

WALKER, THE VEE MAN WHO SHAKED THE WORLD AS A FILIBUSTER AND BECAME PRESIDENT OF NICARAGUA

As queer a genius as America ever has produced was editor of the San Francisco Commercial in 1854. His name was William Walker. He was small and slender, with a high forehead, a pair of eyes that seemed to look straight at you, and a mouth that was a perfect oval. He was a graduate of the University of Nashville, and had practiced law and medicine before becoming a journalist. He was well versed in international law and had traveled widely. He spoke French, German, Italian and Spanish almost as fluently as he did English. He was only 20 years old and considered himself a man of destiny. A year before, at the head of a party of 47 men, he had captured the Mexican town of La Paz and elected himself president of Lower California, and gravely paroled the entire population, navy, state and treasury among his companies. Then he had launched the neighboring province of Sonora, and creating a new republic of his own and consolidating Sonora and Lower California under the name of the Republic of Sonora, proclaimed himself president. He claimed a conquest of Mexico. It was the wildest and most fantastic of crazy projects and the invaders had not marched far into the rugged, inhospitable country before they were ragged, half-starved and half-dead. They had no supplies and had to live on the country. For a while they were able to overcome such opposition as the Indians and the Mexican troops under Col. Meléndez offered, but disease and desertion thinned the ranks of the filibusters and they were forced to retreat. They were harried all along the line, but finally 34 of the invaders, gaunt and almost naked, reached American territory and surrendered to Maj. McKinstry of the United States army in charge of San Diego.

NINETEENTH CENTURY CORTIZ

Such rashness and daring appealed to the imagination of the 40ers, and when Walker reached San Francisco he received a joyous reception. As for the leader himself, he looked upon the Sonora expedition merely as an incident, an introduction or a preparation for the great scheme he had in mind—the conquest of Mexico and Central America, and the extension of slavery throughout those lands. He considered himself a nineteenth century Cortez, and although he may have chafed because he had to return to the editor's desk, he made no sign. He took himself very seriously and was taken very seriously by everyone else. No wonder he received recognition. There was no question as to his courage. He never weighed more than 120 pounds, but when he was before him, he was known to raise his voice, but what terrified those who aroused his passion was the fact that his eyes turned green. He was punctilious in matters of etiquette and form, but was simple and unostentatious in dress. Although he lived in a community of lavish spending, hard drinking, high playing and among riotous-minded people, he never drank, never gambled and never was known to utter a profane word. Surely an odd character for California in the early fifties.

While the "president of Sonora" gave his attention to the news of the mining camps and occasionally fought a duel with an offended neighbor, the owner of the paper, Byron Cole, was on his way back from New York to San Francisco. The principal route at that time was by sea from New York to San Juan del Norte (Greytown), Nicaragua, then by the San Juan river to Lake Nicaragua and by land from Virgin Bay to San Juan del Sur, where the steamers from San Francisco discharged and took on cargo and passengers. The route was controlled by a corporation called the Transit company, of which Commodore Vanderbilt was the chief. The Pacific line was controlled by a San Francisco firm. The Transit company was under contract to pay to the Nicaraguan government \$10,000 a year and a certain percentage of its net profits for the privilege of its operation in the country. Occasionally the business of the company was interrupted by the journeying of passengers across Nicaragua made lively by the outbreak of a revolution. A gentleman could not be elected president of Nicaragua in those days without having the chair pulled from under him before he got settled. A revolution every four months—three a year—was the average. Some of the residents could not read or write, but had no difference in a count where only 1 percent of the population had been educated. What did a nation amount to anyhow, where nature had provided everything necessary for man's existence and well-being? Nicaragua was known as Mosquito "Paradise" because of its great part of the republic. It was ideal. Work was unnecessary or almost so. Fruit grew in riotous profusion and clothing was not a need. Man reaped without sowing and the harvest never failed. It was the Paradise indeed, but for the viciousness of man.

OFF FOR NICARAGUA

In October, 1854, Nicaragua was more disturbed than usual. After the election of a year before Chamarra, leader of the Legitimist party, had ousted Castellón, the leader of the Democratic party, whereupon Castellón had returned, started a revolution with the aid of Honduras, driven Chamarra out of Leon, the Democratic stronghold, and then laid siege to Granada. The Legitimist headquarters. The siege had lasted nine months with remarkable things in Central American revolutions when Castellón's allies were called home by a war in Honduras and Castellón was in a bad plight. Just then Byron Cole appeared upon the scene. Castellón knew something of the ability of Americans and he gladly made a contract on the part of his government to take into his army 300 American "volunteers" to help him fight. The contract was for a term of 18 months, \$100 a month for services in war. Cole took this contract to the Man of Destiny, who was editing the San Francisco Commercial, for he had no greater faith in the ability of the filibusters than did the man who offered the post.

It was to May, 1855, that Walker, after a multitude of petty annoyances and legal obstacles, left San Francisco with 47 companions in the brig Vesta for New Orleans. From there he went to Leon, the Democratic capital, Cas-

telion welcomed him heartily. Walker was commissioned as colonel. Achilles Lecoeux as lieutenant-colonel and Thomas Lecoeux as major. The Americans were organized as a separate corps under the name of the American Legion, and, with a supporting body of several hundred veterans of the Mexican army, were sent to attack Leon. A city of 11,000 in the most thickly populated part of Nicaragua, and defended by 600 Legitimist troops before he started, Walker's supporting force of veterans, but he declined to go, and when he was met by the Legitimists outside the city the veterans fled at the first fire. The 56 Americans advanced steadily and fought their way into the city through the narrow streets down to the plaza. It was not until he had reached the plaza, where the Legitimists put up a stubborn resistance, that Walker discovered the defection of the veterans. Six of Walker's 54 were dead, 12 were wounded. The enemy had lost 150. It was useless for Walker, reduced to such numbers, to continue the contest for Leon, so he withdrew from the city. The enemy killed the American wounded who fell into their hands and then burned the bodies. Walker retreated to San Juan del Sur, where he held a Costa Rican steamer, his wife and child and sailed away until he met the Vesta.

A MARTINET

To illustrate how rigid was the discipline Walker maintained over his volunteer band, even in defeat, two instances are given. Two of his men, either for lost or forgotten, set fire to some of the Legitimist houses. A few weeks later a member of his force, in a drunken spree, killed a native boy. Walker ordered the man executed and had the order carried out although the mother of the boy pleaded for the man's life.

When Walker returned to Leon with what was left of his phalanx he had an interview with Castellón, but he was not to be won over. He was only by exercising his authority to the utmost that Walker could prevent his men from clashing with Castellón's troops. Castellón promised various things to compromise the Americans, but did nothing, and at last Walker left in disgust, threatening to go to Honduras and enter the service of President Cortés. Nothing was to be done from Walker's point of view. He had been told to believe he intended to do. In fact, he had received an offer of 100 recruits from Don José Valle if Walker would return to the meridional department to help him fight against the Legitimists. Valle wanted to set up an independent government for that part of the republic, but Walker would not consider that part of his mission. He wanted to see the whole of Nicaragua under his control, for without it he would be out of the reinforcements from the states and with it he would command that really was key to Nicaragua. Accordingly, he put his men aboard the Vesta again, arriving at San Juan del Sur on Aug. 28. With Valle's 100 active recruits joined to the phalanx he marched to Virgin Bay, where he was attacked by 1,000 Guardia and 600 Legitimists. Walker made such skillful use of his men that Guardia's little army was routed, leaving 60 dead and 100 wounded on the field.

CAPTURE OF GRANADA

Guardiola was succeeded by Corral, who took up a strong position at Rivas, commanding the road to Granada, the largest city in Central America. While Corral strengthened his position and prepared to give a hot reception to the Americans, Walker quietly laid his plans for the capture of Granada. Granada is on Lake Nicaragua and is well guarded. Getting possession of a lake steamer, Walker got his whole force aboard hurriedly and approached Granada at night with his lights shrouded and his furnaces screened. He had his men inside the city before the sentries could spread the alarm. The surprised garrison, panic-stricken at first, tried to rally in the plaza, but it was too late. Walker's men drove them away in disorder. Possibly the fact that the day had been one of rain and the inhabitants and the garrison had celebrated it with fervor and heartiness, accounted for the completeness of the surprise. At any rate, Walker, with a force of 110, captured the chief city of the republic and did not lose a man.

It had been the custom in Central American warfare to subject a conquered city to pillage, but that was not Walker's liking. He established a provisional government at once, put the city under guard and punished the first case of looting so severely that there was no more of it. Then he sent messengers to treat with Corral. Corral not only rejected Walker's proposals, but put the United States minister, who accompanied the envoys into Walker's hands. Walker meanwhile had received reinforcements from California and his native force had been increased until he had quite a respectable army. He might have given battle to Corral, but it was not necessary. Some of Corral's men killed six or seven American travelers who were crossing the Transit company road and Walker at once reestablished by countermarching the Legitimist secretary of state, Don Mateo Mayorga, who had been captured in Granada. Why Walker should be so kind to the murderous deeds of the soldiers is not clear, but he was executed. This seemed to strike terror to the soul of Corral, for he agreed to a truce to treat for peace. Corral entered Granada and side by side he and Walker marched to the cathedral, where a high mass and Te Deums were sung.

Corral and Walker signed a peace agreement by which Don Patricio Rivas was appointed president pro tempore, Parker H. French, (one of Walker's lieutenants) minister of finance and Corral minister of war. Walker was made generalissimo of the army.

EXECUTION OF CORRAL

Corral was the pride of Nicaragua. He was enormously handsome and one of the most generous, kindly and lovable men, but he was not honorable and had been signed the treaty that he sent letters broadcast to his friends, begging them to foment trouble, arouse the Legitimists everywhere and drive the Americans out of the land. "Nicaragua is lost, but are Honduras, San Salvador and Guatemala if they let this thing pass. Let them come quickly if they would meet auxiliaries," he wrote. All good and patriotic had it not been for the treaty he had signed and the pledges he had entered into.

Walker got wind of Corral's duplicity

and laid proof of the general's guilt before the president and cabinet. A court-martial was convened. Corral threw himself upon the mercy of the judges, but it was useless. He was condemned to die by the fusillade. The leading citizens pleaded for clemency, but Walker, who was the government, refused. Corral died and Nicaragua wept.

In the four months following the formation of the new government Walker's force of Americans and other foreigners increased to 1,200. They came from all parts of the Union, but principally California and the southern states. Among the filibusters were many idle and desperate characters who looked for booty and the utmost license in living. They had a shocking surprise. Instead of debauchery and free living, they found the most rigid of military discipline. Any one caught selling liquor to a soldier was subject to 120 flog. A soldier caught intoxicated was put in jail for 10 days. Never before were filibusters held so strongly in leash as by this little man, Corral, against the natives he punished with a severity that was appalling. There was no forgiveness for an offender. When the filibusters were had to deal with is considered there can be no doubt of his ability to control men.

But while Walker was master of affairs in Nicaragua, the whole of the public was enjoying a peace and contentment such as it had not known for several years. Troubles were developing on the outside for the filibuster leader. England was alarmed. If the United States got control of Nicaragua and built a Nicaragua canal, Great Britain's commercial supremacy was endangered. England had held possession of Nicaragua for a century or more, and she was not willing to see her safety threatened by the Walker influence in Nicaragua. If Walker ruled in Nicaragua it was inevitable that his power would extend further. It might embrace all Central America. Neither England, France, nor Spain wanted any extension of American influence in Central American countries.

MARCY'S OPPOSITION

Walker might have handled the European opposition without much trouble, but he had more serious antagonists in the United States. He was opposed by an advocate of slavery, and he had the support of people of the slave states. William L. Marcy, secretary of state, and his project, which Walker or his project, he looked upon him as a little less than an outlaw and his plans as criminal. He saw, too, that if Walker's undertaking succeeded there would be a stimulus to filibustering and freebooting such as he had stirred up. There were some men in Wall street, too, connected with the Transit company who saw no good for their interests in Nicaragua if a martinet such as Walker controlled the government. They preferred to deal with Nicaraguans.

The minister Walker's provisional government sent to the United States was not received and Spanish America gave evidence of its feelings toward the filibusters by two acts. Costa Rica declared war against Nicaragua and Vera subscribed \$100,000 to aid Costa Rica. Honduras, too, was on the eve of taking up arms. Both Honduras and Costa Rica got war supplies if not financial support from the British.

Walker was down with fever when the Costa Ricans crossed the border, and Colonel Schlessinger had command of the filibuster force. He was utterly incompetent, and his little force was routed, being surprised through gross carelessness. The Costa Rican army was commanded by the Prussian general, Von Bulow. The unexpected defeat of the filibusters stirred the opposition in the north into revolt. Guardiola raising a mixed force of Leonese and Hondurans. What was more serious, the Transit company suspended business. This cut off Walker's supplies and reinforcements from the east. Walker retained by appointing a committee to audit the Transit company's books. The commission reported that the government had been defrauded for years and that \$250,000 was due to it. Commodore Vanderbilt refused to acknowledge the debt. Walker, who had theretofore seized the Transit company's property as security, revoked Vanderbilt's charter and granted a new one to a rival company.

ELECTED PRESIDENT

On April 9, 1856, Walker rode out of Granada with 500 men, four-fifths of them Americans, to give battle to the Costa Ricans. He was met by Rivas. The Costa Rican army was 3,200 strong and had some English, German and French mercenaries in it. In a general assault Walker practically was defeated. He was driven back such as the Costa Ricans that they were glad to see him withdraw. The cholera breaking out among the Costa Ricans, only a remnant of the army survived. This did Walker of one trouble, but the invasion from the north still menaced him. By quick work he overcame this and then he turned to a new line of action. He became a candidate for the presidency, and in the June election he received twice as many votes as all his rivals. On July 12, 1856, he was inaugurated president. It is noteworthy that Walker received the largest vote ever cast for a candidate in the republic up to that time and that his administration lasted longer than any other president's, but two exceptions. But although Walker was elected legally the nations of the earth refused to recognize him.

Walker was at the top of his fame. The filibuster, the mining camp editor had become the lawful ruler of a nation as big as all New England and as rich in resources as almost any in the western world. Walker selected natives for most of his cabinet positions and made excellent progress toward reforming the affairs of the country, but he was not to go far undisturbed. On the north the Hondurans were raising and on the south the Costa Ricans. Both had aid, financial and otherwise, from Europe. The Hondurans and the disinclined Leonese overran Leon and finally took up a position on the heights of Masaya, 15 miles from Granada. In October, 1856, Walker, with 300 men, attacked them and had victory in sight when he learned from a courier that another force was marching on Granada. He had to postpone the crushing of the Masaya force to return and protect Granada. He was just in time to save the city and rout the allies. This put an end to hostilities for a time.

WAR AGAIN

Nicaragua was not to have peace for long, however. Soon the Costa Ricans



were over the border again and new open communication between the lake and San Juan del Norte, but failed, all the points along the San Juan river being held by his enemies. He got recruits and supplies by every steamer from San Francisco, but every day his position became more desperate. Through the winter of 1856 he was besieged in Rivas by the allied armies of Costa Rica, Honduras and northern Nicaragua. His ammunition began to run short. Early in February, 1857, the United States man-of-war St. Marys arrived at San Juan del Sur. The British warship Esk was in her wake. Events were nearing a crisis.

There were numerous engagements between Walker's army and the allies and hundreds and hundreds of lives were sacrificed. Then a new danger confronted Walker. It was famine. When this came his men deserted in droves. Soon there was not an ounce of bread in the city. The men lived on horse or mule meat for a few weeks, but there had to be an end to it. On the 19th of April the allies made a general assault and were repulsed, but on April 23, when Commander Davis offered safe convey to Walker and all his force to San Juan del Sur if he would evacuate Rivas, Walker accepted. President Davis had demanded that Walker surrender to him.

THE LAST PHASE

The filibusters walked out of the city with Walker at their head. At San Juan del Sur Walker and 16 of his officers boarded the St. Marys and were taken to Panama. The others of the



WILLIAM WALKER

determined to try to get there by way of Honduras. In August, 1857, he sailed from Mobile in the schooner City of Ruston. He landed at Ruston on Aug. 15, and a few days later captured Trujillo, on the mainland. Several had been captured the town and the British warship Icarus appeared and the captain, Salmon, demanded that he surrender. He was unfeeling. He held 700 strong, and by General Alvarez, meanwhile assembled to him and with Walker evacuated the town and with 70 men retreated down the coast. The force on board followed, and at the Rio Negro Captain Salmon and General Alvarez cornered Walker. The filibuster surrendered to the British captain, but when the Icarus returned to Trujillo Captain Salmon turned over to the Hondurans to plead for Walker. If the president would ask, as an American citizen, for interest, Walker declined. On Sept. 11 he was arraigned before the court-martial and condemned to die the next morning by the fusillade.

At 7:30 a. m., Sept. 12, 1857, he walked calmly and with firm tread to the place of execution. If he had any fear of death he did not show the slightest sign. He was unfeeling. He held his arms and looked without emotion at the three soldiers who were assigned at the grim work of carrying out the sentence of the court. They approached within 20 feet, took deliberate aim and, at the signal, fired. All three men took effect, but Walker stood as a statue. A fourth soldier approached, put his rifle close to Walker's head, pulled the trigger and the last and greatest of all the filibusters was dead at the age of 37.

or all the adventures that went with him to Nicaragua only one is known to be alive today—Joseph Miller.

RICHARD SPILLANE

CONSUMPTION STATISTICS

Prove that a neglected cold or cough puts the lungs in as bad a condition that consumption germs find a fertile field for fastening on. They are caught just as soon as it appears with Ballard's Horehound Syrup. Soothe the torn and inflamed tissues and make you well again. Sold by E. C. M. I. Drug Dept., 112 and 114 South Main St., Salt Lake City.

ACHES AND PAINS

You know by experience that the aches and pains of rheumatism are not permanent, but only temporarily, relieved by external remedies. Then why not use an internal remedy—Horehound Syrup, which corrects the acidity of the blood, as which rheumatism depends and cures the disease?

This medicine has done more for the rheumatic than any other medicine in the world.

CACHE VALLEY MULE RANCH COMPANY

322 Boston Building, Salt Lake City, Utah

Capital Stock, \$300,000

First Offering of Stock for Subscription

The company is formed for the purpose of raising mules for the markets of the world in a field particularly adapted for the purpose. Two thousand acres of Cache Valley land has been secured. The ranch is situated seven miles from Logan, Utah, on the main line of the O. S. L. R. R., and an abundance of water is supplied by the Logan river. The ranch will be stocked with 400 brood mares and Kentucky jacks and with the first sales of stock, steel and concrete barns to take care of 900 head of stock will be erected.

The first allotment of 100,000 shares is now offered to the public at the par value of \$1.00 per share, payable 50 cents down on each share, the remainder within one year at the option of the directors.

The physical condition of the company's property warrants us in saying that this stock is now worth par and the prospective value makes it an investment, not a speculation.

The ranch is all under cultivation. 800 acres in timothy hay and 500 acres in wild grass.

Cache Valley has always loomed large in the stock market of this section and it is the purpose of the company to take advantage of nature's bountiful provisions.

For prospectus and all information, call on or address

The Cache Valley Mule Ranch Co.

W. P. FUNK, S. L. RICHARDS, C. F. HUFFMAN, Temporary Directors. 322 Boston Building, Salt Lake City, Utah