



## **CAPTIAN JACOB W. ZABRISKIE: Sesquicentennial Remembrance of the Mexican War** by Kevin Wright

Male twins, Jacob and Albert, were born to Jacob C. Zabriskie and his wife, Maria Brevoort, in the village of Hackensack, on April 11, 1817. In 1839, at 22 years of age, Jacob Westervelt Zabriskie departed home and family for the Old Northwest, settling as a merchant in Illinois. It was there that he joined the First Illinois Volunteer Infantry at the outbreak of war with Mexico.

A pale obelisk, inscribed for Capt. Jacob W. Zabriskie and the far-off hacienda of Bunea Vista, is prominently situated on the roadside margin of the old burying ground, facing the public green and courthouse in Hackensack. Gus Newman correctly surmises that the spot was chosen for "the homegrown war hero - the local boy who made good." And heroes of the Mexican War were not in great local supply. Neither Bergen County Democratic leaders nor the Polk Administration needed reminder that their territorial ambitions - especially in the American Southwest - met with apathy, if not antipathy, in the northeastern States. Consequently, volunteer soldiers would have to be raised much nearer the battleground, amongst those with a potentially greater stake in Manifest Destiny.

And the need for a volunteer army loomed as the Texas controversy resisted diplomatic resolution and headed for a military showdown. Despite a vast territory to defend and experience of two wars against its former sovereign, citizens of the young American republic disdained a large standing army, built around a professional officer corps, as a potential tool for political destabilization and a threat to liberty. Consequently, when war with Mexico broke out in 1846, volunteer citizen-soldiers, answering the summons to patriotic duty and adventure, would greatly augment the ranks of the small regular army.

In June 1846, Brigadier General John Ellis Wool took command of a volunteer army comprised of two volunteer Illinois infantry regiments, strengthened by a six-gun artillery battery, five battalions of dragoons and one of infantry from the regular army. Colonel John J. Hardin commanded the 1st Illinois and Colonel William H. Bissell commanded the 2nd. At Alton, Illinois, the volunteers boarded two river steamers, the Hannibal and the Big Missouri, while General Wool and staff traveled aboard the Convoy, passing downstream to New Orleans. They established camp at Chalmette, scene of General Andrew Jackson's famed defeat of the British in 1815, from whence they sailed across the Gulf to Port La Vaca. Marching 160 miles into the interior, General Wool established Camp Crockett at San Antonio, where he thoroughly drilled his volunteers. In late September, he marched his army toward Chihuahua. Six companies of regulars from the Sixth Infantry formed the core of his army, augmented by Captain Enoch Steen's First Dragoons, a flying battery of eight guns commanded by Captain John M.

Washington, the two regiments of Illinois volunteers and an Arkansas cavalry regiment under Colonel Archibald Yell, former Governor of Arkansas and presently a Congressman.



Capt. Zabriskie's monument at the Church on the Green remains a great historic curiosity, enlivened by survival of a contemporary manuscript describing his funeral obsequies, now in the hands of his descendant, Jeanne Newman. Moreover, Jeanne also possesses a letter addressed to her great-



grandmother Helen, sister to Jacob W. Zabriskie, that was written two weeks before his regiment departed Camp Crockett on a 164-mile march to the Rio Grande. Here it is in full:

Miss Helen V. Zabriskie, Hackensack, New Jersey

San Antonio Sept. 22nd 1846

Dr. Sister - Some time has elapsed since I heard from any of you at home, after receiving your letter at Alton (before our departure for this country). I wrote you an answer and on my arrival at Port Lavaca, Texas, I wrote you again. I presume you not knowing where to direct, have not since written, by looking at the papers I presume you have learned the point we are destined for and how far we got on our way, and I now write to give you the particulars (or a few of them) that have attended our journey thus far. We left Alton and after a pleasant trip on board of the Hannibal, arrived at our Encampment on the Old Battle Ground below New Orleans, where we remained one day. I saw the ditches (or part of them) still remaining from which the breastworks were thrown and my men found many Balls and grape shot giving evidence of the battle of the eight. while walking over the ground I depicted to myself Old Hickory and his gallant command, the attempt of the British soldiers to scale the cotton baggs, the repulse they met with. The shouts of Victory that rent the air from our troops, And the breathless silence that prevailed in Town during all this time. and thought I could almost hear the shouts of joy ascending from the city upon hearing of the success of the American Army. These and a thousand other things passed through my mind, but I must continue on my journey for we only remained the one day.

On the evening of the next day we sailed on board of the Steamer James L. Day, and on the next morning we were at the mouth of the Gulf, and in forty eight hours crost it and entered the pass into Matagoda Bay and on the evening of the same day landed at Lavacca. we remained there one day and then moved out twelve miles to a spring [,] for the water had to be hauled from the spring to Lavacca where we were encamped. We remained there untill the ballance of the troops came up and got rested and then took up our line of march for this place. The first day we reached Victoria, a distance of twenty miles and long ones at that, part of the way up to our middle in water and all the way thru deep. On the next day my company was the only one ready to march and Col. Hardin gave me permission, my becoming responsible for the good conduct of my men, to go on and consequently I march[ed] on, encamping on the bank of the Colilt and awaited the arrival of the bal[ance] of the troops, and then marched on together to this place where we have been laying ever since. There is some talk in camp that [we] will start off in a few days for the Rio Grand but I place no reliance in any reports untill they come in form of Genl Orders. My company is getting along quite well. The Doctor and Elias are neer and doing well. The Doctr gets one hundred dollars a month and I get \$91.50, but unless we are going to fight soon I hope we will be dismissed not but that I like this mode of life but I want to get away from this place and have come so far to get a fight - I want to get at it. It is thought by all the knowing ones of the army we will be retained in service for one full year - and if we do and I live I will come home and see you all [?] certainly and since I had almost forgotten to say anything about this country or San Antonio[:] as for the country, I am pleased with it, some good land, but the climate is warm, as for San Antonio, it once was a large and fashionable place, but is now in a delapidated state. There is several missions in its vicinity (the meaning of that word is a Catholic school) but they are in ruins. One is called the Alimo, Davy Crocket was killed in it. Give my love to all, Father & Mother and all our family. Direct your letter to San Antonio, Texas, and pay the postage or they will not forward it. Do not fail to write and give me all particulars in reference to every thing.



Your afft Brother, Jacob



P. S. Direct your letter to Capt J. W. Zabriskie, 1st Regt - Ill Volunteers, San Antonio, Texas.

Buena Vista

After a forced march of 50 miles from San Luis Potosí across cold desert, a Mexican army, twenty thousand strong, hoped to fall upon and destroy a small American force at Agua Nueva. Poorly supplied with water and rations, Santa Anna's troops marched on the promise that a stock of provisions would be seized from the unsuspecting Americans. To counter the threat, General Zachary Taylor sent Colonel Charles May's Second Dragoons and Jefferson Davis' Mississippi Rifles as reinforcements. General Worth, headquartered in Saltillo, ordered General Wool in Parras to make a rapid march over 116 miles of desolate country to prevent Santa Anna from splitting the two main American armies. Four days later, on December 21, Wool's troops arrived at Agua Nueva.

Accepting Gen. Wool's suggestion to deploy the army on better defensive ground, Gen. Taylor ordered teamsters and dragoons to remove what they could from the supply depot at Agua Nueva and to burn whatever could not be carried away. Upon his arrival, Gen. Santa Anna interpreted the burning heap as evidence of panicked flight, and pressed his exhausted, poorly nourished troops onward. Meanwhile, Gen. Wool positioned his largely volunteer army atop a broad mesa, intersected by deep gullies, which stretched between the steep Sierra Madre and a narrow pass, known as La Angostura, through which passed the road to Saltillo. Here, about a mile south of a hacienda named Buena Vista, the Americans dug in. Col. William R. McKee's Second Kentucky Foot Regiment and Col. John J. Hardin's eight companies of First Illinois Infantry fortified the bluff above the narrows, building breastworks and digging trenches, in order to protect Capt. John Washington's battery of eight guns defending the road through the narrows. Battle commenced upon Washington's Birthday, February 22, 1847. Confronted by an enemy in a strong natural position, Santa Anna decided to make a diversionary assault upon the batteries defending the pass, while his main thrust would be a flanking movement through the gullies, up the mountainside and around the American left. At 11 a.m Taylor received a note from Santa Anna, asking him to surrender "under the assurance that you will be treated with the consideration belonging to the Mexican character..." Taylor succinctly replied: "Tell Santa Anna to go to hell!" Finally recognizing Santa Anna's design, he rushed reinforcements to seize the high ground. The Mexicans took heavy casualties and only wounded seven Americans before night fell. Both sides hurried men to the contested ground during darkness.

Before renewing their assault in the morning light of February 23rd, Mexicans submitted to a procession of Catholic priests with their elaborate benedictions - much to the astonishment of American soldiers who had not a single chaplain in their ranks. The bark of a Mexican cannon signalled a renewal of hostilities. Twelve hundred Mexicans launched a formidable diversionary attack against thirty-three hundred Americans defending the pass. Two guns from Captain Washington's battery, supported by two companies of First Illinois Volunteers, devastated their ranks with a barrage of canister, shot and musketry. At about 10 a. m., a division of Mexican infantry passed undetected through ravines to within 50 yards of the American center, held by six companies of the First Illinois under Col. Hardin and by the Second Kentucky under Col. McKee. The surprised Kentucky and Illinois regiments threw themselves flat on the ground and returned fire upon a rushing mass of Mexican troops. By late afternoon, the American volunteers had repelled the assault, but foolishly rushed forward into a deep gully, where the Mexicans fell upon them with bayonets and stones. Col. Hardin stabbed the standard bearer of the Hidalgo Battalion with his sword and seized their colors, when he was suddenly felled by buckshot to his thigh and pierced by a dozen Mexican bayonets. Here Capt. Zabriskie was mortally wound. Col. William McKee and Lt. Col. Henry Clay Jr., of the Second Kentucky were also bayoneted to death, before the Americans finally extricated themselves from the ravine.

Meanwhile, Mexicans finally dislodged the Americans from the mountainside, but were too tired to pursue their advantage. In the heat of battle, Col. Bowles, of the Second Indiana, mistakenly had given the order to retreat, precipitating a crisis in the American line, which wavered in disorder and broke in confusion. At this critical moment, when the American line verged upon collapse, Lieut. O'Brien, of Washington's battery, advanced his guns into the breach and poured double loads of canister, mixed with handfuls of



stones, into a foe on the edge of triumph. The Second Illinois arrived in support and enough Indians rallied to restore the line. Gen. Taylor sent Col. May's Dragoons and the First Mississippi Rifles, lead by Col. Jefferson Davis, into the gap. The red-shirted Mississippians mowed down Torrejón's cavalry with their Windsor rifles and then rushed forward to stab the riders with their bowie knives.

A brigade of 1,500 Mexican lancers under Gen. Miñon flanked the American defensive line and attempted to seize supply wagons on the Saltillo road, guarded by volunteer Arkansas and Kentucky cavalry. Col. Archibald Yell fell in the initial assault. Col. May's dragoons hurried to the rescue, striking the enemy on the flank and routing them.

The firing ceased with nightfall. By daylight, the Mexican army was gone. American casualties numbered 272 killed, 388 wounded and 6 missing, out of 4,691 engaged.

The following account of the ceremonies attendant upon Capt. Zabriskie's burial is taken from a typed transcription of an original pamphlet, loaned by Jeanne and Gus Newman. Titled, honor to the brave, An Account of the Funeral Obsequies of the late Captain J. W. Zabriskie, of the 1st Illinois Regiment, who was slain at the battle of Buena Vista, on the 22nd day of February, 1847, it was "published by the Committee, New Brunswick," and printed at the Union Office in 1847. For the sake of brevity, I have edited its description of events and the text of some speeches, preserving as much of the flavor of the original as possible.

Despite the fact that Albert Saboriski had arrived in New Amsterdam in 1662, memoirist Samuel Chamberlain, with the Second Dragoons, eulogized Capt. Jacob Zabriskie as "a Polish exile." He further described him as "a gentleman of remarkable literary and scientific attainments" who "lost his life, and the world a rare scholar, while liberty lost a devoted worshipper, and Illinois a valued citizen."

Honor to the brave

Lieut. Stott sought out the body of his captain on the field of Buena Vista and (knowing only that Capt. Zabriskie's brother was a surgeon on Gen. Taylor's Staff), furnished coffins, both lead and wood, at his own personal expense, and every facility for transporting them. He had the body decently interred in camp, with the usual military honors, and had it disinterred when returning home, at the expiration of his term of service. Lieut. Col. Warren, of the 1st Illinois Regiment, obtained the Company's consent to permit Capt. Zabriskie's corpse to be conveyed to Hackensack, N. J. and Lt. Stott accompanied it on its final journey.

The mortal remains of Capt. Jacob W. Zabriskie reached Philadelphia on July 20, 1847, and, on the following day, were escorted to the steamer John Stevens, by military guard under command of Major Fritz. Arriving in New Brunswick, N. J., at about 1 p. m., Captain Moore, Grand Marshal, and the Neilson Guards, escorted the casket to City Hall, attended by the faculty and students of Rutgers College, and by a large number of citizens and strangers. Minute guns fired a salute. On the morning of July 22nd, Capt. Fisher of the steamboat Raritan, conveyed the remains to Pier No. 1, East River, accompanied by Capt. Moore and a detachment of twenty-three Neilson Guards, together with a military committee of the Lafayette Fusiliers. At 4 p. m., a solemn parade under command of General Storms escorted Capt. Zabriskie's coffin from the Battery to the steamer Frank at the foot of Canal Street.. The Lafayette Fusiliers formed the guard of honor, followed in procession by German Hussars, German Horse Guards, the New La Fayette Guards, the Washington Guard and Rifle Rangers, the Mayors and Councilmen of Brooklyn, New York and Jersey City, and a large concourse of citizens. The Lafayette Horse Guards fired minute guns from the Battery, as bells throughout the city chimed, and flags flew at half mast. As the boat approached Bull's Ferry, Lieut. William Palmer and Capt. Thomas Milne fired minute guns at the ferry landing and from the bluffs of Fort Lee. Ashore, John I. Mumford, Esq., speaking on behalf of the New York committee, placed the remains in charge of the committee of Bergen County, with a short speech. He said:



## Bergen County Historical Society

"He to whose memory we of New York are now called to evince what sentiments animate us at the moment we are about to deliver over his remains to his nearer and dearer friends, was a soldier by hereditary right, being the grandson of one of those who achieved our independence, of one from whose early teachings he not only learned the duties of a soldier, but from the inspiration of whose example he imbibed that large patriotism - that absorbing love of liberty, the ardor of which no circle of relations, however affectionate - no troop of friends however devoted or endeared - could for a moment repress; and hence, we find him among the foremost in rallying around the standard of his country, a body of volunteers like himself, and hastening to the field of duty and honor.

Opportunities for distinction in battle are less numerous than is generally supposed; but, in our contest with Mexico, there seems to have been a kind of instinctive and irresistible power in the daring and devotion of our officers, that bore a character of patriotism so transcendent as to make them court and even covet death in such a cause. May it not have been that one and all of these choice spirits had a prophetic view of the destiny of their country? May it not have been that they believed the time had come, when we should, on this continent, teach the nations of the Old World that there should be a new national law, and that our rights should not be invaded nor our countrymen imprisoned, nor robbed nor butchered with impunity, and that in no sphere could they so serve the cause of public liberty, and of their country, as on the fields of Mexico?

Be this as it may, in reference to the great body of our officers, we know of the deceased, that all his energies of body and mind were actively and restlessly engaged in recruiting and drilling his company, and that he hastened with such expedition to the camp at Buena Vista, that his troops were pronounced to have outmarched all other - even regulars. We know too, that when called to the support of a repulsed regiment, his promptness, alacrity and expedition were such, that he turned the fortune of that part of the field, and though urged to retire in consequence of the feebleness of his health, he nobly exclaimed that he would not leave the field while his company was on it.

Capt. J. W. Zabriskie was a native of New Jersey, but at an early age engaged in mercantile pursuits in the young and chivalrous State of Illinois; and it was there, in the free and far West, that he found those kindred spirits whom he led to the bloody victory of Buena Vista.

It is there, as well as in his native State, that he will long be remembered. But thither he cannot go. His remains must rest in the tomb of his ancestors, and his mother must have the privilege of holy tears, and of decking his grave with garlands, while the proud father of such a son has a right to console her and himself with the fact that the son was one."

A. O. Zabriskie, Esq., of Hackensack, replied on behalf of the Bergen County Committee of Arrangements and his fellow citizens:

"Sir: The duty which we this day with mournful alacrity assume to perform is a sad and solemn one. It is to receive, from your hands, the remains of one well known and loved among us; these insensate remains, from which the spirit has long since fled, which have travelled far, borne by friendly though stranger hands, to reach among us, on their natal soil, their last earthly abode.

It is most fitting now, that these remains should be brought here, to be borne on the shoulders of his companions and friends of his boyhood and youth, to their home in the dwellings of the dead; to be lain in a grave over which a father's affection or a mother's fond love may bend with sad satisfaction; which may be watered by their kindly tear of manly brothers and deeply afflicted sisters.

This, too, Sir, is a most fitting place for those who bear the soldier's bier, to pause; we stand on revolutionary ground, hallowed by martial mementos of the past. Yonder, beyond the Hudson, stood a fortress honored by the great name of the father of his country; here, on the high cliffs above us, stood another, named from one of Washington's chief generals, which, in its turn, has given its name to this fair village - each, in that year, were scenes of deadly conflict.



## Bergen County Historical Society

New Jersey was battle ground in the war of the revolution; and our good county of Bergen, though not distinguished by those brilliant though brief successes that gave lustre to the names of Trenton, Princeton and Monmouth, was the constant arena of war. Tradition has well preserved the story of many a fray, and the sufferings and stout resistance of the Bergen yeomanry, who with a few inglorious exceptions, in the years when the stronghold of the enemy was in our great city, stood shoulder to shoulder in that protracted strife and slept not but on their arms. Amid these traditions was this young man raised, at the hearth stone of a grandsire who bore an active and efficient part in the great struggle of that day. From them, as you Sir, well suggested, he doubtless imbibed that love of glory, and spirit of patriotism which carried him to the armies of his country, and alas, to a too early grave.

We will lay him beside that grandsire, who, more fortunately escaped the perils of war, and lived honored, respected and beloved to a good old age.

We will lay him in the ground where the ashes of his ancestors have in succession been laid, and mouldered for near two centuries.

In this country, the only distinction of birth is descent, either from those who, at the first settlement of our country, in suffering and privations, laid broad and deep the foundations of our civil and religious freedom, or from those who at the revolution, established and preserved them on the broad basis of our national independence: and he claims pedigree from them both.

In the vivid recollections of the more recent and brilliant successes of the war of revolution we are too apt to forget the loftier enterprise and high moral bearing of those, who centuries ago, at greater sacrifices and sufferings, through more protracted, imminent and universal perils and dangers, secured our more important heritage of freedom: its preservation is the chief value of our national independence.

New England justly claims her Pilgrim Fathers; they came not here as many do now, to seek ease and affluence in an earthly paradise but to seek in the savage haunted wilderness an asylum from oppression. Few in number, they were a band to comfort and support each other. This young man was lineally descended from one who, an exile of unhappy Poland, came singly and alone from the banks of the Vistula and the fertile plains of Sarmatia, and sought asylum from her oppressors in the then wild and desert valleys which lie beyond these hills. In them his keen eye at once discerned the God created home of liberty. Here he took his abode with the Indians, and with the white men, the common friend of both, he joined their hands on peaceful ground. His descendants are spread through every village and hamlet and their bones moulder in almost every graveyard of our county.

To these, their kindred dust, and to the swelling hearts of living friends, we bid these remains a sorrowing welcome.

To you, Sir, and these your fellow citizens of New York, who have shown such kind attention to our dead, in the name of his venerable fathers, and these his friends and fellow citizens, I tender you our heart-felt thanks."

These speeches were voiced in a pouring rain which drenched everyone "almost to the skin." As the body was brought off the Frank to the hearse, the band played so solemnly and sweetly, that one soldier remarked, "I forgot the rain - I forgot everything else." The remains were escorted to Hackensack by the Lafayette Fusiliers, a contingent of New York Rifle Rangers, and Capt. Terhune's Bergen County Troop of Cavalry, followed by the Committee of Arrangements and other Jerseymen. The procession entered Hackensack about 8 p. m.. Rain pouring upon them, the band continued to play the most plaintive airs as a cannon uttered its loud lament, while the remains were deposited in the Court House for the night, guarded by Capt. Wilson's Fusiliers.

The storm subsided and at 9 a. m., of the 23d, a detachment of sixteen men from Capt. Wilson's Lafayette Fusiliers carried the casket on muskets by silent march with slow and solemn step to the



mansion of Jacob C. Zabriskie, father of the deceased. At 10 o'clock the coffin with its contents was carried to the hearse, during which the band discoursed the most solemn and exquisite music. The procession was then formed in the following order: Capt. Terhune's Troop of Cavalry; Capt. Wilson's N. Y. Fusiliers as a guard of honor; Dodsworth's band; the hearse (covered by a splendid black velvet pall, with the words, "Buena Vista," in large silver letters on both sides) drawn by two gray horses, caparisoned in mourning, led by grooms; carriages with the relatives of the deceased; a carriage containing four clergymen; a carriage containing the Committee of Arrangements; a large number of citizens; the Paterson brass band; the Society of Rechabites with their banner; and a large number of citizens.

Under direction of Marshal Ackerson, the funeral procession passed through the principal streets of the village: minute guns boomed, bells tolled, business was suspended, and the immense assemblage seemed penetrated with the deepest emotions of solemnity. Arriving at the public square between the Courthouse and Church, the coffin was placed on a stand and covered with the pall. Capt. Terhune's Troop dismounted, officiating as a guard. The ladies occupied seats prepared for them, while the remaining area was covered with the dense mass assembled for the occasion. Rev. Cornelius T. Demarest arose, and after offering a prayer to the Throne of Grace, in the most solemn and effective manner, delivered the following eloquent sermon, based upon a verse from the "remarkable elegy of David on the death of Saul and Jonathan, found in the Second Book of Samuel; 1st c., 25, 26 v.: - "How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle." In part, he said:

"A son of New Jersey, who fell at Buena Vista, has been brought back to his native place for honorable burial; and this vast multitude has assembled to unite in the ceremonies. The loved one of his family, the honored one of his fellow citizens, one of the brave ones of Angostura, has come back to his family and to us at Hackensack. But how? Not on a noble charger, but in a shroud - in a coffin! Instead of a joyful, triumphal procession to welcome his return, behold a mournful gathering and funeral rites.

The Spartan mother, when she armed her son for the battle and presented his shield, said "Return with this or on this." This gallant Captain has returned to his mother, and to us, borne on his shield encircled with honors. The friend whom David laments fell in a battle that was lost; the friend whom we deplore fell in a battle that was gloriously won against fearful odds.

David laments the fall of Saul and Jonathan on the mountains of Israel, in the most pathetic terms; we may lament the death of those brave men who fell amidst the mountains of Mexico, in nearly the same terms, with some slight alteration:

'The beauty of Columbia is slain upon thy high places, O Mexico; how are the mighty fallen! From the blood of the slain, from the fat of the mighty, their weapons turned not back, their swords returned not empty. Clay, and McKee, and Yell, and Hardin, and Zabriskie were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided; they were swifter than eagles, they were stronger than lions. Ye daughters of America, weep over their fall. How are the mighty fallen in the midst of battle. O, Zabriskie, thou wast slain in thy high places. I am distressed for thee, my brother Zabriskie."

To die for one's country, for such a country as ours, is an honorable death. Where is the country that can be compared with ours; with limits so extended, almost a continent between two vast oceans; with blessings so abundant, whether civil or religious; the only country where man is truly free. In all other countries, under all other governments in the world, man is oppressed in his civil and religious rights. Such oppression was attempted here, but it was put down by the revolution. Our liberties were obtained, under the smiles of Divine Providence, by the pen of the skillful writer, by the sword of the brave warrior, by the prayers of the pious, by the intelligence and integrity of wise and disinterested rules, and by the same means our liberties are to be perpetuated. This free country, with its constitution, government and laws, is the admiration of the nations, the joy of the whole earth. It is the last hope of the oppressed and suffering throughout the world. May it be a land 'shadowing with wings;' affording a home and protection, liberty, plenty and peace to the oppressed and afflicted of all other nations.



And where is there a country whose destiny is higher or more glorious than ours? All the ancient forms of government are to be annihilated - not a vestige of them is to remain on the earth...

God has not only made us free and prosperous, but increases our greatness on every side. With rapid strides we advance in agriculture, manufactures and commerce - in science, arts and arms. The greatest inventions of modern times; the quadrant; the propulsion of vessels by steam on rivers, lakes and oceans; the subjection of the lightning of heaven itself to the uses of man - are all American. We give lessons of prowess, humanity and justice to the world. We do nothing which is not clearly right, we submit to nothing wrong. We are teaching Mexico how to become a just, a moral, a peaceful, a civilized and prosperous republic. We are, in fact, the conservators of the rights of the human race - of the liberty and happiness of the world.

For such a country, what man would not be willing to die? For such a country, this gallant Captain shed his blood!

To you, mother and father, sisters and brothers, of this brave Captain, I tender, in behalf of this vast assembly, military and civil, met to do honor to your son and brother, the warmest sympathies of our hearts. Your house has lost a son, but nothing of honor. His position was in the centre of the line, under Col. Hardin, and under the immediate eye of the General Commanding. Santa Anna, on the afternoon of the 23d, the last day of the battle, concentrated his forces for his last and greatest effort, and fell with all his strength, with overwhelming numbers, upon the centre of our line. It was the hottest and most critical hour of the battle, according to Gen. Wool. Our forces bravely withstood the terrible shock, repulsed the enemy with great slaughter, and gained the day; but how many brave spirits fell! O, Zabriskie, and thou too wast slain in that terrible conflict. We are distressed for thee. You weep a son and brother fallen, but his gallant death has adorned your name with a noble wreath. You still weep - we mingle our tears with yours. May God himself be your comforter.

To you, soldiers and citizens, I extend the right hand of congratulation, because this brave son of New Jersey, in the hour of trial, has not dishonored his name and state. In the war of the revolution, waged for true liberty, just laws, a good government, a peaceful and happy home, New Jersey had a name. In this war with Mexico, for just causes and desirable ends, the name of 'Jersey Blue' remains untarnished. Our sons, who have periled their lives in Mexico - this gallant Captain, who fell at Angostura - have added the brightest Mexican dahlias to the already beautiful wreath of New Jersey's glory.

To you, young men of New Jersey, I present for imitation an honorable example of enlightened courage and cool bravery. He was not brave like Santa Anna, who hid himself behind masses of human flesh, and blindfolded our flag of truce to prevent his place from being discovered, but he was brave as his own Commander-in-chief who stood on the highest ground, overlooked the whole battlefield, and ordered every movement; he was brave as the bravest and most gallant of that day, a worthy compeer of Clay, and McKee, and Yell and Hardin, and others — like them he led his men to the charge — with them he fell at the head of his command; and contributed with his blood to the honor and victory of that memorable day. I present you this noble example. If your country calls upon you to maintain her rights, to defend her cause, to vindicate her honor, or to avenge her wrongs — flinch not from duty. Put your trust in God, and fear neither foe nor danger...

But to one and all, permit me to say, fail not to enlist under the banner of Christ, the great Captain of Salvation — by faith receive his testimony and hold it fast to the end — rely on his all-sufficient merits in life and in death, for pardon, peace and glory. Arm yourselves with the Gospel armour — fight manfully for his name, and honor, and truth, against the hosts of darkness and the power of sin. And, whether ye die in your beds, amidst weeping friends; or meet your death in the battle field, far from home — it will be a happy, a glorious death."

Dr. Abraham Hopper then spoke:

Fellow Citizens: — We have here assembled on a most sad and solemn occasion. To mingle our tears





with those of the bereaved mourners and to render the last sad honors to the brave, the illustrious dead. It is fitting and proper on occasions like this, when we are about to consign to the silent tomb the remains of one who has died in defense of his country's rights and honor, that the funeral ceremonies should be conducted with every demonstration of public respect. Should the time unfortunately ever arrive when our citizens shall sacrilgiously withhold this soldier's boon from the brave defenders, then shall be heard a most doleful dirge in our land, the requiems of her honor, the funeral knell of her liberties.

He whose mortal remains now lie before us, was one of nature's noblemen, the artisan of his own enduring fame, our fellow townsmen, our neighbor and our friend. To most of you he was personally known from his infancy. Suffice it, therefore, to say that in his youth and manhood he was ever esteemed a dutiful son, an affectionate brother, a kind neighbor and a steadfast friend. At the age of 22 years he left his father's home to make Illinois the state of his adoption where he pursued the peaceful arts nor dreamed of contests dire and all the panoply of war.

But hark the tocsin of alarm! The hero of Palo Alto with his little band is hemmed by a ruthless foe; our countrymen are in danger, and calling on their fellow citizens for aid; the spirit of his revolutionary grandsire is enkindled in his bosom and bursts forth like volcanic fires, his neighbors and friends gather around him, glowing with patriotic ardor they hasten to the rescue. Having briefly reviewed his life as a private citizen, we must henceforth behold him as a soldier of his country. That he was brave his silent bier fully attests. As an officer, he combined strict discipline with the urbanity of the gentleman, and the kind solicitude of a parent to his subordinates, and he soon acquired the esteem of his superior officers and the love and esteem of his fellow soldiers.

His alacrity and endurance of fatigue were such as to gain from his commander, Gen'l Wool, the compliment of having the best marching company in his army, and subsequent events proved them no whit behind in fighting qualities. After a long, fatiguing march, it is well known that Gen. Wool with his command joined Gen. Taylor at Saltillo, and soon the hour of trial approached. The birth day of the father of his country had dawned on the plains of Buena Vista, when Santa Anna with twenty-two thousand of the best appointed and disciplined troops that Mexico ever marshaled on the battlefield, advanced to the onset. Sad disparity of numbers! There a countless veteran host. Here a small band of citizen soldiers, but yesterday engaged in the peaceful pursuits of domestic life; to-day prepared to defend her honor and rights. With cool intrepidity they gazed in admiration on that gorgeous array of glittering arms, extended far as the eye could reach; and as squadron after squadron of the foe advanced and wheeled into hostile array before them, not a cheek was blanched, not a lip quivered, not one heart for a moment quailed. When that heroic commander uttered his famous response to Santa Anna's summons of surrender, "Gen. Taylor never surrenders," he but echoed the feelings of every officer and private in his command. Twice did the sun in his diurnal course set on that heroic band, still occupying the field where first they stood, and twice did his morning beams light them to renewed deeds of valor; charge after charge had for a time the foe repelled, when our brave townsman, but lately risen from a sick bed was requested by Col. Hardin to seek repose in his tent, but his lofty spirit disdained to leave his post of danger and his companions in arms. Already had the sun approached the western horizon when the final charge made, carried by too enthusiastic ardor they were suddenly assailed by a large body of hitherto concealed foes; worn down by their previous exertions and exhausted by fatigue they still disdained to yield to ten times their own numbers. It was here that with Clay, McKee and Hardin, Zabriskie fell; kindred spirits were they in their lives and in their deaths they were not divided. Their battle cry, death or victory, and both were theirs; almost in the moment of their fall, victory perched on their banners. Thus nobly fell our brave townsman, and from the bloody field of victory, he comes to repose his laurelled brow in the soil of his native state. Well may New Jersey be proud of her son, and like the Earl of Ormond exclaim "I would not exchange this, my dead son, for any living in Christendom."

But how shall we express our gratitude to his devoted friends and companions in arms to whose unremitting care and attention we are indebted for this opportunity of manifesting our feelings towards our fallen brother. Language is inadequate to express our admiration of a friendship so endearing that even death could not sever its bonds, and naught but the grave effect a separation. Words are too feeble to convey our thanks for such disinterested love and kindness. Posterity shall award him his just meed of



praise, and with the memory of Capt. J. W. Zabriskie, of New Jersey, shall be associated the name of Lieut. Handford Stott, of Penn.

Ye stricken mourners, we bid you not restrain those sacred tears; well may you weep, for he, who was the recipient of your parental care and solicitude in his infancy and youth, and from whom you hoped for solace and comfort in your declining years, has departed forever. Weep, for you have lost a dutiful son, a kind affectionate brother, and an endeared companion. Fellow citizens, well may you mingle your tears with theirs, for you too have lost a brother, your state a noble son, and your country a gallant defender. No more shall fond words of love flow from those sealed lips. No more shall the deep roll of the drum arouse him from his slumbers, nor the shrill clangor of the trumpet summon him to the marshaled field of glory and renown. Weep thus for your loss "but weep not for him, though dead, he liveth." He lives on the scroll of a fame, he shall live in the annals of his country, and long, long shall he live in the bosoms of Jerseymen.

When we shall have mingled our dust with the mother earth and the place that knoweth us now shall know us no more forever, his name shall remain fresh as his own unfading laurels, and future generations when pausing on the historic page of Marathon and Thermopylae, or sipping deep draughts of patriotism from the records of Bunker Hill, Monmouth, Trenton, and Yorktown, and fanning the flame of military ardor o'er the storied deeds of Palo Alto, Monterey and Cerro Gordo, shall point to yon hallowed spot, and exultingly exclaim "there sleepeth a gallant son of New Jersey — a hero of Buena Vista."

After which the procession was formed in the following order, to wit: — Capt. Terhune's Troop of Cavalry; the New York Fusiliers, as a Guard of Honor; preceded by Dodsworth's band; clergymen; relatives and friends; citizens and strangers. After the remains had been deposited in the grave, General Walbridge, of Ohio, introduced Lieut. Stott, who had recovered Captain Zabriskie's remains on the battlefield, to the citizens of Hackensack, and then presented the thanks of the relatives and friends of the deceased, saying:

Soldiers, Citizens and Friends: — The immediate relatives and friends of him over whose honored remains these funeral obsequies have been performed, have unexpectedly assigned to me the delicate and melancholy duty of extending to you their profound and grateful acknowledgments for the deep manifestations of your sympathy and condolence, in this, the trying hour of their suffering and affliction.

But while we mingle our sympathy with the tears of the bereaved, the occasion should not be lost upon ourselves. Here, over the remains of the departed hero, we may re-ignite our love of country, as we commemorate his virtues and his worth. A proper regard for the memory of the distinguished dead, is one of the strongest incentives to virtue and moral worth — an obligation which it is the highest duty of man to protect and cherish, and that love of patriotism may be well questioned which finds no terms of eulogy in commemoration of those whose services have advanced the interest of humanity either in the cabinet or in the field. A genuine lover of liberty will always delight to linger upon the character and services of those by whom it has been perpetuated or achieved; and we should cease to be true to our own nature, if whenever courage and fidelity have been exemplified in human action, we did not extend the voluntary effusions of our gratitude.

It is then, proper and becoming that we are here. It is due to the services and memory of the dead, and alike serviceable to ourselves.

A gallant son of New Jersey has returned from the field of his glory and of his fame, to rest his wearied limbs by the side of his honored ancestors — he was stricken down, not by the insidious approaches of disease, but in the full noon-tide of manhood's pride — in the full strength and fruition of manhood's power, he fell, on foreign soil, beneath the flag of his country, contributing to its honor and upholding its renown.



Not a hundred years hence, this immense assemblage, by an inevitable order of divine providence, over which we can exercise no control, will have gone the way of the earth. Some, perhaps, to be remembered and perpetuated by the marble monument, and the sculptured stone, yet, who is there here present who would not readily exchange places with the departed patriot, on his lonely bier. He requires no marble monument to perpetuate his renown. It was achieved in the service of his country, and will be embalmed in the hearts of a grateful posterity. In the thickest of the conflict, the gleam of his sword was brightest, and in the hottest of the strife, the blast of his bugle horn was loudest.

“Once more into the breach, dear friend, once more.”

In that terrible charge that marked the overthrow of the enemy at Buena Vista, he fell, on the 23d day of February, A. D. 1847. On the 23d day of July, in the same year, you, his relatives and friends have congregated to pay appropriate honors to his worth. Having filled up the measure of his renown — having fell in the service of his country, that was honored in his birth, it is becoming that his remains should be deposited by the grave of that ancestor who bore a conspicuous part in our early revolutionary struggle. Here, within sight of early revolutionary memorials, did the vision of the hero first greet the beams of the effulgent sun. Here, in his early years, surrounded by the surviving patriots of the revolution, did he receive rich lessons of patriotic emotion. Here rest the ashes of his ancestors; and hither he has returned to repose beside them.

Not a hundred years since, other soldiers and other citizens congregated on this very spot to extend public honors, and to bestow private grief over the decease of this revolutionary ancestor. It was a becoming tribute to valor — to patriotism and devotion.

Who shall say that the consciousness of this fact, had not an important influence in determining the career of him, over whose remains, you, soldiers and citizens, have assembled to do honor.

The ancestor contributed to establish the liberties we enjoy, and was honored by a grateful country; the grandson fell in upholding the integrity of his country, and appropriate honors are extended to his memory and his grave.

Here, then, is a rich lesson for the rising youth of America. Here they may learn that courage will always be revered and virtue rewarded. Here they may behold by what immense sacrifices freedom is perpetuated, and thus taught to cherish it with vestal fervor and fidelity.

Though the spirit of the hero has departed, none will have the hardihood to deny that this virtue is not just and proper. One of the ornaments of the world has fallen, but he fell revered and lamented. The laurels which he gained on the field of battle will never fade.

Honoring the institutions of the country at the same time they are honoring the services of its distinguished sons, the Mayor and Common Council of the great commercial metropolis, and the municipal authorities of the surrounding cities have united with a vast concourse of citizens, extending to his memory and services, the high testimonials of their regard.

They knew him only by his public life — they judged him only as he came to them covered with garlands gained on the field of his fame — they recognized in him a citizen of that Union, whose renown, his valor has adorned. But oh, how differently he returns to you, the friends and companions of his early years. He brings back to the state of his nativity, another diadem to bedeck her brows. He adds another claim to New Jersey for the admiration of the world.

“Yes, Yes, I go, he whispered soft  
In freedom’s cause my sword to wield,  
Columbia’s banner waves aloft,  
And glory called me to her field.”



Ages and ages hence when we shall all be forgotten, when our bones shall have crumbled back to their original elements; when gorgeous palaces, with their lofty columns shall have fallen a sacrifice to the inroads of time; then, when the iron pen of the antiquarian shall come to perpetuate the renown of the republic, he will find its brightest pages in the biography of her departed sons; and if he shall seek to hold up in the emulation of other generations, a proper and becoming example for imitation, he will point at Hardin and Zabriskie, to Clay and McKee — “Beautiful in their lives — in death they were not divided.”  
“How sleep the brave who sink to rest,  
By all their country’s wishes blest,  
Here honor comes, a pilgrim gray,  
To bless the sod that wraps their clay,  
And freedom shall awhile repair  
to dwell a weeping hermit there.”

But I am admonished by, I fear, your almost exhausted patience, to draw these desultory remarks to a close. To you, soldiers, who were his associates in the profession of arms; to you, citizens, who were his neighbors and friends; to all who have mingled in the mournful offices we have just discharged, on behalf of his surviving relatives, I again tender to you their sincere thanks, and extending my own acknowledgments for the kindness with which you have listened to me, I respectfully take my leave of you.”

Rev. A Warner closed the exercises with a solemn appeal to the Throne of God. Nothing occurred during the day to mar the order or solemnity of the exercises.

Henry Libenau, of New York, attached a A Card to the funeral obsequies, thanking, on behalf of Capt.Zabriskie’s family, those prominent citizens and military corps, “for the kindness and patriotism evinced in honoring the remains of their dearly beloved and much lamented relative.” Besides providing further identification of the participants, this Card expressed gratitude to Major Crawley, of the Military Argus, for his services, professionally and personally; to Gen. Storms, whose active spirit of patriotism was observed on every fitting occasion; to Capt. Jagels and his Troop of Hussars, together with his mounted band; to Capt. Finck and his Troop; to Capt. Leurison and his 27th Mounted Troop; to Capt. Parker and his corps of Rifle Rangers; to Capt. J. Lonati and his infantry, the Lafayette Guards; to W. B. Burrell, Esq., for the use of his pall.

Capt. Jacob Zabriskie’s father, Jacob C. J. Zabriskie, died Nov. 21, 1847, aged 80 years. His mother, Maria Brevoort Zabriskie, died June 22, 1861, aged 82 years. They were also parents of Squire Henry B. Zabriskie and John Z. Zabriskie and of Mrs. Helen and Mrs. Jane Schnebly.