

YUMA INDIAN DEPREDTATION ON THE COLORADO IN
1850.

NOTE.—On the 23rd of April, 1850, Dr. A. L. Lincoln, the owner of a ferry at the junction of the Gila and Colorado Rivers, and ten of his employees, were massacred by the Yuma Indians. For an account of this massacre see Part 1, Vol. VI., Publications of the Historical Society of Southern California.

On this 8th day of June, A. D. 1850, before me, Abel Stearns, first alcalde of the county of Los Angeles, and state of California, personally appeared Charles H. Veeder, who being duly sworn, deposeth and saith, that on approaching the junction of the Gila and Colorado rivers on his way down and on his way to California on the morning of the 8th May, he was met by Judge Robinson, a fellow traveler, who was in a state of alarm, and reported that he had a few minutes before been rudely treated by some Indians, one of them had assaulted him by striking him in the face, and that they were hostile to the Americans. On the same day this deponent states that he passed down to the crossing of the river Colorado six miles below the junction and found there a number of Mexicans engaged in crossing their animals. They had Indians employed in getting their mules over, who as it appeared to this deponent strove as hard to drown them as to get them over alive, and did drown some eight or ten during the afternoon. On the next day the Indians collected around this deponents wagon and from their general deportment it appeared they were unfriendly and made frequent applications to buy knives, powder and gun caps. On this day as the day before several mules were drowned, designedly, as it appeared to this deponent. This deponent further states that as a consequence of the threats and menaces of the Indians and the fright of his family he was forced to cross the river unprepared with the necessary provender to secure the lives of his working animals across the great Jornada* (very properly called the Sahara of America), and on the following day, the 10th of May, after paying the charge of sixty dollars for having a light two-horse wagon, six animals, and six persons in number ferried over, the Indians gathered again around his wagon, this deponent being absent from it for a short time), and as he was told by his family on his return to it they, the Indians, had taken out of the wagon

*The literal meaning of "Jornada" is journey. It is used in the deposition as a synonym of desert.

several small articles in their presence. One Indian had pointed a pistol towards my daughter, and another had seized my wife by the arm, apparently in anger, and told them to vamos, and this advice was repeated in this deponent's presence by several. This deponent further states that being thus hurried forward without any food for his animals which he could and would have provided on the east side of the river, where young cane and grass could have been cut and cured (there being none on the west side that this deponent could hear of or find), he, this deponent, lost three out of six animals, and was forced to leave his wagon on the Jornada to save the remaining three who had barely their lives left, being wholly exhausted of strength when they reached the first grass; and to save the lives of his wife and daughter, he had to pay a Mexican forty dollars for furnishing them a mule each to ride over the last fifty miles of the Jornada. And further this deponent saith not.

CHAS. H. VEEDER.

Subscribed and sworn to before me, Abel Stearns, First Alcalde of Los Angeles county, and state of California, on this 8th day of June, A. D. 1850.

ABEL STEARNS.