INTRODUCTION: The first part of this article—Weekly Arizona Miner Editor John Marion’s account of an 1871 trip from Prescott to the Salt River Valley—was included in the May 2013 issue of Territorial Times. This final part of the article, edited and annotated by Fred Veil, begins with the travelers’ arrival in Phoenix and concludes at Arizona City (now Yuma).

SALT RIVER VALLEY

[Here we are, in plain view of the Salt River Valley, which is to Arizona almost what the Mississippi is to the “Great West.” On we drive past houses, ranches and ditches, the latter containing water, until we arrive at Phoenix, the county seat of Maricopa County, and the commercial emporium of the valley.

Seated on high ground nearly in the center of a valley extending east and west farther than the eye can discern, this young and ambitious town has before it a future such as few towns in Arizona can expect. Scarcely one year old it is a town of considerable importance, containing stores, boarding houses, a jail, schoolhouse, many neat, comfortable private dwellings, blacksmith and carpenter shops, and various other buildings. In it, too, are gathered together many energetic people who think that at last they have “struck it,” and who act accordingly.

From Phoenix we went up the valley, three miles to Mill City, the seat of operations of W. B. Hellings & Co., where the evidences of more thrift, enterprise and energy were presented. Being quite dusty, fatigued and hungry upon our arrival, our first efforts were to relieve our poor frame, after which in company with the senior Hellings, his brother and Major Veil, we examined the premises, consisting of a large, well-furnished adobe store, comfortable residences for owners and employees, and last, but not least, the flouring mill—which is a large, three story building, well roofed with lumber and shingles brought all the way from our own mountain home, Prescott. The walls of this building, excepting the portions upon which the heavy timbers rest, are of adobe, and of great strength and thickness. The woodwork is strong, and the machinery is the best that could be procured in San Francisco. To drive this machinery they have a 48-horsepower engine. The mill has two run of stone, and, for a day’s work, can make, at least, 30,000 pounds of flour.

It has taken over a year to complete it and the two granaries adjoining, and has cost its proprietors at least $50,000. The granaries in question are built to store, each, 75,000 lbs. of grain. The entire work has been accomplished by Arizonans, under the direction of a Mr. Henderson, who has spent a lifetime in running and building flouring mills. After having beheld all these things, we clambered on the top of the roof of the mill, and from that elevated position, had a good view of valley, river, mountains, etc. To the north, we beheld the Bradshaw range, wherein lies stored sufficient gold and silver to keep Bill Tweed’s gang, with all other fast plunderers, for an age. To the east lay the
Editor Marion’s 1871 Route from Phoenix to Arizona City
Four Peaks and the hills around Camp McDowell; and further south, Superstition and Pinal mountains were plainly visible. On the south, the valley is surrounded by a barren-looking range of mountains, containing, we were told, gold mines of considerable richness, one of which was then being prospected. To the southwest, there stretched Maricopa Mountain, famous for the stone face that ornaments one end of it. Then, Salt River, which rises several hundred miles to the northeast, and whose waters come pouring down from thousands of springs in Apache-land, comes under view, as it winds through a valley containing at least 60,000 acres of good arable land. And what a noble stream it is, especially for dry Arizona. Being in width, between 250 and 300 feet; and in depth, about 2 ½ feet, it is estimated that, at its lowest stage, it contains from 60,000 to 100,000 inches of water—good clear water, at that, which, rushing headlong over a pebbly bottom, between low, secure banks, offers no obstacles to those who would divert it into ditches, and lead it over the thirsty soil.

Having feasted our eyes upon all these charming things, we descended to *terra firma*, had a good night’s sleep, and, next day, rode through a portion of the great valley, visiting friends and seeing new sights. Thanks to J. W. Swilling, the man who first settled permanently in the valley, who has labored hard for its settlement and development, a splendid conveyance was placed at our disposal, and with Dr. Alsop, another pioneer of the valley, for a companion, our movements were both agreeable and instructive. From Messrs. Alsap, J. B. McKinnie, William Osborn, Mr. Gray, Mr. Hancock and many other prominent and ancient “salts,” we learned that the soil of the valley was better adapted to the production of wheat and barley, than of corn, owing, we presume, to the want of rain at the proper time. Cotton, sugar cane, sweet potatoes, and all kinds of tropical trees grow to perfection. The only trees growing upon the river bottoms are cottonwoods and mesquite and both these are plenty. In fact, the latter are too plenty, and have to be cleared off the land, in order to prepare it for cultivation. The estimated population of the valley is 1,500, and new settlers are every day arriving. Ruins of ancient buildings and canals are met with on every hand, telling us of the present that the place has a past history, unwritten and unknown, save to that Supreme Being, at whose bidding seas dry up and mountains disappear.

In riding through the valley, we discovered with pleasure that almost every farmer had set out an orchard, vineyard, and long lines of shade trees, all of which appeared to be flourishing. Wheat and barley are put into the ground at all times from the first of October to the 20th of March, and, the ground being already wetted to receive these cereals, good crops, with little labor, are generally the result. The market has, so far, been good; yet, as many of the settlers started in poor and have been somewhat careless and extravagant, they are yet poor. Over three millions of pounds of grain were raised last year, and it is confidently expected that as high as 8,000,000 pounds will this year be raised, which, with the vegetables, cane, cotton and fruit, will enable “the valley” to splurge a little. Unoccupied land is yet abundant, and water to irrigate
it is plenty, so that we know of no better place for poor but honest tillers of the soil to locate. Then after a while, it is safe to conclude that the proposed 32nd parallel railroad will pass through the valley when naught can prevent Phoenix, or some other of its aspiring villages from becoming a second Salt Lake City, not, however, in the great number of the wives its citizens will have, but for the position it will occupy as the largest interior city of Arizona.

The people of the valley should see to it that inducements sufficient to persuade the Southern Overland Mail Company to run their stages via Phoenix are speedily held out, as, just now, mail and traveling facilities are not sufficient for their wants. The next thing for them to do, is to build a road to our mountains, over the route already selected which would confer a two-fold benefit upon them, and be of great service to our miners. The Valley of Salt River is distant from Prescott (by the old road) about 160 miles, via Bradshaw, about 100 miles; from Wickenburg, 60 miles; from Bradshaw, 60; from Camp McDowell, 25; from the Pima Villages, on the Gila, about 30; from Florence, on same river, about 40; from Arizona City 190; from Ehrenberg, 190.

Of ditches, for conveying water, finished, and soon to be finished, we saw the “Salt River Farming Ditch,” made to carry 15,000 inches of water; “Swilling Irrigating,” 20,000 inches; “Prescott,” 5000 inches; “Tempe,” 10,000; and two ditches belonging to Mexicans, and two or three ditches belonging to private persons. Still, with all this drain upon old Salt, he is yet plethoric of water, and filled with fishes weighing from one ounce to 40 pounds.

EDITOR: William B. Hellings, the former post trader at Camp McDowell, his brother Edward and others, constructed the Salt River Flouring Mill on the banks of Jack Swilling’s irrigation canal just north west of the intersection of Van Buren and 32nd Street in present-day Phoenix. The mill, which went into operation in December 1871, was the largest and most productive in the Territory. Swilling may not have been the Valley’s first permanent settler; he did, however, construct the first irrigation canals in the Valley, thereby providing water which led to a booming agricultural industry and, ultimately, the founding of Phoenix.29

John T. Alsap, a physician and lawyer by profession, came to the Arizona Territory in 1863 in search of gold. He was the Territory’s first treasurer (1864-67) and an owner/operator of the first saloon in Prescott. By 1869 he was situated in the Salt River Valley where he was engaged in farming in partnership with his brother-in-law, William L. Osborn. He served terms on both the Council and the House of Representatives of the Legislative Assembly and was one of three commissioners who oversaw the creation of the town of Phoenix. In 1871, he led the effort to create Maricopa County from the southern part of Yavapai County.20

William L. Osborn was the eldest son of early pioneers John and Perlina Osborn, who arrived in Prescott in 1864, established a farming and cattle operation, and opened the first hotel in the newly-created Territorial capital. William soon moved on to the Verde Valley where he farmed land near the present site of Camp Verde. In 1869, William relocated to the Salt River Valley where he partnered with Alsap in a farming operation.21

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William A. Hancock came to Arizona in 1864 with the California Volunteer Infantry and served through the early years of the Apache Wars. He left the army in 1866, and established a trading post near Ft. McDowell. In 1870 he was hired to survey and plat the townsite for Phoenix. He served as the Phoenix postmaster for eight years (1871-79). At various times, Hancock also held the positions of sheriff, district attorney, and probate judge, all in Maricopa County.22

James B. McKinnie, who owned and operated a saloon just east of Mill City, and Columbus H. Gray, who had farmland along the southern branch of the Swilling Canal, each proposed competing sites for the location of the Phoenix Townsite (as did Hellings and Swilling, who favored the Mill City site). In the end, they were all outmaneuvered by Alsap, who influenced the selection of a townsite on land situated further to the west.23

Marion’s reference to the Southern Overland Mail Company is curious, as that company had not operated in Arizona since 1861. More commonly known as the Butterfield Overland Mail Company after its principal owner, John Butterfield, the company provided mail and passenger service between the "eastern" states of Missouri and Tennessee, and California, beginning in 1858. This service was discontinued three years later at the outbreak of the Civil War.24

Marion’s comment respecting the construction of a more direct road between Phoenix and Prescott was prophetic. In late 1873, Hellings and Company, which now included Veil as a full partner, constructed a wagon road from Mill City through the Black Canyon to a point near present-day Dewey where it intersected with an existing military road between Fort Whipple and Camp Verde, thereby providing a shorter route for freight between the Valley and Prescott.25

                                                                                   John T. Alsap

MARICOPA WELLS

Having completed our tour of the Salt River Valley, we moved on to the Gila River, in a conveyance belonging to our old friend Jas. A. Moore, who met us at Mr. Hellings’ place, and would have us accompany him home to Maricopa Wells, one of the old stations built in years ago by the Butterfield Company.

The road from Phoenix to the Wells was good, but dusty—so dusty that upon arriving at our destination, our ears, eyes, nose, etc., were “chock full” of the finest kind of dust, which resisted all attempts made by us to remove it by water, and remained wherever it had lodged until after it had dried, when a stiff wind blew it away. Before crossing the Gila, we had a good view of the village of the Maricopa Indians, and passed Mr. Morgan’s trading post. The river was about dry where we crossed it and had been so all summer; however, the land between the two rivers is good, and may yet be farmed.

Besides the hospitality of Mr. Moore and his wife and two daughters, we found at Mari-
copa Wells, a large store, well filled with goods of every kind; wagon and blacksmith shops where work of all kinds is done; scores of teams encamped, repairing wagons, etc.; a good well of water, which cannot be dried; and a nice, grassy valley with considerable mesquite timber.

One day, in company with the ladies, Mr. Carr, Mr. Grover and Mr. Baker, agent for the mail company, we took a drive to the Pima Villages, above on the river, saw the good Pimas at home, in the bosom of their families, and learned that the tribe numbered somewhere in the neighborhood of 4,000, while their Maricopa friends cannot count over 400. The Pimas reside in pretty large, oval shaped huts, constructed of mud, poles and straw, and are divided into bands under separate chiefs, all of whom are subject to the head chief, Antonio Azul. They have resided here on the banks of the “Sacred Gila” for centuries, and have earned an honest living by tilling the soil. Hating the wild Apaches with a hatred unknown to us, they never miss a chance to kill one, and as the Apaches hate them fully as bad, if not worse, continual war between both tribes is, and has been, the result. Indeed, the Pimas and Maricopas, watch, unceasingly, for the approach of their hereditary enemies, who are ever on the alert to catch a Pima or Maricopa napping, or to steal their horses, etc. But a short time previous to our visit, a party of Pimas had killed some Apaches, and, as is their custom, the braves who did the killing were housed up, doing penance, we presume. While thus engaged they converse with nobody, and water, provisions, etc., is carried to them. This, we were told lasts for about thirty days.

Owing to the scarcity of water in the Gila the past three years, those Indians have raised short crops of wheat, and but a very little corn and pumpkins, so that they really need some assistance from Government. They need, besides provisions, carts for farm work, and we earnestly hope they will get them soon. Meanwhile, they were beseeching their God (whom they call “Montezuma,”) to send rain and snow so that the Gila would again fill up, and enable them to raise plenty of grain and vegetables, and it is to be hoped that God will give them more than they are clamoring for.

On returning to the Wells we got a good view of the stone face on the southeastern end of Maricopa Mountain, which looked very much like the face and head of an Indian, and which, the Indians say, is a profile of Montezuma.

EDITOR: Maricopa Wells was strategically located at the intersection of the major roads that served to supply the communities and military posts of the Arizona Territory in the 1850s and 60s. It served as a distribution point for shipments from California and wheat raised by the Pima and Maricopa Indians. The stage station located there was the largest of those built by the Butterfield Overland Stage Company on the route between Tucson and Arizona City. In earlier years, Hooper & Co. of Arizona City, the largest mercantile establishment in the Territory, had a branch store at the Wells, and Henry Morgan operated a trading post and a ferry near there. In 1870, Larkin W. Carr and James A. Moore acquired the stage station and operated the store and shops described by Marion. Two years later they purchased the Tucson, Arizona City & San Diego Stage line.
The Pima Villages were comprised of ten Pima Indian Villages and two Maricopa Indian villages. Situated about twelve miles east of Maricopa Wells, the Villages were also the site of an early flourmill operated by Ammi White.27

The Pimas are among the oldest inhabitants of the American Southwest. Their occupation of the Gila River Valley predated the arrival of the Spanish in the late 1600s. Predominantly an agricultural society, they traded with the Spanish and later, the Americans, and enjoyed friendly relations with both. In the early 1800s they welcomed the Maricopas into the Valley and the two groups formed a strong defensive alliance. In 1857, the two tribes routed an invading force of Yumas, Mohaves and Yavapai. The Pimas (and the Maricopas) were indeed archenemies of the Apaches. They willingly scouted for the Army against the Apaches in the early post-Civil War period of the Indian Wars in Arizona, although they were decidedly ineffective in that respect.28

The Grover referenced by Marion was undoubtedly Edwin W. Grover, a partner in the Hellings & Company business. In 1873, Grover and Hellings had a falling out and on September 19 of that year, Hellings shot and killed Grover during an altercation on Prescott’s Whisky Row. Hellings was tried for murder, but acquitted by a Maricopa County jury. Mail agent John W. Baker also met an untimely death, as Indians at Blue Water Station killed him within days after he accompanied Marion and Veil on their trip to the Pima Villages.29

From Maricopa Wells, Marion and Veil turned westward toward Arizona City, following the route along the Gila River established by Spanish explorer Juan Bautista de Anza nearly 100 years earlier as a southern route to California. Their travels took them through Gila Bend and stage stops at Kenyon Station and Burke’s Station before arriving at the Agua Caliente ranch of Col. King Woolsey, where they spent a pleasant five or six days visiting with the famed Indian fighter and partaking of the hot springs for which the ranch was famous. Thereafter the travelers moved on to Gila City, passing through Stanwix and Mohawk stations and the camps of Filibuster and Mission while en route.30

The Stanwix and Filibuster stations have an interesting history. On March 29, 1862 the former was the site of the westernmost engagement of the Civil War, a minor skirmish between a detachment of Confederates on a mission to destroy hay stored at the station and a larger force of California volunteers. The Confederates retreated after a brief exchange of gunfire and returned to Tucson.31

Filibuster was named for Henry A. Crabb’s party of “filibusters” who used the site as a staging point for their infamous foray into Sonora, Mexico in 1857. Crabb, a former California state senator, pursuant to an agreement with a Mexican revolutionary named Pesqueira, raised a force of 1000 Americans to support Pesqueira efforts to oust the duly-elected governor of Sonora, in exchange for which the Americans would each receive 160 acres of land adjacent to the U.S.-Mexico border. However, by the time Crabb entered Mexico with an advance party of approximately 100 men, Pesqueira had succeeded with his coup. No longer needing Crabb’s filibusters, and perhaps not wanting
to be embarrassed by an association with the “Gringos,” he turned his followers against the Americans. All but one of Crabb’s party were either killed in the ensuing battle or captured and executed by the Mexicans. Crabb’s dismembered head was sent to Mexico City, apparently to demonstrate the loyalty of the Mexican commander.

GILA CITY

At Gila City, eighteen miles east of Arizona City, we met Mr. Hackett, and several other men, who showed us about ten ounces of coarse gold, which had recently been taken from auriferous gravel in the neighborhood. We also saw, at a distance, the mill, out-houses, etc., which a mining company engaged in working quartz, had recently erected. The gravel alluded to is plenty in the vicinity, and some pans of it have paid over an ounce to the pan. Years ago, the “cream” of those diggings was taken away, but the bed-rock strata were left untouched, and people have just found out that they are far richer and more extensive than were the surface strata. Hackett & Co., were running tunnels and carting the gravel to the river.

EDITOR: Gila City was established as a stage station on the Southern Overland Route in 1858, about the same time that Jacob Snively discovered placers at that location. Snively’s discovery led to the influx of more than a thousand miners who successfully worked the diggings for about four years.

ARIZONA CITY

As we approach Arizona City, the valley of the Gila widens, and evidences of civilization, in the shape of houses, fenced fields and domestic animals, increase, until, finally, the whole valley becomes “taken up,” with the city and its suburbs, and we enter wide streets, between rows of comfortable houses. The second, if not the first, largest town in the Territory, Arizona City is destined to be a city of vast proportions, located as it is on the Great Colorado, near the mouth of the Gila, and at the only point on the Colorado where a bridge can be built for the 32nd parallel railroad.

Arriving early in the afternoon, we met with a hearty welcome from John S. Carr, (of the old, reliable and enterprising mercantile firm of Hooper & Co.), George Martin, and numerous other ancient Arizonans. And what was our surprise at beholding a large, thriving town on ground where in 1863 but two business houses were to be seen—Hooper & Co’s and one other. We gaze, wonderingly; at the work which, in a few years, Americans have accomplished on what was once Mexican soil! Here are business houses belonging to Wm. B. Hooper & Co., David Neahr, I. Sumpter, Hall Hanlon, C. F. W. Nisses & Co., W. R. Larkin, Mr. McCarthy, H. E. Baker, George Martin, and others, which would do credit to old towns in any State of the Union. Besides the houses named there are several others occupied by Mexican traders, 1 hotel, 2 restaurants, 2 breweries, 4 or 5 saloons, many stables and corrals, numerous offices where law and medicine are practiced and studied, and last, but not least, the fine building occupied by the Sheriff, his deputies and prisoners—commonly called “The Courthouse.” Surrounding these are numerous private residences, some of which looked both neat and comfortable. Then, the Mexicans have their houses, which, although they are not so pretentious as those of their American neighbors, are comfortable and answer for all the purposes of homes. But, best and costliest of all are the houses belonging to the Colorado Steam Navigation Company, and the Depot buildings belonging to Uncle Samuel, situated on the western line of town, overlooking the Colorado River. Both these establishments are finished in good style, extensive, and portions of them are shaded by trees, which, in summer—and summer here lasts nearly the
year around—must afford grateful shades. The residence of the Quartermaster, near the Depot, is surrounded by a garden in which, we were told, “every tropical tree and plant grew and flourished.” The premises are well supplied with water, which is pumped from the river into a large stone tank, from which it is led, through pipes, to every portion of the place. With this precaution, and the many preparations for overcoming fire, it ought to be a long time before another Depot is burned at this place.

Having to kill six or seven days of time at this place, waiting for a steamer to take us up the river, we had the opportunity to learn many useful facts concerning the city, fort, rivers and surrounding country, which we will now try to relate.

First—the city is built upon a sand bed between two mesas, and it is not strange that the houses, fences, etc., look as dusty as the soil. And, speaking of fences, we are reminded that Arizona City is notable for the number and great height of its fences. For instance, every Mexican who has a house has it surrounded with a high fence, made of upright poles.

The walls of the houses, and the roofs, are all thick, so as to keep the inmates cool in summer, when the sun gets hot enough to cook eggs. Nor are they very well provided with windows, which, you know, would be worse than useless in such a climate. The winter weather is, of course, delicious. Balmy breezes from the Gulf of California, sweep over the country, gladdening and strengthening man and every living thing that breathes them. Rain seldom falls, and it is a hard, cold night that can produce anything like ice, although fog we have seen.

Notwithstanding the great heat of summer, the town is healthy, and was it not for the indiscretions of men and women, doctors could not make a living in it.

The stores are well filled with goods—notably that of Wm. B. Hooper & Co.—which is the largest wholesale establishment in the Territory. The trade of the place is immense, and the money that is cast adrift by Government and the Navigation Company occasions lively times and active movements of businessmen.

Through it there runs, every week, six coaches, conveying mails and passengers between Tucson, Arizona; San Diego, California, and many other points. Wells, Fargo & Co. also has a branch office here.

The population, we were told, counting “Indians not taxed,” is not far from 2,000, and a look into the streets satisfied us that many of the population came under the foregoing head.

The tables of the hotel and restaurants were well provided with meats and fish, but few vegetables were to be seen, although tons upon tons of fruit and vegetables might be raised, annually upon the bottoms of the Gila and Colorado.

Not a public bath could we find in the place, which was a great drawback to us, and must have been to other dusty travelers. Board and lodging are cheap, and work appeared to be plenty. The only hotel in the place—the Colorado—is kept by a Chinaman, or, rather, an American citizen of Chinese extraction.

“The Heads,” as the people call the bluffs upon each side of the Colorado, and upon which they confidently expect will rest the first railroad bridge that will span the Colorado, are several hundred feet in height, and rest upon pretty solid foundations. Near them, Mr. Yager [sic], who has resided near Fort Yuma for over a quarter of a century, has a fine ferryboat, and keeps a well-regulated ferry between California and Arizona.
The county seat of one of the richest counties in the Territory, Arizona City is the location of the largest military depot south of San Francisco; headquarters of the Colorado Steam Navigation Company; supply port for all of Southern Arizona, a portion of Northern Arizona and Mexico; and a prominent point of the proposed 32nd parallel railroad. It will be strange, indeed, if it does not expand, in dimensions, until it becomes the first city south of Los Angeles. This, its location warrants us in prophesying.

It is 175 miles from good anchorage ground at the head of the Gulf of California; 50 miles from tide water on the Colorado; and about 200 miles from San Diego, California. The mouth of the Colorado, all of the country along both banks to within a short distance of Arizona City, as well as the country bordering the Gulf, belongs to Mexico, but cannot long remain the property of that “nation,” as it is very essential to the rounding and squaring of United States lines which must soon take place. Indeed, we covet this region, for its mines, seaports, farming and grazing lands, fish, pearls, etc., and for the case and protection it will give us whenever we become possessed of it.

While in Arizona City, we visited “The Yumas”—Fort and people. The fort was commanded by Captain Vivian; the Indians, by Pasqual. Captain Vivian received us kindly, and so did Pasqual. Our observations, while among the Yuma Indians, led us to believe that all of them that have remained virtuous are happy, while those who have departed from the paths of virtue, and taken the trail of vice, are abandoned wretches, not fit to live and unwilling to die. Pasqual was suffering from old age and a sprained knee. He and his tribe have been friendly with all whites ever since the whites thrashed them into submission, over 20 years ago. They like us believe in “curing” the Apaches by the saltpeter process.

EDITOR: Arizona City was founded in 1851 as Colorado City, three years before the area on which it stood would be annexed into the United States as a result of the Gadsden Purchase. It was subsequently renamed Arizona City and, in 1873, the name was again changed, to Yuma, by an act of the Territorial Legislature. From its early days it was the major distribution point for supplying Arizona with the goods and other provisions.34

George F. Hooper established a mercantile business at Arizona City in 1851, primarily to supply provisions for the emigrants passing through that location en route to the California gold fields. Although he sold his interest in 1868, the firm continued under various names (including the William B. Hooper Co.) and by 1871 was operating branch stores in Maricopa Wells, Sacaton, Sweetwater, Camp McDowell and Ehrenberg, all in Arizona, and Ft. Yuma, on the California side of the Colorado River. John S. Carr was a partner in the firm and attended to its business in Arizona City.35

George Martin had a drug and retail store in Arizona City as early as 1856. In the early 1860s he partnered with King Woolsey to establish the Agua Caliente ranch. He sold his interest to Woolsey in 1865 and returned to Arizona City where he was employed by Hooper & Company until 1872, when he re-established a drug business in that city.36

David Neahr came to Arizona City in 1854 as a steamboat engineer for the Colorado Steam
Navigation Company. Later, he served as the forwarding agent for the Mark L. Jacobs Co., arranging for the transshipment of goods from Yuma to the company’s retail establishment in Tucson. In 1879 he constructed a 15-stamp mill on the west bank of the Colorado River to process the ore from the Picacho Mine situated in California’s Imperial County.37

Hall Hanlon also came to Arizona City in 1854, via the California gold fields. Initially employed as a carpenter constructing buildings at Fort Yuma, he later operated a retail store, raised cattle on land south of the city, where he also managed a ferry across the Colorado River.38

L. J. F. Jaeger attempted to establish a ferry business on the Colorado River south of the site that would become Fort Yuma in 1850, but was driven off by the Yuma Indians. He returned a year later with the Army and, under military protection, reestablished a ferry to transport passengers, cattle, sheep and products and materials across the river. Jaeger contracted with the government to haul supplies to the military posts within Arizona until 1863. He was an original stockholder in the Swilling Irrigation and Canal Company, the first irrigation canal builders in the Salt River Valley. Jaeger operated his ferry until 1877 when the Southern Pacific Railroad extended its line through Yuma and completed the bridge across the Colorado.39

In 1851 the U.S. Army established a garrison on a hill on the California side of the Colorado River, but soon abandoned it due to supply problems. A year later, the post was reestablished as Fort Yuma, the purpose of which was to protect travelers from the supposedly war-like Yuma Indians. During the Civil War, when the regular troops were moved east, companies of the 1st California Volunteer Infantry garrisoned the fort. The Quartermaster’s Depot was constructed on the east (Arizona) side of the river in 1866 and thereafter served as the distribution point for the military installations that were established in Arizona76 to deal with the Indian problem.40

The Yumas, or Quechans as they are otherwise known, occupied the land at the confluence of the Gila and Colorado Rivers before Spanish explorers reached that area in 1540. For centuries they grappled, first with the Spanish, then the Mexicans, and finally the Americans for control of the narrow crossing of the Colorado, which was so important to the trade between the Pacific Coast and the interior. The U.S. Army finally subdued them in 1852, shortly after the reestablishment of Fort Yuma. The Yumas were further decimated as a result of their 1857 defeat by the combined forces of the Pima and Maricopa Indians (see above). By 1871, they were generally at peace with the Anglos.41

George A. Johnson and others organized the Colorado Steam Navigation Company in 1852 for the purpose of transporting passengers and freight between San Francisco and points on the Colorado River, with intermediate ports in Mexico. Freight and passengers were transferred between the ocean and river steamers at the head of the Gulf of Mexico. On the Colorado, the company serviced the river ports of Arizona City, Ehrenberg, La Paz and Hardyville. The company met a critical need of the Arizona Territory, as the military and civilians alike were dependent on it for their provisions, goods, equipment, arms and other necessities of life on the frontier.42

Marion and Veil departed Arizona City aboard the steamship Cocopah and traveled up the Colorado River to Ehrenberg, from whence they returned to Prescott via the Ehrenberg Road. Unfortunately, for those of us who would like to read a contemporary description of that part of the trip, Marion’s promise to continue his commentary in a future edition of the Miner went unfulfilled.
25 Hanchett, Catch the Stage, pp.130-131; Fred A. Rozum, “Buckboards and Stagecoaches: Establishing Public Transportation of the Black canyon Route,” JAH, vol. 30 (summer, 1989), pp. 166-167; Veil, “Charles Henry Veil,” p. 68. (See also Leland Hanchett’s article on the Black Canyon Road beginning on page 21 of this publication.)
30 In the 1820s, and for more than 20 years thereafter, American frontiersmen such as Ewing Young, Bill Williams and Sylvestre Pattie trapped along the Gila River, and in 1846 General Steven Watts Kearny’s Army of the West and Captain Philip St. George Cooke’s “Mormon Battalion,” followed this trail to invade California during the United States’ War with Mexico. Thereafter, the Gila River Trail, as it was commonly called, was a popular route for emigrants seeking riches in the California gold fields. In 1858, the Southern (Butterfield) Overland Mail Company invested heavily in improving the route and constructing stations in order to fulfill its federal contract to provide mail service between Missouri and California. Harlan Hague, The Road to California, 1540-1848: The Search for a Southern Overland Route (Glendale, CA: Arthur H. Clarke Co., 1978); Walker and Bufkin, Historical Atlas of Arizona, p. 41; Hafen, Overland Mail, pp. 92-94.
32 In the mid-19th Century, the term “filibuster” (Spanish origin “filibustero) denoted an irregular military adventurer who engaged in an unauthorized military expeditions into a foreign country to foment or support a revolution. Dictionary.com; Richard J. Hinton, Handbook to Arizona, 1877, (Glorieta, NM: Rio Grande Press, 1970), pp.36-40; San Diego Herald, May 9, 1857.
33 Barnes, Arizona Place Names, p. 177; Hinton, Handbook to Arizona, p. 154; Bates, Swilling, pp. 16-17.
34 Farish, History of Arizona, vol. 1, pp. 252-253; Barnes, Arizona Place Names, pp. 499-500.
36 Ibid., vol. 4, pp. 277-278.
38 Arizona State University Library & Archives (www.asu.edu/lib/archives/bios/HANLONH.PDF).
40 Alshuler, Starting With Defiance, pp. 67-72.