

LETTER FROM COL. JOHN C. FREMONT.

(Presented to the Historical Society by his daughter, Miss Elizabeth B. Fremont.)

Washington City, October 8th, 1847.

To the Secretary of War.

Sir: In the execution of my duties as military commandant during the war in California and afterwards as civil governor of the territory I incurred many liabilities, some of which I think it absolutely necessary to bring to your attention. These are:

1st. The payment of the volunteers for their services during the war and for supplies in arms and other necessaries furnished by them.

2nd. Payment to citizens of that territory of money loaned to me by them, and which was required and expended in administration of the government and partial payment of the troops.

The principal amount required for payment of the troops is comprehended in what is due to the volunteer emigrants for services during the insurrection in the southern part of Upper California. These men were just arriving on the frontier of the territory and at the first call for their service quitted their families, leaving them unprotected and exposed to the inclemencies of a rainy winter, and repaired to my camp, bringing with them arms, ammunition, wagons and money, all of which they freely contributed to the public service. These men returned to their families without money and without clothes, and the long delay of payment has consequently created much dissatisfaction.

Paper given to them by properly authorized officers as certificates of service has been depreciated by officers recently in command and much of it consequently sold at one tenth of its true value. As these public services were rendered promptly and in good faith by all concerned at a time of imminent danger to the American army, I trust that some measure will be taken properly to recognize them and to redeem the pledges made to the people by myself in my public and private capacity. For this purpose I enclose a brief estimate from the paymaster of the battalion. (This paper has been lost.)

Amounts of money required for civil and military purposes were at different times and by different individuals principally Mexican citizens loaned to me as the Governor of the Territory, acknowledged as such by them. The sums of money are not large, but, having been obtained under the high rates usual in that country, public interest is suffering by the delay. The liabilities which require immediate attention amount to forty thousand dollars.

The two subjects which I have here presented for your consideration are causes of much dissatisfaction in the territory, and I have thought it a matter of duty to myself and the people with whom I have been connected, as well as to the government, respectfully to apply for the means of removing it.

I have the honor to be with much respect

Your obedient servant,

J. C. FREMONT

Lieut. Col. Regiment Mounted Riflemen.