

COMMUNITY MEMORIAL MUSEUM
1333 Butte House Road
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SUTTER COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWS BULLETIN

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GUM TREE LEVEE BREAK OF DECEMBER, 1955

SUTTER COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MEETING

April 17, 1956

This is the date to remember
the Sutter County Historical
Society will meet in the cham-
bers of the Board of Supervisors

At 8 P.M.

ANNOUNCEMENT

CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
NOTICE OF CHANGE OF ADDRESS
Effective January 1, 1956
California Historical Society
Flood Building
870 Market Street
San Francisco 2, California

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By
Honora Laney

It is my privilege and honor to serve as president of the Sutter County Historical Society for 1956. With much hesitancy, I accept this responsibility, especially hesitant since I must follow the society's first and able leader, Noel Stevenson. Much credit is due Mr. Stevenson for his unflagging zeal in helping to establish the Sutter County Historical Society and for his inspiring leadership in coordinating the interests of its members.

In reviewing the history of the society, I find that the first organizational meeting took place on January 28, 1954 in the chambers of the Sutter County Board of Supervisors. Twenty-one interested Sutter county residents attended that meeting and approved the formation of a Sutter County Historical Society.

The purpose of this society is three-fold: First, to organize a method for gathering, classifying and preserving old records and other valuable data pertinent to the history of Sutter county; secondly, to establish a public museum for the display of such material; and third, to locate, identify and preserve (if feasible) historical landmarks in the county.

In the first two years under the guidance of Randolph Schnabel, program chairman, a stimulating and varied program was offered. Earl Brownlee and Earl Ramey, local residents who have done considerable research in Sutter county history, and Mr. Ottley, librarian in the California section of the State Library, indicated the wealth of unrecorded material and presented methods by which the material could be gathered. Mr. Stevenson highlighted the meetings with many historically significant displays. Mrs. Liane Weber contributed a watercolor sketch, taken from a small lithograph, of the John Augustus Sutter home at Hock Farm.

President's Message-continued

Realizing that, through flood, fire, and carelessness, much historical material is destroyed or disappears and that, because of the passing of many early day residents, interesting personal accounts of experiences are lost, the Sutter County Historical Society established committees whose functions are to record and preserve such data.

It is my hope that these committees under their able chairmen will become active and proceed to function purposefully in 1956. It is only through purposeful action that the objectives of the society may be achieved. It is only by setting up a thorough and consistent method of procedure that purposeful action may be attained.

Inspired, therefore, by the past capable leadership of our officers, and by the stimulating programs offered, and renewed by the determination to function purposefully, let us work toward the achievement of our society's objectives and establish a richer and more tangible history of our county. Only through the interest and the effort of each and every member of this society may this be accomplished. With such interest and effort, may 1956 prove richly rewarding.

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A SKETCH OF THE HISTORY OF THE MOORE-GETTY RANCH

Our apologies are due the Moore family of Sutter for not including the following article with the last Historical Society Bulletin.

There was much confusion in the office of the County Superintendent of Schools in January and in our rush we overlooked publishing the article at the same time we printed the picture. Please refer to the January issue of the Bulletin while reading this article.

The Moore-Getty Ranch

By

Ethel Hawley

The Moore-Getty home in the Buttes was built by Joseph Kindall and Moore Getty. The partners had first lived at Dutch Flat near Emigrant Gap. When their interest in mining wained they came to the valley to engage in farming. They moved to this locality in the 1850's. First they built and lived in a small cabin, then they built the present home in 1859-1860. Mr. Kindall was married and had two daughters, Annie and Mary.

The outside of this house has been changed very little up to this date. It was one of the first, large homes erected in the vicinity of the Buttes. There were Indians living in the Buttes at this time and Marysville was known as Nyes Landing.

Mr. Kindall was hauling brick from the Onstott place for the fireplace, by ox-team, when he was fatally injured. He stopped to open a gate and as the oxen walked through, they turned quickly to eat grass at the side of the road and caught him between the gate post and the solid wooden wheel of the wagon, causing his death in October 1860. The solid wooden wagon wheel was still on the farm at the time Mr. and Mrs. Jeff Moore purchased the place.

After his death Mrs. Kindall with her two daughters moved to Vacaville for a short time. The girls attended a school run by the Methodist Church. Later they returned to their home in the Buttes and Mrs. Kindall married her late husband's partner, Mr. Moore Getty. Mr. Getty died in 1888 and Mrs. Getty passed away a few years later. (1895)

The Moore-Getty Ranch-continued

The home was purchased by Mr. Jeff Moore in the 1900's and he lived there until his death in 1935. Mrs. Nettie Moore is still living in the old home with her daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Howard Cull. The home is now known as the Oak Hill Ranch.

* * *

SUTTER'S CANACAS

By
Charles W. Kenn

Early California history is closely linked with Hawaii.

It was in the latter part of 1838 that Captain John Sutter arrived in Honolulu from Oregon on his way to California where he hoped to make his fortune, and where he realized his ambition until gold was discovered on his land when he lost everything in the turmoil that followed.

Sutter was a citizen of the Principality of the Grand Duchy of Baden, Germany, where he left his wife and four children to seek his fortune in America.

After crossing two oceans and a continent, Sutter found himself in Honolulu where he remained for five months, eagerly awaiting passage to California.¹

He made friends with Honolulu merchants and participated in a few business ventures, one of which was to purchase the abandoned ship Clementine moored in the harbor. He served as supercargo, sailing first to Sitka, Alaska, then to Yerba Buena, now San Francisco, where he disembarked with some Sandwich Islanders. There were contracted to serve him for three years at ten dollars each per month and found. He was to pay their passage back to Hawaii after that time.

The actual number of Hawaiians who accompanied Sutter is not definitely known. Sutter claimed there were ten, eight men and two women, while William Heath Davis numbered eight, four men and four women.

Davis was Captain of the fleet of two river boats which took Sutter and his people up the Sacramento River. He was a Sandwich Islander who later became a successful California merchant and rancher, and was known as "Kanaka Jack." He was grand uncle to Hawaii's present Governor.

Sutter's Hawaiians were to play an important role in the development of Sacramento, and their descendants, many of whom are living in Sacramento and environs today, have contributed greatly to the economic progress and welfare of the region.

They became gold miners, salmon fishermen, snag boat operators, river boatmen, farmers, trappers, levee builders, and entertainers.

It was in the role of salmon fishermen that they made their greatest contribution, supplying the city of Sacramento with fish. Mr. Walter K. Jarrett, Jr., was the first to ship salt salmon to Hawaii in barrels from Sacramento.

Sutter referred to his Sandwich Islanders as "canakas" and observed that they were faithful and loyal to him, and that had it not been for them he would not have succeeded in his California venture.

They helped to construct his fort, built the first frame houses (thatched them with grass) in Sacramento, protected his person, fought at his side in skirmishes against hostile Indians, and in defense of the Mexican Governor of California, Micheltorena. They were the last of his people to leave him after the discovery of gold on his land.

(1) Cendrars (Sutter's Gold, 1926) reported Sutter formed a trading company with Honolulu merchants, who "shanghaied" shiploads of kanakas to him in California.

Sutter's Canacas - continued

One of Sutter's most trusted men was Kanaka Harry. He managed Sutter's Hock Farm after 1847. His wife, Manaiki, accompanied Sutter to California.² Another Hawaiian was known as "Harry's brother," and another, as "Manaiki, brother of Harry's wife." "Harry's brother" was drowned in Suisun Bay in 1847. Manaiki, Harry's brother-in-law, was employed as cook aboard one of Sutter's river boats. Another Hawaiian nicknamed Maintop was helmsman aboard Sutter's pinnace which he purchased in Yerba Buena before ascending the Sacramento River in 1839.

Sam Kapu and his wife were in Sutter's original group. John Kapu, their son, later became the leader of the fishing colony at Verona. John married an Indian woman of Maidu stock named Pamela Clenso. She outlived three husbands, all Hawaiian fishermen. She died in 1934 at the age of 100. Richard Hakauila Adams, her second husband, was in the U.S. Navy before settling in Verona in the 1880's. A daughter Lilly Adams Williams, lives in Broderick with her large family, children, grandchildren, and in-laws. Aihi Eel was Pamela Clenso's third husband.

Keaala O Kaaina, another of Sutter's "Canacas," married a Maidu woman. He accompanied his wife and her people on foot to the Indian Reservation in Round Valley in the 1850's, later returning to Sacramento where he worked on the river boats. They had two children, a son, Hiram, and a daughter Mele Kainua Keaala. Hiram later went East, married a white woman, then settled in Washington State, where he became an apple grower. He died in the 1920's. Mele accompanied Kalakaua's body to Honolulu in 1891, later returning to San Francisco, where she married John B. Azbill. Mr. Azbill's people disowned him and they settled on land given to them by Mr. Bidwell in Chico. Henry K. Azbill of San Francisco survives.

Edwin Mahuka and William David Paaniani (Paaniani) were Hawaiians who went to Sacramento during Sutter's time, but not with him.

Edwin became a wealthy fisherman, merchant, and landowner of Verona. He was naturalized an American citizen on September 4, 1871, according to the Voters' Registry of Sutter County. His name appears as a voter in 1880. Mahuka married an Indian woman of Wintu stock and two of his sons, William (Imikula) and John (Elikula) were sent to Honolulu to be educated. They remained there permanently and drew incomes from the Mahuka Estate which owned lands in Honolulu. Edwin died in Chico where his monument may be found on the Azbill land. Moses Mahuka of Honolulu is kin.

William David Paaniani descended from a Lihue, Kauai, family. He married an Indian woman of Maidu stock and after leaving the mines settled in Verona as a salmon fisherman. He had two sons, Frank who died a few years ago at an advanced age and is buried in Oakland; and John, aged 90, living on the Reservation in Round Valley. William became a naturalized American citizen on October 31, 1876, and a registered voter of Sutter County in 1880.

John was taken to Hawaii when he was six years old and remained until the age of 20, when he returned to Sacramento where he worked on the snag boats.

While in Hawaii, John attended Royal School and Lahainaluna High School. He later became a member of Queen Liliuokalani's Household Guard and participated in Republican politics following the annexation of Hawaii. Daniel Paaniani, Jr., of Honolulu is kin to John.

After Sutter left California, his "Canacas" settled at Fremont, then at Verona. Here, they established a community of their country-men which they named Puu Hawaii- Hawaiian Haven - where their people might find refuge.

² Lienhard, Heinrich observed that Manaiki went to California as Sutter's wife, that she bore him several children, and that later, Sutter permitted her to marry Harry. See A Pioneer at Sutter's Fort, 1846-50.

Sutter's Canacas - continued

Today, they have intermarried with Indians of the great Penutian Empire and whites. They established kin-folk colonies from San Francisco to Round Valley, and from the coast to the foothills of the Sierra Nevadas.

Many carved out fabulous careers; others were more conservative, and taught the Indians Christianity; still others forgot their Hawaiian way of life. Only a handful have remained true to the ways of their cultural heritage, Hawaiian and Indian.

For the Sacramento River, from which they drew their livelihood, they had two names in Hawaiian. In winter, they called it Muliwai Kowaloli (turbulent river) and in summer, Muliwai Ulianianikiki (dark, smooth, swiftly flowing river.)

Today, it can be said of the handful of "Canacas" who accompanied Captain Sutter to Sacramento in 1839 that if you seek their works, you have but to look around you in Alta California.

(Reprint from Conferences of California Historical Societies, December 1955)

THE CHRONOLOGY OF THE FLOODS

(Continued from last issue.)

by Noel C. Stevenson

1862. On January 11th, 1862, the water raised six inches higher than in 1861, but the warning of the previous flood had caused the merchants and farmers to move everything perishable beyond the reach of danger. In spite of this precaution, the loss of livestock was very great and it was estimated that Sutter county farmers lost three-fourths of their herds. The stock that was saved were those that the owners drove to the Sutter Buttes and thus survived on the high ground there. Further misfortune followed when severe cold weather killed the grass and large numbers of cattle died due to starvation.

1866. The next flood was in December 1866. A severe storm raged for several days, and all of the low land and some of the streets in Marysville were flooded. A great deal of the levee, which was small and of new construction, was washed away.

1867-1868. The winter season of these years had a high rainfall. The flood damaged property and levees extensively. About one-fifth of the levee at Yuba City was washed away.

1870. In this year a large levee was constructed on the Colusa county side of the Sacramento River across the heads of the sloughs into which in seasons of high water the Sacramento river discharged surplus water. The farmers on the Sutter county side of the river were afraid that a rainy season would cause the water thus penned in by the Colusa county levees to overflow onto their land.

They therefore commenced to enclose their farms with small levees. The farmers' anticipations were realized. Although it was not a very wet season and there was no flood damage elsewhere, the water at this point rose higher than ever known before and lands between Meridian and Kirksville were submerged causing great damage. Fortunately the Colusa county levees broke in several places providing outlets for the water, thus preventing serious disaster.

1875. On January 19th heavy rain caused the Feather river to rise suddenly. The volume and height of the water was unprecedented, as was also the suddenness in which the flood descended on the Sutter and Yuba area. The levees in both Yuba City and Marysville broke and flooded both cities, causing great loss and suffering. On the Sutter county side of the Feather river, the loss would have

The Chronology of the Floods - continued

been greater but for the fact that there was a natural watercourse running between the Feather River and the North Butte. This natural watercourse had always accommodated overflow from the Feather from time immemorial and in 1875 the ranchers had commenced constructing a channel from the North Butte to the tule land to carry off the surplus water and although it was not completed at the time of this flood, it did help.

According to the Alta, one of San Francisco's leading newspapers (Jan. 24, 1875, 1:4) the principal contributing factor to the flood was that the bed of the river had been raised greatly due to tailings from hydraulic mining. More details of the flood appeared in the Sacramento Union (January 25, 1875 1:5-6):

"The breaks in the levee above Yuba City made two channels through the nursery of Dr. Teegarden causing great havoc and carrying off many trees. The channel of the lowest break is still cutting toward the old Webb house, also owned by Dr. Teegarden and it is feared it will be undermined. It is thought the brick dwelling of J. H. Erich, located on the north side of the slough above the residence of Judge Bliss will fall down by the water softening the foundation. The rear wall of the kitchen has already fallen and the walls of the two story building are badly cracked that the proprietor does not deem it safe. The north and south walls of the Yuba City courthouse continue to settle, and it is thought that it will suffer material damage."

A second flood was anticipated due to further rainfall. The Union stated that ". . . the merchants have their goods raised above the flood mark and will probably keep them there until after the Spring storms."

- - (To be continued)

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