

UNITED STATES MILITARY POSTS ON THE MEXICO BORDER (1856 TO PRESENT)

Summary of Theme

The operations and posts of the United States military are an important part of the history of the Santa Cruz Valley. The first United States Army post was established here in 1856, soon after the region was purchased from Mexico. The first duty was to protect mines and ranches from Apache attacks, which escalated just before troops were withdrawn at the beginning of the Civil War to be redeployed in the East. For a few months in 1862, the Confederate flag flew over the region, until Union troops arrived from California and recaptured it following the westernmost skirmishes of the Civil War. In 1865, United States troops were moved closer to the border to defend it against French troops that had invaded Mexico and occupied Sonora. Between 1866 and 1886, several new posts were established, and this region was the frontline of major campaigns to pacify the Apaches.

A new post was established in Nogales in 1910, when the Mexican Revolution threatened to spill across the border. In 1916, this region was a staging area for the Punitive Expedition led by General John J. Pershing; it crossed into Mexico in pursuit of Pancho Villa after he attacked a town in southern New Mexico. Until the beginning of United States involvement in World War I, the military presence was swelled by National Guard units mobilized from western states to protect the border. From 1918 until 1933, the border was guarded by African-American cavalry and infantry regiments known as Buffalo Soldiers.

During World War II, airfields established in the region were important training bases. Due to the dry climate of the area, thousands of decommissioned aircraft have been stored here since the end of World War II. Bomber groups and intercontinental missiles deployed here were critical parts of the national defense during the decades of the Cold War. Today, Davis-Monthan Air Force Base continues to serve important roles for the United States military and the local economy.

Description of Theme

Securing New American Territory

The first expedition of the United States Army into the region was by the Mormon Battalion in 1846, passing through on its way to help seize California during the Mexican War. The Santa Cruz Valley was included in 30,000 mi² of northern Sonora that became part of the United States after the Gadsden Purchase was approved by Congress in 1854. American troops did not immediately take control of the new territory, which is now southern Arizona and southwestern New Mexico. It was two years later, when four companies of the 1st Dragoons cavalry regiment arrived from New Mexico to replace the small Mexican garrison that had remained at the Tucson Presidio to protect the residents.

The commander of the United States force, Major Enoch Steen, did not approve of the housing, water, pasture, or people in Tucson. Disobeying his orders to establish a post there, he led his men 60 miles south and set up Camp Moore near the recently reoccupied ranch at Calabazas. The hacienda there was built in the ruins of a Spanish period mission *visita* at the confluence

of Sonoita Creek and the Santa Cruz River, long abandoned due to Apache raids. Renovated ranch buildings served as quarters for Major Steen and his family.

With the arrival of military protection, the ranch, leased to the post by the ex-Governor of Sonora, quickly swelled with American squatters. Ignacio Pesqueira, the new governor, allowed quartermaster wagons to cross into Sonora for supplies. The following year, Steen received orders from Colonel Benjamin Bonneville, the departmental commander in Santa Fe, to move closer to Tucson. Deriding Tucson as inhabited largely by peddlers of whiskey and flesh, Steen instead moved his camp 25 miles northeast to the headwaters of Sonoita Creek. The new post was named Fort Buchanan in honor of the recently inaugurated President James Buchanan.

In May and June of 1857, a major campaign was conducted against the Apaches under the orders of Colonel Bonneville. A large detachment from Fort Buchanan was led by Captain Richard S. Ewell, as Major Steen was ill with malaria. Joined by troops from forts in New Mexico, the force searched the rugged mountains along the present Arizona-New Mexico line until it found and attacked an Apache camp on the upper Gila River.

Unhappy Outpost

Both health and morale were chronically low at Fort Buchanan, one of the most remote posts in the country. Malarial mosquitos bred in nearby marshy cienegas, making it an unhealthy place to live. In 1858, the post doctor reported that only two occupants of the fort remained free of malaria. Housing for the soldiers was also inadequate, consisting of crude huts constructed of upright logs, with the gaps chinked with mud and roofs of mud. Scattered over a half-mile area, the huts were not protected by a surrounding palisade, and Apaches often prowled through the post at night.

In 1858, two of the four companies of 1st Dragoons at Fort Buchanan left for California, and the following year, another company was relieved by a company of the 8th Infantry. A detachment of the Mounted Rifles also arrived from New Mexico. The new garrison was poorly equipped. For the 93 soldiers, there were only 56 horses, many of them worn-out steeds left over from the Mexican War. Mules were also used during field operations, and proved to be better suited to the long treks and rough terrain. The soldiers were issued variations of eight different types of firearms, but most of the ammunition was of one kind, so many weapons were useless. Despite these obstacles, under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Isaac V. D. Reeve of the 8th Infantry, the troops of Fort Buchanan conducted several campaigns in reprisal of Apache raids in the region, with the largest campaign being conducted in November 1860.

Escalation of Conflicts with Apaches

When a company of the 1st Dragoons returned in 1860, the 8th Infantry left to establish Fort Breckinridge on the nearby San Pedro River. The Dragoons at Fort Buchanan were soon relieved by the 7th Infantry, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Pitcairn Morrison, for which the post became regimental headquarters. Shortly after this, Fort Buchanan became the focus of a famous incident that escalated hostilities between Apaches and Americans.

In January 1861, a group of Apaches attacked Johnny Ward's ranch on Sonoita Creek, stealing cattle and abducting Ward's stepson, Félix Martínez. Under the impression that Chiricahua

Apaches were responsible, Ward traveled upstream to Fort Buchanan and asked the commander to send troops east to Apache Pass to retrieve the boy and the cattle. Morrison sent a company under the command of Second Lieutenant George Bascom, fresh from West Point. Under a flag of truce, Bascom met with Cochise, leader of a band of Chiricahuas camped nearby. Cochise told Bascom that a band of Coyoteros (White Mountain Apaches) had committed the raid. As insurance for the boy's return, however, Bascom seized and took prisoner Cochise and the six others in his group, which included three relatives. Witnesses report that an infuriated Cochise jumped up, slashed an opening in the tent wall with a knife, and escaped in a hail of gunfire. The six others were still hostages. Cochise stayed near and kept close watch on the military camp, and he was quickly joined by other Chiricahua Apaches and some warriors of the White Mountain band.

Over the next two months, a series of negotiations for hostage exchanges, more betrayals by Bascom, and violent reprisals on both sides resulted in the execution of Cochise's companions, the killing of 150 Americans, the destruction of five Butterfield Stage stations, and ambushes of a wagon train and a stagecoach. In February, more troops from Fort Buchanan and Fort Breckenridge reached Apache Pass and the Indians scattered. The kidnapped boy, Félix, remained with the Indians and later became the noted United States scout Mickey Free, but the Bascom Affair had started a long war between the United States and the Apaches.

At the beginning of the Civil War later in 1861, United States troops in the Santa Cruz Valley and every other post in Arizona were ordered east. Fort Buchanan was burned to prevent it from being used by Confederate soldiers. Camp Lowell, established the previous year in what is now downtown Tucson, was abandoned. Thinking they had defeated the Americans, the Apaches scavenged for usable items at the abandoned forts and increased their raiding in the region. Almost every mine, ranch, and town had to be abandoned. The only holdouts against the Apaches were the town of Tucson; Sylvester Mowry's silver mine, swelled with miners from other claims seeking protection; and Pete Kitchen's ranch on Potrero Creek, just north of the United States-Mexico border. Kitchen described the stops on the dangerous road to Sonora as "Tucson, Tubac, Tumacácori, and to Hell."

The Civil War on the Border

The Confederate Territory of Arizona, including most of what is now southern Arizona and southern New Mexico, was designated in 1861 by Lieutenant Colonel John R. Baylor of the 2nd Texas Mounted Rifles. The Confederate government in Richmond, Virginia, quickly recognized the territory, defined as all of the Territory of New Mexico that lay south of the 34th parallel. General Henry H. Sibley, commander of the Confederate Army of New Mexico, ordered Captain Sherod Hunter from Baylor's regiment to Tucson to establish headquarters there.

Hunter arrived in Tucson with less than 70 men in February 1862, and raised the Confederate flag. Numerous southern sympathizers were among the Anglo residents. Many were from southern states, but there was also widespread anger against the United States for withdrawing all military protection from the Apaches. The few remaining Union sympathizers were rounded up, and those who did not swear an oath of allegiance to the Confederacy were forced to leave town and forfeit their properties. Gaining some recruits in Tucson, Hunter's Arizona Rangers were able to secure 3,000 percussion caps from Sylvester Mowry's mine, and additional supplies were obtained in Sonora.

Hunter traveled north to Ammi M. White's flour mill and surrounding Pima villages on the Gila River, where he captured an advance party of the approaching 1st California Cavalry. To slow the advance of the main force of 2,300 California Volunteers from Fort Yuma, Hunter sent detachments to burn the hay stockpiled at former Butterfield Overland Stage stations between Yuma and Tucson. Perhaps reaching the banks of the Colorado River, this was the farthest western penetration of the Confederate Army, and this action delayed the Union invasion of Arizona by more than a month. A skirmish was fought on 3 March 1862 between Hunter's men and a detachment from Fort Yuma at Stanwix Station, an abandoned Butterfield station on the Gila River. This incident was the westernmost skirmish of the Civil War. Afterward, Hunter sent a detachment of 10 men to Picacho Pass between Tucson and Phoenix to watch for the approaching California Column.

The second skirmish between United States and Confederate troops in what is now Arizona was fought at Picacho Pass on 15 April 1862, between a small number of Union troops and the 10 Confederate pickets. Several of the Confederates were killed or taken prisoner, and three Union soldiers were killed. Swayed by exaggerated reports of the size of the Confederate force in Tucson, the Union force withdrew to the Gila River. Receiving accurate reports of the large size of the approaching Union force, Captain Hunter ordered the evacuation of Tucson on 14 May, leaving only a small detachment behind to notify him of the arrival of Union troops. The Civil War in Arizona was over.

On 20 May 1862, Lieutenant Colonel Joseph R. West led four companies of infantry and cavalry of the California Volunteers into Tucson, and the remaining Confederate detachment fled. General James H. Carleton, overall commander of the California column, soon arrived with more troops. Carleton announced the creation of the Territory of Arizona, named himself Governor, and declared martial law.

Camp Lowell was reoccupied on the future site of the Santa Rita Hotel in downtown Tucson. The house of Confederate sympathizer Palatine Robinson was confiscated and used as headquarters. Under Major David Fergusson, military surveyors mapped the town and its agricultural fields along the Santa Cruz River so they could identify the properties of Confederate sympathizers for confiscation. Two companies of cavalry were sent south to Sylvester Mowry's silver mine, where they arrested Mowry and Palatine Robinson, who was visiting.

The Union soldiers established the Tucson Supply Depot, using confiscated buildings at the Plaza de las Armas, within the crumbling walls of the old presidio, and at the Plaza de la Mesilla to the south. Tucson became the major supply depot for posts between Fort Yuma and New Mexico garrisoned by the California Volunteers. In July and August of 1862, a temporary post was occupied at El Reventon, a ranch on the Santa Cruz River 35 miles south of Tucson. In 1864, El Reventon was reoccupied and one company of the 1st California Cavalry was stationed at the abandoned Calabazas Ranch.

Gold and silver strikes to the north and west during the early 1860s increased Washington's interest, and Arizona was declared a separate United States territory. A north-south line was chosen to separate Arizona and New Mexico because it broke up the pro-southern area that spanned the southern parts of both territories.

When the Civil War ended in 1864, the Tucson Supply Depot was moved north to Fort Whipple, the new military headquarters in Arizona. That same year, units of the 1st California Cavalry

were stationed at Tubac to provide protection from Apache attacks. The following year, the cavalrymen at Tubac were relieved by companies of the 7th California Infantry.

Defending the Border

In 1865, French forces supporting Napoleon III's puppet, the Emperor Maximilian, occupied Sonora as far north as Magdalena. Rumors spread that they might try to reclaim the Gadsden Purchase. General John S. Mason, the new commander of the District of Arizona, was ordered to transfer the Tubac garrison to Calabazas, 8 miles from the border. Leaving only a detachment at Tubac, companies of the 7th California Infantry were repositioned to build and garrison the new post, dubbed Fort Mason, located on the site of old Camp Moore. There, they were reinforced by a battalion of the Native California Cavalry. Ignacio Pesqueria, the new Governor of Sonora, fled the French troops and took refuge at Calabazas with his own troops. With arms and ammunition provided by the American commander, the governor took his troops back across the border, defeated the French troops, and regained control of Sonora.

When an epidemic affected one-third of the United States troops at Fort Mason and its Tubac outpost in the fall and winter of 1865, vacant houses at Tubac were used to quarantine the sick. Early in 1866, the California Volunteers headed west to be mustered out, leaving behind units of the 1st Cavalry and the 14th Infantry. In compliance of 1866 General Orders to rename unfortified forts in Arizona as camps, the commander changed the designation of Fort Mason to Camp McKee. When another epidemic struck in the fall of that year – about the same time the French forces began withdrawing – the post was abandoned and the garrison was moved to Camp Cameron, 15 miles northeast of Tubac, in the foothills of the Santa Rita Mountains.

Scouting, Escort, and Pursuit Duty

In 1866, a company of the 1st Cavalry arrived in Tucson and cleared trees for a new post in a location east of town, but which is now in the heart of the city. The new post was named Fort Lowell in honor of a Union officer killed during a Civil War battle in Virginia. Later that year, the designation changed from fort to camp in compliance with General Orders. Camp Lowell, occupied by companies of the 1st Cavalry and 32nd Infantry, was primarily a tent encampment, with ramadas built over the tents for shade, and a guardhouse, magazine, and ordnance storeroom built of adobe. Officers with families rented quarters in town, and Apache scouts lived in a settlement half a mile to the south. Papago scouts were stationed at Calabazas.

In 1867, a temporary convalescent camp was set up in the Cañada del Oro north of Tucson by troops from Camp Grant who were recovering from malaria. Apache raids were increasing in southern Arizona, and ranchers and residents of smaller towns asked for protection. Between May 1867, and March 1868, troops of the 1st Cavalry re-occupied the post at Tubac, using abandoned buildings, and guarded the Santa Rita mines.

By the time Fort Buchanan was abandoned at the beginning of the Civil War, work had already begun on moving the post about a half mile northeast. When troops of the 1st Cavalry moved from Camp Tubac to the selected location in 1868, they found enough neatly stacked adobe bricks, left in 1861, to construct the necessary buildings. The new post above Sonoita Creek was named Camp Crittenden after a colonel of the 32nd Infantry, then commanding the District of Tucson. The garrison actively scouted and pursued Apaches raiding ranches in the region, seeing much action during 1870 and 1871.

In 1870, Camp Lowell was expanded by claiming 367 acres to the east and south, in the area known today as Armory Park. A new guardhouse, adjutant's office, and an arsenal were constructed of adobe, but the soldiers continued living in tents. Between 1866 and 1873, various companies of 1st, 3rd, 5th, and 8th Cavalry, and of the 14th, 21st, 23rd, 32nd Infantry regiments were rotated through the post.

Incited by a series of editorials in the *Arizona Miner* newspaper, in April 1871, a party of approximately 150 Anglos, Mexican-Americans, and Tohono O'odham from Tucson ambushed a camp of Aravaipa and Pinal Apaches on Aravaipa Creek, where they were under the nominal protection of nearby Camp Grant. Most of the men were away from the camp, so the more than 100 Apaches killed were mostly women. Twenty-seven children were also captured, and the settlement was burned. Dubbed the Camp Grant Massacre by the eastern United States press, the perpetrators were put on trial by order of President Ulysses Grant. A jury of southern Arizona residents, who considered the attack justifiable revenge for every Apache depredation of the previous decades, acquitted all the defendants.

Subjugating the Apaches

The incident near Camp Grant convinced the President and military leaders in Washington that the conflict between Americans and Indians in the Southwest had to be resolved. Under orders to end the last Indian resistance in the region, General George Crook was assigned command of the Department of Arizona in June 1871. In the fall of 1872, he began a campaign to defeat the last groups of Yavapais and Western Apaches who resisted relocation to reservations.

Needing troops for this campaign, Crook ordered the abandonment of Camp Crittenden, but sent a troop of the 5th Cavalry to protect local farmers until after the harvest. This detachment left at the end of the year to participate in the campaign, leaving behind only a small garrison to remove government property. Crittenden was finally abandoned in June 1873. That same year, a military telegraph system connecting San Diego with Yuma, Tucson, and Prescott was completed, and was used during the campaign. Ultimately, Cochise's band of Chiricahua Apaches agreed to settle on a reservation in southeastern Arizona. With the considerable help of Apache scouts from other bands, the Yavapai and Western Apache were defeated, and the few survivors were forced onto reservations. The last holdouts surrendered by 1875.

As the edge of the growing town of Tucson reached Camp Lowell, officers became concerned about increasing illnesses among the troops and misbehavior of soldiers in town. In 1873, the post was moved 7 miles northeast of Tucson to the bank of the Rillito, where there was also better grazing, water, and wood. The new post retained the name of Camp Lowell, and troops of the 5th Cavalry replaced those of the 1st Cavalry and 23rd Infantry. The garrison occasionally responded to Apache attacks on ranches and logging camps, but mostly performed escort duty. The designation was changed to Fort Lowell in 1879, when all camps in Arizona were changed to forts in compliance with a new set of General Orders.

Front of the Last Apache Campaigns

Crook returned to Arizona in September 1882 to track down the last bands of Chiricahua Apaches who refused reservation life. After Mexico signed a treaty allowing United States troops to chase hostile Apaches into northern Mexico, Crook led about 50 soldiers and 200

Quechan, Mohave, and Western Apache scouts into Sonora to chase a Chiricahua band led by the shaman called Geronimo by Mexicans. Chased into the Sierra Madre, Geronimo's band agreed to return to the reservation at San Carlos, arriving in February 1884. However, tired of the hardships and humiliations of reservation life, some of the Chiricahuas deserted the reservation later that year, fleeing to Sonora. Crook led another expedition after them.

An agreement brokered by Crook and Geronimo for the Chiricahuas to return to the reservation following a two-year imprisonment in the East was rejected by President Grover Cleveland and General Philip Sheridan, and some of the Apaches escaped again. A furious Sheridan ordered Crook to stop using Apache scouts and to ship the remaining Chiricahuas by railroad to permanent exile in Florida. Crook asked to be relieved of command, and he was succeeded by General Nelson Miles.

Miles led 5,000 troops – a fifth of the United States Army – after Geronimo's band. He ordered the establishment of a heliograph network that connected United States military posts in the region. Using mirrors, the heliograph directed beams of sunlight up to 40 miles in any direction, and shutters interrupting the beam allowed messages to be sent using the dots and dashes of Morse code.

The impressive United States force, backed by this advanced military communication system, never engaged the renegade Apaches. Geronimo was tracked down by Chiricahua scouts and agreed to surrender for the fourth and last time. After the ceremony was held in Skeleton Canyon in southeastern Arizona on 4 September 1886, Geronimo, his companions, and even the loyal Apache scouts were shipped to exile and imprisonment in Florida, where many died of unfamiliar diseases. The Chiricahua Apaches were not allowed to return to the Southwest until 1913, when the few survivors were given a part of the Mescalero Apache reservation in central New Mexico.

Troops from Fort Lowell participated in the Apache campaigns of the 1880s, and the post served as the major supply depot to posts closer to the field of operations. During this time, the fort quartered companies of the 4th Cavalry and the 8th Infantry. With the final surrender of Geronimo in 1886, troops were gradually withdrawn from southern Arizona. In the late 1880s, Fort Lowell gained a reputation as a prestigious place to be stationed, and it was designated the regimental headquarters of the 6th Cavalry. The fort was abandoned in 1891, when troops were needed for General Miles' campaign against the Sioux in South Dakota.

Protecting the Border during the Mexican Revolution

In the fall of 1910, Mexican supporters of Francisco I. Madero revolted against the 30-year dictatorship of President Porfirio Diaz. Mexico became embroiled in a violent revolution, with opposing political and military forces struggling for control of the country. Wary of the violence spilling across the border, United States troops were stationed at Nogales, Naco, and Douglas in 1910, joining the previously established Fort Huachuca in a line of defense.

After the assassination of President Madero in February 1913, Sonorans refused to accept Victoriano Huerta as his successor. Huerta was the former Diaz general who had betrayed Madero. Sonora and the twin border towns of Nogales became a focus of the revolution. On 13 March 1913, rebels led by the Sonoran strongman, General Álvaro Obregón, attacked Nogales, Sonora, which was guarded by Huerta's troops under Colonel Bernardo Reyes and

rurales (rural police) under Colonel Emilio Kosterlitzky. Sightseers came from all over Arizona to witness the Battle of Nogales, picnicking while they watched. Outmatched, Kosterlitzky and his men fled across the border into Arizona and turned over their arms to the 5th United States Cavalry. Following his success in Nogales, Obregón won another battle a few days later in nearby Cananea.

In April 1914, the coastal city of Vera Cruz was seized by the United States Navy to protect important American-owned oil fields, and President Huerta was forced to resign and flee. Obregón called General Francisco “Pancho” Villa, the cattle rustler turned revolutionary leader of Chihuahua, to a meeting in northern Mexico to determine who would take over as president. Consensus could not be reached. Wary of Villa’s power, Obregón decided to throw his support to Venustiano Carranza, the governor of Coahuila in northeastern Mexico. In another attempt to broker a peaceful solution between the warring factions, General John J. “Blackjack” Pershing, a veteran of Miles’ Apache campaign, hosted a meeting in Nogales, Arizona, on 28 August 1914. On Pershing’s staff was a young officer named Dwight D. Eisenhower. Villa arrived with 50 bodyguards, and Obregón arrived by train along with Sonora’s Governor José María Maytorena and Carranza. This meeting was also inconclusive.

Mexico elected a new Constitutionalist government, with Carranza as president, in 1915. After receiving the support of Obregón, Carranza’s major opponent was Villa. On 26 November 1915, a battle occurred in Nogales, Sonora, between Villa’s famous Division del Norte and the united Constitutionalist force under the command of Obregón. Private Stephen B. Little and two other soldiers of the United States 12th Infantry were killed by Obregón’s soldiers when they mistakenly directed gunfire at American troops guarding the nearby border. American soldiers then opened fire, but there was a ceasefire as soon as the mistake was recognized, and General Obregón and Colonel William H. Sage met at the border and exchanged apologies. Camp Nogales was renamed Camp Little on 14 December 1915.

Losing a series of battles, Villa was pushed northward by Obregón until his back was against the United States border, where the Villistas suffered a decisive defeat at Agua Prieta, the bordertown opposite Douglas, Arizona. Branded an outlaw by the Carranza government, Villa sought refuge in the mountains of Chihuahua. On 9 March 1916, Villa attacked the small border town and United States military camp at Columbus, New Mexico. This was after President Woodrow Wilson recognized the government of Carranza and allowed his troops to cross the border and use the Southern Pacific Railroad as transport to Nogales, Sonora, thereby gaining an advantage. Elements of the 13th Cavalry repulsed the attack, but there were 18 American casualties, including many civilians.

Chasing Pancho Villa

President Wilson ordered General Pershing to organize an expedition to pursue Villa into Mexico. The expedition force of almost 5,000 that entered Mexico in mid-March included the 7th, 10th, 11th, and 13th Cavalry regiments, 6th and 16th Infantry regiments, and part of the 6th Field Artillery. Soon joining were the 5th Cavalry, the 17th, 24th, and 25th Infantry regiments, and engineer units, expanding the size of the expedition force to about 12,000. This campaign represented the last time that United States horse cavalry went into action against an enemy. It was also the first mechanized military expedition, with motorcars used to transport troops. Airplanes were also used as spotters, marking the beginning of the Army Air Corps. A young officer named George S. Patton rode in a truck during the expedition, and foresaw the day when motor vehicles would replace horses on battlefields.

Over its 11-month duration, Pershing's Punitive Expedition never directly engaged Villa. Instead, the American force fought dozens of skirmishes with small bands of Villa's soldiers and also clashed with regular Mexican Army units, sent by President Carranza to prevent Pershing from penetrating too far south. The most serious battle with the Mexican Army in June nearly decimated a detachment of the 10th Cavalry Buffalo Soldiers, an African-American regiment based at Fort Huachuca near the Arizona-Mexico border.

In the summer of 1916, President Wilson ordered the states on and near the border to mobilize the National Guard and send them to the border. Some 160,000 guardsmen were soon bivouacked along the border from California to Texas. Camp Little in Nogales swelled from 900 to 12,000 troops. National Guard units from California and Idaho were stationed in Nogales and patrolled the Arizona-Mexico border. In March, 1917, the newly formed 35th Infantry was transferred from Douglass, Arizona, to Camp Little, relieving the 12th Infantry.

Due to the limited success of the expedition, the high cost of keeping United States troops on the border, and the escalation of World War I in Europe, President Wilson ordered the withdrawal of Pershing's force in January 1917. Pershing later commanded the Allied forces in World War I, and his Lieutenant Eisenhower eventually became commander of the Allies during World War II. General Obregón became president of Mexico twice during the 1920s, and initiated many important and lasting reforms before being assassinated. Pancho Villa retired to a ranch in Chihuahua, but was assassinated in 1923.

Guarding the Border during World War I

The 10th Cavalry Buffalo Soldiers were assigned the mission of guarding the United States-Mexico border during World War I, and companies were stationed at Nogales, Arivaca, and Lochiel. Tensions rose on the border at Nogales in 1918, when rumors spread about German "agents provocateurs" operating in the area, providing military training to Mexican soldiers. On 27 August 1918, a Mexican citizen crossing at the border station from the American side refused to stop for questioning. When a U.S. Customs agent and a soldier of the 35th Infantry chased after him, shots were fired and the situation quickly escalated into a battle between regular troops and civilians on both sides. By the time it was over, three troops of the 10th Cavalry and three companies of the 35th Infantry were involved in what became known as the Battle of Ambos Nogales. Three days after the battle, more than 2,000 troops of the all-black 25th Infantry arrived to provide additional protection.

The Last Army Posts

After World War I, all army posts in Arizona were closed except Fort Apache and Fort Huachuca, while limited border patrol operations continued at Camp Little and Camp Newell. Camp Little, which had become very important to the economy of Nogales, was finally closed in January 1933. One of the last constructions related to the cavalry-era Army in Arizona was the R.O.T.C. stables at the University of Arizona, built in 1935. For the first time since 1856, there were no United States Army posts in the Santa Cruz Valley.

Training Flyers during World War II

During the 1930s, there was little military presence in the region except some training of military pilots at Davis-Monthan Field, the Tucson municipal airport dedicated in 1927, by Charles Lindbergh, after his famous transatlantic flight. In preparation for involvement in

World War II, Davis-Monthan was taken over by the military in 1940, for use as a training base. The field was expanded from 300 to 1,600 acres, and the runways were lengthened to handle the largest bombers.

During World War II, Davis-Monthan was a training base for bombers, including the B-18 Bolo, B-24 Liberator, and B-29 Superfortress. North and west of Tucson, Marana Field and Ryan Field were also established for civilian training of military flyers. From when it opened in August 1942, to its deactivation in September 1945, Marana Field was the largest pilot-training center in the world, training some 10,000 flyers.

At the end of the war, Davis-Monthan Air Force Base was selected as a storage site for decommissioned aircraft due to Tucson's dry climate and ample available space. The national aircraft storage site, nicknamed the Aircraft Boneyard, was initially used to store mothballed B-29s and C-47s, but all surplus military aircraft were eventually stored there.

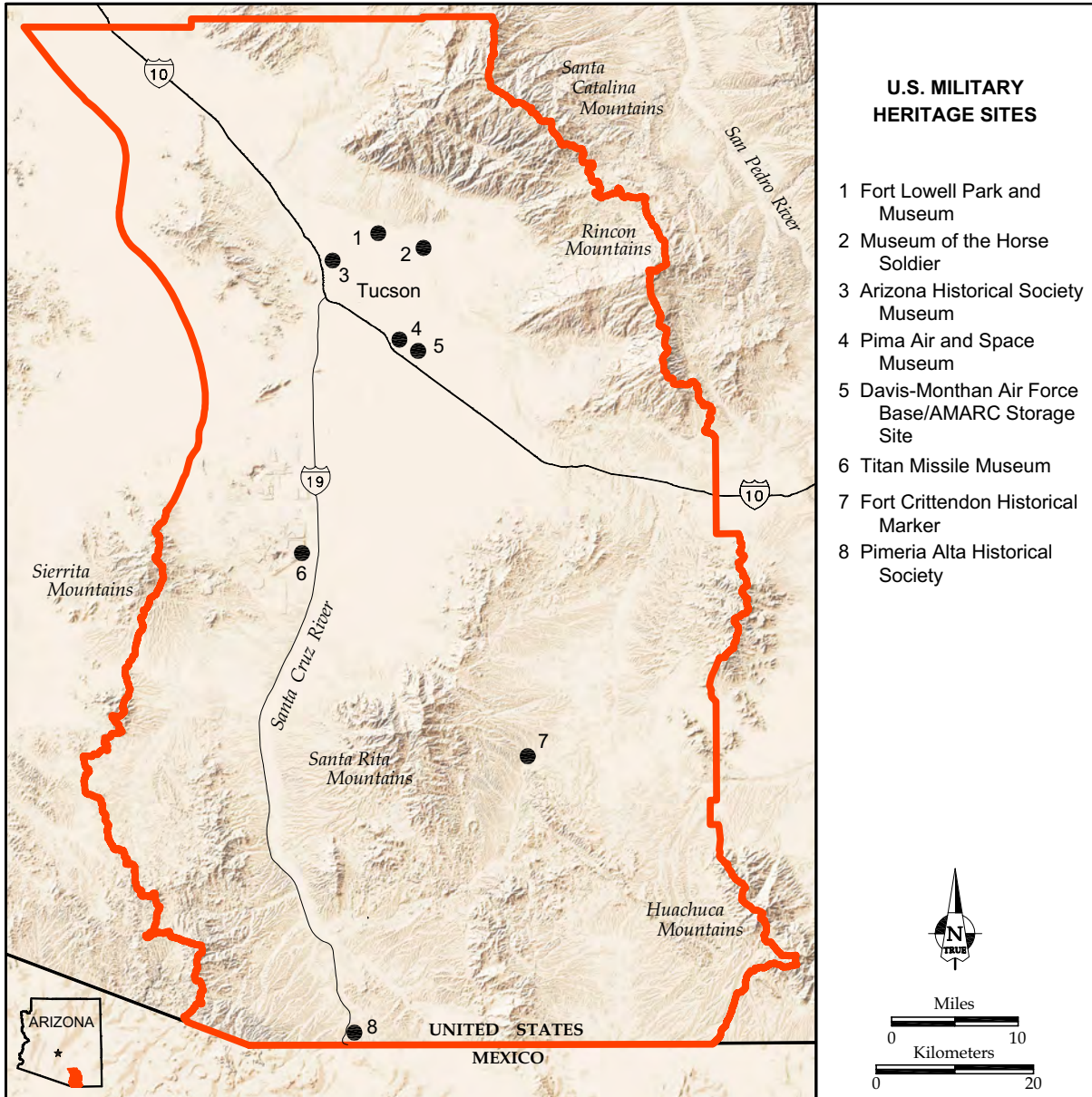
Cold War Bases

During the Cold War, starting in 1946, two B-29 Bomber Groups of the Strategic Air Command were based at Davis-Monthan until 1953, when the Superfortress was replaced by the new jet bomber, the B-47 Stratojet. That same year, a squadron of F-86A Sabre Jet fighters of the Air Defense Command were first based at the airfield. In the early 1960s, a wing of U-2 reconnaissance aircraft was transferred to Davis-Monthan, combat crew training for the F-4 Phantom was initiated, and 18 Titan II missile sites were built within 25 miles of Tucson and manned by the 390th Strategic Missile Wing.

In 1971, the 355th Tactical Fighter Wing was re-activated at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, flying the A-7 Corsair II, and the F-4s moved to Luke Air Force Base near Phoenix. The U-2 Wing was transferred to Beale Air Force Base, California, in 1976. That same year, command of the base was transferred from Strategic Air Command to the Tactical Air Command, and the primary mission changed from bombers to attack fighters. With replacement of the A-7 by the A-10 Thunderbolt II in 1979, Davis-Monthan became the primary training location for flying and tactical maneuvers, including use of the Goldwater Bombing and Gunnery Range, just to the west.

During the 1980s, the 836th Air Division was activated at Davis-Monthan to oversee multiple units. The 868th Tactical Missile Training Group was activated to train personnel in the Ground Launched Cruise Missile and deployed units to Europe that were so important in the United States position which secured the end of the Cold War. Also arriving during that decade were the 41st Electronic Combat Squadron and the 42nd Airborne Command and Control Squadron, both flying versions of the Lockheed C-130 aircraft, and the 602nd Tactical Air Control Wing was activated with subordinate units covering the western states. In 1992, the 836th Air Division was inactivated, and the 355th Fighter Wing was redesignated the 355th Wing.

Today, Davis-Monthan is one of the most important bases in the U.S. Air Force, with its variety of important missions, training facilities, proximity to the Goldwater Range, extensive size, aircraft storage facilities, good weather, and location away from heavy air traffic areas. It is a major unit of Air Combat Command, and is joined by Air Force Material Command, Air Force Special Operations Command, and Air Reserve Command. Headquarters 12th Air Force is the air component of United States Southern Command, with responsibility for the Caribbean



United States military heritage sites in the proposed National Heritage Area.

and Central and South America, where it exercises supervision of all U.S. Air Force assets in the counternarcotics mission in USSOUTHCOM area. Its supervision extends to all reserve wings in the western United States and eight active combat wings in the west. The Aerospace Maintenance and Regeneration Center provides temporary and permanent storage for all government aircraft, usually about 5,000 aircraft of all types. Flying HH-60 Pavehawk helicopters, the Reserve 305th Rescue Squadron, and the Special Operations Command 563rd Rescue Group are available to perform rescue missions worldwide.

Adjacent to Davis-Monthan is the headquarters of the U.S. Customs Service in this large area of the border. A significant portion of the aircraft ramp is set aside for use of a small unit from the 162nd Fighter Wing, the largest Air National Guard unit in the United States. Here, air

force units from all over the world can establish themselves for short periods of time and take advantage of the excellent flying weather in Tucson. Because most of the Air National Guard units are from colder northern states, it is known as the Snow Bird Ramp. The full 162nd Wing is stationed at Tucson International Airport, where pilots from all over the world are instructed in flying the F-16 aircraft.

United States Military Posts in the Santa Cruz Valley (in chronological order)

- ◆ Camp Moore, 1856
- ◆ Fort Buchanan, 1856-1861
- ◆ Post at Tucson, 1862-1864
- ◆ Tucson Supply Depot, 1862-1864
- ◆ El Reventon, 1862 and 1864
- ◆ Camp Tubac, 1864-1868
- ◆ Camp Lowell, 1866-1873
- ◆ Fort Lowell, 1873-1891
- ◆ Camp Crittenden, 1868-1873
- ◆ Fort Mason/Camp McKee, 1865-1866
- ◆ Camp Cameron, 1866-1867
- ◆ Camp Nogales/Camp Little, 1910-1933
- ◆ Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, 1940-present
- ◆ Titan II Missile Silos, 1963-1984
- ◆ Air National Guard base at Tucson International Airport, 1975-present

Distinctiveness of Theme

The Revolutionary War is the central theme of the proposed Crossroads of the American Revolution National Heritage Area, and Civil War battles are central themes of the Shenandoah Battlefields and Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Areas. However, the changing role of the United States military on the Mexican border is a unique theme among National Heritage Areas. The development of this theme in the proposed Santa Cruz Valley National Heritage Area will increase public recognition of the history of the United States military in southern Arizona, which represents an important part of the national story.

Related Resources

Many places can be visited to learn about the military history of the Santa Cruz Valley. Nineteenth century forts, military life, and Apache campaigns are interpreted at the Arizona Historical Society Museum on Second Street, the Fort Lowell Museum, and the Museum of the Horse Soldier in Tucson, and the Pimería Alta Historical Society in Nogales. A roadside sign on Highway 83 between Sonoita and Patagonia marks and interprets the site of Fort Crittenden. The third largest aircraft museum in the United States, the Challenger Space Learning Center, and the Arizona Aviation Hall of Fame are at the Pima Air and Space Museum. There can be seen exhibits about the most famous aircraft, from the Wright Flyer to the latest combat planes. Escorted tours of the AMARC Storage site (Aircraft Boneyard) are also available from there. The Titan Missile Museum in Sahuarita is the only one in the world, and it is an

accurate copy of an active site. This National Historic Landmark highlights the role of Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles in national defense during the Cold War. Aerospace and Arizona Days is the annual base visitation displaying many historic and modern aircraft, civilian acrobatics flying, military precision demonstration teams, and parachute jumping.

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