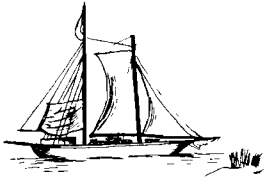
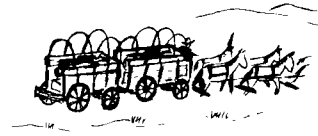


# SAN JOAQUIN HISTORIAN



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## TALES OF OLD SAN JOAQUIN CITY

BY EARLE E. WILLIAMS

[Continued from the April - June Issue]

### THE NEW HOPE AGRICULTURAL COLONY

In November, 1846, while the log cabin of Captain Imus was being built on the high ground along the west bank of the San Joaquin River, another settlement was taking shape several miles to the east on the other side of the river along the north bank of the Stanislaus. This was to become the Mormon settlement of New Hope under the leadership of Samuel Brannan, and incidentally the first agricultural colony in San Joaquin Valley. Some twenty men, part of the group of 238 Mormons who had arrived in San Francisco on the ship *Brooklyn* on July 31, 1846, were outfitted by Brannan and sent

up the San Joaquin River in a little sailing schooner, the *Comet*. Just upriver from the site where John Doak and Jacob Bonsall were to establish their ferry two years later (Mossdale "Y") the launch encountered snags in the main channel and put into the east branch, landing the party of colonists and their cargo on the east bank of the slough. This is now Walthall Slough.<sup>1</sup>

The party then proceeded overland southeast for about six miles to a location on the north bank of the Stanislaus, about one and a half miles up from its mouth. The location had



EAST SIDE OF THE SAN JOAQUIN RIVER, looking south from the approach to the Durham Ferry bridge. Trees lining the banks of Sturgeon Bend and the Stanislaus River may be seen along the horizon (top left half of photograph). San

Joaquin City was located across the river (to the right of the photograph), while New Hope Colony was located about one mile east of the left edge of the photograph.

### TALES OF OLD SAN JOAQUIN CITY (con't)

previously been selected by Brannan. It was a beautiful place, the lowlands of rich river loam and silt dotted with ancient live oak trees spreading their branches and shade over a large area. It was truly an idyllic spot, Sam Brannan's "Garden of Eden" near Sturgeon Bend, and the little band of pioneers envisioned the time when their "New Hope" would become the nucleus of a great center of Mormonism in the far west.<sup>2</sup>

The colonists had come with the intention of settling permanently and of quickly preparing for the arrival of Brigham Young and the remainder of the Mormon party who were moving westward by the overland route. The Comet had been loaded at Yerba Buena (San Francisco) with seed wheat and potatoes, wagons and horses, farm equipment and implements, and household wares. They brought with them a Pulgas redwood sawmill which they had obtained at Searsville (Woodside) on the Peninsula, and they soon completed one large log house and two smaller ones in the western style, sawing the boards from oak logs they found on the ground. They used these boards for sheathing, siding, and flooring. Then they covered the houses with oak shakes split from logs.

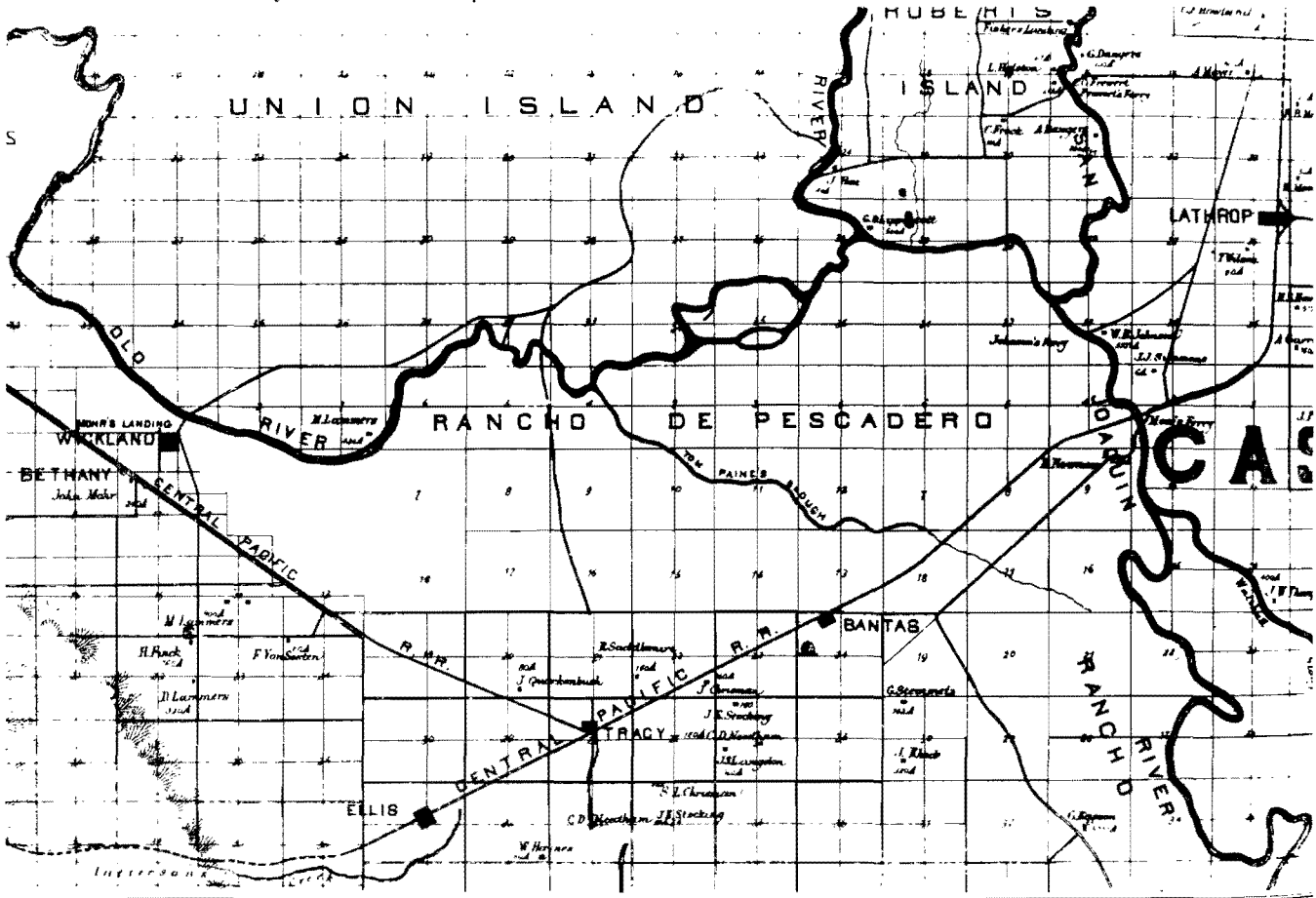
They had come armed with rifles, small arms, and fishing gear, and one man in a few hours could bring in enough game or fish to last the settlement for a week. When the houses were completed they plowed the ground and sowed eighty acres of wheat. Then they fenced it to keep out the wild

horses, bears, deer, elk, and the smaller wild animals that abounded in the whole area. They cut up the fallen oak trees to make fencing, rolling the butts and large pieces into a line and then covering them with branches and limbs. Like the houses, this was after the western style, a practice which they had borrowed from the Mexican vaqueros of the land grants across the San Joaquin River.

There were a number of Indian villages along the rivers of this area, but none west of the San Joaquin where Captain Imus had built his cabin nor on the north side of the Stanislaus where New Hope was taking shape. However, Sam Brannan's men remained cautious at all times, and guards were placed around the buildings nightly.

The crops had been sown, the land fenced, and a ferry put into operation on the Stanislaus within two months after their arrival. The men were now able to rest from their labors, secure in their oaken houses. But dissention developed among the men that first winter, aggravated by the arrogant behavior of their leader, William Stout. Matters were soon brought to a head when, according to Colonel F. T. Gilbert (Thompson and West: *History of San Joaquin County, California, with Illustrations*, 1879, page 100) Stout addressed his men somewhat as follows:

Now boys, we have got through putting in our crop, and have got it fenced in; now go to work each of you and select a good farm of 160 acres, and make out the boundaries; we will go to work and put up houses, one at a



1879 MAP OF THE NORTH PORTION OF TULARE TOWNSHIP. Paradise Cut, between Tom Paine(s) Slough and the San Joaquin River to the north of it, had not yet been dredged. Note Mohr's Landing on Old River, just above Bethany and Wickland. Note also the communities of Ellis, Tracy, and Bantas in

a straight line along the Central Pacific Railroad line which crosses the San Joaquin River at Moss's Ferry (Mosssdale "Y"). Johnson's Ferry lies to the north, and Durham Ferry lies to the south (below the bottom right corner of the photograph).

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time, so that by the time the crop is ready to harvest, you will all have your houses and farms. But I selected this place; this house and this farm are mine.

This was the "straw that broke the camel's back," and Sam Brannan was sent for to hear the men's grievances. Upon his arrival a church meeting was called in the largest of the three structures, at which a unanimous resolution dedicating the entire settlement to the Twelve Apostles (to the Church leadership) was adopted, thus thwarting Stout's plan to assume personal ownership. A few days later Stout left the group, returning to San Francisco.

But this was only the beginning of the difficulties that were to plague the small band that winter. In locating the colony along the lowlands of the Stanislaus Brannan and Stout had failed to take into account the idiosyncrasies of Mother Nature. A mile and a half to the southwest was the mouth of the Stanislaus River, flowing into the San Joaquin at an angle against the current. And just below (north) this point lay Sturgeon Bend where the combined waters of the San Joaquin and all of its tributaries were forced to flow in a counter-clock-wise motion, creating the whirlpool effect in the hairpin turn of the river. In January (1847) these waters seemed to flow with a vengeance into Sturgeon Bend, the result of extra heavy rains that month. Coupled with a high tide backing up the waters of the San Joaquin on its lower reaches, the Stanislaus River backed up and spilled its water down the steep, narrow overflow channel that by-passed its mouth, cascading the silt-laden flood waters at great speed and pressure into the outer periphery of the reverse curve of Sturgeon Bend. In one hour an eight-foot rise was recorded at the Bend, and yet the waters continued to rise. The inevitable finally happened, the torrents of water spilling over into the lowlands and plains on both sides of the San Joaquin and north side of the Stanislaus. The floodwaters swept the buildings and fences away, the men clinging to the debris as it lodged in the trees.

Upon their return to the site of the colony days later following the subsidence of the flood waters, they were appalled at the desolation they found. Upon digging up a batch of potatoes, they found all rotten to the core. They could not even reach Sturgeon Bend to fish and wildlife was now frighteningly scarce. They left, one or two at a time, some to join the settlements on Dry Creek and the Mokelumne, others to return to the families they had left behind in San Francisco. Even a visit by Brannan in April was not enough to give the men the determination that would be needed to re-establish their community in anticipation of the arrival of Brigham Young and his Saints in California and the subsequent establishment of New Hope as their headquarters.<sup>3</sup> In November (1847) the last of these Mormon pioneers, Alondus Buckland, left the ill-fated colony.

In 1849 New Hope came back to life briefly, but with a new name - Stanislaus City - and a new purpose - to serve the miners on their way from Stockton to the Southern Mines. A ferry was re-established at the same point on the Stanislaus as the original Mormon ferry, and an 1851 map of the area shows that the road from Stockton (over what is now the approximate route of Airport Way to the Stanislaus River) to Tuolumne City<sup>4</sup> crossed the Stanislaus River at this site. Nothing came of the attempt to re-settle the area, however, and by May, 1851, a pioneer of the area, Henry Grissim, was farming the land.<sup>5</sup>

### BANTAS

Another interesting settlement whose existence was contemporary with that of San Joaquin City was Bantas. This little settlement owed its existence to the need for a way-station along the Stockton-Pueblo San Jose stage route between Stockton and the Livermore Pass. The Elk Horn Inn had been constructed in the winter of 1849 by A. E. Henry and a certain Dr. Hopkins at the point where the River Road



**PICNIC PARTY OF YOUNG SAN JOAQUIN CITY PEOPLE** at the old Henry Fink Grove of oak trees on his ranch near Paradise on Tom Paine Slough. Third

man from the left (sitting) is William Riecks, later sheriff of San Joaquin County. Photo taken about 1890 by Charlie Dreyer of San Joaquin City.

Courtesy of the author.

## TALES OF OLD SAN JOAQUIN CITY (con't)

through San Joaquin City crossed the stage route and continued northwestward to Mohr's Landing on Old River. Almost immediately the Inn changed hands and the new proprietor, A. McCaffery, began running advertisements in the February, 1850 issues of the *Stockton Times* newspaper. It was described as being "five miles west of Bonsell and Doak's Ferry on the San Joaquin."<sup>6</sup> The Inn was opened following the establishment of Slocum's Ferry in 1849 some three miles below (north) the Doak and Bonsell Ferry (Mossdale "Y") and Johnson's Ferry which in turn was established between the other two. With the opening of these two ferries the stage route was shortened between Stockton and the Livermore Pass; west of the river the road from Slocum's Ferry met the road from Johnson's Ferry and from their intersection the route lay across what is now the Stewart Tract. At the Tom Paine Slough it crossed at just about the point where the Southern Pacific Railroad crosses it today.

Leaving Elk Horn Inn the road followed along the south bank of Tom Paine Slough to Mohr's Landing,<sup>7</sup> where it left Old River and then headed directly into the Livermore Pass and on to San Jose. Along Tom Paine Slough, on the south side, was a tule marsh about a half-mile wide, and it often overflowed when the tide came in. An early settler in the area, a man by the name of Chamberlain, took over the Elk Horn Inn circa 1853-4 and he built there a very pretentious two-story hotel with a restaurant and saloon. He painted the hotel white just as Captain Inias had only a few years earlier painted his new home at San Francisco. Chamberlain then on it was known as the White House. The hotel was located just above the high water mark of the river, that point to the Slough's confluence with the Old River. The River Road followed along the high ground of the tules until it came to Mohr's Landing.

In the spring of 1848 when the first freight wagon came from Livermore's Pass on their way to the Mother Lode region, they came down across the plain to a point on Old River just about where Mohr's Landing was later established, and followed the tule marshes in down to Doak and Bonsell's Ferry as well as Durham Ferry at San Joaquin City. This road ran through the present Holly Sugar mill property (north of Tracy) and a long half-mile east of the plant site the original road was only about four hundred feet north of what is now Arbor Road. It was at this point that another stage station, or more properly a road house for teamsters, was erected about the year 1857, the same year that the first grain was hauled from San Joaquin City to Mohr's Landing.

This house had been erected by J. H. Smith, the famous "Go Ahead" Johnny Smith, stage driver and teamster to the Mother Lode towns in the early days. Built in sections in Boston, Massachusetts, it was shipped around the Horn in a sailing vessel which delivered it at Mohr's Landing. After assembling his structure Smith also built barns and stables. The house was painted white and was known as the Little White House to distinguish it from Chamberlain's White House a scant two miles to the southeast. Smith's original house and outbuildings were destroyed by fire in 1963.

It is interesting to note that Edward B. Carrell (at Corral Hollow) stated in his diary under the date of March 3, 1857, that "The road is very bad between Chamberlain's and Stockton, the slews is [sic] filling up." Like all other stage and wagon roads of the 1850's and 1860's the River Road was dusty in summer and almost impassable in wet weather.

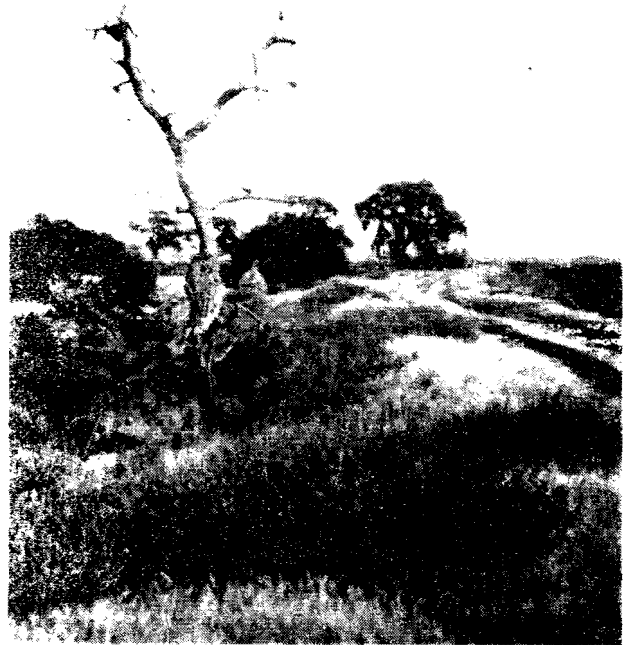
In 1863, Henry C. Banta bought Chamberlain's White House and then with the construction of the Central Pacific Railroad across his property in the late 1860's he built new buildings about a half-mile south of the original site.<sup>8</sup> There was a great amount of activity at Bantas during the 1860's. Numerous buildings were constructed, large sheep and cattle

corrals were built as well as a huge terminal for the heavy teaming to the mining country. As many as a thousand horses and mules were corralled there at a time, and hundreds more were on the road; eight-span teams were a common sight.

J. H. Smith played a leading part in these operations from his headquarters at the Little White House. The teaming station at Bantas before the coming of the railroad was operated by Caleb String Merrill.

About the time the railroad came through Tulare Township the levee along the south side of Tom Paine Slough was constructed to reclaim the land between the River Road and the Slough itself. This was the first levee construction job undertaken anywhere on the Delta.

This work of reclamation was done by Chinese laborers, many hundreds of them, using wheelbarrows to clean out the



SOUTH BANK OF TOM PAINE SLOUGH, showing levee work done by Chinese before the turn of the century. This is the site of the original bridge crossing.

Courtesy of the author.

channel and to build up the levee to a height of five feet or more above high-tide level. Up to a few years ago a son of J. H. Smith lived on Union Island. He was in his nineties then, and every year he would visit the farmers along Arbor Road and Tom Paine Slough to relive with them the "old days" when he was a boy living at the Little White House.

He remembered vividly the home where he had been born and raised, and the old wagon shed that for years after the construction of the levee was filled with wooden wheelbarrows stacked high one on top of the other. They had heavy wooden wheels with iron tires, and their bodies were made of staves from the halves of oaken whiskey barrels, bolted and banded to a wooden frame with handles.

Smith also recalled the deeply-rutted wagon road along the edge of the tule marshes, and the great wagons and teams hauling supplies and machinery to the mines. Most of the heavy machinery, boilers, crushers, pumps and other mining equipment was hauled direct from San Francisco by wagon. Some of the teams were of sixteen to twenty horses. A single jerkline running along the left side of the near horses to the

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bit of the near leader guided the team. A steady pull on the line and the teamster's "Haw Haw" meant a left turn; a series of jerks and a "Gee Gee" meant a turn to the right.

And then there was the road that branched off the River Road from his house and went diagonally across the land the Chinese had reclaimed in a northeasterly direction and across Tom Paine Slough on a bridge that they also built. The

leaf for those days, being thirty feet wide and over two hundred feet long from pier to pier.

At low tide the wooden piles (or piers) can still be seen, four on each side of the Slough, but the bridge itself is gone. Gone too is the beautiful grove of oak trees that once shaded the bridge.

Another bridge across Tom Paine Slough was built just a little later. It was east of Chamberlain's White House where the Stockton stage road went down (east) to the ferries. While the writer realizes he is going far afield in his "Tales of Old San Joaquin City," even getting off the River Road in crossing Tom Paine Slough, yet there is another tale that should be told at this point in the narrative as it will give the reader a better insight into the road conditions during these pioneer years.

According to the story that has been passed down orally through the years, one summer day after the McCloud Stage from Stockton had crossed the San Joaquin at the Johnson Ferry and was on its way across the river bottom lands toward Chamberlain's, the passengers noticed that they were being followed by some mounted men. Because the stage carried a heavy money box and because every seat was filled with passengers, including some of the fair sex, the driver whipped up the horses and there was a race and pursuit across the tule flats that would do justice to any modern western movie.

Because the rutted road was dry and the dust thick the plunging team and stagecoach threw up a cloud of dust so thick that it prevented the stage robbers from immediately crossing. The driver and the shotgun guard knew they would close in; however, as soon as the stage had passed over the Tom Paine bridge and was on hard ground where the dust was not so thick. They quickly made their plans accordingly, and as the stage passed over the bridge the two men threw the money box over the bridge rail into the waters of the slough, continuing on to Chamberlain's White House at top speed.

Judging correctly what had transpired, the would-be stage robbers stopped at the bridge and desperately attempted to recover the money box. They were unsuccessful, however,



**BRIDGE PILINGS ON SOUTH BANK** of Tom Paine Slough. This is all that remains of the original bridge built by Chinese labor. Courtesy of the author.

bridge was a half mile from the Little White House and about two hundred yards east of the present Laurel Avenue bridge at Hog Island. It was the first bridge to be built across any of the Delta waterways and it opened up that fertile region between Old River and Tom Paine Slough known now as the Paradise and Stewart tracts.<sup>9</sup> The bridge was a monumental



**INTERIOR OF CHARLIE DREYER'S WEST SIDE HOTEL AND BAR** at Bantas following his removal from San Joaquin City. Charlie was not only an early photography enthusiast, but also a talented artist. The sign over the near end of the bar reads, "WE

WELCOME ALL NATIONS. CARRIE; TO TRUST YOU TO WHISKEY. OH, NO IT'S TOO RISKY; TO PAY FOR YOUR BOOZE. THEN I CAN'T REFUSE." Stenciled on the bottle cases (lower right corner) is "LIVERMORE SODA WORKS." Courtesy of the author.



## TALES OF OLD SAN JOAQUIN CITY (con't)

because the mud in the slough was too deep and they had to flee before the men at Chamberlain's would be able to organize and arm a posse to hunt them down.

The coming of the railroad to Bantas gave the community a new lease on life in 1869 although the establishment of Tracy as a junction point by the Central Pacific Railroad in 1878 sealed its fate once and for all.<sup>10</sup> At its "height" Bantas boasted a permanent population of 150 inhabitants, with a post office, four general stores, two blacksmith shops, one hotel, one livery stable,<sup>11</sup> one boot and shoe maker, and five saloons. It was strictly a railroad town, serving as a shipping point for cattle and sheep, with corrals and chutes for loading the livestock onto railroad cars and pits for sheep dipping. Thousands of cattle from the huge Miller and Lux ranges to the south were driven down the River Road through San Joaquin City for shipment out of Bantas for years. In time grain fields replaced the open cattle ranges of the valley, and in time shipping from Bantas became a thing of the past. Like so many other promising communities of the period, it languished for some time, finally becoming little more than a memory of a colorful past in San Joaquin County.

### TUOLUMNE CITY

With great expectations Tuolumne City was founded in the early spring of 1850. It bid fair to become the county seat of Stanislaus County soon after the formation of the latter in 1854.<sup>12</sup> It was located on the Tuolumne River, about three miles up from its mouth and about two miles east of the place where S. J. Grayson had established his ferry (at Graysonville) on the San Joaquin River the prior year.

A gentleman by the name of Paxton McDowell was the promoter of the enterprise. He laid out lots on 160 acres of ground fronting on the river and sold them at high prices on the promise and expectation that the traffic coming through Corral Hollow (from the Livermore Valley) and out of Lone Tree Canyon would swing south to take advantage of the Grayson Ferry and the river route along the Tuolumne River to the Southern Mines. Also, McDowell had his sights set on the riverboat traffic that was sure (he thought!) to develop between Tuolumne City and Stockton, and he built docks and landings to accommodate the expected flow of boats and barges. From the first a few boats did make their way up to Tuolumne City, but they were hampered and endangered by the many snags and obstructions in the river channels.

Later in the same year the water level in the river went down to such an extent that boats could not navigate upstream that far. Residents panicked and began to desert

their new city almost as quickly as they had created it, and Paxton McDowell abandoned the project with great loss to the businesses and individuals who had cast their lots with him. The usual pioneer-town business establishments had mushroomed to life - the saloons, hotels, livery stables, general merchandise stores, barber shops, blacksmith shops, harnessmakers - even a newspaper office and a post office - only to wither and die as quickly. A few of the buildings on front street were not of the usual wood construction of the pioneer town, but had been built of brick with great iron doors like those found in the Mother Lode towns.

Perhaps the most interesting enterprise of them all was the combination gambling hall and entertainment house (actually a tent structure) that had been moved down from the Sonora mining region. The move to Tuolumne City was voluntary, but the move from Sonora was at the sheriff's request. When the bubble burst in the little river town this house of entertainment moved out in the fashion of a circus, and established itself by the side of the road in the mouth of Corral Hollow canyon. Being on the main line of traffic between the coast region and the Southern Mines, the establishment was calculated to drain off some of the gold coming down from the mines in the pokes and saddlebags of the returning miners. Edward B. Carrell<sup>3</sup> noted in his diary their arrival from Tuolumne City in December of 1850 and two months later the demise of its nefarious operations with the murder of four men in the tent.

In the middle 1860's Tuolumne City was revived due to the development of grain farming in the area, and ships plied the Tuolumne during periods of high water, carrying grain to Stockton. In 1870, when the Central Pacific Railroad was built through the San Joaquin Valley, the new town of Modesto sealed the fate of the little river town once and for all.<sup>4</sup> The inhabitants - and a number of the buildings of Tuolumne City - literally moved "en masse" to the new railroad town.

### HILL'S FERRY

Hill's Ferry, just inside the southern boundary of Stanislaus County, was another important river town. The ferry at Hill's Landing on the San Joaquin was first operated in the autumn of 1849 by a man named Thompson. Unlike the lower river towns, which took their transient trade from the traffic through Corral Hollow and Stockton for the most part, Hill's Ferry took its trade from Spanish-Californians and Mexicans passing through Pacheco Pass and up through the



ARTIST'S CONCEPTION of Hill's Ferry at its prime. Taken from the Newman Diamond Jubilee (1888-1963) publication.

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West Side, on their way to the Mother Lode. Hill's Ferry had a relatively long and relatively interesting history,<sup>15</sup> especially during the first two decades of its existence when cattle thieves, bandits, and lawless characters in general made their rendezvous and sanctuary from the law there. Like the other river settlements that were contemporary

with San Joaquin City, the history of Hill's Ferry was explicitly interwoven with that of its sister cities, all having a common background and a common bond through the waterways and wagon roads which connected them.

[To Be Continued In Next Issue]



EARLY PHOTOGRAPH OF HILL'S FERRY. Note steamboat in background.

Taken from the Newman-Diamond Jubilee (1888-1963) publication.

### EDITOR'S NOTES

- 1 A State Registered Landmark, erected approximately one mile east of the Mossdale "Y" crossing of the San Joaquin River on the south side of Highway 120, commemorates the event:

"THE COMET - 1846 - FIRST SAIL LAUNCH

First known sail launch to ascend San Joaquin River from San Francisco landed here in autumn, 1846. Carried twenty Mormon pioneers who founded New Hope agricultural project on Stanislaus [River]. Yoke of oxen and span of mules driven from Marsh's Landing (Antioch) by two men who followed crude map drawn by Merritt the trapper. Two years later Doak and Bonsall operated here [Mossdale "Y"] the first ferry on the San Joaquin River."

The presence of Sam Brannan's Mormon party in Stockton was noted several years later by Captain Weber when he named the slough that passed through the south-central part of Stockton for them.

Walthall Slough evidently takes its name from a pioneer land-owner in that area. Madison Walthall, Sr. A Mexican-American War veteran, he came to California in 1849, and was soon after elected to the state's first legislature from San Jose. He came to San Joaquin County about 1850, apparently at the end of his one-year legislative term.

- 2 For the reader who may wish to obtain a brief overview of the Mormon activities in California during this period, two sources are recommended: 1) Hubert H. Bancroft, *History of California*, Vol. V (*The Works of Hubert H. Bancroft*, Volume XXII), Chapter XVIII and pages 544-554 of Chapter XX; 2) Norma B. Ricketts, *Mormons and the Discovery of Gold* (Placerville: Pioneer Press, 1966).
- 3 Sam Brannan had envisioned New Hope Colony as the terminous of the long march overland of the Mormons who planned to leave behind them the persecution of the eastern states as they moved out to the West to establish a permanent home. After his visit to the stricken colony in April he received word that instead of continuing their march to California, Young's followers were settling at the Great Salt Lake, and the California members were ordered back to Utah. This of course ended Brannan's dreams, and New Hope's purpose.
- 4 Tuolumne City, described by the author in this issue of the *Historian*, was approximately three miles east of the San Joaquin River, on the north bank of the Tuolumne River in today's Stanislaus County.
- 5 State Registered Landmark No. 436, located near Ripon, commemorates the founding of the Mormon settlement:  
"NEW HOPE - 1846 - FIRST WHEAT.  
Approximately six miles west twenty Mormon pioneers from ship Brooklyn founded first known agricultural colony in San Joaquin Valley, planted first wheat; also crops they irrigated by pole and bucket method. Erected three log houses, operated sawmill and ferry across Stanislaus. Settlement later known as Stanislaus City."
- 6 The following advertisement appeared for several months in the *Stockton Times*:  
"ELK HORN INN  
This well known stand is located on the road leading from Stockton to Pueblo San Jose, five miles west of Bonsell and Doak's Ferry, on the San

Joaquin. The travelling public will find here accomodations for themselves and their animals, as good as the country can afford. Animals kept at low rates per month. The proprietor invites the public to call and examine for themselves.  
A. McCaffery"

- 7 Mohr's Landing was established on the Old River by a pioneer settler in the Bethany area, John Mohr. He arrived in San Joaquin County in 1857, buying 240 acres on the south side of the Old River. This was at the same time that John O'Brien and Edward B. Carrell had organized the Pacific Coal Mining Company up in Corral Hollow. Coal from the mining operation was hauled by wagon to Mohr's Landing, where it was transferred onto barges for shipment to Stockton and San Francisco. Within four years the town of Wickland was laid out just a half-mile below the landing, and it thrived for some eight years - until the coming of the railroad across the Tulare Township. The town of Ellis was laid out along the Central Pacific Railroad route just south of Wickland in 1869 and the coal was then shipped out by railroad with a spur line, the Corral Hollow Railroad, connecting the mines eight miles to the south with the Central Pacific. The settlement (Ellis) grew rapidly, and by October of the following year (1870), according to a *Stockton Independent* news article of October 26th, the new town already had some "45 to 50" buildings. It boasted good, flat soil, and it even had an organized Sunday School - a sure sign of "growing up"! Most of the Wickland residents moved to Ellis, taking their buildings with them, but in 1879 the little community (Wickland) could still boast that it had a hotel, a warehouse, a blacksmith shop, and a number of homes. A ferry, established earlier in conjunction with the landing operations, continued to operate under the name of Naglee's Ferry.

In 1878 the Southern Pacific built a line from Oakland to connect with the existing Central Pacific line that ran from the Bay Area to Stockton through Ellis. With the official opening of the new line on September 8, 1878, the city of Tracy was "born" at the point where the two rail lines met some three miles east of Ellis. The Ellis residents then moved to the new rail junction, abandoning that site completely.

- 8 Henry Banta and his brother William came to California (San Joaquin County) in 1854. In his own words he "bitt [sic] the town off [sic] Banta" in 1867-68 along the rail line which ran from Stockton to San Jose. A very brief biography, including Banta's own account, was published in 1954 by the San Joaquin Pioneer and Historical Society under the title *Ups and Downens of a Ole Calafornaen*. The original manuscript is at the Haggin Pioneer Museum in Stockton.

- 9 At that time Paradise Cut had not yet been dredged between Old River and Tom Paine Slough. (See 1879 *Tulare Township* map on page 16.)

- 10 The best description of what happened after Tracy became the railroad junction point can be found in Banta's own words, written just after the turn of the century:

"... tha [they] run tha [the] Antioch Branch to Whare tha town of tracy [is now located] one mile and a half Bee low tha town of Banta and moved tha town off elis [Ellis] up thare and that ruened tha town of Banta. So I had to sell out for what I Cold git. . . ." (Henry Comes Banta, *Ups and Downens of a Ole Calafornaen*.)

EDITOR'S NOTES: [cont.]

- 11. Both the hotel and the livery stable were built by Banta at a cost of \$6,000 and \$3,000 respectively.
- 12. This is not too surprising when one realizes that the county seat was located successively in the following settlements before Modesto was settled upon in 1872 as the permanent seat of county government: Adamsville, Empire City, La Grange, and Knight's Ferry.
- 13. Edward B. Carrell took up residence in Corral Hollow in 1850. This is the same area referred to by Mr. Williams in the previous **Historian** as the Spaniard's El Arroyo de los Buenos Aires. The author is in possession of all the Carrell diaries.
- 14. Modesto was located approximately nine miles east of Tuolumne City. The colony of Paradise, laid out in 1867 five miles east of Tuolumne City and also on the river suffered the same fate as its rival city. Readers interested in the founding of Modesto are referred to Modesto's 1970 centennial publication, **One Hundred Years**, by Jeannette Gould Maino.
- 15. In 1888 the present city of Newman was laid out and lots were offered for sale by the Southern Pacific Railroad which had just completed its line down the West Side: like the residents of Tuolumne City before them, the citizens of Hill's Ferry were induced to pick up "lock, stock, and barrel" and move to the new railroad stop some four miles to the southwest. The first four pages of the **Newman Diamond Jubilee 1888-1963**, published by a special Newman Jubilee Committee in 1963, contain an interesting account of Hill's Ferry.

Persons interested in doing research on local history, whether members of the Society or not, are invited to submit their manuscripts for publication in the **Historian**. The editor must, however, reserve the right to accept or reject and/or edit all material and photographs submitted.

While none of the original material printed in the quarterly is copyrighted, we would appreciate acknowledgement of the source by anyone using any portion thereof.

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Miscellaneous from the STOCKTON TIMES . . .

TUOLUMNE CITY

The subscribers having been appointed Agents for the above flourishing town, are prepared to dispose of several lots admirably located. A map may be seen at our office, corner of Main and Eldorado streets.

**HEATH & EMORY**  
 Agents."

(advertisement March 23, 1850)

"PICKED UP ADRIFT.

CAP[S]IZED in the San Joaquin river, about 20 miles below Stockton, a small sail boat, about three tons burthen, sloop rigged, bottom green, sides white with red stripe; contains some clothing and a small quantity of provisions, and a memorandum book containing papers bearing the name of John Lawrence. Inquire of

**FIRST ALCALDE, Stockton."**

(advertisement March 23, 1850)

San Joaquin City election results for organization of first San Joaquin County government [only the top vote-getter in each category, and the number of votes he received, is listed]:

- "Clerk of the Supreme Court --W. G. Marcy, 46 [votes]
- County judge -- Benjamin Williams, 44
- Surveyor -- A. K. Flint, 46
- Sheriff -- Dr. R. P. Ashe, 44
- Recorder -- M. T. Robertson, 44
- Clerk -- J. Patterson, 46
- Assessor -- Thomas McSpedon, 36
- Treasurer -- C. J. Buffum, 40"

[San Joaquin City election results, continued]

In addition to San Joaquin City, the following were the only other polling places in San Joaquin County: Atherton and Davis' Ranch; Isbell's Ranch; French Camp; Stockton; Knight's Ferry; Red's Tent.

(news item April 6, 1850)

VISIT THE SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY  
 HISTORICAL MUSEUM AT MICKE GROVE

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 AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF MUSEUMS

HOURS: 10 A.M. to 5 P.M.  
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**CLOSED: MONDAYS, TUESDAYS, NEW YEARS  
 DAY, THANKSGIVING DAY AND CHRISTMAS DAY.**