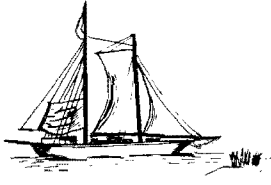


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TALES OF OLD SAN JOAQUIN CITY

BY EARLE E. WILLIAMS

EDITOR'S NOTE:

In this issue of the HISTORIAN we begin the first in a series of installments on the history of San Joaquin City, one of the pioneer settlements of this county. The original manuscript submitted for publication by the author, Earle E. Williams of Tracy, consists of approximately 46,000 words and is the result of research extending over a period of many years. With his permission we have had to reluctantly condense much of the narrative in order to prepare it for publication in the HISTORIAN.

One of the most difficult tasks in preparing a publication of this nature is to condense someone else's work without losing the style or "color" of its author. We hope that we have succeeded. With the commencement of this series we would like to thank Mr. Williams not only for making this major research project available to us, but also for graciously placing his collection of rare photographs at our disposal.

This is the story of a community born as a result of the California Gold Rush, of some of the people who were prominent residents of it, and of the personal reminiscences of the author. In addition Mr. Williams weaves into his narrative much interesting material on San Joaquin City's sister-communities along the old River Road route from Bantas to Hills Ferry. He also covers briefly the history of the Mormon settlement of New Hope on the Stanislaus River.

Although born of the Gold Rush, it was the existence of a deep water channel that allowed the steam barges and ships to ply the waters of the San Joaquin that gave the settlement its real impetus. The development of large-scale grain farming all along the West Side Plains, from Tracy to Patterson, made San Joaquin City an important inland shipping point for the area's farmers. But the coming of the Southern Pacific Railroad to the West Side, coupled with a change in the course of the San Joaquin River in 1911 and the introduction of irrigation on the "Plains," doomed the City to extinction, and today only an historical landmark plaque marks the site of what was once a bustling little city. We hope you will enjoy this bit of here-to-for untold history of San Joaquin County.

San Joaquin City, founded in the fall of 1849, was located on the west bank of the San Joaquin River just below the point where Airport Way (formerly Durham Ferry Road) crosses the river today. At the time of its "heyday" it was an important point along the old River Road (now Kasson Road in San Joaquin County but still called the River Road in Stanislaus County) between Bantas and Grayson's Ferry (now the community of Grayson in Stanislaus County).

Through all recorded time towns and cities have arisen in



AERIAL VIEW OF THE SITE OF SAN JOAQUIN CITY TODAY, LOOKING NORTH.

In the bottom foreground is the John Ohm home, built in 1907. The open triangular area behind (north of) the ranch buildings is the site of San Joaquin City. The road running generally north-south on the left edge of the photograph is Kasson Road, which, as River Road, served as the community's main street during its heyday. The river lies to the right of the cleared area, and the Durham Ferry bridge, built in 1902 at the site of Durham's Ferry, can be seen in the distance in the upper right of the photograph. The course of the San Joaquin River has changed a number of times in this immediate vicinity. When San Joaquin City was a flourishing community the main channel of the river lay along the edge of the triangular clearing, but it now lies some distance to the east. From an aerial photograph taken by the author.

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response to particular conditions and particular needs of people, flourished and grown, and then passed away as those conditions and needs changed. This was particularly true of many of the settlements born during California's Gold Rush period, the "Days of '49". These California communities were all founded with great expectations, grew to more or less importance, and then having fulfilled their purpose in their particular time, languished for a while and then finally dwindled away to become but sleeping landmarks of the past. So it was with San Joaquin City.

Located on high ground and at the point where its founders felt certain that it would be at the head of navigation on the San Joaquin River, it indeed seemed to have a bright future. It was, after all, the furthestmost "downriver" of a group of sister communities along the San Joaquin River and its two major tributaries, the Stanislaus and the Tuolumne. These post roads and river towns, built up and maintained as accessories to the early river ferries for the staging and teaming associated with the development of the mining camps along the Mother Lode belt to the east during the 1850's, and later the development of the huge grain farms of the valley, mushroomed and bustled with activity for a number of years. In their day they were very essential to the river traffic that plied the waters of these three rivers, supplying the hinterland from the ports of San Francisco and Stockton. But with the decline of gold mining first, and later with the advent of the railroad down the center of the Great Valley (followed by the laying of the Southern Pacific track down its West Side), their reason for existing for all practical purposes disappeared. Some of these little cities are entirely forgotten, others linger along with little except their memories, hoping that someday they may spring back to life again. New Hope Colony, Stanislaus City, Graysonville, Hill's Ferry, Tuolumne City - these were the larger settlements of the area when San Joaquin City was a flourishing community. Smaller settlements dotted the general area, too, like Bantas, Johnson's Ferry, Doake and Bonsall's Ferry, Adamsville and Wickland.

Because the birth, life, and even the death of San Joaquin City had much to do with its sister communities and the land and river trails that joined them, a short sketch of each of the major settlements, noting their relation to San Joaquin City, will be given in the course of the narrative.

The site of San Joaquin City lay within El Pescador, a Mexican land grant of approximately 34,500 acres lying along the west side of the San Joaquin River, which had been granted to Valentin Higuera and Rafael Felix in 1843. (This is not to be confused with the better-known Pescadero grant, situated north of present-day Tracy and given in the same year to Antonio Maria Pico. Hiram Grimes and others received the U. S. Patent on the former in 1858; Pico and Henry M. Naglee received the patent to the latter in 1865. To further confuse the reader, it should be noted that later both were known as the Pescadero grants.) When San Joaquin County was created in 1850 the Stanislaus River formed a major part of its southern boundary and San Joaquin City was the only settlement (among those mentioned above) then flourishing within the new county. Already New Hope Colony (on the east side of the San Joaquin River and north of the Stanislaus) had disappeared completely and even the town lots of its successor, Stanislaus City, were being farmed by a certain Henry Grissim by May of 1851. San Joaquin City, founded on high ground and hence not subject to the constant ravages of flooding (as was the case with the New Hope-Stanislaus City site across the river), became more than just a river town. It was at the crossroads where the principal wagon and stage roads converged and ferried the river on their way to the central and southern mining regions of the Sierra Nevada. The site had been chosen by

experienced pioneers and for a time bid fair to equal or exceed Stockton as the "hub city" between the Coastal settlements and the bustling camps of the Southern Mines.

The story relative to the settlement of our subject city actually goes back a number of years before the Gold Rush, back to the time when the whole of the San Joaquin Valley area was a teeming wilderness, the site of many villages of native Indians who were to be called "diggers" by the first Americans.

Great droves and bands of wild horses, elk, and antelope roamed the plains between the Coast Range hills and the San Joaquin River to the east (West Side Plains). Great flights of the squawking Canada goose filled the air above and sometimes literally covered the ground. The rivers on the eastern half of the valley and their bogs and sloughs were filled with millions of ducks, and the willow and tule swamps along the river bottoms and lowlands adjacent to the San Joaquin were crossed and re-crossed with the trails of the grizzly bear. Out on the plains hundreds of animal trails led from the hills down to the river. Wild horses and the other large animals would follow these trails down in the morning to graze on the tall, wild grasses, and to drink, and then follow them back in the evening to escape the mosquitoes in the tule swamps and lowlands along the river. In the winter and spring the creeks on the west and the rivers to the east of the San Joaquin ran swiftly, swollen by the seasonal rains. For a few months in late summer and fall the creeks and lowlands dried up, but the wildlife found abundant feed in the dense stand of dry grasses that had been nurtured by the winter rains.

THE MORAGA EXPEDITION OF 1810

In August of 1810 Gabriel Moraga, with a party of sixteen Spanish soldiers, Father Jose Viader, and four Christian Indians from the Santa Clara Mission, camped on the west side of the San Joaquin River somewhere near the site of the future San Joaquin City, judging from the entries in Father Viader's journals of the expedition. The campsite was given the name Rasura (close shave) as the soldiers had to drop their razors while shaving when suddenly attacked by a group of Indians. From there it was ten-and-a-half leagues south and ten leagues west to San Luis Gonzaga (Pacheco Pass). Since the attacking Indians were Apelamenes¹ from the area near the confluence of the Stanislaus and San Joaquin rivers, and a Spanish league was approximately 2.65 miles, it would seem probable that their camp was on the last high ground immediately along the west bank of the San Joaquin. Downstream from this point the tules of the lowlands west of the river channel made further travel adjacent to the river difficult if not impossible. And lending credence to this supposition is the fact that this oak-studded spot of high ground seems to have been a favored site of a number of later American trailblazers such as Jedediah Smith, Joseph R. Walker, John C. Fremont, Sam Brannan, and Caleb Greenwood. They had trapped, hunted, and fished in Sturgeon Bend (just east of the site), and crossed the river at this point before the establishment of the Doak and Bonsell Ferry (Mossdale "Y" a few miles downstream) in 1848.

AMERICAN TRAPPERS ARRIVE ON THE SAN JOAQUIN

The first American believed to have visited the site of the future San Joaquin City, and to have actually camped somewhere very near there, was the exploring and trapping party of the famed mountain man, Jedediah S. Smith. With seventeen trappers Smith had set out from the vicinity of Salt Lake and, after making its way to Mission San Gabriel in southern California by the so-called southern route, the party

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trapped and explored up through the San Joaquin Valley and as far north as the American River. Turning south and retracing their steps, the men then made their way back to the Stanislaus. Camp was set up on high ground on the west bank of the San Joaquin early in 1827, and every indication points to the likelihood that this high ground was the same area that was destined to be the site of one of the valley's first settlements a quarter of a century later.² Here the men could easily supply themselves with fresh meat and fish, the land was above flood-level, and also high enough to be easily defended against Indian attack if necessary. And it was from this point that Smith and two of his men, Silas Goble and Robert Evans, set out on May 20, 1827, to cross the Sierra Nevada to return to the Great Salt Lake. Traveling up the Stanislaus, Smith named this river the Appelaminy, evidently for the Apelamenes Indians whose rancheria lay somewhere on the south side of the river not too far from its mouth - the same Indians who had attacked the Moraga-Viader party in 1810. This journey eastward across the Sierra Nevada marked the first recorded crossing of this formidable mountain chain (from west to east) by any Caucasians.

Six years after the visit of Jedediah Smith to this area, and sixteen years before San Joaquin City was founded along the bank of the San Joaquin River, another party of American trappers and explorers camped for a night near this same site. This was the night of November 9, 1833, and the leader of this contingent was another famous western mountain man, Joseph Reddeford Walker. With him were nearly sixty trappers on their way to the Pacific Ocean from Green River, Wyoming. They were in search of new trapping grounds for a Rocky Mountain fur company commanded by Captain Benjamin Bonneville. One member of the party, Zenas Leonard, acted as the bookkeeper for the expedition, and also kept a journal of events. They followed down the course of the Humboldt River, otherwise known as the Ogden or the Mary's, and on October 12th they breasted the steep escarpment of the eastern Sierra Nevada. Thirteen days later they came to the rim of Yosemite Valley, the first white men to gaze down upon its unbelievable grandeur. They were the first, too, to see the giant sequoias, which Leonard noted were "incredibly large," some of which would measure "16 to 18 fathoms"³ around the trunks at the height of a man's head.

They followed the swift cascading waters of the Merced River and eagerly made their way down into the San Joaquin Valley where food and game would once more be plentiful for both the men and their horses. They crossed the San Joaquin River at the point of its confluence with the Merced on the last day of October, and then began their trek northward along the west bank of the former, trapping and hunting as they proceeded. On the ninth they arrived at the confluence of the Stanislaus and the San Joaquin, still on the west bank of the latter. Leonard's written account of their arrival at this camp site, and of their experience while there is as follows:

This plain, to which we gave the name of Oat Plain, lays on the south [west] side of the river. The grizzly bear and the wild horses⁴ appeared more numerous in the country through which we this day passed than I had ever known them. In the evening just before sunset we came across the carcass of another dead Indian, which was also partly eaten by wild beasts, . . . there are also some signs that this country is thickly inhabited by wild Indians, but we couldn't see any, nor discover any of their habitations, . . . we also discovered some signs of white people, At this place the river is two or three hundred yards wide, as the country is generally level the water moves gently along, forward, being quite deep, clear, and smooth.

This night we encamped on the bank of the river in a

very beautiful situation. Soon after the sun went to rest and the camp had become quieted, we were startled by a loud distant noise similar to that of thunder. Whilst lying close to the ground this noise could be distinctly heard for a considerable length of time without intermission. When it was first discovered some of the men were much alarmed, as they had readily supposed it was occasioned by an earthquake, and they began to fear that we would all be swallowed up in the bowels of the earth; and others judged it to be the noise of a neighboring cataract. Captain Walker, however, suggested a more plausible cause, which allayed the fears of the most timid. He [Walker] supposed that the noise originated from the Pacific [Ocean] rolling and dashing her boisterous waves against the rocky shore. Had any of us ever been to the coast, he said, we would have readily accounted for the mysterious noise.

STURGEON BEND — LANDMARK OF THE PAST

What had the mountain men heard in the stillness of that November evening, so long ago? Although they had no way of knowing it then, they were many miles from the rocky shores of the broad Pacific. Had they traveled up the east side of the San Joaquin that day they would have been able to understand the sound which reminded them of a "loud distant noise similar to that of thunder" for they would have discovered the peculiar loop in the San Joaquin, later to be known as "Sturgeon Bend," that was just below (north of) the mouth of the Stanislaus River. The Stanislaus flowed into the San Joaquin somewhat against the current and the resulting tumult at this point was further intensified as the waters hit the sharp curve in Sturgeon Bend just downstream (and about a mile east of the Walker encampment). This "hairpin" turn in the old river channel, engorged after every storm with the combined waters of the Stanislaus and the San Joaquin above it, caused a sudden change in the direction of the flow, resulting in the peculiar sound as described by Walker's diarist. This is what had terrified the unsuspecting trappers that night.

Supporting evidence for this theory can be found in the written accounts of another fur-trapping party then at the upper end of the San Joaquin Valley. This party, under the leadership of Colonel J. J. Warner, had been trapping fur-bearing animals at the headwaters of the Kings River about the same time that the Walker party was descending the Merced River. Due to heavy rains which had moved down over the Sierra Nevada from the north, they had been forced to abandon their river camp and head some twenty miles in a southerly direction to the Alpaugh Sand Ridge area which divided Tulare and Buena Vista lakes at low water. Here they were safe from the rampaging waters of the valley's river system. Walker's party, camped on the high ground near the site of San Joaquin City, would have found the river "two or three hundred yards wide" and the water moving "gently along, forward, being quite deep, clear, and smooth" while at the same time hearing the roar of the turbulent waters rushing into the sharp curve of Sturgeon Bend following such a Sierra storm.

As a young boy the writer often heard the roar of the cascading waters in this particular loop of the San Joaquin during the heavy rains of the winter of 1910. But after the river broke through Sturgeon Bend in the spring flood of 1911, it was heard no more for no longer were the heavy run-offs of wet winters forced to follow the hairpin curve of the old channel.⁵ Although the waters of the San Joaquin are once more confined to the old Sturgeon Bend channel, because of the great retaining dams that have been built on the upper reaches of all the rivers of the San Joaquin system, nothing like it is likely to be heard again in the future.



PHOTOGRAPH OF THE AUTHOR, taken in 1963, with the New Jerusalem School in the background. The school, built in 1874, was originally located at the intersection of the Durham Ferry Road and Koster Road, about four miles west of San Joaquin City. The author attended the upper grades of this school while

living on a near-by ranch. When the photograph was taken the building, no longer in use as a school, was located on the south side of Durham Ferry Road about five hundred feet west of the road's Interstate 5 overpass. The building has since been torn down.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR . . .

Although born in Woodside (San Mateo County) before the turn of the century, Earle E. Williams, author of "Tales of Old San Joaquin City," has spent almost all of his life in San Joaquin County's southwest corner, the Tulare Township. His background and experiences have been broad and interesting, giving him the first-hand knowledge in the area of which he writes that few others are fortunate enough to enjoy within their lifetime. Combined with a good command of the language, an unusual ability to communicate well with others, and his love of research Earle has earned for himself a fine reputation as a local historian.

Arriving in Tracy in 1910, Earle spent the next few years finishing his elementary education at the New Jerusalem School while living on a nearby grain ranch. From his association with the "old-timers" of the area grew a life-long interest in the history of the Tulare Township. After only two years of high school he went to work as a teaming contractor in building the old River Rock Gravel Plant at the mouth of Corral Hollow south of Tracy. By 1925 Earle had become the plant superintendent.

In 1946 he founded and built the Kerlinger Plant of the Pacific Cement and Aggregates corporation four miles south of Tracy on the alluvial fan of Corral Hollow Creek. He was responsible for the operation of the million-dollar enterprise until his retirement on September 1, 1965.

Earle Williams' working years covered a span of fifty-one years, during which time he was credited with a number of inventions and the development of a number of processes related to the extraction and processing of non-metallic minerals. Our author's introduction to the field of writing came with the publication in 1956 of a technical paper entitled "A Worm's-Eye View of the Road Ahead." The Columbia Steel Manufacturing Company of Portland, Oregon, printed and distributed 10,000 copies of the Williams' monograph.

Besides his life-long interest in history and in the rock and gravel business, Earle has devoted much of his time to community affairs and civic organizations. He has been active in at least a dozen organizations, and has received honorary life memberships from the Tracy District Chamber of Commerce, the Tracy Rotary Club, and the San Joaquin County Historical Society. A further honor came to him in May, 1973, when he received the San Joaquin County Senior Citizen of the Year award. From 1962 to 1970 he served the City of Tracy as a councilman, vice-mayor, and mayor.

Earle is the author of a number of published articles and monographs as well as literally dozens of manuscript histories, sketches, essays, and biographies. He resides at the family home on Holly Drive in Tracy with his wife, Elinor Counihan Williams, where he continues to devote much of his time to historical research and writing.

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A LOG CABIN IS BUILT

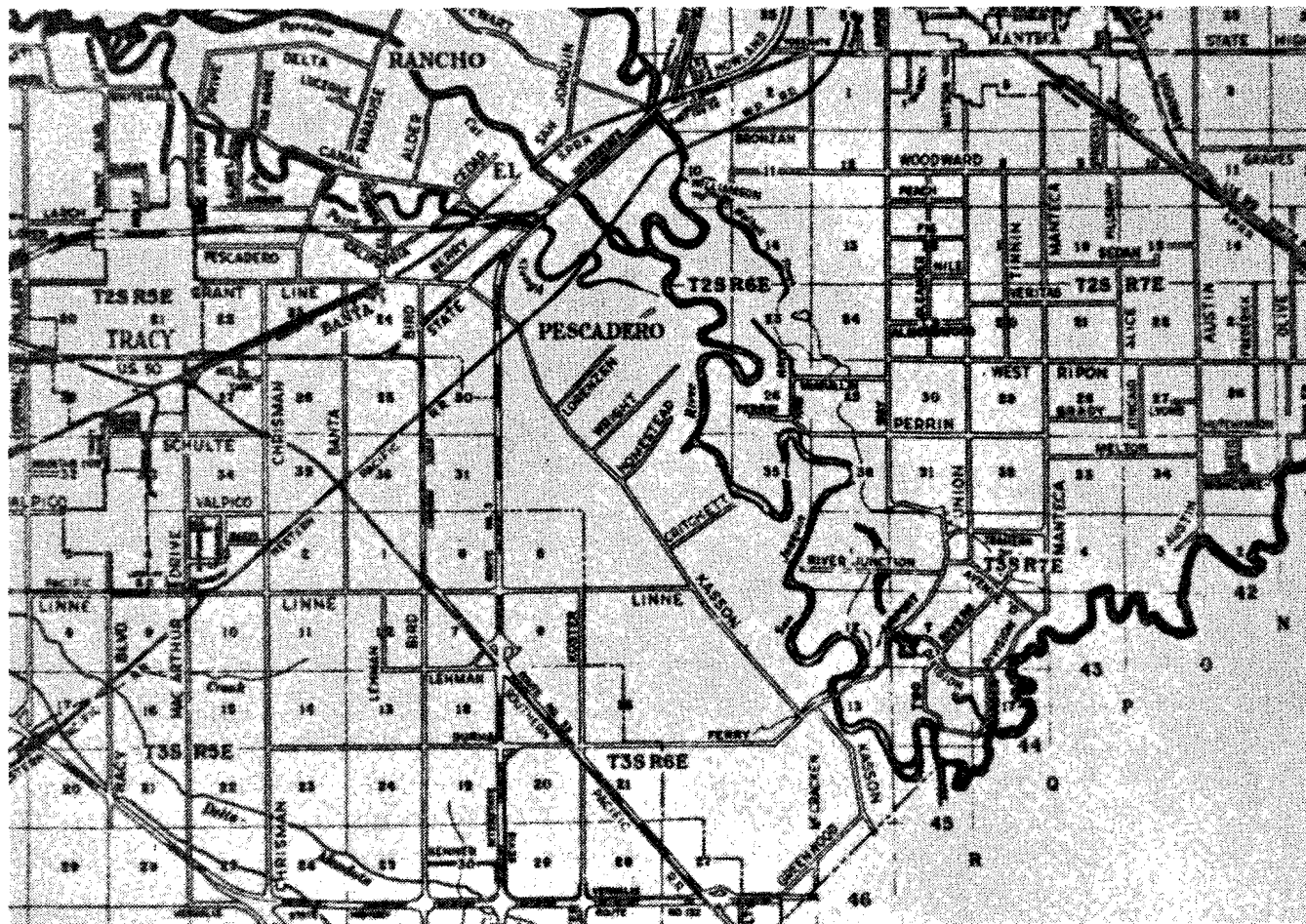
The history of San Joaquin City really began with the first American covered-wagon immigrants who came to settle on the high ground across from Sturgeon Bend. They were Captain Charles M. Imus, his brother Charles C. Imus, and their nephew Charles A. Imus. The Captain had been the leader of a contingent of ten covered wagons that had joined the Donner-Reed party in 1846, after it left Independence, Missouri. Because of his frontier experience he had been elected wagonmaster of the whole train, and in turn he had engaged as his guide the famous Rocky Mountain fur trapper Caleb Greenwood.⁶ Greenwood, 84 years of age, had with him his two half-breed sons, John and Britton. His familiarity with the area was the result of a previous trip to California in 1843 when he had guided the John Henry Brown party of fur trappers over Walker's Pass as far as "Hooters Damm" as Greenwood called Sturgeon Bend on the San Joaquin River.⁷ Here the party had left him and they in turn continued northward to winter quarters at Johnson's Ranch, located along the foothills of the Sierra Nevada northeast of Sutter's Fort.

Captain Imus and his original party of ten covered wagons, having earlier separated from the remainder of the ill-fated Donner-Reed party back at Fort Bridger, Wyoming, entered

California by the same southern route Joseph Walker had pioneered in 1833 (Walker Pass). At Immigrant Peak on El Camino Viejo the wagons split, six taking the old Monterey-Sutter's Fort trail⁸ to settle on Dry Creek and on the Calaveras River in northern San Joaquin County.⁹ The remaining four, including the Imus wagon, continued on up El Camino Viejo to the mouth of Corral Hollow (along El Arroyo de los Buenos Aires) where they went into camp for the winter on or about October 15, 1846.

What the relationship was between Caleb Greenwood and Captain Imus is a matter of conjecture; neither party left any written record of their association at this time. But Old Greenwood undoubtedly recommended his "Hooters Damm" area to the Captain as an ideal site for settlement, and guided him to it.

With a little imagination it is not difficult to picture the two men on a morning sometime after the middle of October, 1846, riding back over El Camino Viejo (southward) from the winter camp they had just set up in Corral Hollow, scouting for a trail to the old trapper's chosen spot on the river. Crossing Hospital Creek where it emerged from the hills¹⁰ they would have found the old animal trail on high ground, which the elk, antelope, and wild horses feeding on the plains used in making daily trips to the river. Turning northeast along the southwest bank of the lower reaches of the creek,



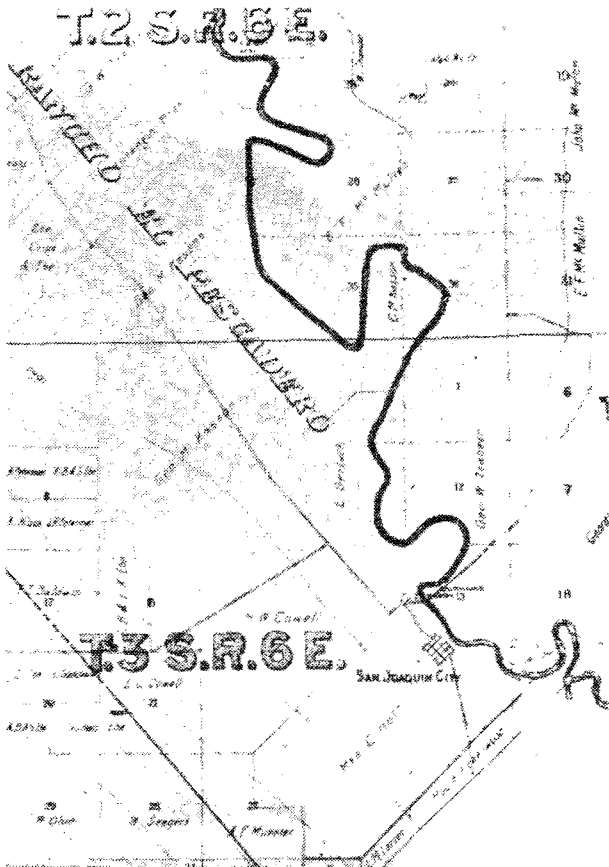
PRESENT-DAY SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT MAP of the south-central portion of the County showing the Airport Way-Durham Ferry roads and the Grant Line-Kasson roads (originally River Road). The site of San Joaquin City, no

longer marked on county maps, is located just below the off-set intersection of these two major county road systems. The Two Rivers Road on the east side of the San Joaquin River passes alongside Sturgeon Bend.

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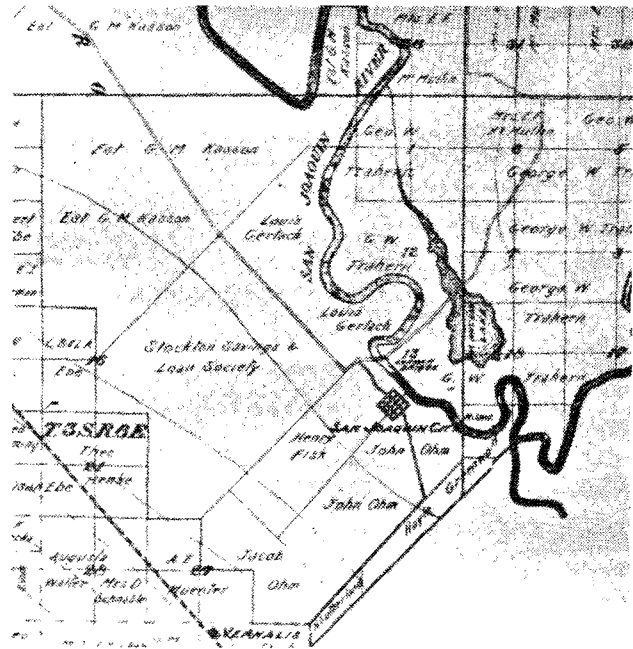
they would once more cross the creek and then travel in a straight line (paralleling the present San Joaquin-Stanislaus county boundary) until they reached their destination. The portion of this trail lying between Kasson Road and Highway 132 near Vernalis is still in use today as a county road. In the early 1880's, when the Southern Pacific Railroad crossed the trail at Vernalis, the portion of the county road between the railroad and El Camino Viejo along Hospital Creek was abandoned. The earliest maps of San Joaquin County show it running its entire length from the creek to Kasson Road. (Incidentally, the road was named Greenwood Road, but not for Caleb. It was named for an early settler in the area, Hoyle Greenwood - no relation to Caleb - who was farming on the south side of the road as early as 1883.) And it is also interesting to note that the early Geologic Survey maps show this same road continuing eastward across Kasson Road (then River Road), terminating at the point of high ground on the west bank of the San Joaquin just across from Sturgeon Bend.

mouth of Corral Hollow and hauled them by bull teams to the building site. He then purchased a section of land (640 acres) along the San Joaquin from the holders of the Rancho el Pescadero grant. It was the first habitation of an American on the West Side. He then ordered a large two-story house from Boston, to be shipped (dismantled) by sailing vessel around



AN 1895 MAP OF THE NORTH PORTION of the original Rancho el Pescadero grant (west of the San Joaquin River). Note the San Joaquin City "sub-division" with Kasson Road (originally River Road) running through it. Note also that, unlike the land on either side of the grant area, survey lines within the grant do not follow the Mt. Diablo-based east-west and north-south section lines. The unmarked triangular area in the bottom right corner of the photograph is a portion of Stanislaus County.

It was at this spot that Captain Imus, with the help of some Mexicans, immediately began the erection of a little log cabin. With the help of his brother and their nephew, Imus cut the logs for the cabin from pine trees then growing at the



NOTE CHANGES IN LAND OWNERSHIP of the area adjacent to San Joaquin City in this 1905 map as compared to the 1895 map. Note also the creation of the large lake on the east side of the river across from San Joaquin City.

Cape Horn and up the river to the log cabin site. Upon its arrival some months later the house was re-assembled with the help of Mexican vaqueros and because it was painted white it was christened "la casa blanca" (the white house). From that time on until San Joaquin City was founded in 1849 the settlement that began to develop around the Imus house was generally referred to as Casa Blanca.

(To Be Continued in Next Issue)

EDITOR'S NOTES

- 1 Father Viader's journal refers to these Indians as the Apaglamenes. Variations in the spelling of Indian village and group names were common among both the Spanish and the later American settlers in California.
- 2 The exact site of Smith's camp has been a matter of conjecture for many years. The author's familiarity with the area, coupled with the research he has done on the subject, has led him to conclude that the camp was most probably in the rather immediate vicinity of the San Joaquin City site. There also seems to be some disagreement among California historians regarding which river received the name "Appelaminy" from Smith. Not all agree that it was the Stanislaus. For a short, interesting article regarding this controversy, see Jack Brotherton's "The Appelaminy: Was it the Stanislaus?" in the *Pacific Historian*, Vol. 14, No. 4, Fall 1970.
- 3 A fathom is equal to six linear feet.
- 4 Horses were first introduced into the San Joaquin Valley as early as the 1830's by the Mexican land-grant settlers. They flourished on the open plains and soon became wild. This accounts for the numerous references made (by early American visitors and settlers) to the band of "wild horses" roaming the length and breadth of the San Joaquin Valley's "West Side." For a brief listing of all the land grants in the Valley see Robert Cowan's *Ranchos of California* (Fresno, Academy Library Guild, 1956). For a more detailed account see Chapter V of Wallace Smith's *Garden of the Sun* (Fourth edition, Fresno, 1960).

EDITOR'S NOTES: [con't]

5 Flood waters inundated parts of San Joaquin County on and off during the months of January, February, and March of 1911. The winter rains of 1910-11 commenced on the ninth of January, following a period of drought. Eight days later large parts of the County were under water, and all the rivers were running at flood stage. The first break in the San Joaquin River came on February 5, followed by additional breaks during the second and third weeks of March. By the 15th the waters spilling through the cut at Sturgeon Bend were described by the *Stockton Daily Independent* as a "big stream" and it was running north across the road between Lathrop and the Mossdale bridge. Already most of the elevated roadbed of the Durham Ferry Road (east of that bridge) had been washed out. All connections with the west side of the county were completely severed and the Western Pacific railroad line had been shut down. Repair of the roadways was not expected to commence until July according to the newspaper accounts of the day.

6 Caleb Greenwood, one of the West's most famous "Mountain Men," has proven to be a rather elusive character. For the best account of his travels in the west and his years in California see Charles Kelly and Dale Morgan, *Old Greenwood*, the revised edition published by the Talisman Press at Georgetown, California, in 1965.

7 Kelly and Morgan (*Old Greenwood*) discount John Henry Brown's claim (in his book *Reminiscences and Incidents of "The Early Days" of San Francisco*, San Francisco, 1886) that he was in California in 1843-44, having been guided by Greenwood and his son, John, as far as "Hooters Damm." In reference to Brown's claim the authors state (page 93) that "unless and until substantial corroboration turns up, we must account Brown's California visit of 1843-1844 an amiable invention," and that "Hooters Damm seems to be known only in the geography of fable. . . ." In answer to the editor's request for clarification of this point Mr. Williams wrote the following:

I think the writers of *Old Greenwood* are absolutely wrong in rejecting Brown's account of his California visit of 1843-1844, when the Greenwoods guided them. During the years 1910 to 1913 I attended the New Jerusalem School near the site of San Joaquin City. I hunted and fished on the river at San Joaquin City with other boys who lived on the ranches in the area. They referred to the Sturgeon Bend area of the San

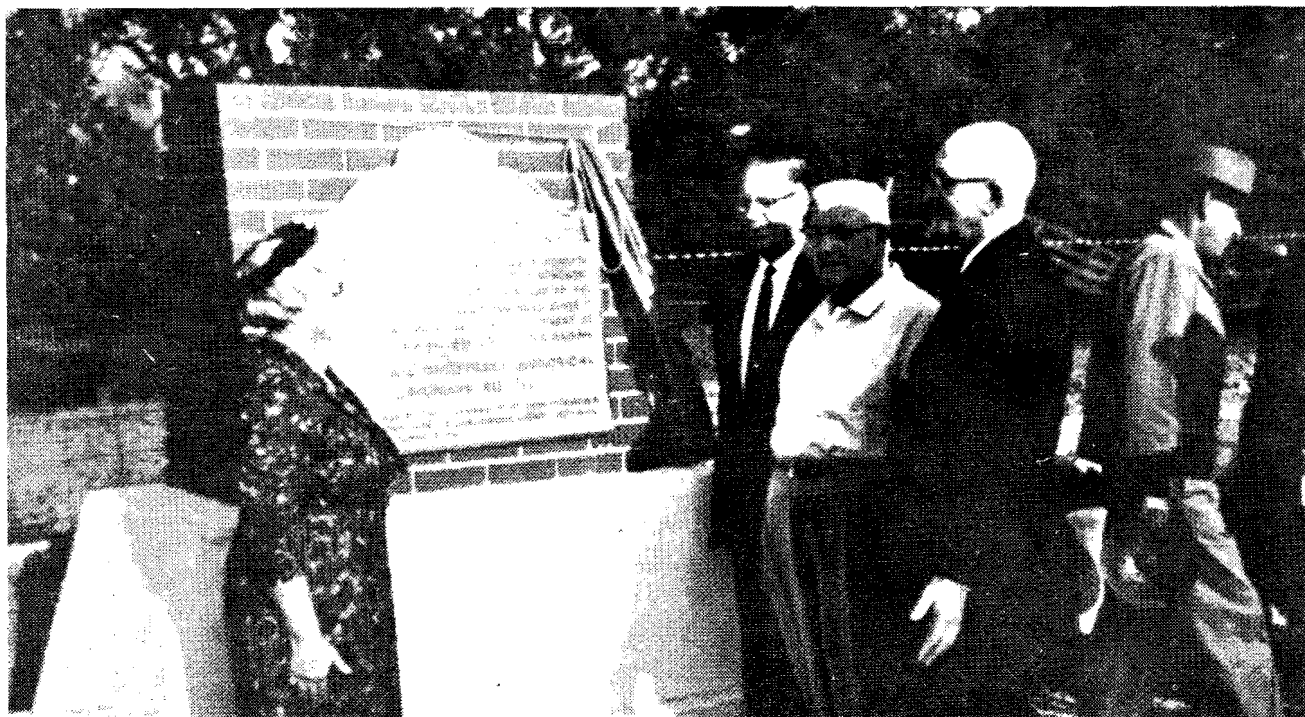
Joaquin River as Hooters Damm, almost invariably.

Before I read this account of the Brown Party in *Old Greenwood* I was pretty certain that Caleb Greenwood had been to the site of San Joaquin City, not once, but several times. I believe that he accompanied the Jed. Smith party in 1826, and knew about Hooters Damm beforehand, and the route Jed. Smith took when he left. I believe Caleb Greenwood was speaking the truth when in 1846 he told Edwin Bryant at his hunter's camp on Clear Lake: "The Grisly [sic] bear, fat deer, and poultry, and fish - them [sic] are such things as a man should eat. I came up here where I knew there was plenty. I was here twenty years ago, before any white man see [sic] this lake and the rich land about it. . . ."

8 El Camino Viejo ran along the eastern edge of the Coast Range hills in the San Joaquin Valley northward to the mouth of Corral Hollow. From this point it ran generally east-west through the hills and then down into the Livermore Valley and on to Mission San Jose. From there it turned northward, terminating at what is now the Oakland area. The Monterey-Sutter's Fort trail crossed the Coast Range and entered San Joaquin Valley below the present Kettleman City in Kings County. Immigrant Peak was the well-known landmark near the intersection of these two trails. From this point the trail crossed the valley to Miller's Fort (Fort Millerton), from which point it then turned north and proceeded up the east side of the Central Valley to Sacramento. For a more detailed account of these two early valley trails see Earle Williams' *Old Spanish Trails of the San Joaquin Valley*, (Tracy, California), 1965.

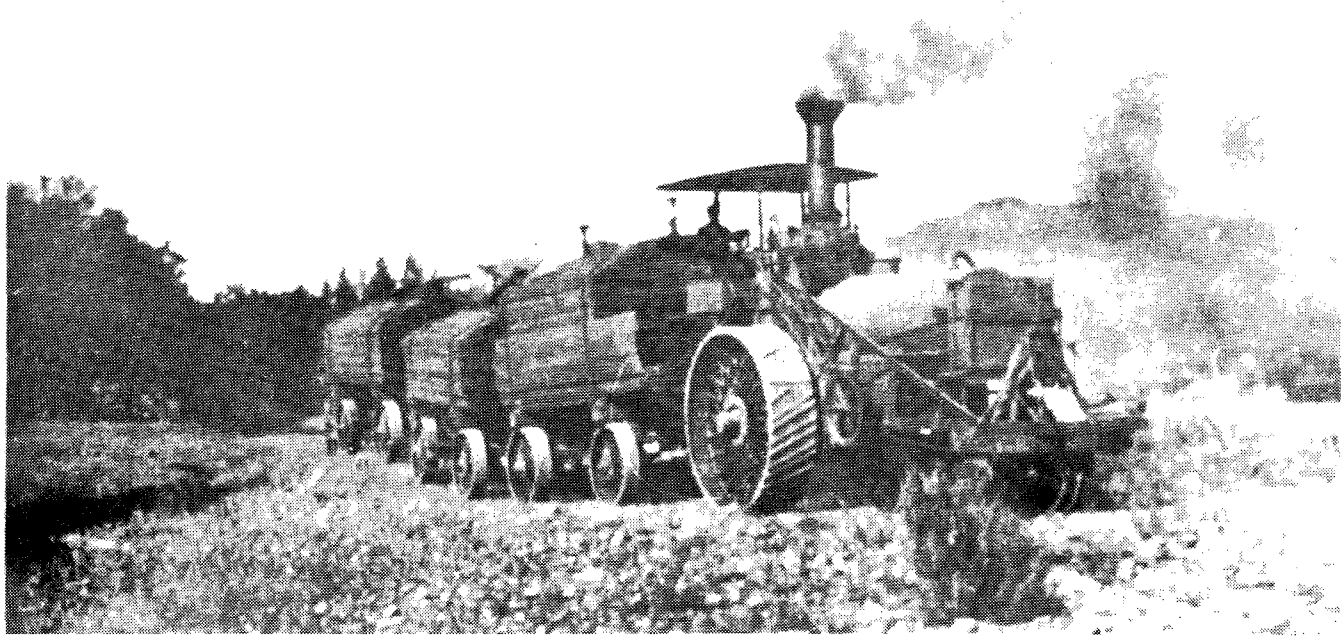
9 The six wagons belonged to Dr. I. C. and James Isbel who settled along the Calaveras River. Turner Elder and his wife and three children who settled on Dry Creek, Elder's father-in-law who also took land along Dry Creek, and Thomas Pyle who settled with his wife and two children at the site of Staple's Ferry on the Mokelumne River.

10 Hospital Creek, named by the early Spanish explorers in this area, is one of a number of small creeks that carry winter rains coming down off the eastern slope of the Coast Range Mountains. Most of the year it is dry. It is situated southwest of Vernalis, running roughly parallel to the San Joaquin-Stanislaus County line west of the San Joaquin River.



DEDICATION CEREMONIES marking the unveiling of the new San Joaquin City monument took place on November 3, 1962, under the joint auspices of the California State Park Commission and the San Joaquin County Historical Society. Instrumental in getting state recognition for the site, as well as in the construction of the marker, was the author, Earle Williams of Tracy. The concrete and brick marker is located on the east side of Kasson Road, approximately three-fourths of a mile south of its intersection

with Airport Way (formerly Durham Ferry Road). The Henry Fisk, Jr., home lies directly across the road. Shown admiring the new monument are (l. to r.) Miss Gladys Boynton, president of the San Joaquin County Historical Society in 1962; Mr. Frank Hoyt, then Chairman of the County Board of Supervisors; Mr. Henry Fisk, Jr., whose family has lived in the immediate area since the 1860's; and the author, Earle Williams.



A STEAM WAGON-TRAIN in Corral Hollow, taken circa 1888 by Charlie Dreyer of San Joaquin City. Note the pine trees in the distance above the lumber on the last wagon. This was the area from which Captain Imus

had cut his logs in 1846 for his first structure along the San Joaquin River.

From the collection of Mr. and Mrs. William T. Ohm of San Joaquin City, courtesy of the author.

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