

BATTLELINES



A Bimonthly Newsletter of the San Pasqual Battlefield Volunteer Association

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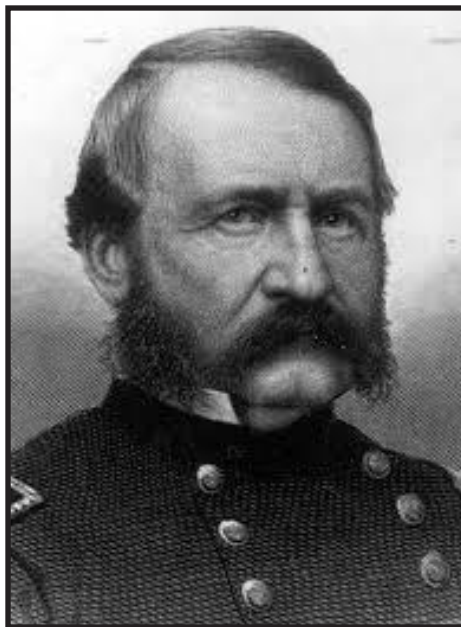
SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2024

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Along the Route of Kearny's Army

By Ellen Sweet,
photos by Melvin Sweet

Have you ever traveled east from San Diego along Interstate 8? I bet you have. If you ventured into Arizona beyond Yuma, but not as far as Gila Bend, you may have zoomed past signage for Exit 102 Painted Rock Dam Road. This area fascinated my husband and me. We always stopped for a break, to explore, and to honor some interesting history. This road leads to Painted Rock Petroglyph Site and Campground. The site is operated by the BLM. It was formerly an Arizona State Park. It's not directly off the interstate, but it is definitely worth the time. There are short trails to follow, but nothing very strenuous. Once you spot the park, you'll be hooked.



Lieutenant William H. Emory

And early explorers and travelers were interested enough to write (and sometimes illustrate) the site. This includes General S.W. Kearny's Army of the West as they headed to California. Letters, journals, and official reports describe this site. Especially helpful is the official report of Lieutenant William H. Emory's *Notes of a Military Reconnoissance*. As an officer of the U.S. Army Corps of Topographical Engineers, Emory kept records of the travels of the Army of the West as the men traveled from Fort Leavenworth to San Diego, including their stop on November 16, 1846—this petroglyph site.

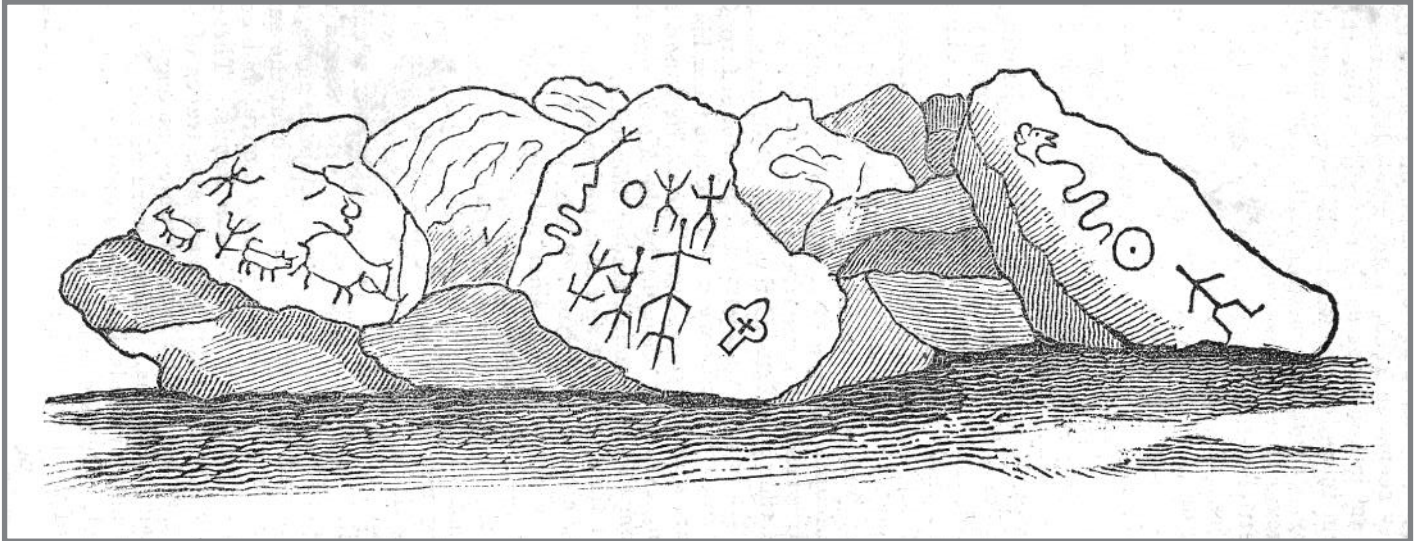
Armed with copies of Emory's drawings, my husband and I spent one of our visits trying to match his images with what we were seeing as we walked the site. But, first, what is a petroglyph? Petroglyphs are images created by altering a rock by chipping, carving, or abrading the surface. While the area is called Painted Rock Petroglyph Site, this is incorrect as the rock is not painted. Petroglyphs are found worldwide and were created by early peoples. This area is associated with the early Native Americans. Technically, painted rocks are referred to as pictographs. As a Native American site, the area should be treated with respect. You will also see inscriptions by early historic passers-by. This is a protected site. It has been included in the National Register of Historic Places since 1977.

Painted Rocks Petroglyph Site is also near the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail and on the newly authorized Butterfield Overland National Historic Trail. The Mormon Battalion passed through this area. And John Russell Bartlett of the U.S. Boundary Commission included many of his drawings of the area from his travels there in June 1852.

continued on page 2

Along the route... Images *continued from page 1*

Painted Rock is an area of hundreds of petroglyphs. It is a very concentrated site—really overwhelming. It was fun for my husband and me to try to find the images that Emory pictured in his report. We did not have copies of the Boundary Commission artwork from Bartlett when we did this exploration. The photographs I want to display here were taken December 1, 1996—approximately 150 years after General Kearny and his army traveled through this same area.



Above is Emory's drawing on page 90 of his report from November 16, 1846. Compare the center rock with the large rock in the bottom photograph taken December 1996. Remember that thousands of people have passed this rock, perhaps modifying it, in the intervening years. You can still clearly identify some of the prominent petroglyphs.

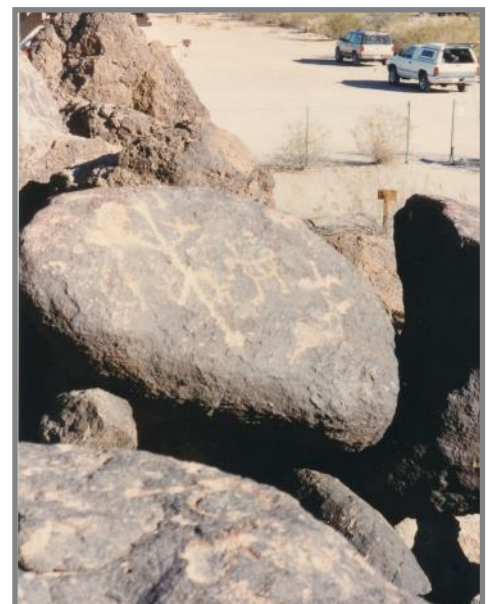
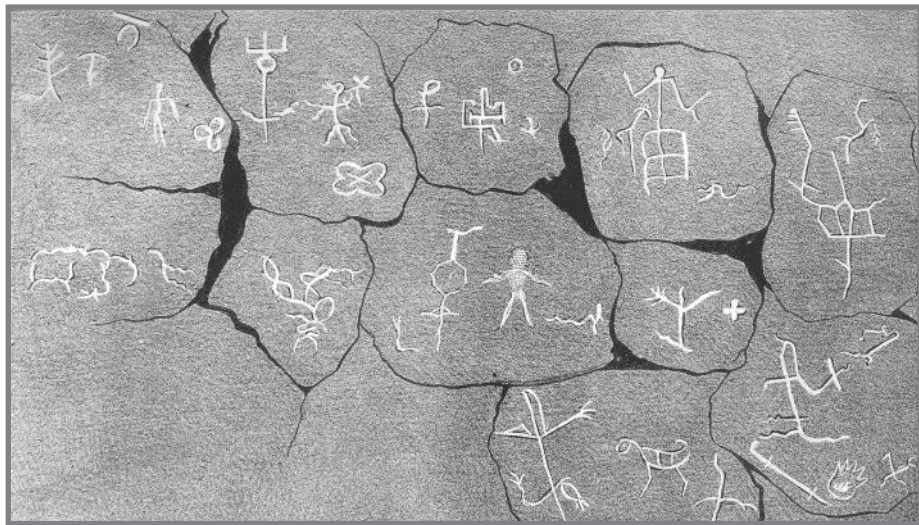


Continued on page 3

Along the route... Images *continued from page 2*



In the page center is another drawing from Emory. It appears to be a combination of many rocks on one drawing. You can see some of the same images on our photographs shown here. You'll also find dated additions to the rocks from travelers in 1879 and 1907.



Continued on page 4

Along the route... Diaries *continued from page 3*

Lieutenant W.H. Emory recorded in his journal the following entry to go along with his diagrams:

November 16 [1846].—The valley on the south side continues wide, and shows continuously the marks of former cultivation. On the north side the hills run close to the river.

After making ten miles we came to a dry creek, coming from a plain reaching far to the south, and then we mounted the table lands to avoid a bend in the river, made by a low chain of black hills coming in from the southeast. The table land was strewn with fragments of black basalt, interspersed with agate, chalcedony, vitrified quartz, and carbonate of lime. About the summit was a mound of granite boulders, blackened by augite, and covered with unknown characters; the work of human hands. These have been copied. On the ground near by were also traces of some of the figures showing some of the hieroglyphics, at least, to have been the work of modern Indians. Others were of undoubted antiquity, and the signs and symbols intended doubtless, to commemorate some great event. One stone bore on it what might be taken, with a little stretch of the imagination, to be a mastodon, a horse, a dog, and a man. Their heads are turned to the east, and this may commemorate the passage of the aborigines of the Gila on their way south.

Many of the modern symbols are in imitation of the antique, and, doubtless, the medicine men of the present day resort to this mound to invoke their unseen spirits, and work the miracles which enable them to hold their sway amongst their credulous race. There are many more weird and mysterious-looking places than this to be found along the banks of the Gila, and the first attraction to the modern Indian was, without doubt, the strange characters he saw described.

Some of the boulders appear to have been written and re-written upon so often it was impossible to get a distinct outline of any of the characters.

We descended into the broad valley of the Gila, skirted on the south side of the table land, black with basalt pebbles, resting on a stratum of the carbonate of lime upon which the river impinged at every flood, and widened its valley.

The hills on the north side were of red and grey rocks, probably granite, irregular in form, varying from 500 to 1,000 feet. Finding no grass, we loosened our mules among the willows and cane.

Other diarists from the Army of the West wrote shorter descriptions. Here is the entry for Captain Henry Smith Turner:

November 16, Monday,—1/4 past 8 were in the saddle —marched over a level plain for about 11 miles, then halted for a half hour to permit our animals to graze a little on an hermaphrodite grass— something between a coarse grass and a weed—they did not relish it much, but picked at it in the absence of anything else. We left the river bottom about noon to take a nearer route across some table land which extends into a bend of the Gila in this part of its course—found much black loose stone in passing over the table land, and at one place where there was an immense heap of this stone, larger than those on the plain surface, we found many figures worked on the larger stones of the heap—figures which were wholly incomprehensible to us, and which we suppose to have been drawn there by the people who ages ago lived in the valley of the Gila, the ruins of whose inhabitants are more visible in a great many places. Reached our present camp a little after 3:00 P.M. find no grass at all, but an abundance of cane which our mules seem to eat voraciously. A delightful day—somewhat cooler than usual—the road generally good. Made today about 18 miles. 727 miles.

Finally, here is Doctor John S. Griffin's belated entry about the mysterious rocks:

17th & 18th, Our march for the last two days has been some 35 or 37 miles—I neglected to note a stone we passed on the 16th or rather a hill of stone—all carved up with Indian hieroglyphics—the sun moon & stars—horned frogs—Attempts at the human form divine, were the most frequent forms—they seemed to be of recent date—whether cut in sport or to commemorate some great event we could not tell—We also camped opposite to a stone last night with the names of Carsons party carved on it as they passed from California to New Mexico last summer.

Hopefully, you can visit these rocks sometime and think about the soldiers who stopped there in 1846.

State Park News: Meet the Staff— Alexandra Latona



Alexandra Latona

Alexandra Latona has served as the State Park Interpreter III for the San Diego Coast District since January 2022. In her role, she manages the education and interpretation program across the district's park units including K-12 in-person programs, Parks Online Resources for Teachers and Students (PORTS), campground programs, visitor centers, museums, and special events. Her favorite programs have included Día de Los Muertos in Old Town San Diego State Historic Park, Celebrating Community and Culture Day of California State Parks Week at San Elijo State Beach, and the Kumeyaay Constellation virtual reality experience in the California State Parks Virtual Adventurer App. Alexandra earned her Bachelor of Arts in History from California State University, Fresno, and her Master of Arts in History with a Concentration in Museum Studies from the University of North Carolina, Greensboro.

She has worked in Museum Education and non-profit management for over a decade including as the Education Manager at the California Museum and Director of Public Programs at the Ocean Institute. Before working with State Parks, she worked at the UCI Libraries in Communications and Events. Alexandra lives in Orange County with her husband and two dogs, where she enjoys kayaking at Newport Back Bay, reading, traveling, and enjoying game nights with friends.



On September 14, Old Town San Diego State Historic Park will once again celebrate Fiestas Patrias. The event marks the traditional commemoration of Mexico's independence from Spain in 1821. It is the start of National Hispanic Heritage Month. It is not the same as Cinco de Mayo, which is the annual celebration to honor Mexico's victory over the French Empire at the Battle of Puebla in 1862,

News of Mexico's independence was slow to reach San Diego. The first adobe homes were established at the foot of Presidio Hill. Trade began to be allowed with foreigners. Land grants were given by the Mexican governors, with the first land grant in present day San Diego County being given to the retired commandant of the Presidio, Francisco María Ruiz in 1823—Rancho Santa María de los Peñasquitos. Other eventual changes were the establishment of the Pueblo of San Diego and the secularization of the missions.

Events on Fiestas Patrias in Old Town SHP will include music, dance, kids' activities, crafts, food, walking tours, and a parade, including the traditional women's equestrian group.

**SPBVA 2024
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*Board Meets 4th Fri,
10 am, except 3rd Fri
in Nov & Dec*

SPBVA Info:

Tom Vilicich
 (951) 674-0185 or
 Trooper284@aol.com

Battlelines:

Ellen Sweet
 Deadline Oct 25, 2024
 elsweet@gmail.com

Grape Day Festival, Escondido, September 14



**Saturday, September 14,
noon—6 pm. Grape Day
Park in Escondido, 321
North Broadway**

**SPBVA members will
host a group table.**

Escondido Historical Society will be hosting the traditional Grape Day Festival on September 14. This is Escondido’s oldest and most famous event. It honors the grape harvest and winemaking heritage of the area.

The festival is family-friendly with old time entertainment, food (including grapes), artisans and crafters, demonstrations, and a chance to do some grape stomping. There will also be a Kid’s Zone. There’s something to please everyone.

Meet some of your fellow SPBVA members, as we continue our tradition of participating. We always support the Escondido community as they supported the early years of San Pasqual Battlefield SHP and its docent group. Meet some of your fellow SPBVA members, as we host a group information table.

Membership Renewals

Donald & Vicky Coates, Escondido
Ellen Sweet, La Jolla

Welcome to New Member

Lisa Woodward, Temecula

A big THANK YOU to R. Rhodes Trussell for his donation

Dragoon Level Members

- **Bob & Judy Bowman**
- **Justin & Michelle Burkhard**
- **Carole Chavez**
- **Donald & Vicky Coates**
- **Jane Stokes Cowgill**
- **Jake Enriquez Family**
- **Foucar Family**
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- **David Herbert**
- **Janell Percy**
- **Ellen Sweet**
- **Gerald & Norma Tonnell**
- **Thomas M. Vilicich**
- **Bob & Robyn Wohl**



JOIN NOW! Our non-profit organization supports the activities of the San Pasqual Battlefield State Historic Park. All members receive *BATTLELINES*, a 10% discount on all bookstore items, special programs, field trips, history discussions, and opportunities to participate in our Living History Sundays and in our annual December re-enactment of the Battle.

SAN PASQUAL BATTLEFIELD VOLUNTEER ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

P.O. Box 300816, Escondido, CA 92030-0816

(760) 737-2201

www.spbva.org

This is my/our membership application & dues for the following category:

- Student (\$5)
 - Sustaining (\$50)
 - Dragoon (\$100 or more)
 - Individual (\$15)
 - Organization (\$25)
 - Benefactor (\$1,000 or more)
 - Family (\$20)
 - Corporate (\$100)
- Please make checks payable to: SPBVA

NAME(S) _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____ EMAIL _____

OCCUPATION _____ INTEREST/SKILLS _____

Two Books to Consider Reading

SPBVA’s newest member Lisa Woodward coauthored with Gary DuBois their new book *The Temecula Massacre: A Forgotten Battlefield Landscape of the Mexican-American War*. Lisa is the archivist for the Pechanga Band of Indians and Gary DuBois is the founding director of the Pechanga Band’s cultural resources department. This is an important book for SPBVA members to read. Many of you are familiar with happenings in Pauma after the San Pasqual Battle. Chapters on San Pasqual, Pauma, and the Mormon Battalion are included in the book. Gary and Lisa’s book provides even more to the story with the continuing events in Temecula. The book was published by Great Oak Press in Temecula and is a significant addition to the complex interrelationships in our area before statehood. Congratulations, Lisa! If our park were open, it would be great to hear about your book.

SPBVA’s board member Stan Smith recommends another book about 1846, but from a different section of California. His suggestion is *Macnamara’s Irish Colony and the United States Taking of California in 1846* authored by John F. Fox. This book was written in 1999 and is difficult to purchase. In searching for the book, I found a second book by Fox on the subject, *El Proyecto Macnamara: the Maverick Irish Priest and the Race to Seize California, 1844-1846*. This 2014 book is easier to locate, but I’ve not had a chance to read it.

Information available online states that the Irish priest Eugene Macnamara wanted to allow 3,000 Irish families (this could mean about 12,000 people) to settle along California’s coast. He tried to promote his idea to Mexican authorities and visited the San Joaquin Valley and other areas, but his timing was wrong. The Americans occupied Monterey, California, and began taking over the country. Macnamara supposedly died at sea in 1853 without succeeding in his plan. Ironically, the Irish potato famine caused thousands of Irish to arrive in America and some made their way to California.