

observations determining the proper latitude for the southeastern terminal of the border line between California and Nevada.

While camped alongside the Colorado River, Mowry received an urgent message out of Los Angeles stating California had reneged on its promise to share the expedition's expenses; leaving the party without enough funds to complete the survey. Mowry had no choice than to head for Fort Tejon before his dwindling supplies ran out.

His party started out across the desert on a forced march - stopping only long enough to water the animals at Stump Springs, in the Pahrump Valley, and Resting Springs near Tecopa. They continued through Ash Meadow and descended to Furnace Creek for more water before trudging further north to Chloride Cliff. From here they crossed the treacherous wastes of Death Valley, Panamint Valley, the Argus Range and Walker Pass, before finally reaching the sancity of Fort Tejon. Leaving the animals there, Mowry disbanded the rest of his party at Visalia before leaving for San Francisco to file his report.

Although this ill-fated expedition proved camels were capable of carrying enormous loads over great distances in the desert, with little food or water and survive, it also sounded the death knell of the camel express.

By then, enlisted soldiers refused to work with the camels or their drivers and the Army went along with their "rebellion." A few months later Fort Tejon was disbanded and its remaining thirty-one camels shipped to Los Angeles, where they were scattered around Army posts throughout southern California; mismanaged and abused, or completely neglected. Beale later wrote Washington it cost \$500 a month to feed them and although half-hearted attempts were made to use them in a few spasmodic ventures without success, this overwhelming cost to feed them finally led the government to sell them at auction.

As local historian George W. Beattie related, in his book The Heritage of the Valley:

"But the camel experiment as a whole was a failure. American soldiers would not work with them.... In 1862, after Lincoln signed the bill for the construction of a transcontinental railroad, the camels then remaining were ordered sold at auction. But even then they did not disappear from the picture at once. As late as 1900 a few of these ships of the desert that had been set adrift were sighted now and then in isolated parts of southern Arizona and northern Sonora, white with age, and with sharp, pronged hoofs. Indeed, in 1934, the Los Angeles Times announced the death of a one-time government camel in the zoo at Griffith Park at

the age of nearly one hundred years. Today the sole reminder of this experiment in transportation is the skeleton of a camel that was killed in a battle with one of his fellows at Fort Tejon."

In 1935, members of the Philatelic Club of Los Angeles, Inc., revived the camel express with several camels



(LOS ANGELES TITLE INSURANCE AND TRUST COMPANY.)

1863 photo showing camel standing before commissary building at Camp Drum, Wilmington, California.