional disputes which opened the door to raiding and violence as the frontier was left unprotected. This was extenuated by the fact that the government structures that had been in place during Spanish rule were now consigned to the scrapbook of history.

The war for independence had left the Republic in a state of disarray with a bankrupt treasury and lacking a strong central government able to respond to the challenges and needs of its citizens. As the government discontinued the food supplies that pacified Apaches, attacks and raids on the citizens became more frequent.[31] The Apaches, in need of these supplies, were forced to abandon their camps and search for the necessities of survival for their people. This action by the Mexican government did more to reinvigorate the Native attacks in Sonora than any other.

As a response, the Apaches began attacking the "isolated, vulnerable, easily destroyed" homesteads, farms, and ranches that "were little more than adobe islands in a desert sea."[32] As the Mexican Republic was beginning, the increase of hostilities from the Apaches grew significantly. They began to burn homesteads, attack and kill ranchers and their workers, steal their horses, and slaughter their cattle.[33] While all northern states were subjected to Native attacks, Sonora was by far the most affected. The remote location and difficult terrain made it the least protected by the government. There is no way to know for certain just how many Sonorans were impacted by these raids, but estimates for the late 1840s and early 1850s numbered conservatively more than a hundred Sonorans killed annually.[34] As early as 1848, the governor of Sonora was warning the federal government that these raids had made the roads unsafe to travel.[35] An effective government would seek to defend its people from such horrific attacks that often left numerous men, women, and children dead. However, the Mexican government did little to assuage the fears and dangers of its people in Sonora. T. Robinson Warren described one such government attempt in 1852. He wrote,

> Troops were occasionally sent, and some turbulent general put in command, with orders to pursue and exterminate the Indians; but the Apache was more than a match for the Mexican soldier, and the general, knowing this, never engaged them; but, instead of endeavoring to protect the suffering people against their incursions, usually assuming the supreme power, laid the very people whom he was sent to relieve under contribution.[36]

These generals and their men had little interest in protecting the people, but were more focused on their own survival. As the Apaches were raiding, the central government would make a grand show to defending the people by sending troops. These troops would then set up camp in some town or village and use it as a headquarters in which to fight the Natives. In reality, the troops had no intention of fighting and stayed for months at a

time, surviving only with the support of the town. In reality, the people had exchanged one form of raider for another. Warren attested that the commander would hire a local guide to help locate the pillaging Natives, and then "march in a *contrary* direction, thus entirely avoiding any collision."[37] After a few weeks searching for the offending Apaches, they would return to their chosen headquarters with "flaming accounts of bloodless victories" of the federal troops.[38] These heroic tales would be sent to the local and national newspapers as well as the government in order that the leaders of these expeditions could be properly awarded and rewarded for their bravery and defense of the Republic. Ironically, this was not an unexpected outcome as often times the Apache were better equipped and armed than the Mexican troops.[39] The Apaches raiding in Mexico would take their ill-gotten goods northward to trade with the Americans. They would offer goods such as horses or burros in exchange for American weapons, bullets, and powder. As a result, it was common for them to have the advantage over the antiquated weaponry provided to the Mexican soldiers. Additionally, the Mexican troops were so underfunded that many a soldier resorted to selling their government issued weapons just to provide food for their families.[40] John Russell Bartlett encountered one such group of Mexican soldiers who were tracking Apache movements in the summer of 1852. He described the encounter:

> A more miserable set of men I never met, certainly none calling themselves soldiers. Some of them were destitute of shirts, others of pantaloons, and some had neither coats nor hats. Some wore overcoats, without a rag of clothing beneath.[41]

It is not hard to sympathize with the reticence of Mexican troops to engage the enemy when put in these types of situations. Bartlett was also incredibly critical of the Mexican militaries successes against the Apache. He wrote, "These campaigns against

the Indians are utterly useless" and that in the past two years of Mexican expeditions against the Natives, "not fifty of them have been killed."[42] If the government could not protect its people or provide a sufficient means for an army, there was little hope of convincing people to stay on their land to farm or ranch. These government failures were so common and Apache raids so frequent that in some areas of Sonora there was almost complete cessation of cattle ranching for more than half a century.[43] Cattle ranching did not reemerge in the area as a profitable endeavor until the 1880s. Physical protection, though, was not the only failure of the government that directly impacted the lives of Sonorans.

Corruption was also a constant problem that stagnated the economy of the region. As the Mexican government struggled with bankruptcy and lacked even the remotest oversight over the newly created northern states, it is not surprising that graft quickly emerged. It existed in many forms and in all levels of government, including the judiciary. It was understood that government officials could be bought. For many people residing in Sonora and Chihuahua, Sonora's eastern neighboring state, much of the goods they purchased entered Mexico at the port of Guaymas. It was then transported via mule into the interior to trading posts and towns.[44] The corruption began here and escalated. T. Robinson Warren described the smuggling of goods ashore and bribing the customs officials and local politicians as common occurrences.[45] In the event that a customs official was honest, he would be taken care of through transfer, intimidation, or death. In this way, corruption was "no exception to the general rule, but is the usual and only way."[46]

Judges also happened to be complicit, in many cases, in the widespread corruption. A person who could afford the judge's fee could purchase a verdict in the court of law. Verdicts were "sold to the highest bidder" and judges often received their appointments through the bribery of politicians at the local, state, and federal level.[47] With decisions going to the highest bidder and the job being tied to corrupt politicians, the game was rigged in favor of the few wealthy patrons of the northern states. Power was consolidated in the hands of a few leaving the average citizen to focus on survival in a state where the government was in no way prepared or willing to help with the challenges of daily life in Sonora.

The corruption and lack of protection from the Apache, created a sizeable economic depression in Sonora. The state lacked any form of unified currency which created difficulties with trade. In the 1850s alone, citizens were using coins of both Spanish and Mexican origin, silver and gold with fluctuating valuations, and even North American currency.[48] These could be handled in most towns, but in the countryside many resorted to simply bartering for what they needed. This created confusion in doing business and caused a deficiency in the economy which prevented the region from becoming more successful. An improving economic system could without widespread corruption could have overcome many of the issues of the day. A strong economy and tax base would have generated greater income for the state which could have been used to greater effect in improving the army. This improved army would have been better equipped to protect the region from Native attacks. If the region could have been cleared from Native attacks, the region would have become more populated with farmers, ranchers, and towns. All of these would have increased the economic outcome of the

region and generated wealth for individuals and the state alike. Sonora contained rich farmland, open spaces for ranching cattle, and even extensive mineral reserves that could have been exploited to great success. However, the rampant corruption, failing economy, and lack of government support left the state of Sonora in a situation in which predators saw it as prey. The northern reaches of Mexico were "the victims of Apache hostilities and Mexican greed."[49] Given the corruption and lack of commitment to protect the region, Americans could be forgiven for thinking they could come in and occupy it.

In the 1850s, American filibusters became an almost routine event throughout Latin America. Yet, one location was overrun numerous times: Sonora. This begets the question: Why Sonora? This question is imperative because Sonora was not a place one chose to go without good reason. The simplest answer one can provide is that men filibustered for personal economic gain. Sonora was chosen in part because of its failings and proximity. Sonora is located just south of the Southwest United States which was being flooded with people due to the Gold Rush. Couple that with the government failure to protect the area, it can be assumed that many were casting eyes south of the border for a chance to profit from this weakness.

One aspect of Sonora that drew attention from its covetous northern neighbors were the inland expanses of fertile land and expanses suitable for cattle ranching. One early American to Sonora wrote in 1852 that the country "for a long distance inland, is extremely fertile, and in many instances well watered."[50] Another early traveler, John Russell Bartlett, during his time on the 1852 Boundary Commission, remarked that northern portion of Sonora was mountainous and rocky, but "the bottomlands were…rich in soil."[51] Water clustered in the narrow valleys which led to soil that could easily be

converted to agriculture under improved economic and safe conditions. As Bartlett travelled south into Sonora he noted "a large deserted hacienda, with extensive orchards and fertile grounds around it."[52] In many cases, due to Apache raids, there were large expanses of land that could easily be put to till or used for ranching that were lying dormant. T. Robinson Warren wrote that arriving at these areas of fertile soil after traveling from the arid coast or the northern deserts, the inland region "can boast of some beauty, too, being half buried in orange groves" and "the fresh luxuriance of its vegetation."[53] This economic opportunity presented by fertile soil "was too strong to be dampened by the danger of Indian attack or the tenuous legality of Mexican claims. Men…saw an opportunity, and they took it any way they could."[54] While the area contained many opportunities to exploit in ranching and agriculture, mineral wealth was driving the men of the world to California and it would soon drive them to Sonora.

The California Gold Rush would draw men from all over the world, including many Sonorans, in search of mineral wealth. By 1850, the combination of Native raids and men moving northward in search of gold left much of northern Sonora depopulated.[55] Many people crossed northern Sonora, taking the southern route to California, without even hesitating to see if what they were searching for existed in the mountains surrounding the trail. In 1852, T. Robinson Warren commented on the "extensive silver mines" near Alamos to the south of Guaymas in addition to its agricultural prospects.[56] Even the silver being mined in Alamos could not compare to the opportunity offered for mineral wealth in the northern portions of the state. Warren wrote, "The northern portion of the state is particularly rich in minerals, the gold and silver mines being exceedingly productive."[57] While passing through the area in 1852, John Russell Bartlett commented

on the copper mines as well.[58] Another early visitor remarked, "The whole country abounds in rich gold and silver mines, but as soon as a town or rancho is built, the Apaches tear it down and kill all the males and carry off all the females."[59] Warren echoed this concern, "Unfortunately, the most valuable mining districts are in the hands of the savages, who ruthlessly murder any white man who ventures to approach them."[60] Charles D. Poston claimed that the mineral deposits were the richest in all of Mexico and considered them "inexhaustible in mines of gold, silver, copper, quicksilver, and precious stones."[61] However, Poston was also careful to omit any statistics regarding the mineral deposits and agricultural output from his observations.[62] If someone could render the threat of Native raids null, it would open a massive economic opportunity; one that many in California had missed out on in the Gold Rush. While international borders and agreements may have kept filibustering incursions at bay in the past, events in Texas in the preceding decades had shone a light on the possibilities of filibustering in Mexico.

The idea of filibustering in Mexico was not a new idea in the 1850s. Quite to the contrary, many viewed the initial filibuster of Mexico as a beacon of success. In the space of a few years, the Americans had tremendous success colonizing Texas.[63] These American immigrants realized they had no need for the Mexican government or its intrusions in their business and revolted to form the Republic of Texas. This led one Mexican official to claim that America did not need to send an army, instead it sent colonists.[64] Shortly after Texas left the Mexican Republic, Sonora found itself in a civil war between political factions.[65] Coupled with the depopulation of the countryside from Native raids and the Mexican American War, Sonora in the 1850s looked like a fruit ripe for the taking. After the Mexican American War, "covetous eyes…were cast southward

towards…Mexico."[66] If Americans could get their foot in the door to fill the empty spaces in northern Sonora, perhaps after a few years they could repeat the success of Texas with the creation of an independent republic which could eventually join the United States for protection and access to markets. Charles D. Poston believed this to be possible in 1854 and dedicated a short paragraph to the possibility of an independent Sonora in his Reconnaissance of Sonora.[67]

Dating back to the earliest expansion, Americans argued that if a land was not being adequately used then there was no reason why it could not be settled, regardless of true ownership. Sonora in the 1850s was becoming depopulated and diminishing in economic output, leaving Mexico's claim to ownership of the land under question by some in the United States.[68] Travelling in the area in 1852, T. Robinson Warren remarked that a person could travel for hundreds of miles meeting only a few people, but in that same span there were homes wasting away, herds of wild cattle and horses, ruined forts and missions, and occasionally, "ruined men who tremble, and ruined women who mourn."[69] Warren recounted that after the California Gold Rush had subsided, adventurous men began eyeing Sonora for "organizing companies, obtaining grants from Mexico, and taking possession of the abandoned country."[70] Given the vast expanse of land at stake, the relative lack of inhabitants, and the seeming indifference of the government, it is not difficult to understand the draw for some to seek out their fame and fortune south of the border.

Beginning in 1850 and continuing until 1857, Sonora would be invaded on numerous occasions by filibusters from California. William O. Scroggs wrote in 1916 about one such filibuster, "The raids on Latin America between 1850 and 1860 were not

mere accidents, but are vital facts of history, symptomatic in a high degree of the American spirit of the decade."[71] Manifest Destiny had been completed, but that did not mean that expansion had to end. Continued expansion was a "symptom" of the "American spirit" and could not be tamed by lines on a map and an international treaty. As justification, many Americans believed that possession gives title and that the title belongs to those who "redeem them from the Indian and the desert."[72] Additionally, if these areas found themselves under the protective wing the United States, they may find themselves happier indeed as did those residing in the southern portion of Arizona when it was made part of the United States as a result of the 1853 Gadsden Purchase. Charles D. Poston, who ventured into Sonora in 1854, wrote that when the annexation of the land to the United States was proposed, "a large majority of the influential citizens of Sonora [were] in favor."[73] As the United States had little interest in stopping these filibusters and the Mexican government had created a vacuum presenting opportunity, it is not surprising that some men fancied their chances in Sonora.

These filibusters from California would become pervasive nuisances to Sonora and no two were exactly the same. Joseph Moorehead, the Quartermaster-General of California, began the filibustering in Sonora in 1850. He was followed shortly after by the Frenchmen Pindray and Raousset-Boulbon in three filibustering expeditions to Sonora between 1852 and 1854. California lawyer, William Walker, led his own ill-fated expedition to Sonora in 1853-54. After the Gadsden Purchase in 1854 there was a pause until the Crabb Expedition in 1857 which finally prompted government interventions and put a stop to the filibustering in Sonora.[74]

Chapter 2

The Early Filibusters

One of the earliest filibustering attempts into Sonora formed in the mind of California Quartermaster General, Joseph C. Moorehead. He was not alone in filibustering in the opening years of the 1850s. During the same period, filibustering expeditions were launched against Cuba and Mexico.[1] Moorehead had early military experience in the northern sections of Sonora in late 1850 which probably gave him some insight into the region and the possibilities open to him under the right circumstances. His earliest exploits in the region came in the response to violent raids to the southwest of Los Angeles. The *Daily Alta California* reported in September of 1850 that a group of Sonorans had killed a Mr. Callaghan and his son, while beating his wife and other family members. These murderers also stole goods and moneys valued at $7000. A militia was formed, led by General Moorehead, to pursue the murderers.[2]

During this pursuit, General Moorehead and his men crossed the Colorado River in the region where it meets the Gila River. This area was one of the main settlements of Natives, probably Yumans, and one newspaper report claimed that Moorehead lead an immediate attack on said group without cause.[3] Whether General Moorehead believed these Natives to be involved in the attacks throughout the region or not was never determined. Regardless, Moorehead and his men reportedly made off with or destroyed a great deal of the Native food supply in the form of beans which had been stored for the winter.[4] After the conclusion of the incident with the Native Americans, Moorehead turned his head immediately southward toward Mexico.

Under orders from General Joshua Bean, his superior officer in California, Moorehead and his men then went in search of horses and mules that were illegally possessed by Mexican citizens. One issue was that during this time, many wealthy Sonorans in the northern mining districts used American bred horses and mules to transport goods to and from their mines. These animals are were often lacking the appropriate branding, yet were from the Mexican ranches nonetheless.[5] Horses, mules, and cattle that Moorehead came across were confiscated, whether branded or not. While allegations against Moorehead were being lodged in the San Francisco press, some appeared willing to support Moorehead's actions. The editors of the *Daily Alta California* printed a scathing attack against the writer of the previous pieces and an ardent defense of the valorous General. According to the editors, the attack on the Yumans was "necessary" and that in all other areas he was dutifully obeying orders as any self-respecting soldier should.[6] The editors followed this up by focusing on the Sonorans as a group of "*ladrones*" or thieves that had been stealing horses and mules throughout the southwest of the United States. Additionally, expeditions such as Moorehead's should be funded by the government since they provided a service and security to all American citizens in the regions.[7] Whether this 1850 expedition of Moorehead was an honest attempt at capturing and punishing murderers and thieves or an act of chicanery by Moorehead cannot be truly be discerned. It was reported in January that at the end of Moorehead's expedition many of his men "broke for the mines" while others returned north to San Jose to be "mustered out of service."[8] It is likely that many of these men had been recruited by Moorehead for service in his filibuster into Sonora.

It is not exactly clear when General Moorehead decided to filibuster in Sonoran, but based on the actions of his men on return from their 1850 endeavor it was probably under consideration months before it began. As early as March of 1851 it became apparent he was ready to move towards Sonora. Moorehead likely saw the possibility of wealth in the Sonoran mines and the limited military presence across the border and decided that success was highly probable. Another reason may have been the rumors that large portions of the populace were unhappy with the Mexican government's inability to protect the people from Native attacks.[9] The goal was to "detach Sonora…from the Mexican confederation, and ultimately annex her to the United States."[10] If this was the case, as the *Sacramento Daily Union* claimed, it would appear that the previous actions with Texas appeared to form the model for Moorehead's actions in Sonora and Baja California. It is likely that General Moorehead enlisted three separate divisions in his attempt to filibuster in Sonora.[11]

One division was to have traveled to Sonora via land from Los Angeles. It was reported at the end of March 1851 that a "party of men armed with rifles and six-shooters, passed through Los Angeles" and that they were only a portion of a much larger group of 300.[12] The account noted that the group's true goal was a "descent upon Sonora."[13] These men reported that they were heading to Sonora to "take advantage of the offer recently made by the Governor of that State" to settle a "certain amount of land…within the territory."[14] While this may have been the case, it is more likely that this was a cover story. Based on the armed nature of the group and a lack of equipment needed to settle an area it can be assumed that they planned to take the land by force and not as part of a peaceful agreement as they stated. A second group traveled by sea to La

Paz, which is located on the southern end of Baja California Sur, in a southern direction from Guaymas.[15] Moorehead procured a boat, the *Josephine*, for himself and set sail with forty-five men to Mazatlán in May as the third and final group.[16] It was rumored at the time that as Quartermaster General, Moorehead had illegally sold a large quantity of the "arms and ammunition under his charge and appropriated the proceeds" to purchase the *Josephine*.[17] The *Sacramento Transcript* reported that General Moorehead's "secret expedition" was equipped by "taking all or nearly all the State arms, and other property placed in the arsenal" and headed south for the purpose of taking possession of the land.[18] The Governor of California, John McDougall, accused Moorehead of stealing four hundred muskets and 90,000 cartridges belonging to the state and sold them through a San Francisco company to pay for his filibuster.[19] When questioned about these actions in San Diego, General Moorehead denied the charge that he had left San Francisco with weapons and none were found on board the *Josephine* during the inspection.[20] It is plausible that Moorhead was telling the truth, but in reality it is much more likely that many were sold to pay for the expedition and those that were not sold were used to arm members of the other two parties traveling to Sonora.

General Moorehead may have had grand designs on Sonora, but his filibuster got off to a rocky start. Shortly after setting sail, they were forced to seek out the port of San Diego because they were "so poorly provisioned that there was not a sufficient quantity of food on board to last a week."[21] The main purpose for the stop in San Diego was to resupply and properly outfit the group for the journey to Mazatlán. However, Moorehead lacked the resources to adequately pay for the needs of his party and left San Diego in debt.[22] While in San Diego, Moorehead's men became very unpopular due to "fighting

and creating disturbances in the streets."[23] At one point, a notice arrived in San Diego offering a reward for the capture of Moorehead. It was reported on May 3rd that a reward of $1500 had been offered for the arrest of General Moorehead.[24] In response, Moorehead crossed the border into Lower California for a couple days. During that time, the *Josephine* was searched but her papers were in order and no weapons were found on board, so there was no authorization to seize the ship.[25]

Coincidentally, at the same time that Moorehead and his men were encamped in San Diego, the Governor of Lower California (Baja), Don Manuel Castro, happened to be in San Diego. Upon hearing the stories of Moorehead's men, Castro was apprehensive "for the safety of his country and was considerably troubled with fear."[26] However, after discerning the true character of the men, their leader, and their overall organization, Castro claimed "the country is safe."[27] Even at this early date, it appeared to some that the expedition was doomed to failure. On the night of May 8th, Moorehead and his men finally left San Diego towards Mazatlán.[28] Shortly after the group sailed south towards Mazatlán, a schooner paused in San Diego searching for the General and quickly followed in pursuit.[29]

At this point, it appears that the various groups of the expedition began to dissolve. The group that went left Los Angeles in their attempt to invade Sonora by land eventually turned up in northern Sonora in July. Early that month, the commander of the local military colony found an encampment of the Americans. The Mexican military was slow to act and the Americans were not forced out of the country until November.[30] The group that travelled to La Paz in Lower California, or Baja California Sur, evidently dispersed quickly upon arrival and nothing was heard from these men again in Mexico. It

is likely that they came across a detachment of the Mexican military numbering 200 soldiers that had been sent to Baja California shortly before to secure that portion of the country.[31] Many of the men from probably professed to be searching for work in the mines and denied being involved in filibustering.[32] In this case, they would have been allowed to cross back into the United States and quietly return home.

What exactly happened to General Moorehead is still unclear; however, what is clear is that his filibustering expedition in spring of 1851 was a complete failure. According to an article in the *Daily Alta California* in October, men from the various groups began trickling back into San Francisco a few at a time after a five month adventure.[33] These returning men claimed that the objectives of the expedition were to "explore the country and prospect for gold."[34] They returned home because they had been denied permission to mine in Sonora and denied any involvement in being part of Moorehead's filibustering.

In a post-mortem of the filibuster, the *Daily Alta California* described Moorehead's expedition as creating "quite a sensation in this part of the country" that, despite its failure, would eventually lead to wresting of Sonora from Mexico.[35] The topic was so often discussed that many in California even believed it may become an issue in the upcoming 1852 Presidential election. But by the fall of 1851, the story had fallen into memory. However, questions still lingered over the legality of his actions. He had committed the "offence of levying war against a friendly power."[36] Despite this, Moorehead's attempt was not remembered as a failure, but that it simply "fell through".[37] There was still clamoring among certain circles of men for the resources abounding in Sonora. The next men to make an attempt on Sonora were not Americans, but

Frenchmen. Two separate individuals built on the foundations of Moorehead to lead three filibustering expeditions into Mexico from California over the next three years.

In the late 1840s Frenchmen were scattered around the globe in places like North Africa, Latin American, the Pacific Islands, and even California. A small number found their way to San Francisco when the Gold Rush occurred and wrote letters home encouraging others to join them. With the promise of gold, the adventurist spirit took hold in France. In 1850, a lottery was held in Paris in which the prize was a one-way journey to San Francisco. As a result of this lottery, in 1851, roughly 500 French men and women would make the journey to San Francisco in search of golden fortunes. Many of these men and women were penniless, but seized the opportunity with both hands.[38]

More French immigrants came to California during this time period than from any other European nation. According to filibuster biographer, William O. Scroggs, at this time one in ten people in California was a Frenchman and that they stood out within the society because they showed little interest in assimilating.[39] At the time, California was home to numerous emigrant and immigrant groups such as: Americans from various regions, Irish, Germans, and Mexicans in addition to the French. The French failed to assimilate or learn English, had no desire to naturalize, and tended to keep to themselves. For this reason, they were often times ignored or worse by the larger community and by law enforcement. In consequence, many of the French were badly mistreated, robbed, and attacked by bands of ruffians.[40]

While there were a few Frenchmen of noble lineage, many of them had lost their fortunes prior to arriving in California and were there seeking to regain them. However, many of the French who came penniless in 1851, remained so in 1852. They were a

discontented group who survived from day to day in clannish fashion in San Francisco and the surrounding area. This made them "fine material for exploitation by some of their adventurous countrymen" and shortly "several of these exploiters appeared on the scene."[41]

The first of these adventurous Frenchmen was a French nobleman by the name of Marquis Charles de Pindray. Pindray was described as handsome and strong, but was most renowned for his accuracy with a rifle and reputation as a duelist.[42] Pindray arrived in San Francisco in 1850 as a noble Frenchmen fleeing debts at home to try his hand at prospecting but had little success.[43] Needing work and being good with a rifle, Pindray made a deal at a local market to provide fresh meat on a weekly basis. He scoured the hillsides around San Francisco for bear and other game which he carted back to the city. In this way he eked out a living in California, but all the while casted about looking for an opportunity that was more to his nature and nobility.[44]

In 1851, Pindray began putting together a scheme to colonize a portion of Sonora. Pindray was invited by the Mexican government to colonize a portion of Sonora in exchange for defending the region from Apache attacks. For this reason it is difficult to ascertain whether Pindray was truly a filibuster. However, the actions of his party leave little doubt that they were far more concerned with enriching themselves through the regions mines than fighting Apaches in the northern stretches of Sonora.[45]

According to newspaper reports at the time, the Governor of Sonora had agreed to pay the sum of $1,800 in silver, provisions for six months, animals, and a stretch of land to found an agricultural colony, and mining opportunities in exchange for repulsing the spread of Apache attacks in the region.[46] It appears that when the offer was made to

Pindray by the Governor of Sonora, the actual colonization bills were still being debated by the General Congress. The Governor jumped the gun by using the Mexican Consul in San Francisco to begin the recruitment process. In the end, the General Congress approved the colonization bills, but the offer from Sonora was much sweeter than that offered by the Mexican federal government.[47] Perhaps if the Mexican government had done a better job of protecting its citizens on the frontier, the Sonoran people would not have welcomed the idea of "an industrious and intelligent class of new settlers" in the form of Frenchmen.[48]

As part of the deal, Pindray needed to form a group of Frenchmen that included no Americans. To garner volunteers, he posted advertisements in California newspapers to exploit the conditions of his fellow countrymen into following him. There were so many responses that he was eventually able to charge $40 to $50 to become a member of the party.[49] By the fall of 1851, Pindray's group was assembled and on November 21, they sailed from San Francisco towards Guaymas in Sonora where they arrived on December 26.[50]

Upon arrival in Guaymas, Pindray and his men were met with much aplomb. They were greeted with celebratory musket volleys and local merchants sought to ingratiate themselves to the newcomers. Having set sail from San Francisco with 85 men, upon reaching Guaymas that number quickly swelled to one hundred fifty.[51] In Guaymas, Pindray's group was provided with "provisions, horses, mules, munitions of war" and the promise of payment in the near future.[52] Additionally, they were granted roughly ten square miles of land near the Cocóspera.[53] Early in 1852 the party made its way to Cocóspera where things quickly began to devolve.

The agricultural colony of Frenchmen at Cocóspera began deteriorating almost immediately. Many of the men were not happy simply farming and had no interest chasing Apaches across the harsh terrain. Very early on up to twenty men abandoned the colony in search of riches in the nearby mines.[54] A divide was growing between the men and their leader and upon returning back to California one former member of the group wrote, the colony was "governed in a deplorable manner" and "had no chance of success."[55]

Some of the Frenchmen made it to a famous nearby mine called St. Theresa which was rumored to be veined with rich ore waiting for the taking. The mine had been abandoned for some time due to the constant Apache attacks, but this group of Frenchmen staked a claim to it and even went as far as filing a petition with a local judge to grant them legal rights to the mine. The judge eventually ruled against them and the men, much aggrieved at not being able to reap the rewards of such a plentiful mine, made their way back to Guaymas.[56]

As things deteriorated, more and more of the party made their way back to Guaymas and slowly returned to California. With the colony a failure, Pindray moved into filibustering and intended to take the mines of Arizona.[57] However, on the journey Pindray fell ill and the remaining members of the expedition stopped at the small Mexican village of Rayon.[58] The exact date is unclear, but it was reported in the *Daily Alta California* on August 15, 1852 that Pindray "committed suicide by blowing out his brains…whilst laboring under a high fever, and in a fit of despair."[59]

As a result of Pindray's death, the remaining expedition fell apart with men seeking a return to California. The *Daily Alta California* reported that "most of the

French are discontented and dissatisfied, and would return to California but for the want of means for their transportation."[60] Reports of the destitute nature of a few of these Frenchmen made their way to San Francisco. It was reported that some had resorted to begging and one commentator wrote, "It is a sad spectacle to see Frenchmen begging alms from house to house."[61] In October, the reports began to emerge of men returning to San Francisco with 45 arriving back after the failed adventure.[62] However, not all returned back to California. Some stayed in Sonora searching for mining opportunities while others settled into agriculture.[63] A few maintained their focus on filibustering and were in luck when another Frenchmen arrived at Guaymas.[64] These men gladly joined the ranks of the next filibustering attempt on Sonora under the command of another fallen French noble, Le Comte Gaston de Raousset-Boulbon.

Gaston de Raousset-Boulbon and Pindray inhabited San Francisco at roughly the same time and as Frenchmen became aware of each other's existence. The two appear to have first met at a saloon and almost immediately a rivalry broke out. It also appears around this time that Pindray shared with Raousset his plan to travel to Sonora and offered him a spot in the group, which was declined by Raousset.[65] Both had come to California as broken French nobles, but there the similarities end.

Where Pindray was strong, handsome, and constantly seeking excitement, Raousset was small, obstinate, and autocratic. Due to his behavior as a child, he was nicknamed the "wolf cub" by the servants of his house.[66] In his teenage years he was sent to Jesuit school, but was dismissed due to his behavior and refusing to kneel before a priest, claiming he would only kneel before God.[67] Leaving the school and turning eighteen were a blessing for the young Raousset as he received an inheritance of three

hundred thousand francs.[68] This fortune should have been apt to keep him in riches for all his life, but Raousset squandered much of it purchasing expensive luxuries. As a turn of pace, Raousset decided to travel to the new French colony in Algeria where he purchased a large estate.[69] He returned to France in 1848 after selling his Algerian estate for a significant loss and dabbled in politics, but failed to win election. He even attempted running his own newspaper for a short time, but nothing managed to keep his focus.[70] After economic struggles in Algeria and France, Raousset borrowed enough money to purchase passage to California and arrived in San Francisco on August 22, 1850.[71]

Arriving in San Francisco, Raousset did a variety of jobs to make ends meet, but was unsuccessful at all of them in generating the wealth he believed was deserve by his noble station.[72] The final straw for Raousset was an attempt to drive cattle from Los Angeles to San Francisco. Raousset travelled to Los Angeles to take control of the herd, moving it northward. He had visions of profit, but returning San Francisco he found that oxen were no longer in high demand. Unable sell the cattle for a profit in San Francisco, he then drove them from San Francisco to Stockton where he sold them for only enough to cover his expenditures.[73] Back in San Francisco by April, he learned that Pindray's expedition had left for Sonora. In Pindray's expedition, Raousset saw the potential to exploit the situation for his own profits and set about forming his own expedition.[74]

Raousset set out in his plans quite differently from Pindray. He began by running his idea past the French Consul in San Francisco, Patrice Dillon.[75] Dillon encouraged the plan and felt with the proper approach to Mexican authorities, it could be successful at fulfilling Raousset's dreams, but also those of the many unemployed Frenchmen around San Francisco.[76] Given the state of Mexico, especially in the northern stretches such as

Sonora, it was plausible that a group of French filibusters would be seen as heroes and not invaders. In his book on Raousset, Maurice Soulié wrote that in 1851 in Mexico "distress prevailed everywhere" and that it "was ripe for annexation."[77] Raousset believed that the Mexican people were in need of help and would welcome Frenchmen in a way they would never receive an American. After the Mexican-American War, there was great distrust of American expansionism, but the French were seen in a different light in part due to the Catholicism they shared with Mexicans.[78] As a way of selling his expedition to the Mexican authorities, Raousset planned to offer his services in building a community or communities in the frontier region that would function as a bulwark against future American incursions into northern Mexico.[79]

Raousset formulated a plan much grander than that of Pindray's single colony. He considered Pindray's single agricultural outpost of Cocóspera a starting point for his larger vision. Raousset would build upon the idea of Cocóspera with more men, more settlements, and more success. He planned to "establish a sort of military, agricultural and industrial company, able to cope with the Apaches and make the mines accessible."[80] In exchange for the allowing his colonies to exist, he would offer the Mexican government a part of the profits. With the plan in place, Raousset established a company to handle the undertaking called "*Compania Restaurada*" or "*La Restaurada*" which would purge the Apaches, reopen the mines, and provide a bastion against Americans seeking to expand into Sonora.[81] The next task was to gain approval of the plan from the Mexican government.

In February 1852, Raousset secured funding with the help of Dillon and left San Francisco for Mexico City. After several months of negotiations and meetings, Raousset

was finally able to secure a concession from Mexican President, Mariano Arista.[82] After receiving the President's approval, Raousset immediately secured financial support from the Swiss banking firm of Jecker, De La Torre, & Co in April.[83] As part of the agreement, Raousset was to quickly return to San Francisco and begin preparations for his Sonoran filibuster. He was expected to rally 150 men to his cause and travel immediately to Sonora for the purpose of engaging the Apaches and opening mining operations.

With the support of Dillon, Raousset set up a recruiting office in San Francisco and sent agents out to the mines.[84] In no time at all he had amassed roughly two hundred men and was organized like a small army.[85] The men boarded the *Archibald Gracie* on May 19, 1852 and traveled for twelve days.[86] Around June 1, 1852 the group reached the Sonoran port of Guaymas.[87]

The *Daily Alta California* later reported how well prepared the group was. Pindray's arrival a few months before was nowhere near as well organized or armed. A report from Guaymas that arrived in late June stated that a group of "180 Frenchmen" arrived and that they are "perfectly well armed…and are a very well disciplined troop."[88] The locals greeted the arrival as a triumph and the group was invited to partake in local celebrations. The locals set the bells of the town ringing and other demonstrations were made to show the Frenchmen they were welcome.[89]

While the locals may have received the French expedition with open arms, the local officials shared no such feelings. The officials were immediately alarmed by the well-armed nature of the group, especially the two artillery pieces.[90] This was "so great a military display" that it alarmed the local Mexican military commander, General Blanco.[91] Blanco questioned the use of such heavy and powerful weapons for pursuing

and fighting Apache in the difficult terrain of Sonora.[92] The argument that the weapons were necessary to defend themselves against Apache attacks as they traveled along the interior roads fell on deaf ears. General Blanco began at once to put up roadblocks to prevent the French expedition from leaving Guaymas.

Shortly after arriving, Raousset sent a letter to General Blanco outlining his objectives and his plan to leave for the interior as soon as possible to fulfill the agreement he had made with the central government.[93] Blanco replied to Raousset seeking to impose conditions onto the expedition beyond what had been agreed previously with President Arista.[94] However, attempting to pacify General Blanco, Raousset agreed to stay for a short time in Guaymas.

The Frenchmen's time in Guaymas gave a boost to the local economy, one person reported that "there is more business transacted in one day than formerly in a month… and some large farmers have made agreements" with the French colonists for a portion of their land in exchange for future proceeds.[95] These farmers would never have done such a thing if they did feel secure in the fact that the expedition would be a success. With the hope that the French expedition would be successful at securing the region from Apache attacks in a way that the government could not, even talk of setting up stage lines and trade networks in the north began to occur.[96] The expedition brought an economic boom to the area, but they quickly wore out their welcome in Guaymas.

As General Blanco would not allow Raousset's expedition to leave Guaymas for a period of what turned out to be a month, the Frenchmen turned to a variety of diversions to entertain themselves. The enforced idleness did not sit well with the French adventurers and within days they were drinking excessively, fighting, and sneaking into

windows around the town, actions which exacerbated tensions between adventurers and local.[97] The Frenchmen left many an angry husband in the town standing next to a swooning wife, but Raousset tried his best to keep his men disciplined and out of trouble and made sure each man paid any debts he had to local establishments.[98] After a month, the idleness and climate began to take its toll on the men and they had exhausted a large portion of their supplies that were needed for the desert expedition.[99] Then news came that Raousset's expedition could proceed.

Raousset's expedition was given a designated route northward by General Blanco that was twice as long as the most direct path.[100] This route was chosen with care to avoid allowing the French group to pass through the major towns, especially Hermosillo, in hopes of avoiding any number of poor outcomes. Raousset ignored this request and began moving north through the shortest and most convenient route possible; straight through Hermosillo and towards the mines of Arizona.[101] They passed through Hermosillo without ill effect and proceeded north to the village of Saric, roughly 150 miles north of Hermosillo and just a few miles south of their proposed claim.[102] Around this point, the expedition was overtaken by a courier bringing a letter from General Blanco instructing the group to halt its advance and for Raousset to report in person to Blanco at Arispe, a town about 100 miles southeast of their current location.[103]

Raousset decided to return to Arispe and hear out the new demands of General Blanco. On his way to Arispe, Raousset passed through the village of Cocóspera and met the remaining men from Pindray's expedition. Here Raousset found "the colony in complete disorder, reduced to a score of discouraged men."[104] Many of the men had long since traveled north to Tucson or made their way out of the country, but about 80 still

remained. These men were poorly fed and dispirited at the fact they did not have the resources to leave safely. Raousset laid out his plans and easily enlisted these men into his company, which swelled his numbers to more than 250 men.[105] Instead of continuing on to Arispe as he had planned, Raousset sent a representative in his place to meet with Blanco. With the remaining men from Cocóspera, Raousset returned to his men at Saric.[106]

Raousset's representative met with General Jimenez, a representative himself. Jimenez offered the new conditions under which the French expedition could continue in Sonora. The new conditions were that Raousset should renounce his French citizenship, disband his group and keep only 50 with him, this remaining group would become Mexican soldiers, and the group should wait for three months for letters to arrive from the capital granting the smaller group permission to proceed to the interior.[107] Raousset, perhaps urged by some of his followers, believed that Sonora was ripe for the taking and that if the group could take one of the Sonoran cities, the state would follow in short order. Raousset took the General's ultimatum to his men and they resoundingly approved of the Raousset's new plan of ignoring the General's orders and instead moving to take Hermosillo.[108] Of course, Raousset would do none of the things proposed in the General's ultimatum, and responded:

> Nothing would induce him to renounce his French citizenship, being contrary to his honor; that reducing his little army would be treachery to the company, who had already spent large sums, and towards his followers, who received no pay, but had the promise of a share in the mines they were to conquer.[109]

Raousset reminded the General of the previous agreements and arrangements and rejected the ultimatum as deceptive and in bad faith.[110] Upon this rebuke, the Mexican

General branded Raousset an outlaw, withdrew all assistance to the Frenchmen, and began organizing troops to rid the country of the French expedition.[111]

Raousset responded by readying his 250 men and marching upon a nearby government store for supplies. After outfitting his men, Raousset proceeded to Arispe where General Blanco had remained with about 600 men. After a couple of small skirmishes, Blanco and his men retreated to Hermosillo.[112] Raousset and his men turned their attention to Hermosillo and were not far behind General Blanco. At this point Raousset began to pose as a "champion of Sonoran independence" with the hope of winning converts to his cause.[113]

Upon arrival in Hermosillo, General Blanco began preparations for the oncoming Frenchmen. According to the *Daily Alta California*, Blanco added more than 200 more men to his small army at Hermosillo, but it would appear that the number was actually significantly higher.[114] As the Frenchmen reached Hermosillo there was a short standoff in which Blanco blustered for time in order to organize his men in defense of the city. He also took this time to attempt to sway Raousset's men into abandoning the cause, while at the same time Raousset was using the "banner of a free Sonora" to lure support for his side.[115] On September 21, 1852, Raousset raised a banner of an independent Sonora and actively recruited more followers from the nearby countryside.[116]

The battle for control of Hermosillo began in October with the city's population of 15,000 left in fear. Raousset's two hundred and fifty men were ready to seize the city from a defending force nearly four times their number.[117] The Mexican forces had used the time to entrench themselves throughout the city and with such superior numbers should have had no trouble holding the town against such a small attacking force. As the

French approached, the first action of the Mexican troops was not to open fire, but to send out an offer of money if the French would leave the city alone.[118] It was also rumored that representatives were sent to the French to ask them to wait forty-eight hours so that Blanco could seek guidance from President Arista on the situation. Raousset did not fall for the delaying tactic and responded to the representatives that it was then half past ten in the morning and within an hour he would be master of the town.[119]

A silence fell over the area as both sides waited for the attack to begin. With a shout, the French flew at the Mexican defenders. So quickly were the Frenchmen into the Mexican lines, that the lines disintegrated as the defenders fled deeper into the city. The Frenchmen pushed further into the city and after several more skirmishes the remaining Mexican troops fled the city with their leader.[120] By the end of the day the Raousset had taken control of the city of Hermosillo. General Blanco and his men had done the unthinkable; they had lost the capital city of Sonora to a small group of Frenchmen who were in Sonora upon an agreement with the Mexican President. The battle had been a rout with over sixty Mexicans killed during the battle and countless more wounded or taken prisoner.[121] Added to the number killed, the total casualties of the battle approached 200 men lost to General Blanco.[122] The battle had not been decided entirely by the bravery of the French or the genius of their commander. A large portion of their success came from the cowardice of its defenders.[123] In the end, the battle had cost Raousset seventeen killed and twenty-five wounded.[124]

News of the French victory quickly spread and Raousset should have consolidated his victory by placing the city firmly under his control. It was heard in Guaymas that a flag had been raised over Hermosillo by the French that was inscribed, "Liberty to the

State of Sonora."[125] However, the French expedition was in no state to increase their claim or rally people to their cause. The citizens of Hermosillo did not rally to the flag of independence and rankled under the control of foreigners. Many of the French officers had been killed in the attack and Raousset, along with several of his remaining lieutenants, became ill.[126] Maintaining discipline became impossible and Raousset soon realized he could not hold the city.

After holding the city for less than two weeks, Raousset and his men evacuated the city. As the ill Raousset and his men made their retreat to Guaymas, the French expedition began to unravel. It is unclear what happened next, but the newspapers in California reported that the Frenchmen had abandoned their leader and made for Guaymas in hopes of returning to San Francisco.[127] Theodore Hittell put forth that Raousset willingly left his own men because of his illness as he was unable to lead them, and leaderless the men quickly drifted away.[128] Regardless of which is true, Raousset and his men ended up in Guaymas broke, broken, and disorganized.

While the Frenchmen were marching back to Guaymas, General Blanco made preparations to expel them from Mexico. He reorganized his troops, evacuated most people from Guaymas, and began making arrangements for the Frenchmen to leave Mexican soil as soon as possible.[129] It was reported that Blanco even had several large canon mounted on a ship in the harbor in case the Frenchmen had any ideas of remaining. Many of the town's citizens fled the town for the safety of nearby villages until the Frenchmen could be sent on their way.[130] The French expedition marched back into Guaymas defeated and the emotions were very different from that they had experienced when arriving months before.

On November 5, 1852, General Blanco published a letter proclaiming that he had, the day before, successfully ended Raousset's war on Sonora. Blanco made a deal with the Frenchmen, which they accepted. The Frenchmen would turn over all their weapons, ammunition, powder, horses, saddles, wagons, and artillery to effectively lay down their arms and prevent any other armed insurrection to occur. In exchange, the Frenchmen would be pardoned and allowed to return home unmolested from Guaymas. While Raousset was not present and never agreed to these terms, a large majority of the remaining Frenchmen took General Blanco's offer.[131] The *Daily Alta California* reported that the agreement went beyond that published in the General Blanco's letter. Accordingly, the General offered the Frenchmen $11,000 "as indemnity and to facilitate their leaving the country."[132] A special concession of $15,000 was also made to the remainder of Pindray's expedition.[133] Many of these men quickly fled on available ships, but a few remained in Mexico of their own choice.[134] Some of the men who were wounded in the battle for Hermosillo simply chose to remain there and were treated well by the local citizens.[135] In early December, many of the Frenchmen came trickling back into San Francisco in groups of a couple dozen at a time.

Raousset not only neglected to agree to Blanco's terms, but remained in Mexico. As many of his men began making the journey north, he travelled south to Mazatlán with a group of about forty. These men who joined Raousset did not remain in Mazatlán and left as soon as arrangements could be made.[136] In Mazatlán, Raousset took time to recover. It was reported in one instance that he had been wounded at the battle for Hermosillo as a bullet had passed through his arm and it would not heal.[137] Other reports stated that he had a lingering climatic fever that persisted without interruption.[138] Another

opinion was that he was suffering from debilitating dysentery.[139] In any case, Raousset spent a great deal of time convalescing in Mazatlán. Raousset had not given up on his dreams of filibustering in Sonora and received a November letter from Patrice Dillon, while recovering in Mazatlán, asking for him to return to San Francisco. As soon as he was able, Raousset made his way back to San Francisco.

Raousset was not prepared for the welcome that greeted him upon his arrival in San Francisco. He was viewed as a hero, "was lionized and got a taste of glory."[140] He became the toast of the town with Americans, French, and English all fighting for the honor of entertaining and conversing with him. The reception in San Francisco solidified his future plans and he immediately went to work preparing a second filibustering attempt in Sonora. Maurice Soulié wrote, "Along with his health he had recovered his energy. The desire to return to Sonora filled all his thoughts and nothing could deter him from the project."[141] However, it was not just Raousset that now envisioned a fortune in Sonora. Despite the failure of his first filibuster, Raousset verified for himself and many others that Sonora contained wealth, enough wealth that filibustering seemed a plausible endeavor.[142] It would not be long before others picked up the filibustering mantle and almost immediately Raousset planned a second attempt on Sonora but was beaten to it when Californian William Walker began his storied filibustering career with his own attempt on Sonora.

Chapter 3

The Walker Expedition

Best known for his ill-starred Presidency of Nicaragua, William Walker, a contemporary of Raousset, had his own grandiose plans for Sonora in the early 1850s. Tennessee raised, and educated in Europe, Walker was present for the revolutions that shook Europe in 1848. He returned to the United States shortly after and practiced medicine for a short time in Philadelphia before relocating to New Orleans to study law. While briefly in New Orleans he studied the law codes of Louisiana that would form the basis of his legal system as he filibustered throughout the 1850s. In 1850, Walker set out for California and settled in San Francisco. Shortly after arriving, he went to work as a newspaper editor until moving to Marysville to join the law practice of Henry P. Watkins.[1]

Living near San Francisco and maintaining his connections to the regional newspapers, Walker was in close quarters with the other early filibusters. Walker imagined he could be successful where others were failing and in early 1852 began laying the groundwork for a filibustering expedition of his own.[2] Much like the other filibusters leaving California for Sonora, the plan was to establish a colony that could be used as a base of operations for numerous other activities such as mining, ranching, and agriculture. Throughout the remainder of 1852 and into early 1853, Walker and his law partner, Henry P. Watkins, worked out their plan to access and colonize Sonora. The first step of the plan was for a small group to travel to Guaymas, travel to Hermosillo to meet with the Governor of Sonora, and obtain permission to colonize a northern portion of Sonora with Americans.[3] The original plan was to settle near Arispe, a village used by the

Mexican Army and was the site of General Blanco's summons to Raousset. Additionally, to sell his project to the Sonoran government, Walker offered the use of the colony as a defense against the vicious Native attacks that plagued the northern reaches of Sonora.[4] At this point, Walker and Watkins even met with Raousset to propose a joint French-American venture. Raousset declined the invitation for several reasons. Primarily, Raousset was concerned that the Mexican distrust of Americans would put the expedition at greater risk of failure.[5] Secondly, the two men had different aims. Raousset's plans were far less grandiose and revolved more around the acquisition of personal wealth. Walker, on the other hand, sought an independent Sonoran republic in which he was leader. Additionally, Walker had plans of incorporating the Louisiana law codes into his new Republic which would allow slavery.[6] The French expedition did not desire nor plan to ever integrate slavery into their Sonoran colonies. The men parted cordially, but as rivals for the same piece of land.

After organizing investors and funding for the expedition, Walker and Watkins set off in the summer of 1853 for Guaymas to secure permission for the proposed Sonoran colony. The group had sold bonds secretly in May for $500 in exchange for future land grants in Sonora when the expedition was successful.[7] The name of the bonds, Independence Loan Fund, leaves readers in no doubt of Walker's ultimate goal in Sonora. He was intent on filibustering even if he was operating under the pretext of reaching an agreement to colonize a small portion of Sonora. The experience in Guaymas was anything but successful. Upon his arrival at the port, Walker was not granted permission to travel inland to meet with the Governor. Walker's passport should have granted him immediate permission to travel inland, but all Americans were treated as suspect and

thought to have ulterior motives.[8] Apparently, rumor of his plans to filibuster in Sonora had reached the wrong ears. In San Francisco, the Mexican Consul had gotten wind of the endeavor and alerted the authorities in Sonora.[9] Walker was free to roam the small port city and converse with the populace, but only with military supervision so it was impossible to move his plans along.

Arriving in the summer, Walker was ill equipped for the oppressive heat of Guaymas. Fellow American, T. Robinson Warren, commented that his appearance "was anything else than a military chieftain" and that Walker wore a "huge white fur hat, whose long knap waved with the breeze" with an ill-fitting jacket and pants.[10] Walker clearly stood out in Guaymas, but perhaps not as he had wished. Warren wrote that "half the dread which the Mexicans had of filibusters vanished when they saw…such an insignificant-looking specimen."[11] While in Guaymas, he did learn that his plans would be in direct competition with Raousset's second attempt at filibustering in Sonora.[12] Being rebuffed by the Mexican officials, Walker quickly returned to California. He may have returned to San Francisco defeated in his attempt to secure a colony in Sonora, but the failure did not signal the end of his plan.

Arriving back in San Francisco without an agreement to found a colony, Walker set to work forming an expedition with exactly the same goal, minus the permission of the Mexican authorities. According to Walker biographer, Allen Merritt Parmalee, Walker's decision, was "typical filibustering" and he immediately began justifying its necessity.[13] Like the filibusters before him, Walker argued that if the Mexican government was powerless to protect its citizens and their property from Native attacks, then how could that government oppose a group that sought to offer protection from such

incursions? Walker believed that it would be a mission of mercy and charity to establish a colony in Sonora that would offer stability and security to the region.[14] His time in Guaymas also assured him that a small body of men, properly equipped and motivated, could create a successful colony and bulwark against Native attacks.[15] Walker himself later wrote, "The condition of the upper part of Sonora was at that time…a disgrace to the civilization of the continent" and that Americans had a duty "of relieving the frontier from the cruelties of savage war."[16] Walker also argued that because the Apaches seemed to have more control of the region than the Mexican government, Americans should feel free to settle there without the direct permission of Mexico.[17]

Using the raised funds, Walker began outfitting his group. It was hardly a secret at this point to anyone in San Francisco. Walker had recruited one hundred men and obtained the brig *Arrow* to transport the men and supplies for the campaign.[18] Outfitting a boat for military service and equipping a small army is a difficult task to keep quiet. It came as little surprise that shortly before the expedition was to leave San Francisco they were halted in their preparations. On September 30, 1853 the *Arrow* was seized by the U.S. military on concerns that the British vessels was to be used to take men and supplies into Mexico for the purpose of filibustering in direct violation of the United States' Neutrality Laws.[19] A week later, with help from his attorney, Walker was in court attempting to earn the release of the *Arrow* and confiscated supplies. It was argued that the ship was British, and therefore should not have been searched and seized, and that the accusations against Walker were in fact libel. Walker's lawyer filed a complaint that claimed Walker "denies all the counts" and he "prays that said libel will be dismissed as the stores, ammunition, material and arms on board, and that the cargo" may be

released.[20] It quickly became apparent to Walker that his goods and ship would be held by the courts for some time to come with no guarantee of success. His filibustering had been discovered, but this setback did not deter Walker. Shortly after his case was first being addressed by the court, Walker quickly and quietly outfitted a second ship, the *Caroline*, with forty-five men and as many weapons and supplies as they could muster.[21] As the group was preparing to supply the *Caroline*, a load of ammunition, powder, and lead was seized on the dock for the reason that their intent was for filibustering.[22] Fearing a repeat of the seizure of the *Arrow*, Walker and his filibustering expedition on the *Caroline* weighed anchor around 1 a.m. on October 17, 1853 and sailed before they could be intercepted and halted again.[23]

Most expected the filibustering expedition to arrive at Guaymas in early November. The *Daily Alta California* even predicted that "they will land without any difficulty and take Guaymas and Hermosillo with very little trouble."[24] When news arrived to San Francisco that by mid-November, the group still had not been spotted at Guaymas, the fate of the expedition began to become less clear. However, even this did not dissuade many from believing that the group would eventually be successful. It was argued that if Walker's expedition could succeed in taking control of the major towns, it would directly lead to an independent Sonora. The foreigners living there might flock to the side of Walker and it was believed the Mexican government would take few serious actions against the Americans.[25] While this may or may not have been the case, Walker and his men never reached Guaymas; instead, they took a different route.

Walker changed his plans due to issues leaving San Francisco. His forces were halved and secrecy was no longer an option. His new plan called for his group to land in

Lower California (Baja California Sur) and create a base of operations that he could fortify and use to reinforce his numbers. If he could successfully begin in Lower California, then he could prepare to eventually seize control of Sonora as well. The expedition first stopped at Cape San Lucas, at the very tip of the Baja California Peninsula. The plan was to wait here for the reinforcements that were on the way, but after several days of waiting Walker determined that the second group had passed them by. Walker's expedition then proceeded to La Paz which was the planned point of convergence for both groups.[26]

On November 3, 1853, the expedition arrived at La Paz, a town on the Gulf of California a short way up the coast from Cape San Lucas, and cast anchor in the harbor opposite the town. Walker, now using the moniker of Colonel Walker despite no military standing, ordered a group of men ashore to take possession of the town. This was done in very short order with local Governor Espinoza being secured as a prisoner. With the town and the Governor secure, the Mexican flag was drawn down in front of the Governor's house and replaced with a new flag provided by Col. Walker.[27] At this point Col. Walker declared Lower California to be independent of Mexico. His proclamation read "The Republic of Lower California is declared Free, Sovereign, and Independent, and all allegiances to the Republic of Mexico is *forever renounced.*"[28] Additionally, the proclamation stated that all duties were to be abolished with immediate effect and that the law code of the new Republic was that of the State of Louisiana.[29] With the formalities taken care of, the men now unloaded the supplies and began fortifying the town to secure it as a base of operations until reinforcements arrived.

Walker and his men remained in La Paz for only a short time and planned to leave on November 6 and move the government seat to San Lucas. As the men were boarding the *Caroline* and preparing to depart, a Mexican ship entered the harbor. In a stroke of fortune for Walker, the boat contained new Governor Rebolledo, who had been sent to replace Espinoza. Walker ordered Rebolledo to be brought aboard, giving him two Mexican politicians as prisoners of his fledgling expedition. This delayed the expedition from leaving, so Walker sent a small group of six men ashore to get wood. While on the shore the men were attacked by an armed party and the first action of the filibustering expedition occurred. The men returned to the boat under fire without suffering any wounded or killed. On the *Caroline*, Walker's men opened fire upon the town with artillery pieces until Col. Walker and thirty men landed to take the fight to the enemy. The battle lasted for approximately ninety minutes and at the conclusion of hostilities the enemy had lost six or seven killed, while Walker's men received wounds only from the "cacti, while pursuing the enemy through the chaparral."[30] The first battle of the expedition may not have been glorious, but it was a victory nonetheless. It gave belief to the men that the expedition could succeed.

On November 8, the expedition finally left La Paz and returned to Cape San Lucas. The next morning a Mexican ship, the *Garrea*, passed by San Lucas, but did not attempt to come near the town. Walker supposed this was due to the nature of being outmanned and outgunned; therefore, it sailed off without a fight.[31] While this was probably true, it is more likely that the cutter was simply assessing the situation and returning to Guaymas with news of the filibustering expedition for the Mexican government. On November 10, the group retraced their steps by sailing northward along

the Pacific coast to the port town of Ensenada, located roughly 80 miles south of San Diego and the United States – Mexico border. In Ensenada, Walker established his headquarters in late November, 1853.[32]

Upon establishing himself in Ensenada, Walker adopted another new moniker. This time he redefined himself as President Walker. One of his first actions as President was to send an address to the people of the United States in defense of his filibustering actions in Mexico. The main argument presented by Walker was that Lower California had essentially been cut off from the rest of Mexico by the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and the Mexican government had "manifested little or no interest in the affairs of the California Peninsula."[33] Additionally, the inhabitants had not developed strong economic ties to the rest of the nation. Therefore, in order to develop the resources of Lower California, "it was necessary to make it Independent."[34]

Over the next two weeks, Walker and his men began building up defenses and preparing for the arrival of reinforcements. The reasons for moving to Ensenada in the first place had been that it was a more defensible location and its proximity to California made it easier to resupply. While awaiting more men and supplies, Walker had sent out ranging parties to some of the nearby villages and ranches.[35] In early December, Mexican natives rose up against Walker and his men. The Mexicans followed Walker's men back to Ensenada, harassing them over the course of the short journey.[36] Walker and his Independent Battalion, as he referred to them, took shelter in a fortified house. The thick adobe walls provided good cover for the men against small arms fire and since the attacking Mexicans had no canon, there was little danger of the walls failing.[37] Walker and his men bided their time until a favorable opportunity presented itself. Early on the

morning of December 14, Walker's men seized their chance. It had been a cold and rainy night, with the Mexicans suffering greatly. Twenty of Walker's men snuck out of the house and attacked the Mexicans in their camp. It was rumored that Walker himself wanted to lead this attack, but was dissuaded by the men's concern for his safety. Instead the attack was led by one of his commanders. The battle was a rout with the Mexicans leaving behind much of their supplies. Over the next two days, Walker's forces and the Mexicans skirmished but fought no major engagements. The leader of the Mexicans attempted numerous acts of subterfuge to defeat the Americans, but were deterred on each occasion.[38] In the end, the Mexicans were pushed out and Walker's expedition was still in occupation of Ensenada.

In these initial engagements this period of action, only one of Walker's men was killed, a Lieutenant McKibbon. In honor of the fallen soldier, the house that they had defended with such zeal was renamed Fort McKibbon.[39] While his loss of only a single man during the fighting can be viewed as a success, Walker also suffered a great defeat. During the action, the *Caroline* weighed anchor and sailed away, presumably for Guaymas or another port. It is likely that the two Governors on board, Espinoza and Rebolledo, successfully bribed the captain and crew to release them somewhere safe.[40] Losing the captives was a blow to his bravado, and the loss of nearly all his remaining supplies that were stored on the *Caroline* was shattering. Walker and his men now had to wait not only for reinforcements of men, but also of food and other supplies that they had not foreseen needing. Luckily, the reinforcements arrived shortly. On December 28, the *Anita* arrived with two hundred and fifty men.[41] Unfortunately for Walker, the *Anita* brought only men and arms, but no food.[42] With no new food arriving, and diminishing

supplies in the camp, foraging quickly became necessary in order to survive. As a result of the attack on them earlier in the month by Mexicans, Walker's group was able to discard any pretense of chivalry and felt they could loot from the surrounding areas as the local inhabitants had proven disloyal to the new Republic.

Walker immediately put his newly arrived troops to good use. On the 29th of December, Walker sent sixty-five men out to locate, attack, and pillage the camp of a famous regional Mexican outlaw named Melendrez who they believed had led some of the attacks against them. The group attacked the town of San Tomas and was able to secure food, horses, and supplies. Additionally, Walker sent another group to secure and reinforce another village, called La Grulla.[43] Taking control of these town around the interior of the peninsula gave Walker greater control of the region in early January 1854. With things under control on the California Peninsula, it came time to look eastward towards the original prize, Sonora.

Walker had no interest in remaining in Lower California any longer than necessary. He had viewed it is a necessary step before taking his men into Sonora. While ensconced in Ensenada, Walker annexed Sonora into his new Republic. On January 18, 1854, Walker signed a series of decrees. The first officially changed the name from the Republic of Lower California to the Republic of Sonora.[44] With a bit of tongue in cheek, the *Daily Alta California* noted it was a "graceful *cout de plume*" in reference to annexing an entire organized state of another nation with the simple stroke of a pen.[45] The second decree split the new Republic into two states, Lower California and Sonora, while laying out the boundary lines for each. It also claimed for the Republic all islands

in the Gulf of California.[46] The later decrees were simple formalities of name changes and changes of authority regarding Lower California.

With little food beyond dried beef and dried corn, the men quickly became restless. Walker had used this time to train his men and prepare them as best he could. He acknowledged that the march ahead would be difficult and long and so set up Ensenada as his permanent military outpost.[47] In late January, the first accounts appear of deserters seeking to make it to the border just to the north at San Diego. On January 27, 1854 it was reported that more than forty men arrived in San Diego that had fled Ensenada after a dispute with Walker regarding horses. It was also reported the lack of quality food for the men and the inability to elect their own officers also caused a rift in Walker's camp. As a result, Walker drew all the men together and gave a long speech, ending with the requirement of each man to take an oath. Any man who would not take the oath was given two hours to leave the camp. Forty-six men took what little belongings and food they had and made to exit the camp. As the men were about to leave the camp, they were stopped and asked to leave their arms as they would be needed by the remaining men; however, these guns had been purchased by the men back in San Francisco and they were not apt to give them up. A standoff ensued until Walker stepped in and allowed the men to leave. After the men had moved some distance off from the camp, Walker went after them with a small party to persuade them to leave their arms behind. Walker was successful in convincing only two men to give up their arms. Some men smashed the weapons on rocks to make them useless in case Walker attempted to take them by force. Others hid their guns and retrieved them after Walker and his men had left. Walker and

his men returned to their camp and allowed the forty-six to make their way north to San Diego.[48]

After the desertion, there remained approximately one hundred forty healthy and active men in Walker's army to invade Sonora by land. There were others who were not as fortunate, as ten men were laid up with various illnesses and the company doctor was in poor health after he had accidently shot himself. As they prepared to march, Walker gave an address to his army as "Soldiers of Sonora."[49] He explained that they were on a mission to save the population of Sonora that the Mexican government had so badly failed. The group would need to "wrest the country from the rule of the Apache, and make it the abode of order and civilization."[50] Walker also assured his men that if they were engaged by Mexican forces, they should fight on. Walker concluded his address, "In such a cause failure is impossible, and triumph certain."[51]

In early February, a Mexican warship blockaded the harbor at Ensenada. This prevented any supplies or reinforcements from reaching Walker.[52] This was followed up by the arrival of the United States warship, the *Portsmouth*, on February 10.[53] The officers of the *Portsmouth* came ashore and visited with Walker on the 11th and promptly returned to their ship. It is not clear what was said, but on February 13, 1854, Walker and his army spiked or buried all their canon save one and began driving the sheep and cattle away from Ensenada.[54] At the same time, Melendrez was rumored to have more than three hundred men at his disposal and was in search of Walker's army.[55] Walker's group travelled inland to the village of San Vicente, arriving on February 17, where for the first time Walker attempted to exert political control over his Republic.

The *Daily Alta California* reported that on February 21st, in San Vicente, Walker issued a statement to the people of that town that they were under the orders to show up for a special meeting with him and if they did not, they would be "punished very severely."[56] This convention of Mexicans was held on March 1st and attended by more than 60 men from the vicinity. All were administered an oath of allegiance to the new Republic which they all took, perhaps out of fear of reprisal if they did not.[57] In response to this convention, Walker issued a message to the citizens of the area expressing his gratitude and promising a more prosperous Lower California under his rule than they had experienced under Mexican control.[58] The Mexican government was no longer a passive participant in Walker's filibustering. They launched a well-armed warship, the *Desperado*, to Ensenada to drive Walker and his men from the country.[59]

The first few days of March brought a new challenge for President Walker. He suffered more desertions and needed to hold tight control of the remaining men. The four men caught deserting were put on trial in the camp. All were found guilty with two being shot and two being flogged before being drummed out of the camp.[60] That men were deserting cannot come as a surprise given the state of his troops. In the official reports from the camp, Walker portrays a picture of his conquering army in good condition. However, unofficial sources claimed his numbers were consistently dropping due to the squalid conditions.[61] At this time, support for his adventure was flagging even back in San Francisco. The *Daily Alta California* compared him to Sancho Panza while pointing out that the Mexican army was surrounding Walker and putting him in a position he could not possibly overcome.[62]

With his diminishing force, Walker set out for Sonora on March 20th. A small force of twenty men was left at San Vicente to hold the town while Walker and the remaining one hundred men moved east with their cattle.[63] Walker's intention may have been to leave these men in San Vicente to hold the fort, but it is also likely that they were posted as a rearguard against attacks from Melendrez or the Mexican military that were hunting for them.

While crossing the mountains between San Vicente and the Gulf of California, two men deserted and twenty head of cattle were lost.[64] It is probable that the Indian guides Walker was using to cross the mountains made off with the cattle. After leaving the mountains a band of Cocopah followed them all the way to the Colorado River, harassing them and stealing cattle. The spot at which they reached the Colorado River was approximately four hundred yards wide, but slow moving. At first they attempted to swim the cattle across the river, but they all perished and the attempt was abandoned. The next day, the group built rafts to carry the men over. The food was so scarce that upon reaching the other side of the river, one man stole another's corn and the offended party shot the thief dead. The expedition remained at this point for three days, but by the second day the mood in the camp was quickly deteriorating. With little ability to resist an attack and looking ahead into the hostile terrain ahead of them, many men prepared to abandon the expedition. They were exhausted, missing numerous articles of clothing, and near starvation. Knowing that they were only a few days hike south of Fort Yuma, more than fifty men set off northward in hopes of eventually making it back to California. These men arrived at the fort in "extreme destitution" and apologetic for partaking in the filibustering.[65]

With his numbers so far reduced and no hope of success, Walker now had a decision to make. He could lead his men north to Fort Yuma, following in the footsteps of the deserting men or he could retrace his steps back to San Vicente. Knowing the group had left some cattle roaming on the far side of the river, Walker crossed back over with his men to begin the trek back to San Vicente. He made the trek back with only about twenty men and about the same number of cattle. Even Walker was not saved from the depredations afflicting the group. On the return trip he had to travel most of the way with only one boot, the other being only remnants.[66]

Returning back to Ensenada came with great danger. Melendrez and his large force were lurking near Ensenada in hopes of tracking down Walker's expedition. At this point, Walker and his men were in no condition to fight, let alone against a force so much larger and well equipped. What Walker did not know was that Melendrez had taken control of the men Walker left behind at San Vicente. Melendrez provided them with a letter meant for the American government at the border explaining that he had taken possession of Walker's fort, arms, and supplies and that this group of Walker's men should be allowed back into the United States so that they end their "molestation" of Mexican territory.[67]

Early in May it was reported erroneously that William Walker had been killed while filibustering in Sonora as the result of an attack by Melendrez.[68] This was not to be the case, as Walker and his remaining troops arrived back to San Vicente to find the fort abandoned and Melendrez's men keeping their distance on the outskirts of the village. From there, the remaining men began slowly making their way north towards the United States border. Walker's group was followed the entire way by Melendrez and his men,

but no serious attack ever materialized. At one point, Melendrez offered to allow Walker's group to put down their guns and complete the journey unmolested, but Walker did not trust Melendrez. Walker tore up the note and send the messenger on his way.[69] When Walker reached a point near the border crossing into San Diego two officers of the U.S. Army came out to meet him. The officers received permission from Melendrez to cross into Mexico for the purpose of meeting with Walker and his remaining men. Melendrez's condition was that Walker's remaining expeditionary force would only be allowed to leave the country if they laid down their arms. At this suggestion, Walker told the American officers that Melendrez could have their weapons only if he could take them. Here the American officers pointed out that they had little concern in the matter and would gladly return to the United States and leave Walker and his men to deal with Melendrez. Walker and his men made the final push to the border, but right before the crossing Melendrez's men were position to block the exit. Additionally, on the hillside many people had come out from San Diego as spectators for this event with the hope of seeing a minor battle. The spectators were disappointed when Walker ordered nine of his men to charge Melendrez's line and in response the Mexicans simply turned their horses and galloped off without a shot.[70] Walker was allowed to cross back into the United States unmolested with thirty-three men. Walker and his men were quickly paroled. The parole offered read, the "Officers and Privates of the (so called) "Republic of Sonora" do solemnly pledge their word of honor to report themselves at San Francisco…charged with having violated the Neutrality Laws of the United States."[71] Walker's surrender took place on May 8, 1854, his thirtieth birthday.[72]

The filibustering expedition that had started out with such hope just seven months earlier now limped back to San Francisco. At one point, Walker commanded more than two hundred men, but by the surrender in May he had suffered ten killed in combat, seven dead through disease or accident, and eight wounded.[73] This does not take into account the scores of men that deserted at different points over the last few months of the failed endeavor.

By the time Walker returned to San Francisco, Watkins, his law partner and co-conspirator of the filibuster had already been tried and convicted in the Federal Court in San Francisco. Despite the conviction, Watkins was only fined $1500, a relatively light penalty for violating the Neutrality Laws and invading a friendly foreign nation with an army.[74] As Watkins was merely an auxiliary part of the expedition, it was assumed that the punishment for Walker would be much more severe. As the trial was delayed, it was reported in San Francisco that there would be no trial because Walker would eventually plead guilty and pay a fine in order to put the whole thing behind him.[75] This did not happen and while awaiting his trial, Walker threw his hat into the political ring in July, 1854 with the newspaper even using his assumed title of Col. Walker and including the honorific addendum to his name "late President of Sonora" lest there be any confusion.[76] He was elected at the Democratic State Convention and began life as a politician while still under indictment in the Federal Court.[77] The trial finally began October 17 with much coverage in the local papers, but lasted only two days. On October 19, 1854 the jury was sent by the judge to deliberate. They returned only eight minutes later to read aloud the verdict of "not guilty".[78] This was a major event and on October 21st, the *Daily Alta California* published an in-depth account of the trial that covered nearly an entire

page of a four page daily newspaper.[79] William Walker, still referring to himself as Colonel, was a free man with an unsated appetite for adventure and filibustering.

Walker later wrote of the expedition into Sonora, "They failed, however; whether through the actions of other more than of themselves, it imports not our present purpose to determine. The leader of the expedition…after returning to Upper California, resumed the occupation of editor of a daily paper."[80] Walker would not stay long in California, nor give up filibustering. He went on to become one of the most famous American filibusters of all time with his later actions in Nicaragua, where he successfully set up for a short time a Republic with himself as President.

Walker's failed filibuster did not spare Sonora from further filibustering from California. Raousset followed up in his wake in yet another attempt to wrest Sonora from the Republic of Mexico.

Chapter 4

The Second Raousset Expedition

Gaston de Raousset-Boulbon had returned to San Francisco in early 1853 to hear news of the plans William Walker had laid for his own expedition. Raousset had rebuffed Walker's offer of a joint venture and crafted his own filibustering scheme, based in part on what he had learned in his earlier trek into Mexico. The quick victory to take Hermosillo in 1852 had given Raousset hope that with a larger force he could take the state and hold it against opposition as weak as the Mexican forces he faced during the previous encounter. While Raousset's plan was still in the development stage, Walker sailed southwards toward his impending failure.

Raousset did not rest on his laurels and instead travelled to Mexico again in the summer of 1853, leaving in early June.[1] His stated purpose for this trip to Mexico was to seek indemnities for what he believed was Mexican betrayal and breach of contract during his first expedition. Perhaps he hoped that the newly elected President, Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna, would be more agreeable than the previous administration. When he failed in this regard, he moved on to what was probably his initial intention: to seek a new agreement for a French colony in Sonora. Raousset found many in Mexico's capital city prepared to support such an endeavor. Despite the support of ministers within the Mexican government, Santa Anna failed to grant any permissions for Raousset's colonizing along the Mexican frontier.[2] Raousset immediately returned to San Francisco in early December of 1853 to begin plotting his actions.[3] He was intent on filibustering in Sonora with, or without, Santa Anna's approval.

When Raousset arrived in San Francisco in the fall of 1853, he struggled to organize any sort of expedition. Upon his arrival, rumors swirled in San Francisco about how Raousset fared in his negotiations with Santa Anna. One newspaper even erroneously accepted as fact that Santa Anna had offered Raousset the Governorship of Sonora.[4] Later, another newspaper reported that even if the offer of the Governorship was false, it was still likely that Santa Anna had proposed some agreement for Raousset to enter Sonora; perhaps as a military officer carrying the rank of Colonel.[5] While Raousset was earning attention by the press, most people's attention was on the early successes of William Walker in Lower California. Additionally, after Walker had left on his filibustering raid of Lower California, the United States government, military, and customs began keeping a much closer eye on those who gave any inclination towards leaving San Francisco to filibuster. Another drawback was the persistent rumor of the annexation of parts of Mexico by the United States that lingered over the summer and into the fall.[6] As the fall wore on, the announcement of the Gadsden Purchase by the United States also dampened people's interest in filibustering in Sonora. Many hoped that the United States could continue to buy up parts of Mexico and that filibustering would become unnecessary.[7]

The situation began to change for Raousset in January, 1854. As Walker's expedition began to falter without forward progress, Raousset was able to begin finding associates willing to support his ambitions. It was rumored at the time that Santa Anna had no fear of the Walker expedition, but did fear that future American filibusters would be more formidable.[8] With persistent Indian attacks in Sonora and the fear of American filibustering in the state, Santa Anna realized he needed a strong bulwark against such

incursions. Santa Anna did not quickly forget Raousset's previous attempt at colonization and feared a large number of any foreign group on Mexican soil. Santa Anna might also have harbored extreme displeasure when the Mexican government intercepted a letter from Raousset to conspirators in Mexico that stated his desire to separate Sonora from Mexico. Apparently Raousset felt that the heavy tax burden imposed by Santa Anna on Sonorans ripened the state for filibustering.[9] Despite his fears, Santa Anna still initiated a plan to recruit a large number of Catholic men to immigrate to Sonora where they would be spread out along the frontier in defense of the state against both Native raids and American filibusters.[10]

Raousset had already began organizing men, procuring materials, and began securing vessels for his next expedition when Santa Anna's appeal for men hit San Francisco. While Santa Anna's plan may have sounded good, in reality it opened the door for Raousset to enter Mexico on quasi-legal terms. In late February word began circulating in San Francisco that Santa Anna had sent a request to the Mexican Consul in San Francisco, Luis Del Valle, to recruit up to three thousand Frenchmen and immediately send them to Guaymas. Del Valle soon contacted the French Consul in San Francisco, Patrice Dillon, for assistance in locating and enlisting that number of Frenchmen.[11] This message was delivered to Dillon between March 4th and 6th and contained all agreements from the Mexican government for the service of the Frenchmen. The original intent of the action was to cut Raousset's filibustering ambitions off at the knees and scuttle his operation by enticing his supporters to abandon him in favor of the Mexican offer.[12] This did not dissuade Raousset. Also, by the time Walker's expedition was deemed a failure which gave encouragement to Raousset. The offer began circulating

in the San Francisco newspapers in mid-March under the title of "Free Passage to Guaymas".[13] While not an official enlistment, it was noted that the Mexican Consul in San Francisco would offer free passage to Guaymas to any immigrant of the Catholic faith. Once in Guaymas, these men would be enlisted as "private soldiers, to be subjected to all the requirements of the Mexican army, and their especial duty shall be the fighting of the Indians and other enemies of Mexico."[14] The "other enemies" can only be a reference to future filibustering Americans. In exchange for their service, the volunteers would receive thirty dollars a month in salary and, at the completion of their one year of service, a tract of land. The *Daily Alta California* summarized this offer as "enlistment is almost equivalent to naturalization" as a citizen of Mexico.[15]

With the cover of travel to Mexico to enlist in the army at Guaymas, Raousset now had a legitimate excuse to travel with a large armed force in that direction. Despite the Mexican government's attempts to thwart Raousset, he quickly rounded up as many men and supplies as he could and packed everything about the waiting ship, the *Challenge*. In a short amount of time, Raousset was able to cobble together a group of between six hundred and eight hundred men.[16] Raousset was not aware of the stipulation that the men be broken up into smaller groups upon arrival, but this would not have tempered his ambitions in the slightest. Raousset began organizing and loading the *Challenge* with a view to depart before the end of March. On March 29th, before the *Challenge* could leave, the United States officials caught on to the scheme and seized the boat. Unofficially they were detained as a result of their intent to filibuster, but officially the boat was seized for a violation of revenue laws.[17] At about the same time as the seizure of the *Challenge*, the Mexican Consul was also detained for infringement of the

neutrality laws. A short time later, his conspirator, French Consul Dillon, was also detained for his part in the formation of a new filibustering group.[18] After the *Challenge* reduced its number of passengers and offloaded some supplies, it was allowed to continue to Guaymas.[19] The *Challenge* now carried between three hundred and four hundred men, mostly French with a few Irish and Germans as well.[20] Raousset did not travel with this initial group, but instead promised to join them shortly in Guaymas. He put in charge of the group a French ex-cavalry officer named Desmarais, who was supported by the men because of his previous military experience. Raousset disclosed to Desmarais his plans so that all would be ready when he arrived to take command of the French troops in Guaymas.[21]

While the Frenchmen made their way south towards Guaymas, events were heating up in San Francisco. The Mexican government had been critical of the United States for doing little prevent filibustering efforts in Mexico. As a response, the United States returned this ire towards the Mexican Consul of San Francisco, Luis Del Valle. If the United States was negligent in not stopping the filibusters, then Del Valle's actions of recruiting the Frenchmen was criminal.[22] On March 31st Del Valle was arrested for "having violated the second section of the law of 1848, which forbids the enlistment, within the territories of the United States, of soldiers to serve under a foreign power."[23] As the trial continued, the prosecutors found it necessary to obtain the testimony of the French Consul in San Francisco, Patrice Dillon. However, an agreement had earlier been reached between the governments of the United States and France that stated that consuls from either nation could not be forced to appear in court to provide testimony, but they could be invited. In an attempt to follow this agreement, the prosecutors sent two

invitations to Consul Dillon, which were both declined. With the court unable to secure Dillon's testimony, Del Valle prompted the judge to force Dillon to testify because it might prove Del Valle's innocence. It is likely that Del Valle had no interest in Dillon testifying, but sought to have the case thrown out on this technicality. Not wishing the case to be abandoned, the judge issued a subpoena and had Dillon "forcibly brought into the court in custody of the United States marshal."[24] For Dillon, this rebuke must have chaffed after believing he was untouchable due to the governmental protections provided by the Franco-American agreement. After much wrangling from both sides, the judge declared that the French consul should be held in the same regard as a French ambassador and therefore could not be compelled to testify.[25] The case was now back exactly where it had started, with both sides wishing for the testimony of Dillon to corroborate their side of the story.

The trial quickly resumed and the Mexican Consul, Luis Del Valle, was found guilty as charged but the jury asked for "kind consideration" in his sentencing.[26] During the remainder of the trial, much evidence was produced that connected Dillon to the actions of Del Valle. In short order Dillon was arrested and charged with aiding in the actions of Del Valle. Both consuls argued that the men aboard the *Challenge* were not filibusters at all. Instead, they argued that the Frenchmen were on their way to bolster the Mexican army in its attempts to dissuade or defeat future filibustering attempts, especially those from the likes of Raousset. They stressed that this had been the plan all along, to strip Raousset of the men he would need for future filibustering in Sonora. That logic placed the burden on the Americans for failing to stifle the filibustering efforts in San Francisco over the previews four years. During the trial of Dillon, all the same

evidence had been produced. However, after six hours of deliberation on May 25th the jury was hung. On May 29th, the prosecution dropped the case and recommended no further proceedings against either Dillon or Del Valle. Both were freed and quickly returned to their respective consulates.[27] Shortly after the trial, Del Valle was summoned back to Mexico to explain what had actually occurred and what it had cost the Mexican government.[28]

While the trials of Del Valle and Dillon were occupying the headlines in San Francisco, the *Challenge* had arrived and deposited troops in Guaymas and Raousset had left to meet up with them. Raousset had secured for his use a small boat named the *Belle* into which he loaded himself, four compatriots, a couple of sailors, one hundred eighty rifles, and other supplies.[29] Raousset left San Francisco on the night of May 23, 1854 and began his journey to link up with the others in Guaymas. The voyage did not go as he had imagined as he was almost immediately forced to obtain a new captain just outside San Francisco. Apparently the original captain had lied about his ability to handle the boat and successfully navigate it to the required destination. Later in the trip, the boat became wrecked on the island of Santa Margarita and was unable to resume for approximately ten days.[30] The journey lasted roughly 35 days with Raousset finally landing near Guaymas on August 1.[31]

Raousset was fearful of the reception he would receive in Guaymas so landed a few miles away from the town. As Santa Anna had tried to prevent his arrival in Guaymas as a filibuster in the first place, Raousset proceeded with caution. In the time between Raousset's Sonoran filibusters, the political and military landscape had shifted. General Blanco, who Raousset had faced off with in Hermosillo and Guaymas during his

first filibuster, had been promoted to Governor of Sonora and the new military commander of the state was General Jose Yañez.[32]

From a safe location up the coast, Raousset sent two of his men to covertly enter the city and find Desmarais, the man in charge of the French troops awaiting him in Guaymas. They were to inform him that Raousset had arrived and pass along orders. Desmarais was to "fortify himself in Guaymas, disarm the inhabitants, take possession of all the munitions of war and hold several notable people of the town as hostages."[33] The messengers had hoped to sneak into the town, but were quickly discovered and detained by Mexican troops as they approached Guaymas. They were held in the Guaymas prison and interrogated by General Yañez, but the men stuck to the story of simply wanting to join up with the other Frenchman in the city. With much conjecture, but no proof, Yañez released the men to join up with their French compatriots.[34]

General Yañez would not be surprised the way Blanco had been in Hermosillo. Whether or not he knew Raousset was near is difficult to say, but he prepared for that eventuality and began organizing his troops in preparation of Raousset attempting something.[35] Rumors abounded and the city was in a great uproar at the possible approach of Raousset. These rumors were fanned when the two messengers finally connected with their French compatriots and word quickly spread that Raousset truly was in the vicinity. Then Raousset finally made his appearance in the city with the *Belle* sailing into the port of Guaymas. After the difficult journey, Raousset entered town, went to a prepared apartment, and cleaned himself up to prepare for the next phase of his plan.[36]

After arriving and seeing the character and discipline of the Frenchmen, Raousset had to reevaluate. He was unsure of their commitment and had doubts about their ability to follow through with his filibustering plan.[37] Additionally, in the time before Raousset arrived in Guaymas, Yañez had been successful in getting the Irish and German members of the *Challenge* to break away from the French group to form their own regiment which took up with the Mexicans.[38] Raousset was bolstered by hearing rumors that General Yañez was dissatisfied with the current state of affairs in Sonora and Mexico and might be keen on breaking his allegiance to Blanco. Raousset also became aware that new taxations put in place on Sonora by the federal government had created an environment where filibustering might quickly gain traction with the local population.[39] This gave Raousset hope that he could form an alliance with Yañez and take control of Guaymas without a fight. Raousset and Yañez began exchanging letters through intermediaries in order to set up a meeting.

A meeting did occur between the two, lasting nearly two hours in the evening shortly after Raousset's arrival in Guaymas. During the meeting, both men attempted to feel out the other in cordial exchange. Raousset explained that he had arrived in Guaymas with ulterior motives, but after seeing the current situation he had changed his mind. Raousset never offered a new plan, only stated that he was not hostile to Sonora or Yañez.[40] Yañez would not allow himself to be drawn into any of Raousset's plans and politely offered that leaving Mexico as soon as possible might be in everyone's best interest. In the end, Yañez was simply playing for time to allow all of his troops to amass in Guaymas and settle into position. Raousset and the French caught on to this far too late

and when it became apparent, the Mexicans had entrenched themselves and greatly outnumbered the French.[41]

Yañez and his men had the upper hand and refused to initiate any attack on the French. The Mexicans had the advantages of numbers and preparation; they could afford to wait. Yañez had hoped to avoid bloodshed and that his superior numbers would have caused Raousset and his Frenchmen to give up their cause, but to no avail. Raousset had surrounded himself with several commanders who seemed bent on fighting.[42] For a time, Yañez attempted to avoid a fight by allowing Raousset his space as the French clung together in one part of the town. The Mexicans dared not try to arrest him or assassinate him as the common belief was that would surely lead the Frenchmen to rise up in instant rebellion.[43] However, once General Yañez believed he had the superior force, he threw out all pretenses of a peaceful solution. This pushed Raousset and the French to make a decision.[44]

Although a few of the Frenchmen wanted to engage the Mexicans straightaway, many dragged their feet at the prospect of fighting. They had been in Guaymas for nearly two months and had begun to settle in. They were being paid by the Mexican government for doing very little and many had taken up with local women. Others in the group were simply biding their time until an opportunity came for them to desert and move to the interior to start new lives.[45] Another challenge facing Raousset was that he expressed to the men that he came as one of them and not as the fearless leader they had come to expect after his previous exploits in Hermosillo. Raousset claimed that the group had already been led by its current commanders for some months and it would be unfair for him to usurp that power on a moment's notice.[46] Thus the French forces were not led by

the ablest commander in the field. Regardless, battle was to come shortly and Raousset would find himself in the thick of it.

Raousset had not come all the way to Guaymas to become a common soldier in the Mexican army in exchange for a scrap of unwanted land in the interior. He had ambitions of controlling the entire state and would not easily relinquish his dream. Many of the Frenchmen pleaded with him to not take action against the Mexicans, but agreed to support him if he did. Spurred on by a small group, Raousset chose to attack. On the afternoon of August 1, Raousset organized the men and began an attack on the Mexican fort.[47]

The French marched against the entrenched Mexican forces in three columns of men and with about three hundred fifty French soldiers the attack began.[48] They immediately came up against more than 600 Mexicans, supported by the regiment of Germans and Irish.[49] The Germans and Irish were left in command of two canons and a howitzer. The French charged this well armed battery but were easily cut down like grass.[50] In the midst of the battle, it was reported that Raousset challenged the Colonel in charge of the Mexican forces to single combat, but before it could be achieved, Raousset was grazed in the neck by a musket ball.[51] While not technically their leader, Raousset was the moral inspiration for the fight. After he was struck and fell, the French forces soon wilted under such heavy attack and retreated.

As the Frenchmen realized the futility of further fighting and ammunition became scarce, Raousset and those left still following him retreated to the French consulate in Guaymas, the house of Consul Calvo. There they received word that another French group had retreated to the Hotel Sonora and were entrapped there by the Mexican forces.

Raousset made one final appeal to counterattack, but his attempt fell on deaf ears and Consul Calvo raised the white flag above the consulate. Raousset's final opportunity to escape vanished when his ship, the *Belle*, set sail and left Raousset trapped in Guaymas at the mercy of the Mexicans.[52]

In just under two hours the contest was over in a decisive victory by the Mexican forces. There would be no return for the "Hero of Hermosillo." At the end of the fighting, more than fifty Frenchmen lay dead and over two hundred, including Raousset, were imprisoned.[53] On the Mexican side, approximately fifty were killed as well and nearly one hundred wounded during the fight.[54] At the time, it appeared that Raousset was sure to be executed and that many of the other Frenchmen would share his fate.[55] Hubert Bancroft summarized the failure in his History of the North Mexican States and Texas, pointing out that "These raiders were not the men of 1852. Nor was Yañez a Blanco."[56] The Frenchmen had no stomach for the fight in 1854 and their group lacked the coherent and strong leadership that Raousset had offered to his expedition in 1852 during the attack on Hermosillo. Additionally, Yañez had not been caught off-guard as Blanco had two years prior. Raousset had given filibustering in Sonora his best effort on two occasions and had come up short both times. As a prisoner in Guaymas, he now awaited his fate.

As the Frenchmen surrendered, Consul Calvo promised to protect them as best he could from the punishments to be meted out. Many of the men, especially those who had been with Raousset at the end, asked for Raousset to be protected from execution to which Calvo acquiesced.[57] Little did the Frenchmen know that Calvo had no interest in protecting Raousset.

Over the course of the evening Mexican authorities rounded up and arrested all the Frenchmen occupying Guaymas regardless of whether or not they had taken up arms against the Mexican forces. The next morning the men were led to a nearby cemetery to dig graves. The men supposed, and the Mexicans did not dissuade them, that the Frenchmen were digging their own graves. This was not to be the case though and in fact they were only digging the graves for the men who had fallen in the previous day's battle.[58]

After the failure of the attack on August 1, Raousset waited ten days for his trial. On August 10, 1854, Raousset was brought before a Mexican council to stand trial on charges of conspiracy and rebellion. Over the course of the trial, many Frenchmen were brought forth to testify and nearly all laid the blame for the entire endeavor at the feet of Raousset. In the end, Consul Calvo was brought in to testify. As part of his testimony, Calvo denied ever having agreed to protect the life of Raousset. Nor did Calvo make any arguments in favor of Raousset, instead leaving him to his fate.[59] This act by Calvo did not go unnoticed though. Back in California, the *Sacramento Daily Union* wrote of Calvo cowardice, "The last name (Calvo) deserves to be nailed to the pillory of the world" and that "one's blood freezes in contemplating the character of such as man as Calvo."[60] In the end, only a representative of the United States pleaded with the Mexicans military tribunal for clemency on behalf of Raousset.[61] In reality, there was little that could have been done to save Raousset. The Mexican leadership in Guaymas and Sonora had suffered repeated incursions onto their territory over the previous few years, twice by Raousset himself. They needed to set a firm example to those with thoughts on future

filibustering in the area. It came as a surprise to few that on August 10, Raousset was condemned to death by firing squad to take place on August 12, 1854.

During the two day period between his conviction and the date of his execution, Raousset sought to write to his family and family. However, all of his communications from the prison were required to be passed through the only Frenchman with permission to visit him, Consul Calvo. Calvo made it clear that only messages he approved of would be carried beyond the prison walls and delivered to the intended audience. This clearly tempered the last writings of Raousset and forced to betray some of the realities that took place.[62] In the end, it made little difference and the day of execution arrived.

When August 12th arrived, Raousset asked that he be afforded some changes to the proposed execution. He was to be blindfolded and shot while kneeling, but Raousset appealed to Yañez to allow him to stand, without blindfold, to face his demise like a man. Yañez was chivalrous enough to oblige to these concessions.[63] It was rumored that the Mexican forces even left Raousset's pistols with him for a time before the execution in the hopes that the firing squad would not be necessary, but as a Catholic, suicide was never an option for a man like Raousset.[64] At six in the morning Raousset was taken from his cell and led to location of the execution and held his head high and walked with a firm gait. The charges against him were read and, true to his nature, Raousset stood tall and looked upon the men of the firing squad. It was reported that the men of the firing squad failed, not once, but twice to heed their commander's order to fire. After much prompting, at least a few of the Mexican soldiers fired and Raousset finally fell.[65]

Thus ended the life of Le Comte Gaston de Raousset-Boulbon at the age of thirty-seven. His death would reverberate far beyond the borders of Sonora with many

Americans looking at him as more hero than villain. The fact he had died, and valiantly so, caused his memory to be more than the filibusters he led. Even newspapers in New York were publishing sketches of his life and he eventually became immortalized in a three act play.[66] The Mexicans had sought to stem the flow of filibusters coming from California by using Raousset as an example and they were successful for a time, but the potential riches of Sonora continued to inspire conquering lust in filibusters north of the Mexican borders, climaxing three years later in an even larger and better organized raid.

Chapter 5

The Crabb Expedition

After the failed attempts of Walker and Raousset, filibustering in Sonora appeared to slacken after the excitement of 1854. The Secretary of War, Jefferson Davis, had placed Brevet Major General John E. Wool in California. Wool's duties were numerous given the expanse of the Oregon Territory to the north and the large scale of land now under his power, but among other things, he was expected to detect and prevent any future filibustering expeditions leaving from California towards Sonora. When explaining Wool's role, Davis wrote on January 12th, "Among these will be the duty of maintaining our international obligations, by preventing unlawful expeditions against the territories of foreign powers" and that Davis expected Wool "to detect the fitting out of armed expeditions against countries which the United States are at peace."[1] Although the best efforts of Wool were not sufficient to keep Walker and Raousset from filibustering in Sonora, his actions provided a deterrent against future actions.

Though the United States Government valiantly attempted to discourage filibustering, there was much support for such action from the citizens of California. The greatest deterrent against further filibustering attempts after 1854 was the dismal end of Raousset. The Mexicans had sent a message to those in California with designs on Sonora that any future attempts would be met with swift and deadly justice. This alone probably deterred more filibustering attempts than any action by General Wool or the United States. While the possibility of execution would dampen the filibustering excitement for many, there were those who felt they could find a way to safely carve out a chunk of Sonora for themselves. One such man was Henry A. Crabb.

Fig. 1 Henry Alexander Crabb

Henry A. Crabb was a native of Tennessee who arrived in California with the massive influx of early 1850. He set himself up in Stockton and hung out his shingle as a local lawyer. It was not long before he entered politics in the new state when in July of 1850, Crabb was elected as the city attorney for Stockton. He quickly made the leap into state politics when he was elected to the state assembly in late 1851 for the session beginning the following year. Later in 1852, Crabb was next elected to the state senate for the 1853-54 term. In these early local and state elections, Crabb ran as a Whig, but with a pro-slavery tilt ingrained from his Tennessee youth.[2] In the fall elections of 1855, Crabb threw off the Whig mantle and joined the Know-Nothings. In California during1855 the Know-Nothings were formidable, leading Crabb to run for Senator in 1856. Despite his popularity, Crabb was defeated and left on the outside of the political power he so desperately craved.[3]

Crabb was not only a prominent lawyer and politician in California during the 1850s. In 1853 he married Filomena Ainsa in San Francisco.[4] The Ainsa family had a long history in northwestern Mexico and the American southwest, with many strong business connections in each country. These connections opened doors for Crabb to make connections both political and financial in Sonora. It was probably through these

connections and his failure to advance politically in the United States that drew his attention to a colonization scheme in Sonora.

The year 1856 was a busy one for Henry A. Crabb. In addition to his political posturing, he made a voyage south to Mexico to meet with his wife's relatives in Sonora and other locations. He returned to San Francisco in early August in time to partake in the elections that fall.[5] While campaigning, his wife gave birth to a son in San Francisco on September 1.[6] After the loss in the fall elections, Crabb quickly pivoted to designs on Sonora.

It appears that during his trip to Sonora in the summer of 1856, Crabb used his wife's family connections to become involved in a minor Sonoran civil war. In Sonora, Governor Gandara was struggling to hold onto power against the upstart Ignacio Pesqueira.[7] Crabb and Pesqueira came to an agreement allowing the American a concession to settle a small colony in the northern reaches of Sonora. It would appear that this agreement was similar to the one offered to Raousset. The idea behind the agreement was that Crabb would equip and march roughly a thousand men into Sonora in support of Pesqueira's men. Crabb and his men would then receive tracts of land in which to settle and defend the region from the ongoing Apache attacks that plagued northern Sonora.[8] It was believed by those men who joined Crabb that the agreement was in fact real and it likely is, but any official records of it were destroyed in the San Francisco fire of 1906.[9] It should be noted that one of the few survivors of the expedition, Rasey Bevin, stated after the event that Crabb and his men had been invited into Sonora by Pesqueira.[10] After Crabb left Sonora in June of 1856, but before arriving in San Francisco if August of that year, Pesqueira had taken full control of the government of Sonora and no longer needed

the support of Crabb and his men. In fact, they were now a liability that could hurt Pesqueira's standing with his own citizens if they learned he had formed an alliance with invading Americans from the north, especially after the filibustering attempts over the previous decade.

Crabb's plans were fully underway in early January 1857 as he still understood his agreement with Pesqueira to be in effect. Crabb even had the press on his side to voice the common belief that Sonora would fall into American hands sooner, rather than later. As news of Crabb's expedition spread in San Francisco, there was little opposition to it. Crabb and his men were not keeping their plans secret, but neither were they flaunting it around town. As the *Daily Alta California* published, "It is, we believe, pretty generally understood among the 'knowing ones,' that an expedition is soon to start from San Francisco" towards the newly purchased region of the Gadsden Purchase along the border with Sonora.[11] The article went on to say that while the planners of this endeavor stated that the intent was to settle in area of the Gadsden Purchase in the Territory of Arizona, it was universally accepted that the group would actually be entering into Sonora. Even as Sonora was the suspected final destination of the group, there was widespread belief that such an incursion could not be avoided. The only concern that the paper voiced was that a filibuster at this time could derail other, larger plans afoot in Mexico. In early January, 1857, the United States had an active minister in Mexico, John Forsyth, seeking to solidify economic agreements between the two nations. This led to numerous rumors spreading like wildfire in California, with the most common being that part of Forsyth's duties were to negotiate a price with Mexico's federal government to purchase the northern Mexican states of Chihuahua, Sonora, and Lower California. The

Daily Alta California was concerned that a filibustering attempt might derail this possible purchase of new territory. The paper, as a voice of the people, wrote that "we believe that it is the "manifest destiny" of the States forming the northern tier of the Republic of Mexico…to fall into the hands of the United States."[12] After so much territory had already been gained from Mexico in the previous decade, it was seen as only natural that the United States would continue to grow and this growth would include taking over more of Mexico. That next area was Sonora and it was ripe for the taking with instability of government, constant Apache attacks, and the complete disregard shown to the region by the federal government so far removed. Crabb believed he was the answer to at least a couple of those problems in Sonora and began his preparations. Crabb enlisted his men, armed them adequately, bought sufficient supplies and set out on his journey southward to Caborca.

By mid-January, 1857 Crabb had his first group of men ready leave San Francisco. Crabb left behind a friend, General John Cosby, who promised to raise one thousand soldiers and meet Crabb in Sonora; however, Cosby failed to live up to his end of the bargain and made no effort to raise more men after Crabb's departure.[13] It was believed that a larger force than Crabb's expeditionary party was needed because, while they believed in Pesqueira's support, there was a strong possibility of opposition once they entered into Sonora from other strongmen.[14] On January 21, 1857 Crabb's expeditionary force of less than one hundred men sailed from San Francisco on the *Sea Bird* headed for San Pedro, near Los Angeles.[15] In the Los Angeles area, they prepared for the overland journey to Fort Yuma on the Colorado River just north of the border with Mexico. While in the vicinity of Los Angeles, the group continued to attest to the

peaceful nature of their expedition, with hope for the "development of the mineral and agricultural resources of the district" despite the fact that some voices in the state were already denouncing the expedition as a filibuster.[16] Intriguingly, the expedition explained that the plan was to settle in the newly acquired lands of the Gadsden Purchase, somewhere near Tucson.[17] This was directly at odds with the common understanding that the group had a concession from the Mexican governor of Sonora for settlement south of the border. It is difficult to comprehend the reason for the misdirection in Los Angeles since it was "strongly suspected, Arizona is only to be used as a starting point for a filibustering expedition into Sonora."[18]

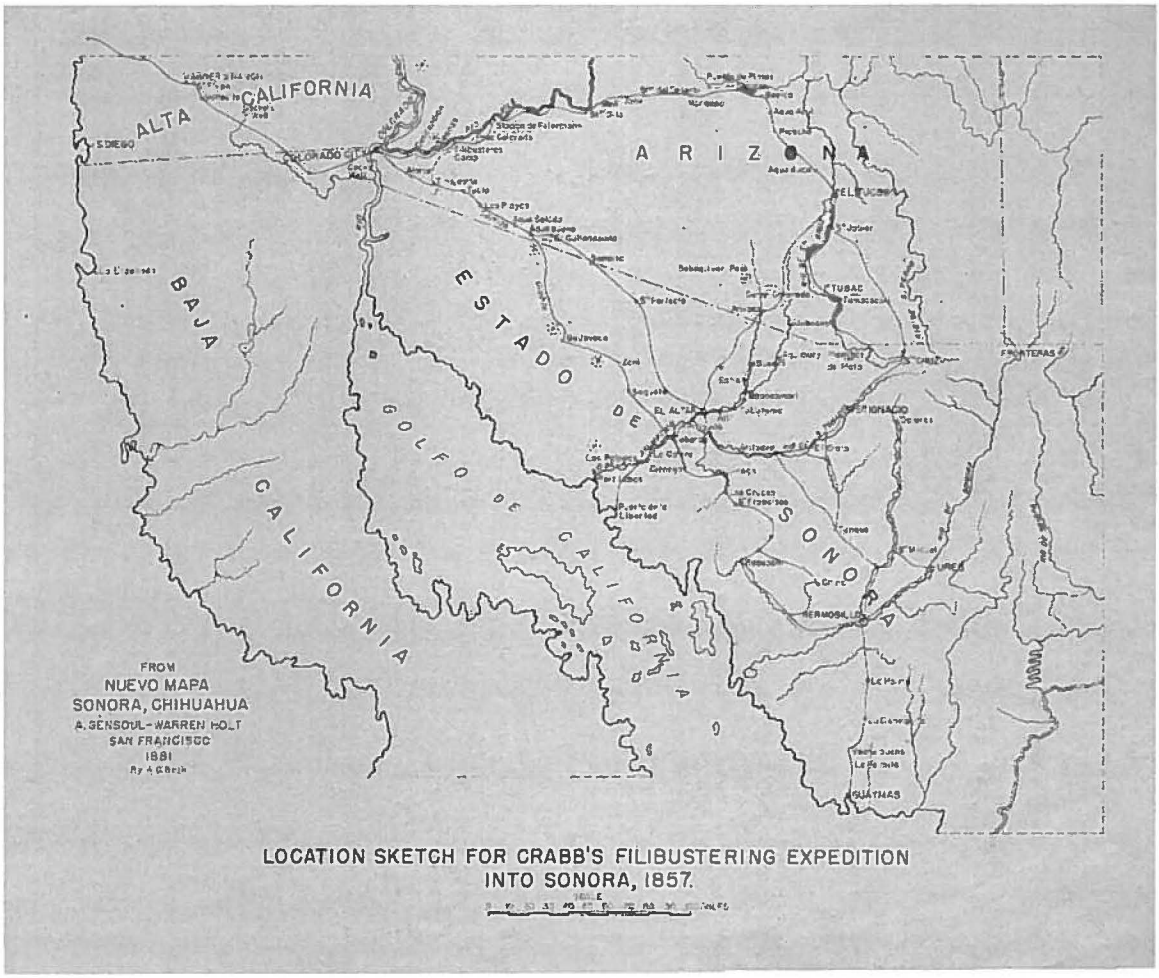

Fig. 1 Map of Crabb's Exepdition from San Francisco to Caborca, Sonora.

The journey from Los Angeles to Fort Yuma in 1857 was harsh even in the winter months of January and February. The distance is just under three hundred miles, but there were very few locations for water and food was scarce. The expedition needed to carry a sufficient amount of food and water to safely make the journey to Fort Yuma, where Crabb hoped to resupply before heading the rest of the way into Sonora. The last portion of the journey to Fort Yuma would be the most challenging as the group had to traverse the northern edge of the Sonoran Desert, today the Imperial Sand Dunes, which stretch up to 40 miles wide. In order to cross this desert, the men had to carry additional items such as long wooden planks to create a road across the shifting sands for the wagons. One of the expedition members wrote, "Their route for the last 100 miles lay over a barren desert, with sand much of the way eight or ten inches deep."[19] This tediousness caused great weariness in men and beast alike and reportedly led to the abandonment of one wagon that could not be freed from the sand.[20]

The group eventually arrived at Fort Yuma in late February, taking roughly forty days to cover a distance normally covered in half that time. Crabb had expected to be able to resupply his expedition at Fort Yuma, but found there was little commerce at the location and was unable to purchase the requisite supplies needed for the remainder of the journey. The men and beasts would have to make do and hope to scavenge from the land and purchase what they would need from citizens on the way south. There were reports from Fort Yuma back to San Francisco that the expedition had arrived at Fort Yuma in good health with only trivial accidents and inconveniences.[21] The expedition's physician, Dr. Evans, could not get the required medicines needed at Fort Yuma and left the group, hoping to make it to Tucson for medical supplies before attempting to meet up with the

group again.[22] The group planned only to stay at Fort Yuma for a few days to recover and then move on.

Soon the group traveled southeast along the border, but they ran into difficulties at Cabeza Prieta, a watering hole roughly halfway between Fort Yuma and Sonoyta. Men became sick, the terrain wore out their clothing and shoes, the animals began to die, and thirst became an issue for everyone involved. A small group of men were left at Cabeza Prieta to attempt to get the wagon and mules on to Sonoyta where they would catch up with the main group of the expedition.[23] The main group, led by Crabb, continued until stopping about a mile north of the Mexican town of Sonoyta. Crabb and his men remained on the American side of the border about 130 miles east southeast of Fort Yuma. There was a small American store, Dunbar's, were the men could send letters home. Crabb immediately sent a letter letting those back in San Francisco know that the group had arrived to Sonoyta on March 21st.[24] Arriving at the border just north of Sonoyta, Crabb felt necessary to send for reinforcements. The group split, with Crabb sending two of his most trusted men, Majors Tozer and Wood, to Tucson in order to raise more troops from that area and travel southwards to meet up with Crabb's main party at Caborca.[25] Additionally, there was a group of men who were now too sick to travel. This group was left under the care of Jesus Ainsa, brother-in-law of Crabb, at a house owned by Dunbar, the local American trading post owner. Ainsa was left with these men in Sonoyta in order to help them recuperate and purchase needed food from the resident Mexican citizens.[26] The main body of the group did not delay long at the border north of Sonoyta, heading south towards Caborca on the 27th of March.[27]

Heading south into Mexico, Crabb began to realize the mood had changed in the surrounding countryside. Governor Pesqueira, now in firm control of Sonora, began to realize that a large force of armed Americans crossing into Sonora would be an immediate threat to his base. If he were deemed complicit in the action, regardless of veracity, it would erode much of his power in the state. As he learned of the Crabb expedition's entrance into Sonora, he began shoring up defenses and opposition to the emigrant group. An article from Sonora, summarized in the *Sacramento Daily Union*, described the Crabb Expedition as a "horde of pirates" and that Henry A. Crabb was an "insolent and threatening character" who would "scandalize any civilized country."[28] One Mexican military commander based in Guaymas wrote of the preparations being made across the state of Sonora, "the most active and efficient measures have been adopted, and are being adopted…to repel and chastise said pirates".[29] In response to the invasion of Crabb, Mexican citizens across the region were rising up as one to defend their homes and nation. The authorities of Sonora wasted no time in raising an army to "exterminate the foreigners."[30]

Crabb, realizing the tides had turned against him in Sonora, sought to push ahead and persisted with his belief that his concession from Pesqueira remained intact. Shortly after Crabb's arrival at Sonoyta, a report reached regional military commander Jose M. Redondo, stating that the Americans were aware of lies being circulated about them, but instead were there on a peaceful endeavor.[31] Another rumor, quite untrue, being circulated was that the Americans were there at the invitation of Gandara, the ex-Governor of Sonora.[32] This was more to do with local politics than with the truth. As the Americans were most likely invited to Sonora by Pesqueira in late 1856, it is credible that

Pesqueira's supporters would spread such lies in order to further discredit Gandara while strengthening Pesqueira's position.

In response to these accusations, Crabb wrote a letter on March 26, 1857, shortly before leaving Sonoyta, to the local military commander Redondo in Altar. In this letter, which was later published in both American and Mexican papers, Crabb insists that his party is following the colonization laws of the Mexican nation and have entered Sonora by invitation of "influential citizens of Sonora."[33] Crabb admits to bringing a small group of men into Sonora with arms and ammunition, but the weapons were for defense against the Apaches since the group had to travel over land that left them exposed to attack by the hostile Natives. He even expresses dismay at the Mexican actions to "exterminate" the American expedition.[34] Crabb continued his letter making it clear that the responsibility of any horrors that should befall the Americans would fall squarely on Redondo's shoulders. Crabb also fell victim to American arrogance, believing that he and his men had the right to enter Sonora in order to seek economic prosperity. However, he came to understand that he may be killed by an "enemy who is void of humanity."[35] Crabb concluded his letter with the threat that though Redondo may continue his "hostile preparations," it would not prevent Crabb and his men from their ultimate goal, the town of Altar.[36]

Pesqueira's response was published in the *Voz de Sonora* just four days later on March 30, 1857. His letter was not directed to Crabb, but instead to the people of Sonora. It called to his fellow citizens, "Free Sonorinians! to arms all!"[37] Pesqueira uses Crabb's letter to Redondo as fodder to rile the people of Sonora. He asked the people of Sonora to "show no mercy…towards these hounds."[38] Pesqueira portrayed the group as filibusters

of the worst kind. He characterized the situation, "Let them die like wild beasts who, daring to trample under foot, the law of nations."[39] He concluded his message, "Long Live Mexico! Death to the Filibusters."[40]

The Mexican response was not solely verbal as Redondo, commander at Altar, was already organizing the defenses of the state. He wrote to Pesqueira that all the forces in the state had been mobilized despite some resistance by the locals. Redondo had also sent scouts throughout the countryside with orders to report any new information on the Americans. Additionally, Redondo reached out to the local Papago tribe to be ready to assist should they be needed.[41] Sonora was beehive of action as the military and citizens alike prepared for the incoming American group.

If there had been any doubt about how he was to be received in Sonora, Crabb surely now understood the danger in front of him. Regardless of the challenges awaiting him, Crabb made the fateful decision to continue south the ninety miles to Caborca with a party of about 70 men, hoping more would join him in the future. A few days later a group of about twenty men arrived at Sonoyta attempting to unite with Crabb. They immediately set out after him, hoping to catch up with the main force before Caborca.

Crabb's main group moved quickly through the Asuncion Valley southwards to Caborca. According to Jesus Ainsa, residing in the United States just north of Sonoyta and caring for the sick members of Crabb's party, there were few provisions to be had in the region and the party was woefully underprepared for the journey.[42] Along the way, the Americans suffered greatly and as a result killed three head of cattle belonging to local Mexican citizens. Describing the incident, Redondo wrote "the filibusters…have committed unlawful acts against Mexican interests, attacking…the sacred right of the

property holders".[43] Crabb's men were forced to kill several head of cattle after crossing into Mexico, but promised to pay for them. Whether or not they ever did cannot be discerned, but it is unlikely the value of the Mexican's lost property was ever repaid. The lack of provisions in the area was not only a concern for Crabb, but also for the Mexicans. Redondo claimed that defeating the Americans quickly was of paramount importance because of the lack of grain in the region. Grain was "very scarce" and barely sustaining the local citizenry, so a prolonged encampment of soldiers would tax the local supply even more, making it "fatal" for his forces.[44]

Approaching the town on April 1st, Crabb and his men had an idea of what they would face on their journey toward Altar but felt sure that they could overcome the opposition and take their rightful place in the region. [45]

As Crabb was moving south towards Altar, he received word that the area was being fortified by the Mexicans. In response, he headed towards Caborca first, to avoid hostilities at Altar.[46] The group arrived at Caborca on April 1st where the events were described at the time by a single American witness, Charles Edward Evans, a fifteen year old member of Crabb's expedition.

According to Evans, Crabb's men were traveling about half a mile north of the town of Caborca without any scouts and with much disorganization as the group passed along a narrow road bordered closely on both sides by wheat fields. They did not anticipate violence nor expect resistance as they approached Caborca with the intention of passing through on the way to Altar. At 8 a.m. the peaceful morning was shattered when the Americans were fired upon by more than one hundred Mexicans laying in ambush. The Americans, being constantly under fire, rapidly made their way towards the

shelter offered by buildings in the town of Caborca, returning fire whenever possible to keep the Mexicans at bay.[47]

As the Crabb party closed to within a few hundred yards of Caborca, the fields ended with a distance of open space between the party and safety of the houses of Caborca. They needed to cross the open expanse that would leave them vulnerable to continued attack from the Mexican forces. The Mexican forces were well prepared and fired at the Americans from behind houses, fences, and any obstacle in which they could fire while remaining mostly protected from the Americans' return fire. The Americans eventually made it to the protection of a row of houses along the main street from which they could shelter from the Mexican onslaught. As the Americans found defensive positions, the Mexican forces retreated into the central church at the end of the main street. Two of Crabb's men had been killed with three more dying later in the day from wounds received in the morning's fighting. After the crossing to the houses, it was assessed that fifteen more men had been wounded but their injuries were not life-threatening.[48]

After about an hour of fighting, Crabb's men had established themselves with some security in the row of houses and were protected from fire from most angles, except from the church. In the early afternoon, a plan was hatched to displace the Mexicans entrenched in the church. A group of men would cross the open space between the houses and the church to take a keg of powder to the front doors of the church and blow them open. The remaining men of Crabb's party could then flood the church and take out the remaining Mexican forces there. Crabb led a group of about fifteen men out into the open with the powder keg where they were immediately under heavy fire. Five men in the

group were killed in rapid succession with seven others wounded, one of the wounded being Crabb who was hit in the arm. When they realized that they could not make it to the church doors, they retreated to the houses again to regroup.[49]

Fighting continued sporadically for nearly a week with both sides entrenched in their defense adobe structures. On the morning of April 6th the roof of the adobe home where the Americans were ensconced began to burn. The Americans placed a keg of powder underneath the smoldering roof and ignited it, attempting to blow away the roof and extinguish the fire. This failed miserably and the Americans quickly realized that they could no longer hold out against the overwhelming Mexican forces.[50] Additionally, the Mexican forces, from the protection of neighboring houses, began knocking down the walls of adjoining houses in an attempt to corner the Americans in a single house.[51] The Americans were slowly entrapped and had no choice but to reach out to the Mexican forces for a more peaceful solution. The Mexican forces were grateful as well, as they had suffered heavily at the hands of the Americans. It was reported in Mexico that "the Sonorians have to deplore heavy losses; their killed and wounded are numerous".[52]

Crabb made overtures to the Mexicans about surrendering, but the Mexicans responded that the Americans would be treated as prisoners of war. Crabb then sent out a messenger, a Mr. Hines, with a white flag of truce to arrange the details of the surrender. The Mexicans would not allow Hines to return to the Americans once he crossed over into the custody of the Mexican forces, but as the two sides were physically so close, yelling was sufficient to communicate between the two groups. Hines was permitted to shout out the Mexican promise that the Americans upon surrender would be sent to Altar

where they would be put on trial on the condition that the Americans would leave the house and march to the awaiting Mexicans unarmed and one at a time.

After the Americans surrendered, Crabb and fifty-eight of his men had they hands bound and were marched to a corral near the Mexican barracks.[53] Here Crabb was separated from his men and presented to the local Mexican commander and not allowed to communicate in any way with his men. Shortly after midnight, a Mexican sentry arrived and read to the Americans their sentence in Spanish without any form of trial. One of the Americans translated for the rest that the next morning at sunrise they were all to be shot. Shortly after the sentence was read, Evans was awoken, his hands were untied and he was taken to Altar, not returning for another two days.[54]

After eight days of fighting, at sunrise the following morning, the Americans were taken in small groups of five to ten men were removed from the others, lined up against a wall, and summarily executed by Mexican firing squads. It was reported that the Americans went to their deaths bravely. Crabb, being separated from the others was allowed to write a letter to his wife, which was never delivered. He was then led out to a tall post where his hands were tied above his head and his nose to the post. The order to fire was given and Crabb was struck many times over, hanging limply from his restrained hands. It was claimed that more than one hundred balls struck the back of Henry A. Crabb.[55] A Mexican soldier equipped with a large knife then proceeded to cut Crabb's head from his body. The head, dripping blood, was placed on a table where the people gathered yelled jeers and taunts at the remains of Henry A. Crabb. Later, his head was placed in a jaw of mescal to preserve it.[56]

A day later, Charles Evans returned with his Mexican captors to Caborca. When he arrived back in Caborca, Evans confirmed the horrific fate of his colleagues. There he saw the bodies of his fallen comrades left upon the killing ground. They had been offered no burial or last rights. Instead their bodies had been stripped bare, even having the gold removed from their teeth. The exposed bodies had been grotesquely eviscerated by coyotes and hogs. Evans even overhead some of the local Mexicans describing how fat their hogs would be after feasting on the corpses of the Americans. The stink caused by the rotting corpses left a nauseating stench permeating the town. As a finale, a large earthenware jar was brought forward and from it the severed head of Henry A. Crabb was produced so that Evans could attest to the fact Crabb was no more.[57] Evans was later turned over to American authorities and allowed to return to California.

But Evans' release did not end the sordid saga of the Crabb expedition because the Mexican authorities were not done dispatching all of the filibusters. There was still the second group of Crabb's men moving to join up with the now defeated main force at Caborca. Now the Mexican forces turned their attention to deal with. Also, there still remained a small group of men who were too sick to travel recuperating near Sonoyta. The Mexicans immediately went out in search of these groups to punish them as they had Crabb's main force.

Of major concern to the Mexican forces was the small band assembled by Major Wood and Major Tozer in the Tucson area. These two had managed to enlist roughly two dozen men to their cause and immediately set out after Crabb. The group elected a new recruit by the name of Grant Orey as their Captain due to his knowledge of the area and the people. They crossed into Mexico only a few days after Crabb had, expecting to meet

up with him at Caborca. This group made it to within two miles of Caborca when they were attacked by a Mexican force. At nightfall, the Americans burst through the enemy lines towards Caborca. Upon nearing the city at first light, they realized it was far too well defended for them to attack. Around this time, the group heard a tremendous amount of gunfire. It was later determined that the gunfire they heard was the execution of Crabb and his men. Realizing the failure of their endeavor, the group sought to retreat back to the American side of the border ninety miles to the north.[58]

The group led by Orey, beat a hasty retreat northward with more than one hundred Mexicans in pursuit. The Americans had lost most of their supplies, food, and water which made the journey even more difficult. The enemy was excited for the Americans' blood. One of the Mexican military leaders wrote that when they found the remaining Americans, they would share the same fate as Crabb. After several days of attempting to evade the Mexicans in the harsh terrain, the group finally crossed back onto American soil having lost four men with three others wounded.[59] This was no small feat as the Mexican were awaiting the Americans at every known watering hole.[60] It was reported after the fact that one of the four Americans killed during the escape had his "heart and hands and ears…brought into Altar on a spear."[61]

It is surprising given the Mexican numbers and knowledge of the land that the Americans under the command of Orey made it back to safety with such small losses. One these men who became separated from the group but also made it back wrote of the return journey, that in addition to the constant dread of being killed by Mexican troops, there was a "soreness of feet" caused by the jagged rocks since the soles of their boots had been worn through.[62] Coupled to the rocky ground was the numerous varieties of

cacti that were covered with thorns and cause numerous wounds on their legs. While many of these men were able to escape the mass of Mexicans hunting them, the "Mexican forces scoured the country in search of stragglers."[63]

A small group of injured or sick men had been left under the care of Jesus Ainsa in Sonoyta. Rumors of their presence had made it as far as Caborca and the Mexican authorities wanted each and every member of the Crabb Expedition punished accordingly. With the Mexicans on the hunt, those sick men understood the danger. One of the men wrote in his last letter that rumors abounded about the Mexicans interest in finding and killing his group, but he doubted the authenticity of it.[64] The exact location of the four sick men and Jesus Ainsa is much debated. The Mexican troops claim that they had set up camp just outside of Sonoyta on the Mexican side of the border. However, it was reported that at the time the Mexicans arrived, the Americans were staying in a house on the American side of the border. In either case, in mid-April, a group of twenty-five Mexicans rounded up the four sick men, bound them, and at first light shot them.[65] As with Crabb and his men, these men were left unburied for the vultures to do their worst. However, in this case local Natives being, "more humane, dug graves and interred the bodies."[66] Jesus Ainsa, the caretaker of the four sick men, was not shot. Instead he was taken as a prisoner and left in jail for nearly a year in Guaymas for his implications in the Crabb Expedition before being released and allowed to return to the United States.[67]

If the actions of the Mexican troops in Sonoyta were not vile enough, their misdeeds continued. Americans traveling throughout Sonora were immediately suspect of being involved in the Crabb Expedition with many unfortunate consequences. Rasey Biven, another American who had married into the Ainsa family, was also in Sonora at

the time, but apparently unconnected with the Crabb Expedition. He remarked that Americans were being hunted in Sonora and that he had been put on notice by family friends that his life was in danger if he remained. Sensing the immediate danger, Biven traveled to Mazatlán where he could remain safe.[68] Biven may have been in great danger, but unlike others he survived.

More typical was the murder of William Ludley, a miner in the remote mountains of Sonora. It was likely he never came into contact with Crabb and had no interest in anything other than mining his claim in hopes of striking it rich. After the Crabb Expedition passed nearby, a group of Mexicans "came upon him, arrested him, and hung him, from the crime of being an American!"[69] Around this same time a group of Americans killed several peaceful Mexicans as they were making their way north to sell in the United States.[70]

In another instance, a group of sixteen Americans traveling in Sonora with a wagon full of clothing and provisions for sale in Mexico were halted near Altar. There were no weapons or ammunition found in the wagon, but still the Mexicans opened fire on the group. The Americans, with no connection to Crabb, surrendered in hopes of sorting the matter out. Instead they were shot and their bodies left to rot just like the men of the Crabb Expedition.[71] Similarly, an American passing through the area near Caborca asked about Crabb. He was shown the place where Crabb and his men had been executed and when he turned to leave, was surrounded and shot. It was said he was killed because he cursed the Mexicans for murdering Crabb. Finally, an Irishman residing for some time in Sonora was on his way to his ranch outside of Hermosillo was surrounded by several Mexicans. They stripped him and tied him to a tree where they could execute him, but

before they fired a passerby recognized the Irishman and convinced the Mexicans to let him free.[72]

The fate of random foreigners in the wake of the Crabb Expedition provides evidence of a robust Mexican national pride, but does not answer the question of whether Crabb was truly a filibuster. Judging by the actions of both sides, the Mexicans believed it to be a filibustering expedition that put Sonora at great risk, while the members of the Crabb Expedition believed they had legal authority to enter Sonora in the spring of 1857. What is known is that after the massacre of Crabb and his party, the House of Representatives passed a resolution asking for all relevant documents relating to the event. This report was submitted by President James Buchanan to the House of Representatives via the Secretary of States on February 12, 1858.[73] It just happened that at the time of the massacre, President Buchanan had already sent John Forsyth, envoy extraordinaire and minister plenipotentiary, to handle other business between the United States and Mexico. Mr. Forsyth was then in conversation at many levels of the Mexican government and able to coordinate the effort to figure out what exactly had happened regarding the Crabb Expedition.

By 1857, the Mexicans had clearly suffered their fill of filibusters coming from California, and no doubt saw Crabb's forces as more of the same. The language used to describe the Crabb Expedition by the Mexican military and government in communications with each other leaves no doubt that they were viewed Crabb as another filibuster. Perhaps the Mexicans had hoped that the execution of Raousset in 1854 would be enough to ward off future attempts, but their ire was raised to new levels when Crabb crossed into Sonora. Louis Noriega, military commander in Guaymas wrote of the Crabb

Expedition, that they were "filibusters gotten up against the State" and as pirates "their depredations have begun".[74] Noriega was not done there, only a few days later calling the Americans a "band of pirates" on which the Mexicans should surprise them, taking advantage of that surprise to "cut off their retreat, and...making war on them".[75] On March 22, it was reported in Caborca that "a party of American filibusters...all mounted, arrived [to Sonoyta] with the object of waging hostilities against Sonora".[76] Jose M. Redondo, in Altar, described the Americans as "rabble" and "wretches" and called upon the region to "immediately resist and repel them by force."[77] In another instance, a local Justice of the Peace, wrote to the state government that "Sonora is exposed to a war".[78] General Yañez, who had played such a prominent role in earlier filibusters, wrote,

> "The present condition of Sonora, the integrity of whose soil is threatened by the covetousness of audacious adventurers, the unheard-of recklessness with which those adventurers challenge the authorities to the contest, and the honor and rights of our country, highly interested in the prompt and severe punishment of an attempt which is as gratuitous as it is criminal."[79]

As the highest ranking military commander in the region in 1957, Yañez clearly saw the Crabb Expedition as an attack on the integrity of Sonora and, by extension, Mexico. By entering into Sonora, they had challenged the Mexicans to a contest and the Mexicans were simply responding in defense of their honor and national rights. Given this was the view of most Mexicans at the time, the punishment of death for all those involved was not extreme. A criminal action such as a foreign invasion deserved no less a punishment than death and a severe punishment was needed to encourage any future filibusters to rethink the prospects of success in Sonora.

Governor Pesqueira, who had likely invited the expedition into Sonora in the first place, responded harshly as well. Perhaps he was attempting to cover up his complicity in

the affair, but regardless he took to the press to motivate the Mexicans against the Americans. He called on the Mexicans to take up arms. Pesqueira wrote,

> Let us fly, then, to chastise, with all the fury which can scarcely be restrained in hearts full of hatred of oppression, the savage filibuster who has dared, in an evil hour, to treat on the national territory, and provoke—madmen!—our anger… Let our reconciliation be made sincere, Sonorians, by our common hatred of that accursed horde of pirates without country, without religion, without honor… Long live Mexico! Death to the Filibusters![80]

Pesqueira fueled the anti-American sentiments of the people, turning most Mexicans against the Americans. He played on the base emotions of anger and hatred to turn them into a weapon to be used against the Crabb Expedition.

Given the prevailing attitudes of the Mexican leadership, it comes as little surprise that Crabb was received with gunfire upon his arrival at Caborca. The rumors of his invasion were widespread throughout the region. The most common rumors had the Americans forces advancing in every direction. One instance is exhibited by the reports from San Ignacio, more than a hundred miles further east from Sonoyta, which thought the filibuster would surely cross there near Imuris. This small town was preparing for the coming invasion and requested arms and ammunition for the government in order to do their part in being "able to resist the movements of the invaders, and make war on them incessantly".[81] There were rumors of more than a thousand men following Crabb's initial group and that they would land at Guaymas or other locations around Sonora. Rumors or not, it can be said that the Mexicans were prepared for the arrival of the Crabb Expedition.

Conversely, there is some evidence that the Crabb party were simply peaceful immigrants seeking to set up a colony in Sonora. One example of this was a report given in Altar from a witness to the Crabb Expedition that while the witness did not know the

true motive of the party, they had no cannon or a sufficient amount of powder for any major incursion.[82] Additionally, many of the men lacked horses as they had needed to kill them for food along the way. Crabb's men were woefully prepared to fight any sort of battle. One Mexican who met with Crabb at Sonoyta reported that the party understood they were being considered as filibusters but they instead had "pacific intentions" and wished to respect all individuals and their property because they were entering Sonora as emigrants.[83] Crabb could surely have been lying, but why then protest his innocence? He knew the Mexicans were against him and the resistance he was likely to incur. Crabb himself wrote to Redondo that his group "had the intention of finding most happy firesides with and among you" and having "come with the intention of offending no one".[84]

The American trading post owner in Sonoyta, Edward E. Dunbar, also met with Henry A. Crabb and questioned him about the expedition. Dunbar claimed to be *anti-filibustero*, and after meeting with Crabb and viewing his party, "did not regard them as *filibusteros*, in the general acceptance of the term."[85]

Whether or not Americans viewed the Crabb Expedition as a filibuster or innocent emigrants, it was clear that they viewed the Mexican response as barbaric. Lewis Cass, United States Secretary of State in 1857, wrote in July of that year that the death of Crabb and all his men was a "terrible event" and protested through John Forsyth "against the inhumanity of the course pursued by the authorities…in slaying men, who, in the worst aspect of the case, were prisoners of war."[86] Cass was outraged that the men were summarily executed without trial or chance to consult with American envoys in the nation. Mr. Cardwell, who was tasked with sending information to his brother regarding

the fate of several members of the Crabb Expedition, described the executions of Crabb and his men as a massacre, a mantle which was picked up by nearly every American newspaper that carried the story. In describing the Mexican atrocities, Cardwell wrote, "There never was so cold-blooded a murder in the world as this has been, and none other than Mexicans could have perpetrated such a deed of blood."[87] There can be little doubt that Americans viewed the Mexican reaction at Caborca as beyond the pale of what is acceptable in a nation of laws.

Another aspect of the Mexican response that riled Americans was the occurrence at Mr. Dunbar's house in Sonoyta. As Sonoyta sat on the line of the border, some of the town sat on United States territory while the majority resided in Sonora, Mexico. Dunbar's house was believed by all involved to rest well within the United States. Even Mr. Dunbar himself attested to the fact in a letter to the United States Vice Consul in Mazatlán.[88] Despite being on the United States side of the border, Jesus Ainsa, who was caring for the sick at Dunbar's house, was worried that the border would do little to protect him from the wrath of the Mexican forces sent to find him. The minister working in Mexico, John Forsyth was in agreement that the house was clearly on United States territory and therefore off-limits to the Mexican soldiers. But this did not stop the Mexicans from crossing the line and executing the four sick men residing in the house and arresting Jesus Ainsa and taking him illegally across the border into Mexico. Forsyth considered this action to be an insult to American integrity and if allowed to stand would turn the United States mission in Mexico into a "farce".[89] The events at Dunbar's house are particularly egregious as they involved an attack on American soil. The four men killed were part of Crabb's force, but being too sick had never crossed into Mexico. They

were unable to participate in any action associated with Crabb in Mexico and therefore innocent of any crime against Mexico. Being too infirm to take action against the Mexicans, it was a horrendous action to hunt them down and kill them without trial, especially risking an international incident by entering the United States in a similar fashion to Crabb entering Mexico. It was an inexcusable act of revenge and bloodlust.

John Forsyth provided an exceptional summary of the United States view of events in a letter penned to the Mexican Minster of Relations, Juan Antonio de la Fuente, on May 30, 1857. Forsyth broke his argument into five major points regarding the evidence provided from both sides after the events had concluded. The first point was that Crabb and his men, from the very outset in San Francisco, had never made any claim to be anything but emigrants to Sonora. The group wished to take advantage of permission given to them by influential citizens in Sonora for such an endeavor while following the Mexican laws of colonization. The second point was that the Mexican officials in Sonora had ample warning of the Crabb Expedition and had numerous opportunities to take a different path. If Mexico was so suspicious of the expedition's motives and activities, then the party should have been simply arrested and put on trial. Third, it appeared that Crabb and his followers had not instigated the fighting and the battle that occurred at Caborca was solely initiated by Mexican forces lying in wait for no other reason than to kill the Americans. This treachery by the Mexicans left the Crabb Expedition with no choice but to return fire as self-preservation. Fourth, Crabb and his surviving men surrendered in good faith to the Mexican forces, obeying all requests by the Mexicans in exchange for a promised trial. According to Forsyth, this surrender afforded them the right to a "full, fair, and impartial trial by law" in the fashion of the

laws of civilized nations. As the men of the Crabb Expedition were summarily executed without a trial, the Mexican action should be viewed by all civilized people as murder. Finally, the unwarranted attacks on the numerous innocent American victims throughout Sonora after the massacre of Crabb and his men was "unmitigated and inexcusable murder." Forsyth clearly laid much of the blame on the Mexican government, and with Crabb and all his men dead there was no American left alive who might have had firsthand knowledge of the concession.[90]

Some Mexican citizens and authorities questioned the execution of the Crabb Expedition and shortly after showed concern that the Americans may seek a reprisal. The Mexicans could surely defeat a band of less than a hundred poorly armed American civilians, but they knew they would not fare well if the United States brought its full military power to bear in response. Charles B. Smith, Vice Consul, reported that many of the Mexicans who had participated in the massacres did so under order from their superiors and were "shocked by the atrocities they had been obliged to commit" and "many of the respectable inhabitants expressed their horror at the barbarities, and their fear of the vengeance of the United States."[91] Even back in California many had the idea of vengeance on their minds, but nothing ever materialized. It was also written that the American "prestige is entirely destroyed" and there should be some response.[92] Perhaps luckily for the Mexicans, there would be no response. Greater machinations were at work in the United States in the late 1850s and an inconsequential war with Mexican over the insignificant state of Sonora was never likely to occur.

The answer to whether or not Crabb's expedition was a filibuster or not may never be known. The only way to tell for sure would be for a copy of the concession

between Pesqueira and Crabb to be discovered. That seems unlikely though. Any copy in the United States would likely have been stored in San Francisco, which was devastated by fire in 1906. If any copy had been stored there, they would likely have been burned up with numerous other documents of great historical value. It is probably far more likely that Crabb took his copy of the concession with him as proof of permission to enter and colonize in Sonora. If this were the case, Crabb's concession ended up in the hands of the Mexicans. If they did end up in the possession of the Mexican government in Sonora, they were surely destroyed by Pesqueira or those loyal to him. Those papers would have represented the only proof against Pesqueira in favor of Crabb.

While it may never be known if Crabb was a filibuster or colonizer, after 1857 the filibustering from California into Sonora came to a close as both nations focused on larger, more pressing issues. In Mexico, attention turned to counter French attempts to take over their republic. The United States quickly moved into its great Civil War. These two national events quickly overshadowed the regional events of the previous decade which for the most part went down as footnotes in the history of the border region between these two great nations.

Conclusion

By the end of 1857, Sonora had seen six filibusters in less than eight years. All had originated in San Francisco. All had sought take advantage of the apparent weakness and desperation in Sonora to take control over land in the northern Mexican state. In the end, they all failed. In each failure though there is something to be learned.

Over the course of the six filibustering expeditions to Sonora, the Mexican response changed. Each attempt sought to improve on the one before it, but essentially brought the same outcome. Each brazen attempt was matched by an escalating Mexican response. Up until the Crabb Expedition, each group drew hope that they could avoid the mistakes of those before them and achieve success. In each case, the scheme failed and the Mexicans found themselves victorious in the end.

At the culmination of the earliest filibuster, Moorehead's attempt in 1850, the Mexican government had little involvement. This encroachment into Mexican territory went unnoticed by Mexican authorities and predominantly consisted of encounters with the Yuman Indians of the Lower Colorado River region of the very northern reaches of Sonora. The main group of filibusters had failed to achieve their goal and the Mexicans eventually found a small group of filibusters and quietly forced them back across the border into U.S. territory. There was little violence despite the obvious intentions of Moorehead and his men. Being the first attempt on Sonora by Americans after the Mexican-American War, it was likely that the Mexicans had no way to gauge an appropriate response and were simply happy to have the Americans off their soil.

The Pindray expedition was for the most part welcomed into Sonora and this expedition came the closest to achieving some semblance of success. His success was

mostly predicated on the fact he had secured prior permission to enter Mexico and immediately took to forming a settlement in the unpopulated north. They had managed to settle and begin agriculture and mining before the group, due to mismanagement and poor leadership, began to deteriorate. A failure to gain mining concessions had caused a major blow to their plans and at that point filibustering entered their minds. However, after the death of Pindray, many of the men returned to the United States while others went in search of mining opportunities. A few even remained to farm. In this case, the Mexican authorities had little to do in defense of their land.

Pindray's failure in 1852 opened the door for Raousset, who had his own designs on Sonora. Each filibuster learned from the one before it and Raousset was no different. He obtained permission to enter Sonora, but with a grander scheme. In Raousset's case, he was building a company with financial backing. This company would open northern Sonora's agricultural and mineral prospects by militarizing his colony to actively defend the region from Native attacks. The Mexican government understood the need for the group to be armed, but the amount of weapons Raousset arrived with quickly put the Mexicans on notice that something was afoot. Not wanting to directly resort to violence, they played political games in the attempt to frustrate Raousset and his men into giving up on their schemes. When Raousset tired of these games, he marched his men on the city of Hermosillo. Despite losing the battle, the Mexicans were able to push the weakened Frenchmen back to Guaymas where they, under threat of continued military action, were dispersed. The Mexicans had justifiably defended themselves and their land from the enterprising filibusters. It must be believed that after the attack on Hermosillo, the

Sonoran government was going to be much more cautious about future filibustering and would meet them with an increasingly violent defense.

In 1854, William Walker made his first attempt at filibustering. He would later go on to filibuster in Nicaragua, but it was the fate of his Sonora expedition that forced him to future filibustering in another location. Walker's eventual goal was Sonora, but his poor execution set his group up for failure before they reached it. His group's exploits in Lower California taxed the group to the breaking point and the overland march to Sonora broke the will of the group. The humiliating end of the filibuster forced Walker and his remaining men to cross back into the United States as defeated adventurers. The filibuster that had started so promising, even allowing Walker to assume the title of President and to declare the region independent, had come crashing down around him. There was fighting and a number of Walker's men were killed in engagements with the Mexicans, but the many more simply returned to the United States. In the last few days, as Walker and his remaining men marched towards San Diego, it would have been easy for the Mexicans to exact revenge. However, the Mexicans engaged the Americans only enough to ensure they continued northward and eventually left Mexican soil. The violence used by the Mexicans was well measured and appropriate to achieve the desired end, but it did not set an example to future filibusters. Instead it sent the message that a failed filibuster may suffer some casualties. This did little to dissuade the next wave of filibuster as the prize of success still outweighed the ignominy of defeat.

The prize of Sonora still hung invitingly enough to convince Raousset to make a second attempt on the Mexican state. This time, he wasted little time on pretexts and shortly after arriving in Guaymas, a battle between French and Mexican forces broke out.

Many on both sides were killed, yet the Mexicans showed they had little patience left for filibustering in their territory. The local leadership in Sonora was fed up with Raousset and those like him by 1854. They needed to set a stronger tone if there was to be any attempt at tempering the filibustering schemes destined to take their land. In this case, Raousset had twice come to Sonora with ambitious designs on the region. Both filibustering attempts had led to blood being spilled on both sides. The Mexicans now realized a message needed to be sent. The Mexicans were absolutely justified in executing Raousset in the defense of Mexican soil. The execution of Raousset appeared to have the desired effect as there were no immediate filibustering attempts in its wake.

There would be a two and a half year hiatus until the next brave adventurer set out from San Francisco with plans for Sonora. Henry A. Crabb learned from each of the filibusters before him. He believed that he had government permission to be in the state of Sonora and brought a smaller group than Raousset had. He arrived less heavily armed and traveled an overland path to the Mexican state. He professed the idea of peaceful colonization at every turn and in many cases acted as the antithesis of a filibuster. When warned of the army preparing to counter his arrival, he could have turned around. Knowing that his agreement with the local government was not going to be respected and that he was no longer welcome, he should have turned around in the interest of survival.

When he failed to heed the warnings and persisted in entering Sonora, he made his group into a filibuster. That may never have been his intent, but from the Mexican vantage point, he and his men were unwanted, armed, and unwilling to turn back. Perhaps the Mexicans should have attempted a tactic less heavy handed than opening fire on the Americans as they reached Caborca. However, after five previous attempts by foreigners

to take portions of Sonora it can be forgiven if they wanted to deal a blow that would resonate across the region as a warning against any future attempts. At the end of the battle at Caborca, the execution of Crabb would not have been an unexpected outcome based on the previous filibusters. The summary execution of every American, save the young Charles Evans, without trial was barbaric. It was an unnecessary end to the expedition, but taken in context of the events that had come before it appears less of an overreaction than if taken as a stand-alone event. If the Mexican goal was to send a message that would keep future filibustering attempts out of Sonora, then this goal was achieved. After the execution of Crabb and his men there were no future schemes to take the state via filibustering. In this regard, the Mexican response can be deemed successful if not appropriate.

In the end, these events faded from national memory in the United States, relegated to the margins of recorded history, while Mexico celebrated the anniversaries as heroes who defended the nation against hordes of foreign invaders. Having lost so much territory in the U. S.-Mexican War, this ballyhoo is quite understandable. A few victories against foreign groups bent on seizing the wild northwestern portions of Mexico would not normally have been hailed as huge victories. But these were different times and at that time were marks of national pride that should be celebrated. Those Mexicans who bravely fought, and those who died, are remembered as heroes who sacrificed to defend Sonora, and by extension all of Mexico.

The horror of executing fifty-eight Americans after the events at Caborca would draw attention all the way to the door of the United States President, but it succeeded in ending the invasions on Sonora. Mexico behaved in a respectful and honorable manner

throughout the first filibustering attempts in the hope that the filibustering would not escalate. The Mexican response was seen as weakness and led to more filibustering towards Sonora. To put an end to these attacks on its sovereignty, Mexico needed to raise the level of its response to match the intensity of the incoming filibusters. When the execution of Raousset failed to stop Crabb, a more violent message needed to be heard. The Mexican response to Crabb's Expedition can be argued as excessive, but it is certain that eventually a massacre such of this was going to occur if filibustering attempts continued. A horrific massacre ended this phase of U. S.-Mexican relations along a hotly contested and recently established border that acquired some stability only over time. Following the American Civil War, economic filibustering abetted by the policies of Porfirio Diaz accomplished through soft-power what antebellum filibusters failed to achieve through martial means.

Notes

Introduction

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Chapter 1

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[3] William O. Scroggs, *Filibusters and Financiers: The Story of William Walker and His Associates* (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1916), 3.
[4] Merritt Parmalee Allen, *William Walker: Filibuster* (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers 1932), 14.
[5] Scroggs, *Filibusters and Financiers*, 4.

[6] *Ibid.*, 5-6.
[7] *Ibid.*, 5.
[8] Allen, *William Walker: Filibuster*, 16.
[9] *Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo*. (National archives, 1848).
[10] Allen, *William Walker: Filibuster*, 16.
[11] Scroggs, *Filibusters and Financiers*, 5.
[12] Allen, *William Walker: Filibuster*, 11.
[13] T. Robinson Warren, *Dust and Foam; or, Three Oceans and Two Continents* (New York: Charles Scribner, 1859), 183.
[14] *Ibid.*, 166.
[15] *Ibid.*, 168.
[16] *Ibid.*, 171.
[17] Bartlett, 122
[18] Warren, *Dust and Foam*, 180.
[19] *Ibid.*, 182.
[20] *Ibid.*, 183.
[21] *Ibid.*, 170.
[22] *Ibid.*, 183-4.
[23] *Ibid.*, 186.
[24] *Ibid.*, 201.
[25] *Ibid.*
[26] Thomas E. Sheridan, *Arizona: A History* (Tucson: University of Arizona, 2012), 55.
[27] Sheridan, *Arizona: A History*, 54.
[28] *Ibid.*
[29] Warren, *Dust and Foam*, 187.
[30] Sheridan, *Arizona: A History*, 54.
[31] *Ibid.*, 55.
[32] *Ibid.*, 58.
[33] *Ibid.*, 58.
[34] Rippy, *The Relations of the United States and Mexico*, 147.
[35] *Ibid.*
[36] Warren, *Dust and Foam*, 201.
[37] *Ibid.*, 184.
[38] *Ibid.*
[39] Sheridan, *Arizona: A History*, 58.
[40] *Ibid.*
[41] John Russell Bartlett, *Personal Narrative of Explorations and Incidents in Texas, California, Sonora, and Chihuahua* (New York: D. Appleton & Company, 1854), 329.
[42] *Ibid.*
[43] Sheridan, *Arizona: A History*, 58.
[44] Warren, *Dust and Foam*, 171.
[45] *Ibid.*, 172-174.
[46] *Ibid.*, 174.
[47] *Ibid.*, 188.
[48] *Ibid.*, 177-178.
[49] Sheridan, *Arizona: A History*, 57.

[50] Warren, *Dust and Foam*, 183.
[51] Bartlett, *Personal Narrative*, 260.
[52] Ibid., 312.
[53] Warren, *Dust and Foam*, 185-186.
[54] Sheridan, *Arizona: A History*, 53. This quote was originally written to describe the early trappers in the New Mexico territory during their first encounters with the Mexican government. However, the concept behind the quote remained the same for many future economic opportunists entering Mexico in search of wealth, resources, or land. The earliest of these pioneers came in search of beaver pelts, but the next groups would come in search of fertile farmland, mineral wealth, or just a simple desire to take control of the state of Sonora.
[55] *Ibid.*, 62.
[56] Warren, *Dust and Foam*, 184.
[57] *Ibid.*, 186.
[58] Bartlett, *Personal Narrative*, 332.
[59] Sheridan, *Arizona: A History*, 63.
[60] Warren, *Dust and Foam*, 186.
[61] Charles D. Poston, *Reconnaissance in Sonora* (San Francisco, 1854), 22.
[62] *Ibid.*, 42.
[63] Sheridan, *Arizona: A History*, 59.
[64] *Ibid.*
[65] Julie Campbell, Linda Gregonis, Robert F. Palmquist, and Dr. Charles W. Polzer, *Studies in Arizona History* (Tucson: Arizona Historical Society, 1998), 60.
[66] Scroggs, *Filibusters and Financiers*, 7.
[67] Poston, *Reconnaissance in Sonora*, 25.
[68] Campbell et al, *Studies in Arizona History*, 55.
[69] Warren, *Dust and Foam*, 202.
[70] *Ibid.*
[71] Scroggs, *Filibusters and Financiers*, 8.
[72] Sheridan, *Arizona: A History*, 54.
[73] Poston, *Reconnaissance in Sonora*, 19.
[74] Juda, "California Filibusters," 3-6, 15, 19.

Chapter 2

[1] Rippy, "Anglo-American Filibusters," 157.
[2] *Daily Alta California*, September 24, 1850.
[3] *Ibid.*, January, 20, 1851.
[4] *Ibid.*
[5] *Ibid.*
[6] *Ibid.*, February 10, 1851.
[7] *Ibid.*
[8] *Ibid.*, January 20, 1851
[9] *Sacramento Daily Union*, May 1, 1851.
[10] *Ibid.*
[11] *Ibid.*

[12] *Daily Alta California*, April 5, 1851.
[13] *Ibid.*
[14] *Ibid.*, May 17, 1851.
[15] Hubert Howe Bancroft, History of California (San Francisco: The History Company, 1888), 584.
[16] *Sacramento Transcript*, June 4, 1851.
[17] Rippy, "Anglo-American Filibusters," 158.
[18] *Sacramento Transcript*, April 30, 1851
[19] *Sacramento Daily Union*, May 1, 1851.
[20] *Sacramento Transcript*, June 4, 1851.
[21] *Daily Alta California*, May 17, 1851
[22] *Ibid.*
[23] *Ibid.*
[24] *Sacramento Transcript*, May 3, 1851.
[25] *Daily Alta California*, May 17, 1851.
[26] *Ibid.*
[27] *Ibid.*
[28] *Ibid.*
[29] *Ibid.*
[30] Rippy, "Anglo-American Filibusters," 159.
[31] *El Universal*, May 22, 1851.
[32] Rippy, "Anglo-American Filibusters," 159.
[33] *Daily Alta California*, October 13, 1851.
[34] *Ibid.*
[35] *Ibid.*, August 20, 1851.
[36] *Sacramento Daily Union*, May 1, 1851.
[37] *Daily Alta California*, October 13, 1851.
[38] John S. Hittell, *History of the City of San Francisco* (San Francisco: A.L. Bancroft & Company, 1878), 185.
[39] Scroggs, *Financiers and Filibusters*, 19.
[40] Hittell, *History of the City of San Francisco*, 186.
[41] Scroggs, *Filibusters and Financiers*, 20.
[42] *Ibid.*, 21.
[43] Joseph A. Stout Jr., *Schemers & Dreamers: Filibustering in Mexico 1848-1921* (Fort Worth: Texas Christian University, 2002), 24.
[44] Scroggs, *Filibusters and Financiers*, 21.
[45] *Sacramento Daily Union*, October 22, 1852.
[46] *Ibid.*
[47] *Daily Alta California*, October 9, 1852.
[48] *Ibid.*
[49] Stout, Jr. *Schemers & Dreamers*, 24.
[50] Scroggs, *Filibusters and Financiers*, 22.
[51] *Ibid.*
[52] *Ibid.*
[53] Stout, Jr., *Schemers & Dreamers*, 25.
[54] *Daily Alta California*, October 23, 1852.

[55] *Ibid.*
[56] *Ibid.*
[57] Scroggs, *Filibusters and Financiers*, 22.
[58] Theodore H. Hittell, *History of California* (San Francisco: N.J. Stone & Company, 1897), 731.
[59] *Daily Alta California*, August 15, 1852.
[60] *Ibid.*
[61] *Ibid.*, October 23, 1852.
[62] *Ibid.*
[63] *Ibid.*, August 15, 1852.
[64] *Sacramento Daily Union*, October 22, 1852.
[65] Hittell, *History of California*, 730.
[66] Maurice Soulié, *The Wolf Cub: The Great Adventure of Count Gaston de Raousset-Boulbon in California and Sonora 1850-1854*, tran. By Farrel Symons (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1927), 22.
[67] *Ibid.*, 26-27.
[68] *Ibid.*, 28.
[69] *Ibid.*, 28-29.
[70] *Ibid.*, 30.
[71] Hittell, *History of California*, 728.
[72] Scroggs, *Filibusters and Financiers*, 24.
[73] Soulié, *The Wolf Cub*, 95.
[74] Hittell, *History of California*, 730.
[75] *Ibid.*, 731.
[76] *Ibid.*
[77] Soulié, *The Wolf Cub*, 123.
[78] *Ibid.*, 124-125.
[79] Hittell, *History of California*, 731.
[80] Soulié, *The Wolf Cub*, 126.
[81] Hittell, *History of California*, 732.
[82] *Ibid.*
[83] *Daily Alta California*, November 25, 1852.
[84] Scroggs, *Filibusters and Financiers*, 25.
[85] Soulié, *The Wolf Cub*, 132. Differing sources claim varying numbers of men who travelled with the group that originally left San Francisco. Some estimates are as low as 150 men with others marking the number at 260. It is likely the exact number is somewhere closer to 200 and for that reason it is the amount used in the text. According to Maurice Soulié, the group contained 160 infantrymen, 40 cavalry, 2 canon, and three officers.
[86] Scroggs, *Filibusters and Financiers*, 25.
[87] There are varying reports of the exact date of Raousset's arrival at Guaymas. The *Daily Alta California* reported on August 28, 1852 that their correspondent in Guaymas reported the arrival on May 29, but William O. Scroggs in his book *Filibusters and Financiers* puts the date as May 31, 1852. Finally, other sources such as Theodore H. Hittell's *History of California* and another article in the *Daily Alta California* published November 25, 1852 claim the group landed on June 1, 1852.

[88] *Daily Alta California*, August 28, 1852.
[89] Hittell, *History of California*, 733.
[90] *Daily Alta California*, November 25, 1852.
[91] *Ibid.*
[92] Hittell, History of California, 732.
[93] *Daily Alta California*, August, 28, 1852.
[94] *Ibid.*, November 25, 1852.
[95] *Ibid.*, August 28, 1852.
[96] *Ibid.*
[97] Soulié, *The Wolf Cub*, 143.
[98] *Ibid.*
[99] Scroggs, *Filibusters and Financiers*, 26.
[100] *Ibid.*
[101] Hittell, *History of California*, 733.
[102] *Ibid.*
[103] Scroggs, *Filibusters and Financiers*, 26.
[104] Soulié, *The Wolf Cub*, 151.
[105] *Ibid.*, 152.
[106] *Ibid.*, 151.
[107] *Daily Alta California*, November 25, 1852.
[108] Soulié, *The Wolf Cub*, 160-162.
[109] *Daily Alta California*, December 7, 1852.
[110] Hittell, *History of California*, 734.
[111] *Daily Alta California*, December 7, 1852.
[112] *Ibid.*
[113] Scroggs, *Filibusters and Financiers*, 27.
[114] *Daily Alta California*, December 7, 1852.
[115] Scroggs, *Filibusters and Financiers*, 27.
[116] Hittell, *History of California*, 735.
[117] Bancroft's *History of California* and Scroggs' *Filibusters and Financiers* have the attack on Hermosillo taking place on October 14, 1852, while Hittell's *History of California* states that the battle occurred on October 23, 1852. The *Los Angeles Herald* claimed later that the battle occurred on October 4, 1852 and numerous other sources leave the date out entirely. Additionally, there are varying figures provided in these sources regarding the population of Hermosillo at the time. Some estimate the population to be near 12,000 inhabitants while others give the larger number of 15,000. Finally, the number of men in Raousset's force that attacked Hermosillo can be assumed to be between 240 and 260 men while the estimates for Blanco's army ranges from 800 to 1,200 Mexican troops.
[118] Hittell, *History of California*, 736.
[119] Soulié, *The Wolf Cub*, 165. There are different versions of this story published in different sources, but the end meaning is similar in each case. Raousset expected to control the city within a very short time of his initial attack.
[120] Hittell, *History of California*, 737.
[121] *Daily Alta California*, December 22, 1852.
[122] Hittell, *History of California*, 737.

[123] *Ibid.*
[124] *Los Angeles Herald*, December 25, 1892.
[125] *Daily Alta California*, December 23, 1852.
[126] Hittell, *History of California*, 738.
[127] *Daily Alta California*, December 25, 1852.
[128] Hittell, *History of California*, 738.
[129] *Daily Alta California*, December 23, 1852.
[130] *Ibid.*
[131] *Ibid.*, December 22, 1852.
[132] *Ibid.*, December 25, 1852.
[133] *Ibid.*
[134] Scroggs, *Filibusters and Financiers*, 28.
[135] *Daily Alta California*, December 25, 1852.
[136] *Ibid.*
[137] *Ibid.*
[138] Bancroft, *History of California*, 588.
[139] Soulié, *The Wolf Cub*, 171.
[140] Hittell, *History of California,* 739.
[141] Soulié, *The Wolf Cub*, 178.
[142] *Daily Alta California*, December 25, 1852.

Chapter 3

[1] Juda, "California Filibusters," 6.
[2] William Walker, *The War in Nicaragua* (New York: S. H. Goetzel & Co., 1860), 19
[3] Albert H. Z. Carr, *The World and William Walker* (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), 76-77.
[4] Juda, "California Filibusters," 6.
[5] Carr, *The World and William Walker*, 78.
[6] Juda, "California Filibusters," 6.
[7] *Daily Alta California*, December 1, 1853.
[8] Allen, *William Walker: Filibuster*, 25
[9] Warren, *Dust and Foam*, 211.
[10] *Ibid.*, 212.
[11] *Ibid.*
[12] Carr, *The World and William Walker*, 77.
[13] Allen, *William Walker: Filibuster*, 27-28.
[14] *Ibid.*, 28.
[15] Walker, *The War in Nicaragua*, 21.
[16] *Ibid.*
[17] *Ibid.*, 21-22.
[18] Carr, *The World and William Walker*, 80.
[19] *Daily Alta California*, October 3, 1853.
[20] *Ibid.*, October 9, 1853.
[21] Carr, *The World and William Walker*, 81.
[22] *Daily Alta California*, October 18, 1853.

[23] *Ibid.*, October 19, 1853.
[24] *Ibid.*, December 1, 1853.
[25] *Ibid.*
[26] Rippy, "Anglo-American Filibusters," 166.
[27] *Daily Alta California*, December 8, 1853.
[28] Wells, *Walker's Expedition to Nicaragua*, 24.
[29] *Ibid.*
[30] *Daily Alta California*, December 8, 1853.
[31] *Ibid.*
[32] *Ibid.*
[33] William V. Wells, *Walker's Expedition to Nicaragua* (New York: Stringer and Townsend, 1856), 25.
[34] *Ibid.*
[35] Throughout the month of December, there were reports arriving in California and being printed in the various newspapers regarding the actions of Walker's men. Reports on December 27, 1853 from both the *Sacramento Daily Union* and the *Daily Alta California* printed accounts of Walker's men abusing and looting nearby citizens and ranches. Alternately, in the same publications, on the same day, there were accounts from Walker's men that no such looting and ill-treatment occurred. If such treatment occurred, it is likely this led to the uprising of Mexicans against the new Republic based in Ensenada.
[36] Scroggs, *Filibusters and Financiers*, 40.
[37] *Daily Alta California*, December 27, 1853.
[38] *Ibid.*
[39] Scroggs, *Filibusters and Financiers*, 40-41.
[40] Carr, *The World and William Walker*, 83.
[41] *Daily Alta California*, December 27, 1853.
[42] Scroggs, *Filibusters and Financiers*, 41.
[43] *Daily Alta California*, January 10, 1854.
[44] Wells, *Walker's Expedition to Nicaragua*, 28.
[45] *Daily Alta California*, January 30, 1854.
[46] Wells, *Walker's Expedition to Nicaragua*, 29.
[47] *Daily Alta California*, January 30, 1854.
[48] *Ibid.*, February 4, 1854.
[49] *Ibid.*
[50] *Ibid.*
[51] *Ibid.*
[52] Scroggs, *Filibusters and Financiers*, 43.
[53] *Daily Alta California*, February 22, 1854.
[54] *Ibid.*
[55] *Ibid.*
[56] *Ibid.*, March 15, 1854.
[57] *Ibid.*
[58] *Ibid.*
[59] *Ibid.*
[60] *Ibid.*

[61] *Ibid.*
[62] *Ibid.*
[63] Scroggs, *Filibusters and Financiers*, 46.
[64] *Daily Alta California*, April 26, 1854.
[65] *Ibid.*
[66] *Ibid.*
[67] *Ibid.*
[68] *Sacramento Daily Union*, May 5, 1854.
[69] Scroggs, *Filibusters and Financiers*, 47.
[70] Wells, *Walker's Expedition to Nicaragua*, 36-37.
[71] *Ibid.*, 37.
[72] Scroggs, *Filibusters and Financiers*, 48.
[73] Wells, *Walker's Expedition to Nicaragua*, 38-39.
[74] Carr, *The World and William Walker*, 90.
[75] *Sacramento Daily Union*, May 31, 1854.
[76] *Ibid.*, July 20, 1854.
[77] Carr, *The World and William Walker*, 90.
[78] *Daily Alta California*, October 20, 1854.
[79] *Ibid.*, October 21, 1854.
[80] Walker, *The War in Nicaragua*, 24.

Chapter 4

[1] *Daily Alta California*, June 18, 1853.
[2] Bancroft, *History of California*, 588-9.
[3] *Sacramento Daily Union*, December 10, 1853.
[4] *Ibid.*
[5] *Daily Alta California*, December 1, 1853.
[6] *Ibid.*, June 13, 1853.
[7] *Sacramento Daily Union*, October 17, 1853.
[8] Hittell, *History of California*, 743.
[9] *Sacramento Daily Union*, February 16, 1854.
[10] Bancroft, *History of California*, 559.
[11] Hittell, *History of California*, 743.
[12] *Daily Alta California*, April 27, 1854.
[13] *Ibid.*, March 15, 1854.
[14] *Ibid.*
[15] *Ibid.*
[16] The exact number of men recruited initially varies from source to source. In his *History of California*, Theodore H. Hittell claims the number of 800, while Hubert H. Bancroft uses the number of 600 in his *History of California* and 700 in his *History of the North Mexican States and Texas*. A source from the time, *The Annals of San Francisco*, published in 1855 lists the number at between 500 and 600. It is impossible to determine the exact number, but looking at the numerous sources a decent estimate is between 600 and 700 men. The original number of men may have been higher, but in this number only those with intent to travel to Mexico are counted.

[17] Hittell, *History of California*, 744.
[18] Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of the North Mexican States and Texas* (San Francisco: The History Company, 1889), 685.
[19] Hittell, *History of California*, 744.
[20] Bancroft, *History of California*, 589.
[21] Bancroft, *History of the North Mexican States and Texas*, 685.
[22] Bancroft, *History of California*, 590.
[23] Frank Soulé, John H Gihon, and James Nisbet, *The Annals of San Francisco* (New York: D. Appleton & Company, 1855), 532.
[24] *Ibid.*, 533.
[25] *Ibid.*, 533-534.
[26] *Ibid.*, 534.
[27] *Ibid.*, 534-535.
[28] *Daily Alta California*, July 22, 1854.
[29] Bancroft, *History of the North Mexican States and Texas*, 685.
[30] Hittell, *History of California*, 747.
[31] *Daily Alta California*, September 12, 1854.
[32] *Sacramento Daily Union*, September 26, 1854.
[33] Soulié, *The Wolf Cub*, 212.
[34] *Ibid.*, 214-215.
[35] Hittell, *History of California*, 748.
[36] Soulié, *The Wolf Cub*, 216.
[37] Hittell, *History of California*, 749.
[38] Bancroft, *History of the North Mexican States and Texas*, 686.
[39] *Daily Alta California*, July 29, 1854.
[40] *Ibid.*, September 24, 1854.
[41] Bancroft, *History of California*, 591.
[42] Hittell, *History of California*, 749.
[43] *Sacramento Daily Union*, September 19, 1854.
[44] Bancroft, *History of California*, 591.
[45] Soulié, *The Wolf Cub*, 220.
[46] Bancroft, *History of California*, 591.
[47] *Sacramento Daily Union*, September 28, 1854.
[48] Bancroft, *History of California*, 591.
[49] *Sacramento Daily Union*, September 28, 1854.
[50] *Daily Alta California,* September 12, 1854.
[51] *Sacramento Daily Union*, September 12, 1854.
[52] Bancroft, *History of the North Mexican States and Texas*, 689.
[53] Sources range from 46, in the *Sacramento Daily Union* on September 16, 1854, to more than 100 Frenchmen killed during the battle in the same newspaper on September 12, 1854. It is impossible to ascertain the exact number, but it is probably that the number dead was closer to 50, while the number of wounded may have been equal to that or higher. Overall, the French casualty rate was over 100, but less than half of those would have been deaths.
[54] Bancroft, *History of the North Mexican States and Texas*, 690.
[55] *Sacramento Daily Union*, September 12, 1854.

[56] Bancroft, *History of the North Mexican States and Texas*, 689.
[57] Hittell, *History of California*, 752.
[58] *Ibid.*, 752-753.
[59] *Ibid.*, 753.
[60] *Sacramento Daily Union*, October 20, 1854.
[61] Bancroft, *History of the North Mexican States and Texas*, 691.
[62] *Sacramento Daily Union*, October 20, 1854.
[63] *Ibid.*, September 25, 1857.
[64] Hittell, *History of California*, 754.
[65] *Daily Alta California*, October 21, 1854.
[66] *Ibid.*

Chapter 5

[1] Ex. Doc. No. 64, H. 35th Cong., 1st sess. 1858, 6.
[2] Hittell, *History of California*, 806.
[3] Thomas Earl Farish, *History of Arizona* (San Francisco: The Filmer Brothers Electrotype Company, 1915), 327.
[4] Hittell, *History of California*, 807.
[5] *Sacramento Daily Union*, August 11, 1856.
[6] *Ibid.*, September 8, 1856.
[7] Bancroft, *History of the North Mexican States and Texas,* 694.
[8] James O'Meara, "Crabb's Expedition into Sonora," *Californian*, 1881, 290.
[9] Robert H. Forbes, *Crabb's Filibustering Expedition into Sonora, 1857* (Tucson: Arizona Silhouettes, 1952), 7.
[10] *Daily Alta California*, October, 14, 1857.
[11] *Ibid.*, January 14, 1857.
[12] *Ibid.*
[13] O'Meara, "Crabb's Expedition into Sonora," 292-293.
[14] John C. Reid, *Reid's Tramp* (Selma: John Hardy & Co., 1858), 199-200.
[15] O'Meara, "Crabb's Expedition into Sonora," 294.
[16] *Los Angeles Star*, February 14, 1857.
[17] *Ibid.*
[18] *Daily Alta California*, February 6, 1857.
[19] *Ibid.*, March 20, 1857.
[20] Ainsa, *History of the Crabb Expedition into N. Sonora*, 14.
[21] *Sacramento Daily Union*, March 18, 1857.
[22] Ainsa, *History of the Crabb Expedition into N. Sonora*, 16.
[23] *Sacramento Daily Union*, May 28, 1857.
[24] *Los Angeles Star*, April 25, 1857.
[25] *Ibid.*, May 23, 1857.
[26] Ainsa, *History of the Crabb Expedition into N. Sonora*, 16.
[27] O'Meara, "Crabb's Expedition into Sonora," 294.
[28] *Sacramento Daily Union*, May 19, 1857.
[29] Ex. Doc. No. 64, H. 35th Cong., 1st sess. 1858, 5.
[30] *Sacramento Daily Union*, May 19, 1857.

[31] Ex. Doc. No. 64, H. 35th Cong., 1st sess. 1858, 8.
[32] *Ibid.*, 9.
[33] *Sacramento Daily Union*, May 19, 1857.
[34] *Ibid.*
[35] *Ibid.*
[36] *Ibid.*
[37] Ex. Doc. No. 64, H. 35th Cong., 1st sess. 1858, 32-33.
[38] *Ibid.*
[39] *Ibid.*
[40] *Ibid.*
[41] *Ibid.*, 12.
[42] *Ibid.*, 14.
[43] *Ibid.*, 14-15.
[44] *Ibid.*, 15.
[45] Forbes, *Crabb's Filibustering Expedition*, 21.
[46] *Daily Alta California*, May 14, 1857.
[47] Ex. Doc. No. 64, H. 35th Cong., 1st sess. 1858, 64-68.
[48] *Ibid.*
[49] *Ibid.*
[50] *Ibid.*
[51] *Daily Alta California*, May 14, 1857.
[52] Ex. Doc. No. 64, H. 35th Cong., 1st sess. 1858, 37.
[53] *Daily Alta California*, May 14, 1857.
[54] Evans, Charles Edward, Reid's Tramp, 224
[55] Ex. Doc. No. 64, H. 35th Cong., 1st sess. 1858, 37.
[56] *Daily Alta California*, May 14, 1857.
[57] Evans, Charles Edward, Reid's Tramp, 224-225
[58] *Los Angeles Star*, May 23, 1857.
[59] *Ibid.*
[60] *Daily Alta California*, May 14, 1857.
[61] Ex. Doc. No. 64, H. 35th Cong., 1st sess. 1858, 48
[62] Reid, *Reid's Tramp*, 215.
[63] *Los Angeles Star*, May 23, 1857.
[64] *Sacramento Daily Union*, May 28, 1857.
[65] *Daily Alta California*, May 14, 1857.
[66] *Los Angeles Star*, May 23, 1857.
[67] *Ibid.*, October 9, 1858.
[68] *Sacramento Daily Union*, June 1, 1857.
[69] *Los Angeles Star*, September 26, 1857.
[70] *Ibid.*
[71] *Daily Alta California*, August 3, 1857.
[72] *Ibid.*
[73] Ex. Doc. No. 64, H. 35th Cong., 1st sess. 1858, 1.
[74] *Ibid.*, 5.
[75] *Ibid.*, 22-23.
[76] *Ibid.*, 9.

[77] *Ibid.*, 15.
[78] *Ibid.*, 17.
[79] *Ibid.*, 24.
[80] *Ibid.*, 32-33.
[81] *Ibid.*, 22.
[82] *Ibid.*, 18.
[83] *Ibid.*, 29.
[84] *Ibid.*, 31.
[85] *Ibid.*, 58.
[86] *Ibid.*, 49.
[87] *Ibid.*, 70.
[88] *Ibid.*, 60.
[89] *Ibid.*, 55.
[90] *Ibid.*, 41.
[91] *Ibid.*, 48.
[92] *Ibid.*, 75.

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