

SUTTER COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWS BULLETIN

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VOL. XVI, NO. 1

YUBA CITY, CALIFORNIA 95991

JANUARY, 1977



AT YUBA CITY, CALIF.

EASTMAN'S STUDIO B- 9252

The second built and present chapel at Yuba City, Calif., built and completed in 1949 solely by the members of the of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints of Yuba City – located at B and Clark Ave.

IN THIS ISSUE – THE MORMON CHURCH OF SUTTER COUNTY
BY AMANDA OLGA ULSTAD KEYS

SUTTER COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
NEWS BULLETIN

Vol. XVI, No. 1

January, 1977

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An index and file of all the past issues of the NEWS BULLETIN may be found in the Sutter County Library and in the Marysville City-County Library.

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NOTE: THE APRIL ISSUE WILL INCLUDE AN ARTICLE ON THE HISTORY OF THE PACKARD LIBRARY BY EARL RAMEY.

NEW HONORARY MEMBER

Mrs. Ida Mildred (Peck) Davis, a native of Yuba City, has been listed as an honorary member of Sutter County Historical Society, having attained the age of 90 years.

She was born May 17, 1886, the only daughter of William Francis Peck and Sarah Jane (Cannon) Peck. Her father, who had served in the Civil War before coming to California from his native Massachusetts, at one time was Sutter County surveyor. Her mother was born at Indiana Ranch, Yuba County, the daughter of Dr. Gay G. Cannon, whose father had settled there in pioneer days.

Mrs. Davis now makes her home in Yuba City, having lived most of her life here.

(The Society gives honorary membership without cost to any person born within Sutter County who reaches the age of 90 years.

*
* JANUARY MEETING *
*
* Tuesday, January 18, 1977 at the Conference Room of Sutter *
*
* County Library - 7:30 p.m. This will be an election meeting, *
*
* please make the effort to be there to vote for the new Board of *
*
* Directors. *
*

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It is with great sadness we note the passing of Carolyn M. Peckham and Reginald Estep. Both teachers have had a great influence on their many students. I never had the privilege of knowing Mrs. Peckham but know many of our members had. Mr. Estep was a great influence in my life as he was in many others. We shall miss both of them.

If anyone has any of the early NEWS BULLETINS they would donate to the Museum we would appreciate it. If not a donation, perhaps a loan so we can make copies. We have had requests for these as they have very interesting titles. We are especially interested in acquiring April 1955, July 1956, April 1957, October 1957, July 1958, October 1958 and April 1961.

WANDA RANKIN
President

EDITORIAL COMMENT

A NEW FEATURE OF THE BULLETIN

We now run as regular features of the Bulletin Sutterana, Gleanings, Museum Report and miscellaneous quotations from old newspapers. We find that many members enjoy these short items as a variation from the longer articles; so we are going to try a new feature.

This new feature, Recollections, was suggested to us by several unrelated items in the history of Sutter County. We can name only a few of the most recent of these items. First there was the photographic history, The Survivors, by Janet Sullivan and Mary Jane Zall. Then Mrs. Nora Burns Hyman coined the phrase "The Last of the First Survivors" with reference to her generation of natives of the County. And, of course, the several fine family histories we have published in the Bulletin convince us that there is much pertinent county history in the memories of these "Survivors."

It is rather difficult to give an exact description of what we should like this feature to be, because there is no exact requirement. We do not want all contributions to be the same. But we can state some general qualities which we should like to prevail:

1. They are to be written or dictated by natives of Sutter County or persons who have had long residence in the County.
2. They can be impressions, memories, recollections or stories handed down. Many of these stories will be in form of anecdotes.
3. They ought to convey some information relative to the history of the County. But the history of a county includes characters, personalities, practice, conditions, and specific incidents. There is no item so trivial that it does not add to history; and history does not have to be sensational. Most small items are valued for their human interest.
4. The contributions ought to be limited to one or one and one-half pages of double spaced typing.
5. These contributions can be submitted to us in long hand.

EXTRA COPIES OF THE BULLETIN

There have been several cases of disappointed members who have been unable to secure extra copies of certain issues of the Bulletin. In self-defense we want to make the following statement:

We print only a few more copies than are needed to give each member a copy. The material for extra copies would be an additional cost. And we would have no assurance of selling these extra copies to recover the cost.

We can supply any number of extra copies if they are ordered in advance. We must tell the printer the number we want. Therefore we must have these orders for extra copies when the manuscript goes to the printer.

We send the manuscript to the printer the first of the month before the month of issue. This means we must have orders by the first of December, March, June and September for the issues of January, April, July and October.

We plan to tell in each issue what will be the feature article in the next issue following. This information will allow members to order extra copies if they believe the announced article will be of special interest.

We cannot possibly have extra copies made by the printer after he has delivered our original order. Therefore, a member cannot order extra copies after he has read the Bulletin and finds that the feature article has particular interest for him or for his relatives and friends.

The only alternative for securing these out-of-print numbers is Xerox copies at 10 cents per page.

COMMUNITY MEMORIAL MUSEUM NOTES
Jean Gustin, Curator

In many an attic, barn, basement, garage, storage closet, or wherever things are put away that don't get looked at from one year (decade) to the next, are items that belong in a museum. All too often things that tell important stories about our past are lost forever. Sometimes they are damaged or destroyed because they were stored under conditions that accelerated their deterioration. Many items and their history are lost to posterity when they are left to be "sorted through" by a later generation. All too often things are brought to the museum with little or no history -- "just found it with Grandma's things." We know also that many items never make it to the museum.

The Community Memorial Museum is pursuing an active collection policy to attain its purpose of preservation of history and equally to have these items to fulfill its purpose of education and research. Our collection is growing, but there are gaps in every category. Looking forward toward the traditional Spring cleaning time of year, perhaps this is the year for you to think about and to go through the items from the past that are in your keeping.

The museum is also looking for collections or groups of related items for its rotating display area. Items remain on display for four to six weeks. This is a perfect way to share the things you have, your

bit of history, with others in the community. If you have items that would be interesting for this temporary display, contact Jean Gustin, at the museum.

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RECOLLECTIONS
(Our New Feature)

THE PROMISE

When living with my grandmother, Honora Burns, in her home at the foot of the Buttes in Sutter County, the two of us would ride for miles on the country roads. In summer it could be 110 degrees in the shade but we went jogging along in the buggy. Grandmother practically filled the seat. I was wedged in between her and the side of the buggy. I didn't mind, and I didn't mind the heat. I did not know what it was to have ice water or soda pop. We were used to the heat and we didn't complain.

At these times grandmother would talk to me. She sat mid-center with her arms stretched from one side of the buggy to the other, with a rein in each hand. In one hand she would also be clutching her rosary. She would teach me to pray and she would talk about many things, much of it, I cannot remember now.

One day, as we were driving along, she said "Nora, now be sure to see that when I die, that I am buried with my shoes on."

I was only seven or eight years old but I knew this was a very serious request. It put a heavy burden on me, because I made this promise, and even though I was a very young girl, I understood that when one made a promise, it must be kept.

When I was twelve years old, grandmother died. At the undertaker's before the funeral began, I remembered my promise. I had never spoken to my parents about grandmother's request. I didn't know what to do, but I realized that I had to act, and quickly, or my promise would be broken.

I went to the man in charge and I asked, "Does my grandmother

have on her shoes?" He looked at me dumbfounded. He couldn't believe this small girl standing before him and demanding he open the casket so she could see if her grandmother was wearing her shoes. I told him how important this was to me, that it was her request of me and I had made the promise. Finally he drew the curtains and opened the casket. There were no shoes. After much whispering and running about, he said, "We cannot find shoes to fit her, she has such tiny feet." I wouldn't give up and I did not budge until he came back with a pair of shoes and put them on her feet. After that the funeral proceeded.

To this day I do not know if the shoes fit, but, grandmother, I tried, and I hope they were the right size.

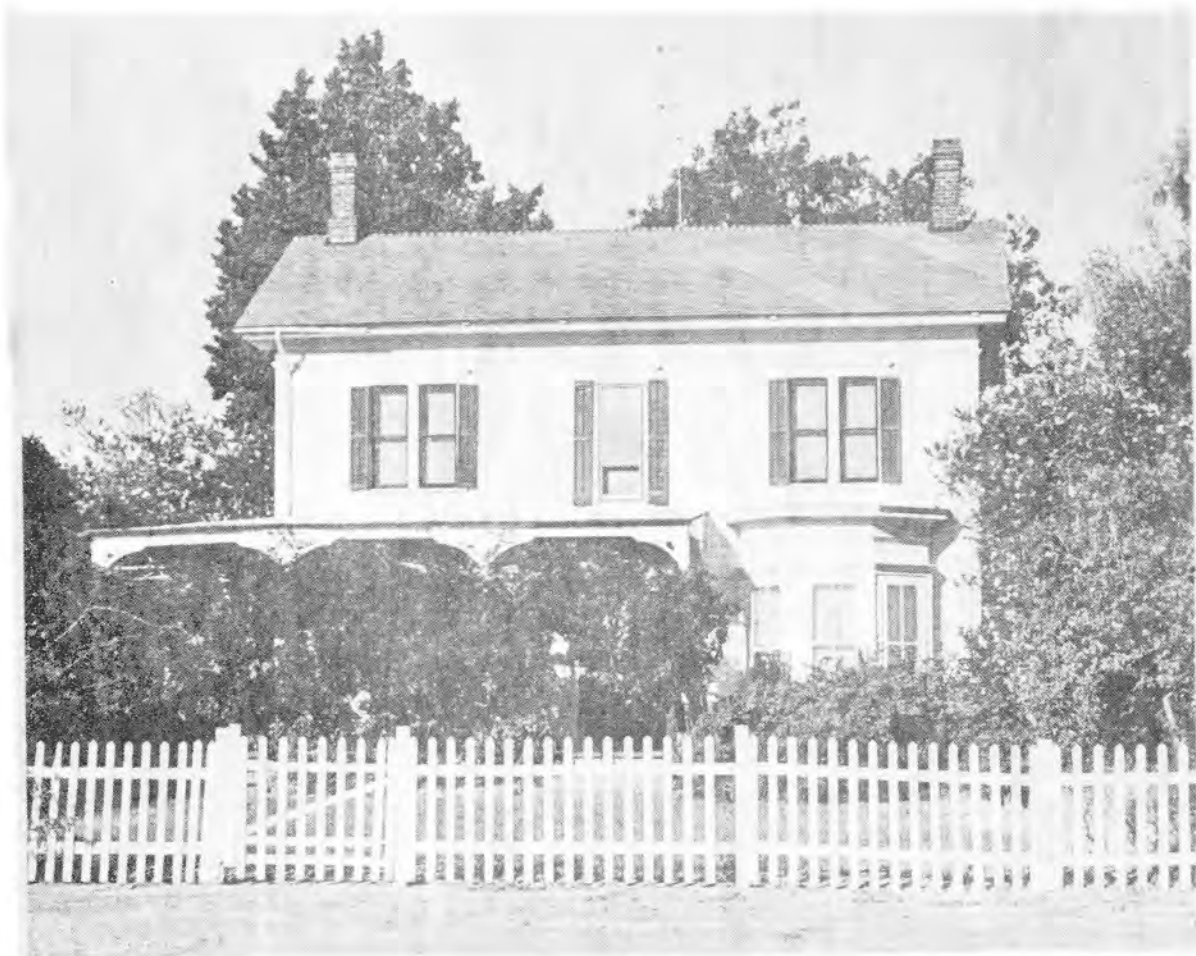
Grandmother was a saintly woman, and I feel very strongly that she will be waiting, in that Celestial place for me. I hope one of my grandchildren will see that I have on my shoes before I leave to meet her.

NORA MARIE BURNS HYMAN

SUTTERANA

General Sutter - The San Francisco Herald says that conspicuous in the handsome military display upon the occasion of the target excursion of the Marion Rifles was the old pioneer John A. Sutter. He was surrounded by his staff and bore himself every inch a soldier.

From the Sacramento Union, October 9, 1854.



THE LANG HOUSE

We reproduced this picture of the Lang house on East Butte Road because it was the setting for the anecdote related by Mrs. Marie Hyman in this issue. We are indebted to Janet Sullivan and Mary Jane Zall for permission to copy this picture from their book, **THE SURVIVORS.**

THE MORMAN CHURCH IN SUTTER COUNTY
by
Amanda Olga Ulstad Keys

What are "Mormons"? Who are they? Where did they come from, and what drew them to Sutter County?

To clarify misunderstanding, may I state that the word "Mormons" is merely a nickname of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints -- just as "Quakers" has become the popular name for The Society of Friends Church. The "Mormon Church" was designated to be known as The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints through scripture. It is not the Church of Joseph Smith or the Church of Brigham Young as some might believe -- as the name points out, it is The Church of Jesus Christ. "The Church of Jesus Christ" (meaning the same church as Christ established when He lived on earth in ancient times) -- "of Latter Day" (meaning restored in these latter times or modern times, thus differentiating it from Christ's Church in ancient times) -- "Saints" (what members of His original church were called).

The four standard works of scripture of the Church are, Holy Bible, Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, and Pearl of Great Price - in that order, the Bible coming first. Just as the New Testament is an enlargement on and a supplement to the Old Testament, so the Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, and Pearl of Great Price is a supplement to the entire Bible.

The Church's intricate and workable organization makes it possible for each and every member to play an active part in an unpaid capacity of giving of oneself to individually serving of others and thus, feel needed -- all the way from being a spiritual leader

over the Ward members, as a Bishop is (not a paid clergy church -- it is a lay church) or in good clean fun in the many recreational activities, etc.

The Church organization, -- the Welfare Program, the Youth Program, the Educational field, and Family Life units, etc., are second to none.

May I also point out here that a Ward is a geographical area within a Stake; a Stake is a larger geographical area encompassing about five to eight Wards. About 25,000 Mormon missionaries serve, without compensation, the world over -- which might account for it being one of the fastest growing churches of today. It is noteworthy to point out that the Church came into being in America and that it believes that the Constitution of United States was inspired of God for the preserving of this country, and it believes Columbus was inspired of God and was led to this Promised Land.

Inasmuch as the Mormon Church is so wrapped up in history, it is utterly impossible to separate the two; therefore, both will be covered in this article.

No other religious history has been equaled (with the exception of the Exodus of the Israelites led by Moses anciently), than the difficult Westward Movement in the United States of the Mormon people in covered wagons and the pushing of handmade handcarts (some 6,000 perishing along the way) over rough terrain and mountains to Salt Lake City, Utah, and in great distress by ship -- with many of them ending up in California.

MORMONS IN EARLY CALIFORNIA

Before we can establish the Mormons in the County of Sutter in

California, let us first establish them in California itself, where they made much of the State's history. It was via two distinct pilgrimages and separate routes that were to hold the key to the introduction of the Church in California -- the ship called "Brooklyn" by water, led by Mormon leader Sam Brannan* at age 36 on February 4, 1846, from New York to San Francisco, and the Mormon Battalion by foot, the Battalion branching off from the main body of wagon trains led by Brigham Young.

Religious bigotry, mobbings, murder and expulsion were often the lot of the members of the Mormons as the new organization took root in New York State, as they were driven out to the later Morman-established town of Nauvoo, Illinois (larger than Chicaco at the time) to Iowa to Missouri, etc., and finally to the Utah Territory desert where they established Salt Lake City in 1847.

In the Fall of 1846, "New Hope," the first Mormon agricultural colony in San Joaquin Valley (where Antioch is now located) was founded by Sam Brannan (settlement later known as Stanislaus City). "California Star," the second newspaper in California, began issues from Church-owned press in San Francisco. From April 4, 1847 to June 30, 1847, Sam Brannan and companions traveled by horseback East to meet Brigham Young's covered wagon company, and found him camped at Green River, Utah. Brannan urged Young to continue to the gold fields instead of settling the Great Salt Valley to farm. Among other things, Brannan stated that the Saints could not possibly subsist there, as it froze every month in that part of the country and the ground was too dry to sprout seeds without irrigation, and even if

*See NEWS BULLETIN of January, 1974 for "Sam Brannan in Sutter County" by Robert L. Ryan

irrigated, the cold mountain streams used would be too cold a water for the seeds planted and would prevent them from growing -- that it was no place for an agricultural people. Brigham Young prophesied then that the agricultural members would blossom like a rose in the deserts of Utah while the gold-seeking members in California would in the end suffer poverty. It was at this time that Brannan's faith withered in the Church; before this time, he had been the first Mission President in California, but now the seeking of wealth in the goldfields over-powered him and he fell away from the Church. It is interesting to note that the prophecy by Brigham Young was fulfilled, as the Saints in the Salt Lake Valley prospered, while those seeking after the gold in California did not -- with Sam Brannan dying in Escondido, California in 1889 poverty-stricken.

At the time of the already harsh and severe conditions of the exodus of the Mormons from Illinois, the Federal Government called 500 men of these migrants while traveling across Iowa, to reinforce the U.S. forces against Mexico in the Mexican-American War in 1846 -- 536 volunteered. Mention should be made here of the almost intolerable hardships that the Mormon Battalion went through from Council Bluffs, Iowa to San Diego, California, but the most dangerous battle they encountered on the whole trek, was not human enemies, but after they almost reached Rancho San Bernardino at the San Pedro River, they fought off with intensity, a hundred or more wild cattle (they had been ordered to march with guns unloaded, but in the presence of such a danger, the men loaded their muskets without waiting for an order and fired on the charging beasts). The battle lasted for an hour or more. These bulls were much more bold and

ferocious than the buffalo herds they had run onto along the way. Attracted by curiosity these herds gathered along the line of march, alternately scampering away and approaching; and some of the bolder ones, as if in resentment of the Battalion's invasion, attacked. Several mules were gored to death by them, both in the teams and among the pack animals, and wagons were thrown about by the mad charge of these curious beasts. The bulls were more desperate and dangerous when wounded than before. One bull was shot five times, twice through the lungs, twice through the heart, and once through the head, and yet would alternately rise and fall and rush upon them until the sixth ball between the eyes proved fatal. The number of wild bovine enemy killed in the fight was reported to be from sixty or more.

After the Mormon Battalion was discharged on June 16, 1847, General Kearney's group left Johnson's Ranch (Marysville) and on June 21, 1847 found remains of the ill-fated Donner Party in the Sierras. Lavina Murphy, a Mormon, was one of the forty-two members of the Donner Party who perished.

On September 27, 1847, James Marshall (Sutter's building contractor) took four Mormon workers (Bigler, Evans, Smith & Johnston) from the Natoma site to the saw-mill site at Coloma -- other Mormon workmen were already there.

On January 24, 1848, Bigler's diary states: "This day some kind of mettle was found in the race that looks like gold."

On March 2, 1848, the "Three" returned from Coloma and prospected along the American River and found traces of gold on Mormon Island (near Folsom -- now under Folsom Dam).

On May 31, 1848, saw-mill and grist-mill closed because of lack of labor -- AND THE GOLD RUSH WAS ON.....

THE SAN BERNARDINO COLONY MORMONS

Captain Jefferson Hunt, senior captain of the Mormon Battalion stationed at Fort Moore on a hill in the heart of Los Angeles (which was built by members of the Battalion in the Spring of 1847), scouted Southern California area for possible supply sources for Utah Saints -- made friends with owners of several large ranches.

In 1851, Captain Jefferson Hunt arrived in the valley with a party of 500 Mormons from Salt Lake City and bought Rancho San Bernardino for \$77,000 in 1852, with a down payment of \$20,000 from the celebrated Lugo family, whose grants came from the King of Spain and the Republic of Mexico. Hunt then laid out a city along the broad, spacious lines (extra wide streets) of Salt Lake City. There were no gamblers tolerated in San Bernardino, no rum sellers, no lewd characters offering vice for sale. There were no drones there.

The first thing the Mormons did was to build a stockade about a quarter of a mile square with two great gates leading into it. Inside they placed their dwellings, shops and stores. The next thing they did was to plant crops. They retained the name of San Bernardino named after Rancho de San Bernardino.

It is interesting to note how the purchase of Rancho San Bernardino of 35,509 acres took place:

"Upon committing themselves to purchase the Lugo Rancho they found themselves with only \$800 in their pocket. Where was the down payment to come from? Captain Hunt, again, came to the rescue. He made friends throughout California during his period of enlistment with the Battalion. His suggestions resulted in a committee being sent to San Francisco to borrow

the necessary \$20,000 down payment. It was a large sum to carry by team through the lonely and almost unhabitable 500 miles from San Francisco to San Bernardino. After the completion of the journey, it was reported that a band of highwaymen, common to that time, had been in waiting for the party carrying the money. The party, however, was so long delayed by the illness of one of their mules, that the robbers concluded they had missed them, so went on their way, allowing the down payment to be safely delivered to the Lugo brother in San Bernardino Valley."

On July 6, 1851, Stake organized in San Bernardino with David Seely as Stake President.

Still another migration, the third one, of Mormons to California was introduced by Amasa M. Lyman, as the second Mission President, with Charles C. Rich, as "Co-President" in the year 1851.

Parley P. Pratt was the third Mission President in California in 1851-1852 (filling a mission to Chile, South America in 1853), then Mission President in California again in 1854-1855, cared for the disintegrating Colonists in Southern California together with looking after missionaries going from Salt Lake City to the Islands of the Pacific through San Francisco.

In April 1853, Los Angeles County was divided to create San Bernardino County to accommodate Mormon population, because it was too far from Los Angeles seat. The past Mormon Battalion leader, Jefferson Hunt, represented the County in the State Legislature. San Bernardino County was the largest county in the United States, encompassing 12,876,032 acres.

In the years 1857-1858, majority of the Mormon Colonists in California responded to Brigham Young's call to return to the Salt Lake Valley.

Thus Mormonism was saying farewell to California -- the three historic penetrations into California had spent their force.

THE INCEPTION OF YUBA CITY

The Yuba River was discovered by Jedediah Smith on March 14, 1828 and he gave it the Indian name of Henneet. When John Sutter came to the valley he named the stream Yubu, after the Indian Maidu village (spelled Yubu, Yupu, Jubu by early settlers) near the confluence of Yuba and Feather Rivers.

Sam Brannan, Pierson B. Reading and Henry Cheever laid out Yuba City in July 1849 on the site of the Indian village found at this spot by the first white men in the region, and named it after Yuba River. Where the round earthen huts of the Indians once clustered on the riverbank at the foot of what is now Second Street, the levee and terraced lots of the white man now stand, and no vestige of the old mound is visible.

THE MOVEMENT OF MORMONS TO SUTTER COUNTY

Promotion of land brought the first Mormons to Gridley area, then to Sutter County in 1906. During the Mexican War when the Mormon Colonists were driven out of Mexico where they had taken refuge during the days of Pancho Villa, many went to live in Rexburg, Idaho in a Mormon community.

Following is the true story and experience of how and why they came to California, as told in part, by James M. Pryde and wife, who migrated from Rexburg at that time:

"Owing to ill health, we decided we would prefer a milder climate. About this time a Mr. Freeling, a Real Estate Agent in the interest of land which was opening up at Gridley, Butte County, California, visited our town of Rexburg, Idaho, and thrilled us with the opportunities around Gridley by explaining the colonization plan there, speaking of its abundance of water for irrigation from the Feather River Water-shed." (These particular people were approached by him because he knew of the past experience and knowledge the Mormons had in

being the first to use irrigation in Utah in the middle 1800's) "When Mr. Freeling was returning to California, a number of our men had decided to return with him to look the situation over. In the meantime, my husband and I had given the matter deep consideration and also made it a matter of sincere prayer. We asked the Lord to direct us in the right way and if it was wrong for us to come to California, for Him to close up the way and not let us be able to dispose of our property. On the other hand, if it was His will, to open the way that we might sell and be able to leave without any unnecessary trouble.

Well, to make a long story short, it was no time at all until we were sold out, only what we could conveniently bring with us was left unsold. The only thing left that we couldn't take was our dog, and we were wondering where we could find him a home, when one morning just before we left, a lady said to the boys, 'Do you want to sell that dog?', and they answered, 'yes.' So she said, 'I'll give you a dollar for him.' They took the dollar and that was the last thing to dispose of, which shows how clearly the way was opened up for us to leave for California. This has always been a testimony to me that the Lord was with us in this move."

GEORGE COLE enlarges on this move in his diary (Journal) as follows:

"On the evening of the 20th of November, 1906, we left Rexburg, Idaho in company with H. Dewsnup, C. L. French, Samuel Smith, W. Simmons, O. T. Shirely, Henry Losser and Mr. Freeling of the California Irrigated Land Company. It was snowing when we left, and was very cold. This continued all the way until we reached the Western slope of the Sierra Nevada Mountains. When at once we dropped out of snow into sunshine, green trees, flowers, oranges, singing birds and beauty everywhere. We were two days and nights on the way, reaching Gridley about 8:00 p.m. on November 22, 1906. On December 7th, we had our first rain storm since our arrival.

Sacrament Meeting was held at my house (George Cole's house) on Kentucky Street, Gridley, California. Beings it was in my home, I presided at the meeting. We opened the meeting by singing as usual, and then prayer and singing again. There was present: Myself and family (George Cole, Julia Cole, James, Louis, Elizabeth and Arthur Cole), C.L. French and his son Vandy, Matthew White and wife, O. T. Shirley, and W. Simmons. It is possibly the first LDS meeting held in Gridley. It was the beginning of what we hoped to be a series of meetings and eventually an organization of the Church here."

"About January 1st, 1907, we began holding meetings at Brother Smith's house. Until this time meetings had always been held at our home; the change was made because we were looking for the "stork," which arrived on January 19th, 1907 and left us twins, a boy and a girl, named George G. Cole and Goldie Cole. The doctor stated that these were the first twins born in this area in twelve years.

On February 5th, 1907, President J. E. Robinson of the California Mission visited us and held meetings with the Saints. His visit was for the purpose of looking over the country to report to the First Presidency of the Church in Salt Lake City.

On February 23rd, of the same year, President Robinson, Elder Thompson and Elder Grant (in other words, the Mission President and two of his missionaries) came, and on Sunday, February 24th, meetings were held in the Gridley Opera House.

George Cole, J. F. Dewsnup and Charles Larsen were sustained as the Presidency of the Branch, in the order named.

On March 1st, 1907, we moved to Live Oak where we had rented a prune orchard. On Monday, the 18th, it rained hard all day. In the evening we noticed water over the railroad track. We did not think much of it until about 9:00 p.m. when we went to the door and saw the water was all around the house. The house was very high with five steps. The water was all over the bottom steps, and crawling up fast. In a few moments the man across the alley came in carrying his wife; the water was in their house. They had four boys and they all came over to our house, because it was highest in that vicinity. Soon after this, about a dozen Greek laborers burst into the house, so we had a house-full until daylight. It was a black night and it rained incessantly. We watched the water crawl up the steps all night until by dawn it had reached the last or top step. The men rescued some of the pigs and chickens that were floating around in the water, or swimming, and put them on the porch for safety; the rest had to drown. The cow which furnished the twin babies' milk was standing in water up to her sides. The water was icy cold. When daylight came I got on a horse and led the cow up the track to the Hampton Place on this side of Live Oak, then a man rowed a boat up to the door and took the rest of the family up to the Hampton Place. We stayed there two days and nights; by this time the water had receded and we were able to return home."

**This bulletin is
continued in Part 2.**

Sutter County
Historical Society
News Bulletin
Jan 1977
Part 2

THE GROWTH OF THE CHURCH IN SUTTER COUNTY IN A NUTSHELL

James Omar Samson and his wife, Ruth Beatrice Henderson Samson, were the ones who introduced Mormonism to and in Sutter and Yuba Counties.

Ruth Beatrice Henderson was born up in the "hill country" around or above Bangor, California on August 9, 1885. She was the daughter of Thomas J. Henderson and Anna Fox.

James Omar Samson was born South of Yuba City, about 1884 -- he was 18 **years** old and Ruth was 17 years old when they met and married on July 10, 1902 at the home of the bride's parents, by Rev. W. M. Woodward, pastor of the Methodist Church.

After their marriage they met the Mormon missionaries, after which they were baptized into The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. They attended church in Gridley, for want of a Mormon church in Sutter County. Sometimes they would to to Sacramento to attend church, but most of the time they would ride on the Northern Electric train that ran between Sacramento and Chico.

By 1914 the Mayer and George Herron families were living in Marysville, California. Later the Alfred Mayer Sr. family moved to Yuba City.

In 1916 or 1917, Julius R. Papa, Harry Gambrel, John Myers, Sutton, John and Hulda Taylor, the White families moved to Yuba City, Sutter County, California. During the winter of 1919-20, four Mormon missionaries, Elders Sorenson, Green, Neilson and Hill, labored in Sutter and Yuba counties, and after a meeting in the J. Omar Samson home on Forbes Avenue, Yuba City, a Sunday School was organized. Those present were: J. Omar and Ruth B. Samson,

George and Mary Herron and their son Alfred Herron, Catherine (Katie) Herron Curry, Julius R. and Lavaun Papa, Harold Papa, Anna Sutton with her son Jess Sutton, Charles and Ruth Taylor with their son and daughter, Alfred Mayer, Sr., and Anna Mayer with their children, Paula Mayer (Best), Alfred Mayer Jr., Max, Robert, Victor, May and Alice and the four missionaries. Twenty-six members were present.

George D. Herron was chosen as the first Sunday School Superintendent, with J. Omar Samson as Ward Clerk. Paula Mayer (Best) was the first Secretary of the Sunday School. She is the only one living today who attended that meeting.

They rented a hall, upstairs on Second and Fremont Streets in Yuba City. Later they moved to Fourth Street between D and E Streets in Marysville, Yuba County. The members were increasing -- the Samuel George Lake family moved from Gridley, Butte County to Yuba City in 1922 -- making 10 more members. Then with the Peter Christensen family, the White and Harry Gambrel families in attendance, gave growth to the Church in this area to becoming a Branch on July 23, 1922 instead of a Sunday School only. Joseph W. McMurrin, then Mission President, organized it into a Branch. Peter Christensen was the first Branch President (similar to a Bishop in a Ward), and Paula Mayer (Best) continued as a Sunday School Secretary until she became married to Best.

Because of still more growing pains after the Samuel George Lake family and others arrived there -- in 1923 two lots were purchased in Yuba City on 723 Orange Street -- Lot 7, Block 5 in the Cooper Addition. The price was \$350, with a down payment of \$25. Brother Ray White was the leader in this project. Mary Pryde (Herron) and Anna White went



The first chapel built by the members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in Yuba City was located at 723 Orange Street, in 1923. The building later was sold to another denomination and still is in use as a church.



Harry E. McClure and his wife, Myra, was the first bishop in the present chapel in Yuba City and the leader during the chapel's construction in 1948-49.

from business house to business house uptown collecting or asking for donations to help build the new building. They collected a goodly amount. (There was some controversy whether to face the chapel towards Orange Street or towards the side street).

Samuel George Lake was the second Branch President of the Church in Yuba City. He hauled the first load of gravel and most all of the gravel, and laid the sidewalks and foundation for the chapel.

Later the first M.I.A. (the Youth Program of the Church) was organized with Esther Lake (Peters) being the first President, with Vida Lake (Macy) as 1st Counselor. The Y Mens (male Youth Program of the Church) President was Alfred Herron, with John Myers and Jess Sutton as Counselors.

Because the membership was growing so fast in the area, they built on two new classrooms and inside toilets, and two more large rooms on the side of the chapel that was used for classrooms, and in the summer these same two large classrooms were used as a cannery for canning peaches and tomatoes (in the old-fashioned way, by hand) for welfare usage. More people moved into the area which made the chapel too small once again -- parking was a great problem.

Everett T. Acor was the third Branch President in the Church in Yuba City, with Henry Matthews and Harry E. McClure as Counselors, still in the old Orange Street chapel. On December 9, 1934, a Stake was organized in Gridley, encompassing Yuba City, and John C. Todd was made Stake President, with John T. Nielson Jr., and Diamon A. Stewart as Counselors. The present Yuba City Ward chapel at Clark and B Streets which was built in 1948, was divided into the 1st Yuba City Ward and the 2nd Yuba City Ward because of constant growth in Church membership in 1952; shortly after this, Marysville, California

in Yuba County across the river from Yuba City, had a chapel which was also divided into two Wards after a short time of occupancy.

THE STORY OF THE NEW YUBA CITY WARD CHAPEL OF 1948

To handle the very important task of raising the necessary funds to finance the size building needed, a committee was called to handle this detail. Under the chairmanship of E. J. (Woodie) Stentzel, it soon was apparent they were going to tackle this task in a very energetic and thorough manner. The various methods used to raise funds employed by this group were unusual to say the least. Their aggressiveness and enthusiasm soon touched all the members of the Yuba City Ward and the money began to roll in.

Soon after the selection of a suitable building plan, ground-breaking ceremonies were held. J. Omar Samson, one of the original Ward members, turned the first shovel of dirt.

Harold B. Lee, one of the Twelve Apostles, from Salt Lake City, was one of the speakers at the ground-breaking ceremonies on November 18, 1947. Another speaker stated it was planned to build the new chapel without public solicitation of funds, and in due time this was accomplished in this way.

Local business firms learning of the building plans of the Mormons, offered their services and materials to them; in most instances at their actual cost. It is acknowledged here that without these offers the task certainly would have been much harder.

In order to secure the lumber, logs were purchased in the forest, cut and hauled to the mill; cut to dimension, transported to the building site in Yuba City and stacked for drying, and remained unplanned. Total lumber used exceeded 200,000 board feet.

Two full time carpenters were hired. Clair Johnson as carpenter foreman, and Harry Clark as assistant foreman. Monday and Wednesday were set aside as worknights. Construction was started on February 5, 1948.

The paid labor worked from seven to five each day, working nine hours, and were paid for eight. They voluntarily returned on worknights, donating their services from six to nine and all day on Saturday; thus their weekly contribution was some nineteen hours of donated labor.

The various ladies' auxiliaries prepared many an evening meal to feed the hungry workmen on their weekly worknights.

Most of the labor was performed by members of the Ward, even to the stone terrazzo and cast sone work. It is recorded that the Morman members were most grateful to the patient and tolerant neighbors in putting up with their evening noises -- not once did they complain.

Construction proceeded steadily. To handle the bricklaying, Thomas O. Wakefield, a former member of the Yuba City Ward Bishopric, who later became a resident of Woodscross, Utah, laid all the brick on the new building. He spent his 78th birthday working, laying some five hundred bricks. Construction experts, who have seen the brick work on the new chapel, have been astounded with the uncanny precision and uniformity with which these bricks were laid. Several, who have seen it, have stated they believe this to be one of the finest brick-laying jobs in Northern California and the best they had ever seen.

Only the very finest in materials and workmanship were put into the building under the watchful eye of Bishop Harry E. McClure.

May the reader be aware that the chapel was completed and paid for in full before it was dedicated and used, only two years later, on November 5, 1950.

AN INTERVIEW WITH BURNARD N. TAYLOR, JANET LAKE MYERS AND
CLIFFORD JOHNSON, YUBA CITY MORMON PIONEER RESIDENTS OF TODAY

- QUESTION: Tell me something about the new Stake Center being built any day now in Yuba City -- why was it moved to Sutter County and taken out of Butte County?
- TAYLOR: Basically, because of the growth of the Church in this area. More than likely there will be a Stake in the confines of Gridley itself.
- QUESTION: Do you think there will be some ill feeling come into this because the original influx of the Mormons came to Gridley and the Church was first established in Gridley and now the headquarters is going to Yuba City?
- TAYLOR: No, because I think shortly after the completion of a Stake Center here in Yuba City, there will also be a Gridley Stake -- in other words, there will be a Gridley Stake, and a Yuba City Stake, and a Chico Stake. The Church is in the process now of buying another site here, a ward site in Live Oak, a ward site in Biggs -- because of the growth of the Church.
- QUESTION: Where do you get your information Brother Taylor?
- TAYLOR: Where do I get it? I've been basically in contact with that particular part of the Church.
- QUESTION: Tell me your personal story in connection with the Mormon Church, Brother Taylor.
- TAYLOR: I was born in 1920 in the Colonies just three miles North over the Sutter County boundary in Butte County. My parents lived there on a ranch in the Colony. Basically, the first few years as a child I lived in the old Colony there -- which is one of the oldest -- the first chapel built in Northern California.
- QUESTION: When you speak of it as a "Colony", what do you mean?
- TAYLOR: I mean that this original group of settlers migrated from Rexburg, Idaho to the Colonies in Gridley by land promoters who wanted people who had experienced irrigation to come out there and they sold them these small acreages of land that could be irrigated.
- QUESTION: And that was about what year?
- TAYLOR: That was about 1906 to the Colonies and several of my relatives came in that original group, and came from Rexburg, Idaho. My dad was Joseph Burnard Taylor; he was a shoe clerk in Brown's Shoe Store in Gridley, and my mother's name was Hulda Agnes Nielsen -- she was working at the time in the Gridley Hotel with Charlie Thompson's wife of Sutter

City, and also, Jennie who opened the original Mama's Place in Marysville -- a famous Chinese lady -- all three of them worked together in the Gridley Hotel as young girls, and it was here that my mother met my father -- their romance is many stories of its own. They were married -- and it was after this that they moved to Marysville. My dad worked a number of years for J. C. Penney in Marysville, and they wouldn't give him a managership when he thought he ought to have one, so he came over to Yuba City and bought the old Yuba City Variety Store on Plumas Street in the late 1920's. It was in these years that I became exposed to the Saints here in Yuba City. Could tell many interesting a story of what happened from then on, but....

QUESTION: Are there any stories of a personal type that would be of a pioneer type?

TAYLOR: My father built a new department store there on Plumas Street in Yuba City, back in the early 1930's -- 1931, that was the time the widening of Plumas Street took place. I was raised on Plumas Street, right across from the Smith Theater and the Safeway Store that used to be there. This was in the day that you could buy a pound of hamburger for 5¢, a quart of milk for a nickel, a dozen doughnuts for a nickel. I worked in the Safeway Store for a while -- across the street from Carlins (No, Carlins sold out to Schneider).

QUESTION: Would it be permissible to ask you what your wages were at that time?

TAYLOR: I got 35¢ an hour.

QUESTION: Did you think you were well paid?

TAYLOR: Like I said, 35¢ bought quite a bit. I could go to Brown's Bakery there and I could get a dozen of the largest sugar doughnuts you ever did see for a nickel.

QUESTION: How old were you then?

TAYLOR: I was about 12 years old at that time.

QUESTION: Would you speak about your experience in the Church, as a youngster in growing up and why you fulfilled the callings that you were called to do in the Church?

TAYLOR: Basically, all my life I have always known that the Church was true -- even from my mother's womb up, and I didn't maybe always act like I knew it was true, but I did. I can remember for years, day in and day out, I was the only Deacon here to pass the Sacrament as a boy. My mother and I had one agreement, that if I went to church and took care of my responsibilities there, I could pretty well have my own way otherwise, and so, basically, that was something to

work towards too. I lost my father when I was a young boy and my grandfather, my mother's father, John Thomas Nielsen, came to live with us to help us. (He was the first Patriarch in the Gridley Stake, and also was on the High Council; and he spent a lifetime being a bishop before he came to California. He also served as Branch President right after Samuel George Lake did, in Gridley). He was a grand old man! Having lost my father, I was quite bitter and I was ready, at the time, to have companionship with Grandpa. It was a great and thrilling experience. Grandpa taught me so many things by his love and kindness that always kept me close to the Church. I knew my mother always talked about the time I'd go on my mission and I looked forward to it, and when the time came, I was ready to go.

QUESTION: Where did you go on your mission?

TAYLOR: In 1940 I went on my mission to the East Central States Mission. I had some thrilling experiences out there -- I hardly slept in the same bed twice -- traveled almost the entire time that I was on my mission. (I had just completed my mission when World War II broke out). I had the privilege of working among the Martins, McCoys, traveled all through the Ozarks, the Blue Ridge, the Cumberland Mountains, all through there and had some thrilling experiences back there in the hills amongst the mountain people.

QUESTION: Have you eaten squirrel?

TAYLOR: I've eaten everything that's edible -- I was companion to the District President when I first went out -- I had the privilege of serving next as a Traveling Elder, and following that, a Local Missionary Supervisor and District President -- came back from my mission -- been back for about three years -- then married a girl from home -- Gridley.

QUESTION: What positions have you held in the Church? Has it been in this area all your life?

TAYLOR: All except when I was on my mission, and in Gridley for a while -- I held a few positions in Gridley, M.I.A. Superintendent (the youth program), Counselor in the Elders Presidency -- 14 years on the Gridley High Council prior to eight years as a bishop in Yuba City, presently serving as a Stake Sunday School President. I've held about every position in the Church -- all the way from Genealogical Advisor, to -- -- just about any position in the Church you can name, I've held it... and there are many, many.

QUESTION: Can you give some explanation as to why you served so faithfully in so many positions all of your life in the Church without any pay whatsoever?

TAYLOR: No, I didn't get any pay -- I got blessings.

QUESTION: Why did you continue to serve without getting paid for it?

TAYLOR: Basically, because of my knowledge and testimony of the Gospel. I pay my tithing and try to live up to the standards of the Church, and they are high!

QUESTION: Why do you do that?

TAYLOR: Because I lived before I came here and that this Church has been restored in these latter days, and I believe that some day I'll have to be accountable for my stewardship here.

QUESTION: And you believe that the Lord is making notes of your good deeds here in the Church do you?

TAYLOR: Oh, I don't do it for that reason. I do it because I want to do it. I know I've been blessed -- above measure -- for things I have already done in the Church.

QUESTION: Do you feel that you have missed a lot of hours of enjoyment in way of recreation by your participating so wholeheartedly in countless hours in the Church, on weekdays and on Sundays?

TAYLOR: No, I don't. When I was interviewed to serve on the Gridley High Council, the presiding Apostle from Salt Lake City asked me if I kept the Sabbath Day holy -- and I said, "Yes, I always have, but I'm committed next Sunday to race a new inboard motor boat that I just built, by the builder, in a race at Lake Francis, between Yuba City and Grass Valley." He said to me, "Fine! You keep that commitment, but don't make anymore." I went over there to that race and I turned over on the third turn -- I have been out in a boat only once on Sunday since, and that was when I was in High Council meeting when the Sheriff's Office called up and asked me to take my boat out, that some bodies had surfaced on the third day down there when three men had drowned in the flood, and the Stake President told me to take my boat and help out the Sheriff's Office, and I left the Council meeting and went down to the river to help them.

QUESTION: Were you called on to help in the Yuba City flood of 1955?

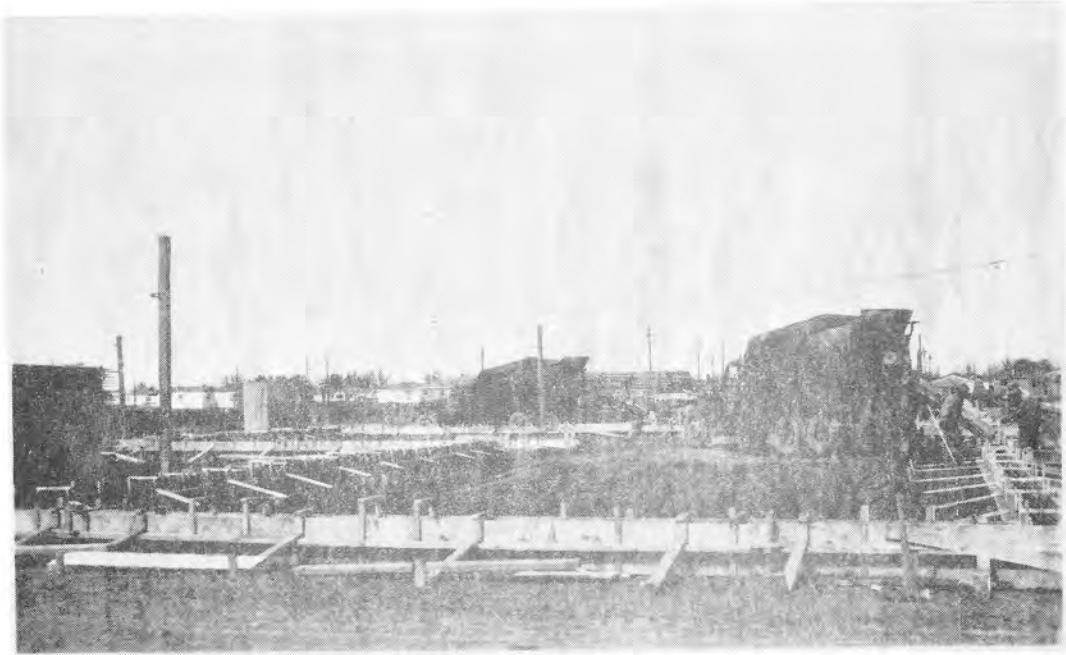
TAYLOR: You bet I was! I was one of the people who had five feet of water in their house and just 20 yards from my house the water was 10 feet deep. I went all through that evacuation of the City. I was camped out all night with Father McElwee over at the St. Boniface Catholic Church (in Nicolaus) to send out the flooded city victims to Sutter City.

QUESTION: Can you tell me something about the night that the flood waters came -- what experience that you and your family went through -- and a few hours before that?

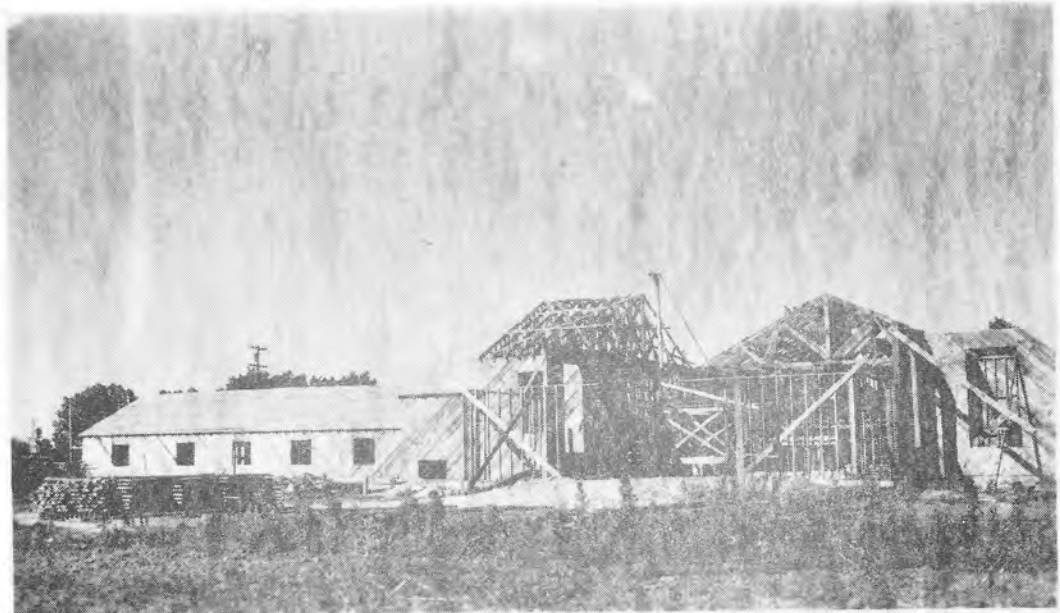
TAYLOR: Yes, I was raised on the river here. I knew it was going to break, but I didn't know where it was going to break, so my family got together and I sent them up to my mother's for she had a two-story house on Walnut Street, right off of Plumas Street in Yuba City and they were to wait for us, because my grandmother was there -- she had lost one of her legs three years before -- this was Clara Nielsen, and we knew we had to take care of her and get her out. I was down getting my boat out and my brother-in-law had his boat out and he had the inboard motor boat in the back of his pick-up and I was there with my station-wagon with my little boat in back of it, and we heard this roar of the water -- he said to me, "What's that noise -- a roar?" I listened and it sounded like a waterfall and I said, "It's the water -- it's coming -- let's go!" And he tried to get the pick-up to move forward with the boat on it, but it was too much for it and the wheels, so he jumped in with me in my car and we left the pickup there hooked up with the inboard motor boat -- this was right on Wilson Avenue here in Yuba City -- and when we hit Percy Avenue the water had already crossed Hillside and Slough Streets and wasn't only about 20 yards from us, coming -- and the water was a foot high, and the back of it had a wall of water four feet high, coming at us, and we raced back; we got up to the railroad track -- then we had a 4-foot embankment between us and the water, and we went on up to Plumas Street uptown and fortunately, the water hadn't gotten there yet. I picked up my family and all of them that was there and we got in that procession that took us four hours to get to Sutter City -- and most of the people had dead batteries along the road -- Oh, it was quite an experience! On my street alone, I lost three neighbors, and one neighbor on Woodbridge Street, and one neighbor on Dorman Street. One of my neighbors spent all night in a tree there and his father was in a tree across from him and during the night after a while he couldn't hear his father anymore -- he had fallen out of the tree during the night -- with a heart attack.

QUESTION: Did the flood draw the Mormon people closer together? Tell me something about the feeling there.

TAYLOR: The Saints in Gridley and the outlying areas dropped everything they were doing and came here immediately, and just as the water receded enough for them to get past it to get in -- they were here -- and within five days after the flood there was this big truck pulled up from Salt Lake City -- a big Semi -- and started unloading stuff into our warehouse, and they set up dryers and



Cement pouring at site of the present chapel in Yuba City, in 1948



Back view of present chapel in Yuba City, during construction in 1948

people would bring their mattresses and they'd take and dry them -- they'd take the motors off their appliances and wash out the mud and sand out of them and put them in ovens at 140 degrees until they dried out; and the Saints came in to help from far distances in large numbers, to assist the people here. The Mormon people were so well taken care of -- my relatives then later took over and helped us. I wore my rubber boots without socks for days and my doctor loaded me up with socks, but I never got out of my boots for over a week -- my ol' milkin' boots -- I was in them for over a week. It was a marvelous experience to see the love of the Saints for each other; and the Stake got together and took the membership of everybody in Yuba City -- in this area, and somebody was responsible to report where they were and if they were all right. This is the time that we lost the Ethingtons and their two children. Well, that Sunday, right after the flood, there was a group of us that got out boats and came back into the water and went to the Freeway looking for the Ethington car, and we found their car just sticking out of the water about six inches, turned over sideways, and we had gaffling hooks with us, but we couldn't find any bodies in the car. Then the Church organized searches -- and when the water receded they walked through those orchards day in and day out -- looking for the victims of the flood until they finally found them all.

One of the worst tragedies that ever was, was the day we found Barbara Ethington and Floyd Adams (Barbara's father) was behind us, to see Floyd pick up his daughter and wipe the mud off her, cuddle her and love her -- one of the tragedies of a flood, I'll tell ya! The Mormons not only helped the Mormons, but went down the street and took every home, whether Mormon or not, and helped mop out and clean out for the non-Mormons as well. One of the men that helped out gave the Church praise for 10 years after the flood, and later he became Mayor of Yuba City.

QUESTION: Is there any other story that you feel is valuable enough to record?

TAYLOR: Yes, I think the role that Harry E. McClure (Bishop at that time) played in the building of the present Yuba City Ward Chapel, certainly should be recorded. It was a great contribution -- it was practically done single-handed under his guidance that the chapel was built, we went up to Grass Valley and engaged a mill from one of the members of the Church up there, we sawed all the logs of this chapel and never did plane them. This Church is built out of rough studding and timbers all the way through it; we just sorted them for sizes and put them up together. Harry played a great role!

JOHNSON: The number of people that worked in the construction of the chapel is an amazing story in its own -- we had women in here who worked right alongside the men. All the sheetrock that was put up in this chapel -- there were women in here with saws, cutting them to size. I have photographs of Burnard Taylor standing on scaffolding and nailing sheetrock up onto the ceiling where the women couldn't reach. The youth in the Ward prepared the pews in the chapel, and things like that, they were sanded, then waxed. There was tremendous participation. The parties that were held to raise money here were participated in by the townspeople, was an amazing record -- the great support that we had from the entire community, was unbelievable!

TAYLOR: I have a nice little confession to make here -- at the time we laid out this chapel -- Harry McClure and I had the plans and blueprints that Salt Lake City o.k.'d, but we put 10 more feet on them. Nobody knew it, and we swore we wouldn't tell a soul-- but we pulled it out an extra 10 feet, and it sure helped -- to this very day. If you look at the plans, the chapel is 10 feet longer than what it shows on the plans.

JOHNSON: And, too, these tiles that went up on the roof -- these tiles were hauled in here by Doyle Sorensen, and then there were 30 to 40 people who would hand the tile off the truck from person to person, on up the ladder this way, and stacked them on top of the roof -- we had an assembly line production. Many a Saturday we had a big barbecue over on the high school lot. Whole families would respond and they worked! The faithfulness of the Saints at the time they were building the chapel -- they demonstrated the quiet inner-strength of their testimonies by their deeds. They got out and gave their physical worth!

TAYLOR: Rube Johnson mixed every bit of mortar for every brick that went on the building -- that's Dave Mowry's father. He was totally inactive at the time -- but he mixed every bit of mortar for all the bricks on this chapel. And Roy Peters did every bit of the glazing on it.

JOHNSON: We haven't mentioned what a stalwart family the Lake family was in the Church.

TAYLOR: Yes, Samuel George Lake, Janet Myers' and Esther Peters' father was a great, strong spiritual man -- mighty; mighty in the Church. It doesn't seem like we have men like that today.

MYERS: Yes, my dad, Samuel George Lake, who we all loved so much, at eight years old, had to leave his home, going to Mexico with his parents -- and lived there, for 30

years when the Mexican War broke out, and he must have been inspired to get out of there, because I remember him telling mother, "We're going to leave", and she said, "Oh! Not after being here for so long!" He answered by saying, "We're going to leave! I don't like the way things are going!" That was the first of January, and by the 3rd of March he sold everything he could, his stock, all but eight horses that he kept and he hitched up two covered wagons -- one wagon had four horses on it and the other one, two, and a saddle horse or two and we came out of Old Mexico, and we went to Blanding, Utah. We were only out three months, and about the time we got to Utah, Pancho Villa ran the Mormons out of Mexico. In 1912 when we were coming from the Colony, Dubland, in the State of Chihuahua, our home in Mexico, we had about 150 miles to travel to Columbus, New Mexico -- we didn't see a Mexican or a Rebel, and at that time they were going through and taking anything they wanted, taking stock, and killing people -- was during Pancho Villa's plunderings, -- but we didn't see a one. And I thank my Heavenly Father that my dad was inspired to get out of there. They would have killed us all if they saw us, and taken our provisions too. My grandfather, when he left, went to Arizona. My dad couldn't stand it back there in Blanding, Utah, though -- the cold winters and he had to be out hauling freight and when he worked on the canal he'd get paid in shares. We didn't see any money back there -- we had to eat carrots and milk and bread. One time he worked and got paid in flour and came home with 20 sacks of flour. Everybody in town came down and borrowed flour and that way we got rid of 16 sacks of flour. Also, we had no water back there; we had to put water in cisterns, by putting snow into them and it would melt and that was our water. When my sister, Esther, became eight years of age and ready for baptism, she couldn't be baptized (by immersion), -- there wasn't enough water.

TAYLOR: No, in Blanding there wouldn't be any water to baptize anyone in, I bet.

MYERS: My dad had relatives in Biggs, Butte County, California (the Prydes and the Herrons), so we came out here in 1913 after homesteading in Blanding for 18 months. He then fixed up one covered wagon and three horses and we went from there to a little town in Utah right below Price; then mother and the six of us kids (seven altogether, one was born in California) got on the train at Thompson, by Ogden, Utah to California, and dad and my two brothers got in the covered wagon, traveled two months, and came out to Gridley over the Donner Summit -- averaging 28 miles a day; the poorest day being 10 miles of travel. So my dad traveled around quite a bit in covered wagons in his lifetime. We moved to Yuba City from Gridley in 1923.

QUESTION: Brother Johnson, when did you come to Yuba City?

JOHNSON: Our family moved here in 1923, consisting of my father, J. W. Johnson (who had the Johnson & Openshaw butcher shop in Oroville, Butte County, California for a number of years), my mother, Alice Johnson, my sister, Loree, and myself, Clifford Johnson. We originally came from Arizona and landed at Wheatland, Yuba County about 1912, then to Durham, Butte County for a spell, then we moved to Oroville in 1915 when I was about eight years old where I stood out in the street and watched Mt. Lassen's operations of the eruption.

THE MORMONS IN THE YUBA CITY CHRISTMAS FLOOD OF DECEMBER 24, 1955

May it be known that this Yuba City flood was the second greatest disaster in California and the fifth greatest disaster in the United States, and several Yuba City Mormons were victims of it.

It was with a misgiving and sinking heart that people looked upon what was left of their worldly possessions after the water receded and the flood came to a close. Words cannot describe the hopelessness that strikes at one's heart as you pick your way through the littered streets, looking at the empty shells of buildings with their mute, staring, empty windows and broken backs. It is hard to realize these were once proud and haughty \$30,000 to \$50,000 homes.

Inside the homes the picture is even worse. Everything has been tipped over, and thoroughly mixed with mud by the churning waters of the Feather River flood waters. Heavy furniture in one room has been carried into another. Moving furniture has knocked holes through the walls. Articles of clothing which were carefully hung in the wardrobe closets are now strewn with reckless abandon throughout the house. Prized books, letters and pictures are strewn everywhere. The drawers are half-filled with water and mud and cannot be opened due to the swollen wood.

After the initial survey, the natural tendency is to see how the neighbor came out, so you go to his home. If he isn't home, you walk in anyway, as most doors were forced open by the tremendous pressure of the water. Inside the picture is the same. A flood is no respecter of persons, regardless of who you are, if you are in the way, rich and poor are treated alike.

After calling on your neighbor, you get in your car to see what the city itself looks like. Instead of starting your clean-up, natural curiosity gets the best of you, so you drive up one street and down the next, sight-seeing. Some parts aren't passable because of the mud -- you can't get through because smashed homes are in the middle of the street blocking your way. Covering everything, inside and outside of houses is a blanket of very fine, extremely slick, light brown mud -- LIGHT CHOCOLATE-BROWN MUD IS EVERYWHERE!

FLOOD VICTIMS IN SPECIFIC MORMON FAMILIES

THE ETHINGTON FAMILY:

Undoubtedly the most sad and unforgettable story of the flood was the loss of an entire Mormon family of four -- the story of the Lloyd Ethington family, a young husband Lloyd age 28, his wife, Barbara age 26, and their two small children, Brent age 4, and Robbin Darlene only 3 years old -- as told by Burke Adams, a brother of Barbara.

After suffering from exposure and shock of swimming and wading through water waist deep to assist his sister and brother-in-law and their two children after the Ethington car had stalled in high water on Onstott Road as they were on their way home from the Yuba City levee, here is the true and most tragic story:

"I had been working all night hauling sand and bags to the levee in Yuba City and my father, Floyd Adams, sent word that I ought to come home. Lloyd and Barbara said they would take me home, but when we got to a point between Lincoln Road and Bogue, the car stalled in the water. I crawled out to see how swift the current was. The water was up to my knees. I was on the North side of Lincoln Road, and made my way to a place where the water wasn't so deep. I thought I could get help for them. Then a wall of water swept over me and I was carried out into a grainfield, I guess.

I saw a string of cars on the road and thought I could reach them. I guess I swam and waded about 75 or 100 yards. I saw a two-story house where all the lights were on, but the people had just evacuated the place. I shouted for help but no one answered. Finally I reached the house and found a couple of blankets and a shirt. I had lost my boots and flashlight.

Lloyd and his family were stranded in their car on Smith Road, the water was all around them. That was the last I saw of them.

After leaving the deserted house I made my way to Lincoln Avenue where some people picked me up and took me to the hospital in Colusa."

The final chapter of the tragic story of the entire family's death was not completed until the last body was found 12 days later -- the body of tiny Robbin Darlene was discovered in a field near Smith Road and Onstott Freeway, close to where the bodies of her parents and brother, Brent were found. The surge of water had

swept over them at Smith Road; their car was found 150 yards West of the freeway.

Two days later the body of Barbara was found by her father, Floyd Adams, in an orchard. The next day the little boy's body was found. Four days later, or one week from the date of the flood, Lloyd's body was added to the list of dead. Finally twelve days after the flood waters engulfed their car, the body of the little girl was found. All four were found in the same general area where the swirling waters had scattered them and covered their bodies with sand and silt.

Scores of sorrowing relatives and friends took time off from their clean-up chores to pay final tribute to the entire family, a family who had been very active in their church they loved so much; and the old proverb began to take meaning -- "I cried because I had no shoes, until I saw a man who had no feet."

THE ALBERT AND DORIS HAYMORE FAMILY:

Albert and his wife, Doris, were also members of the Mormon Yuba City Ward, and were also counted among those who lost their lives. They lived on their ranch South of Nicolaus, and were able to move their house trailer, most of their farm equipment, and cattle upon the levee before the flood waters engulfed their home. They lived in their house trailer with their son, Wesley, until January 6, 1956, obtaining fresh water and supplies from a little store at Verona which was reached by boat, but his parents sank with the boat and were not seen alive again. Albert Haymore's body was recovered four months later, just a short distance from where the boat overturned. Doris Haymore's body was not found for almost six months, approximately 10 miles downstream. Investigators of

the tragedy declared that the men on a barge were unaware that the small boat had been swamped by them.

THE EDSON BARNEY EXPERIENCE:

Edson Barney, another member of the Yuba City Ward, spent a harrowing night in his small row boat tied to a power pole guy wire: When word came to evacuate Yuba City, the family piled everything as high as possible -- television, refrigerator, washer on top of tables, etc. Edson Barney elected to stay, and if necessary would use his boat to get out. His wife and all her relatives who were visiting them for the Christmas holidays, left just before the water came in on them. Barney spent considerable time in his boat attempting to stop logs, boards, and heavy debris from crashing through their front windows. Finally the water became so swift that he had to move away. All through the night he could hear people screaming in the winter darkness, but he was powerless to help as he sat alone in the dark in his little boat tied to the guy wire. "It was the most terrifying experience in all my life -- it was far worse than any of my war experiences," he related. The water had reached a depth of seven feet.

THE MORMON CHURCH IN ACTION IN THE YUBA CITY FLOOD

The afternoon of December 23, prior to the flood, President Wilbur Mills of the Gridley Stake Presidency (in Butte County), Merrill Orme of the High Council and Carlos Rasmussen of the Gridley Ward Bishopric, anticipating the need for help, drove to Yuba City, Sutter County, to learn what the Gridley Stake could do to expedite help for the Yuba City Ward members. They met with Bishop U. John Fox of the Yuba City Second Ward and Lloyd Ethington,

First Counselor to the Bishop in the Yuba City First Ward, to decide on a plan to follow in the event of extreme emergency. (This is the same Lloyd Ethington who lost his life in the flood a few hours later).

A definite action was agreed upon, and President Mills and his group returned to Gridley where a survey was made to learn how many homes would be available for housing the flood victim members, if necessary. Within two hours they had the proper information from contacting the members of the two wards in Gridley, that 300 people could be fed and bedded down between the private homes and the use of the two Gridley chapels -- also, calling on the Chico (Butte County) Ward to stand by on alert and to remain open 24 hours a day. Berkley could accommodate 150 families, also.

The Civil Defense Officials instructed all evacuees to take the road West to Colusa, as it was feared the levee just North of Yuba City and at Gridley, would not hold; consequently few went directly to Gridley and Chico.

THE MORMON CHURCH'S WELFARE PLAN IN ACTION IN THE YUBA CITY FLOOD

The morning of December 24, 1955, nine hours after the flood, President Mills secured a Civilian Defense pass and was allowed into the flooded area to check conditions and ascertain what could be done and found the city under water. Together with Lynn Kendall of the Yuba City Ward, he waded miles and used a stray row boat to learn the Yuba City Ward chapel had six inches of water in it.

The morning of December 25, Christmas morning, the Church's Priesthood members in Gridley were called into immediate action and were organized into groups. Through them, all rolls in the Relief Society Centers (the Ladies Auxiliary in the Mormon Church) and Red

Cross Shelters were checked in Woodland, Meridian, Colusa, Grimes, Williams and Chico, for Mormon church members. From this check most of the church members of the flooded area and their needs were accounted for.

On December 26, 100 Priesthood members in the various wards in the Gridley Stake cleaned the Yuba City Ward chapel, also, assisted in cleaning out homes of individual members, getting permission from the guards posted to go through and do so.

On December 27, the bishops of the two Gridley Wards, Relief Society Presidents, and Stake Presidency met. They had learned from a survey that 50 Mormon homes had been badly hit and 135 homes had water in them, that immediate plans must be made to feed and partially clothe 100 families. Clearing through President Grandall (the Regional Welfare Chairman in Sacramento), the Welfare Program in Salt Lake City was contacted by phone. WITHIN THREE HOURS, the Church General Welfare Committee in Salt Lake City filled an order and had it on the road to the flood area in two big semi-unit trucks of food of every type -- fresh meat, canned meat, canned fruits, vegetables (canned and fresh), eggs and cheese, juices, flour, bedding, beds, chairs, chests of drawers, clothing, personal hygiene items, tooth paste, soap, razor blades, even matches and combs.

A Salt Lake Church member, an executive of the Inland Freight Lines in Salt Lake City, had previously heard of the pending disastrous flood of "Marysville", California, had ordered the trucks be idled in Salt Lake City to await probable disaster call for their use to transport welfare items to these California victims, free of charge, saving freight costs of \$850 per truck, or \$1700 for the two

trucks (later the firm sent another semi to Gridley, making approximately \$2500 saved as a result of this Line's generosity). These trucks were in Gridley 19 hours later with 250 items weighing a total of 40 tons.

A survey was then made of the needs of every individual family of the Church here, by both personal contact and by notices carried in newspapers, together with announcements made over the radio for members to contact their bishop to let their individual needs known. These welfare orders were placed through the Relief Society in the already repaired chapel. These orders were placed twice weekly. Mormon Welfare furnished flood victims were broken down to -- FOOD 75 per cent; CLOTHING, 20 per cent; FURNITURE, 5 per cent.

From December 31, 1955 - January 2, 1956, over 10,000 man-hours of labor were donated by faithful members of the Church from the following Stakes: Fresno, San Francisco, Berkeley, Sacramento, North Sacramento and Gridley. Men, women and teenagers brought their own lunch and drinking water, their own tools to work with, and they truly made the dirt, silt and dust fly.

The following is an example of many letters of thanks received later:

"How grateful we are to have a neighbor and friend such as Gus Stentzel, a member of your church; it is only through his thoughtfulness that my wife and I are alive today. Please express our gratefulness and sincere appreciation to your congregation, as well as to the Brothers and Sisters from other areas that so earnestly assisted us in cleaning up our home and maintaining our spirit."

So ends my research on the Mormons in Sutter County, with a feeling of greater respect for these strong, humble pioneer people

who helped mold Yuba City and the entire County of Sutter, for others to enjoy now and in the future -- this I have tried to convey to the reader.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT IS HEREBY GIVEN FOR PERSONAL HISTORY TO THE FOLLOWING:

Burnard Taylor, Janet Myers, Pat Beadle, Pat Sorensen, Esther Peters, all of Yuba City, California

J. Clifford Johnson, Sr., Marysville, California

Indra Nason, Sutter City, California

Pictures from Elwood J. and Vernetta Stentzel, Sacramento, California, and Myra McClure, San Luis Obispo, California, and John Daze of Yuba City, California

A special acknowledgement is given for the ever-willing assistance of William and Alice Dawson and Earl Ramey, all of Marysville, California

May I not forget the constant support of my dear husband, James William Keys, not only in transportation and time sacrificed on his part, but his encouragement when it was most wanted.

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THE AUTHOR

AMANDA OLGA ULSTAD KEYS of Sacramento, writer of the article in this issue of the NEWS BULLETIN, was born in 1911 in North Dakota of Norwegian immigrant parents. In 1927 they moved to Oroville, California because of the harsh winters. Later in Sacramento Amanda met and married James William Keys. Two years ago she wrote an article for our January quarterly on the history of her husband's father, William Justus Keys of Pleasant Grove, Sutter County.

For 15 years, Mrs. Keys has been affiliated with the Sacramento Branch Geneological Library of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints as a volunteer librarian and Scandinavian Geneological Research lecturer.

GLEANINGS

Marysville Appeal December 4, 1864

Captain Hubbard's Company. -- We understand that Captain Hubbard is succeeding well in enlisting men for his company -- having thirty or forty men on the roll already. Those who have an idea of joining our volunteer forces, if they seek easy service, can never find so favorable an opportunity as the present. The regiment being intended for harbor service, the companies will be scattered from San Francisco to San Diego in the most healthy and delightful climate.

Democrat, February 7, 1916

Feeding Beef Cattle. -- A carload of beef cattle arrived via Western Pacific at Pleasant Grove in Sutter County consigned to Joe Bardini of Rocklin. They were shipped from Chilcote, Plumas County. They were unloaded at the stockyards at Pleasant Grove and driven to

Rocklin from that place. All of the cattle looked good.

Wheatland Graphic June 5, 1886

R. R. Accident -- On Tuesday evening when a passenger train was a short distance above Chico a parallel rod of the engine became disconnected or broke, and went thumping about at a lively rate, damaging the cab, knocking a hole in the boiler, and allowing the water to escape. Henry Gillis, the fireman, was bruised considerably, and his collar bone broken. He was taken to the railroad hospital on Wednesday morning. On Wednesday evening the damaged locomotive attached to the freight train, was taken through town, and presented a sorry appearance.

Marysville Appeal September 14, 1915

Command Good Price

Yuba City, September 13 -- That the local vineyard men are assured of good prices for their product this season is indicated by the fact that buyers of table grapes are paying as high as \$22.50 a ton for choice muscatels, while seedless grapes are commanding \$30 a ton. Wine grapes are bringing \$7 a ton. Sutter County will ship about a thousand tons of table and wine grapes this season, the crop being of good quality as well as size.

Marysville Appeal February 6, 1912

Sutter Independent Sold. Yuba City, February 5 -- The Sutter Independent changed hands again today, when V. M. Cassidy of Washington assumed charge of the paper. Mr. Hawkins recently purchased the Independent from J.C. Phipps, but was obliged to sell out his interest owing to poor health. He and his family will return shortly to New Mexico, where they resided before coming here.

FIRST NEWS BULLETINS LISTED

The first issue of the quarterly NEWS BULLETIN of Sutter County Historical Society appeared in November, 1954, not long after the organization had been activated.

It was circulated to the membership of the society without charge other than the annual dues, which then were \$2.00 per person. It served to give notice of the society's general sessions and to encourage the preservation of county archives.

The specific aims of the organization were set forth on the front page of the three-page original bulletin, as follows: To collect historical data concerning Sutter County; to use such material in preparing publications; to establish a museum for preserving and displaying of such material; and to encourage interest in local history.

On the front page also appeared a picture of the county courthouse on Second Street, Yuba City, before the cupola atop the structure had been removed and the front elevation altered as at present.

For the benefit of the present-day membership of the society and researchers of county history, the Bulletin herewith begins a listing of the earlier issues of the quarterly.

Libraries in Sutter and Yuba county, and the Community Memorial Museum in Yuba City have available files of the publication. A key listing of articles and authors also have been maintained.

Fittingly, the article in the No. 1 issue of the NEWS BULLETIN was "The First County Seat", written by the first president of the society, Noel C. Stevenson, who at that time was Sutter County district attorney. The first issue was dated November, 1954.

No. 2, April 1955, also included an article by President Stevenson, "The Strange Case of George Washington Rideout."

No. 3, July 1955, had an article by Irminna Rudge (now Mrs. John Palmer) former Sutter County Library librarian. This concerned "Fourth of July, 1901". Another article by Stevenson was on "The Great Independence Day Celebration of 1876."

No. 4, January 1955, also had another article by Stevenson, "Chronology of the Floods."

No. 5, April 1956, included the concluding installment of Stevenson's article on the floods; also, "The Moore-Getty Ranch", by Ethel Hawley; and "Sutter's Canacas." by Charles W. Kenn.