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News
Vol. 2

SUTTER COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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NEWS BULLETIN

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VOL. 2 NO. 8

YUBA CITY, CALIFORNIA

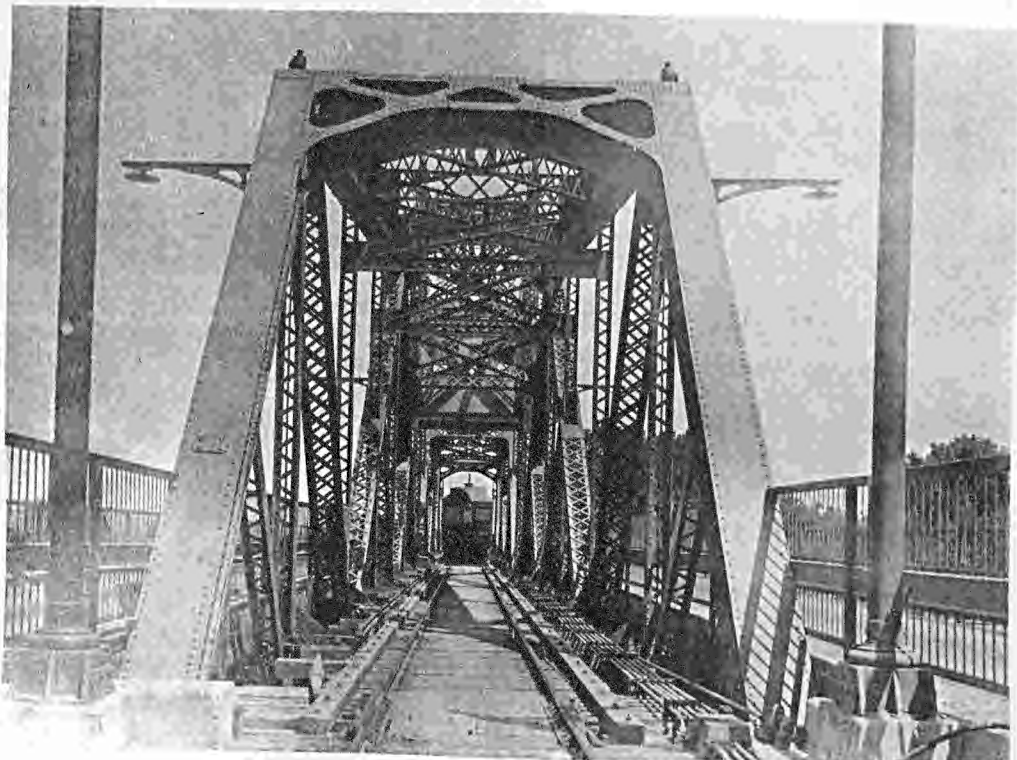
JANUARY 17, 1961



COURT HOUSE GROUNDS LOOKING WEST FROM THE CORNER OF 2ND & B ST.



FEATHER RIVER BRIDGE BETWEEN YUBA CITY & MARYSVILLE LOOKING NORTH
WITH S.P. RAILROAD BRIDGE IN VIEW TO THE NORTH (SOMETIME BEFORE 1955)



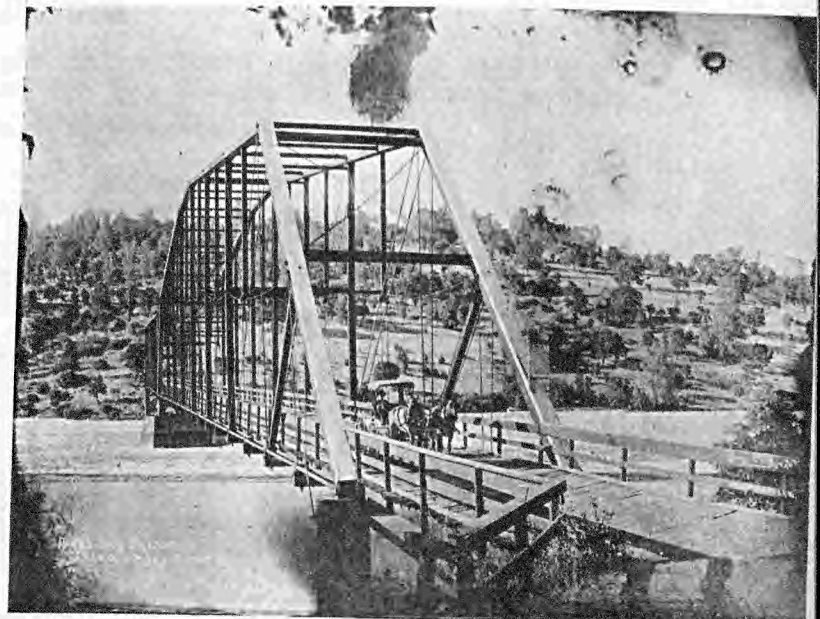
NORTERN ELECTRIC BRIDGE

MERIDIAN

BUILDING LEVEES ON FEATHER
1907-1908



TISDALE WEIR



PARKS BAR BRIDGE

SUTTER COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

ANNUAL MEETING

Tuesday Evening, January 17, 1961

Roast Beef Dinner - 6:30 P.M.
(and all the trimmings)

GRACE METHODIST CHURCH
Walton Avenue between Barry
Road and Oswald Road
5 Miles South of Yuba City

President - W.A. Greene, Jr.
Program Chairman - Randolph Schnabel

+

P R O G R A M

Exhibit of "old time" pictures
Please note Chairman, Mrs. Laney's
request below.

Showing of film - "The San Francisco Earthquake"
and discussion on Techniques of producing such a
film by Bonanza Associates - Mr. Gordon Waldear
and Assistants

Please notify Chairman, Mrs. Florence Arritt if you expect to attend the dinner
before January 14th, Phone Sh 3-7759 or return your post card if you are a member.

Exhibit of Pictures

Will the members please bring in photographs and pictures attached to large poster boards with the pictures properly captioned for the display at the dinner meeting.
If any questions call Mrs. Bernice Gibson, Sherwood 3-4671.

Honora Laney
Display Chairman

(Mrs. Laney will be on a trip to warmer climates between January 11 and 17th)

Mr. Earl Ramey and his good wife are enjoying themselves in Costa Rica via freighter steamer. He states on a card (December 27) "This little country is a garden of bananas and coffee. Schools run six days a week and only those who excell go to higher education free of tuition." He is reading and learning about the escapade of our Marysville pioneer, Wm. Walker.

DUES ARE DUE

Your Membership for 1961 -

SUTTER COUNTY LYNCH LAW
by Noel C. Stevenson*

The River Road, or Garden Highway as it is often called is a scenic drive between Yuba City and Nicolaus. The green fields and orchards present a peaceful scene to the traveler, whether he is a resident or tourist. It always seems to me that during the month of June this drive is particularly pleasant. Yet it was during the month of June, 1852, that one of the most shocking murders and lynchings ever to take place in Sutter county occurred in this beautiful area. The place of the murder; five miles above Nicolaus. The place of the lynching: just South of Yuba City.

Martin Bader was a farmer living a short distance below Hock Farm. He and Mrs. Bader lived alone on the place. On June 9th, 1852, a man known as John Jackson arrived at the Bader farm at about ten o'clock at night and asked to be taken in for a night's lodging. There was nothing unusual about this request as the people were hospitable even to strangers - an example set by Capt. Sutter himself. In the case of Jackson the necessity was quite apparent. He was on foot, carrying a saddle on his back. He said his horse had become crippled and he was trying to walk to his home below Nicolaus. The Baders took him in. Mrs. Bader prepared supper for Jackson, after which everyone retired for the night.

The next morning Mr. Bader said it was necessary for him to go to Capt. Sutter's place on business. Jackson asked to stay on a little longer, and said he would keep Mrs. Bader company during the absence of her husband. There seemed to be no objection to this, so Bader went on his way, and Mrs. Bader gathered up a bundle of clothes she wanted to wash and went to a slough which ran a few rods from the house and commenced preparations for washing the clothes.

About an hour after Bader left his home, two neighbors rode up to the house for the purpose of talking to Bader. At the moment they rode up to the house, they observed Jackson running toward the house from the direction of the slough. Jackson was perspiring and appeared confused to the two men. They asked him where Bader was and he told them that Mr. and Mrs. Bader had gone to Capt. Sutter's place. The men left.

*Mr. Stevenson, was formerly District Attorney of Sutter County and first President of the Sutter County Historical Society. He is now engaged in the practice of law in Wasco, Kern County, California.

A short time after this incident, Mr. Bader arrived home and not finding his wife in or around the house, called aloud for her several times and receiving no response, he became extremely alarmed. He became so worried he went to the corral to mount his horse in order to make a general search for her. Much to his surprise, Jackson met him at the corral with a cocked pistol in his hand which he pointed at Bader's head. Jackson informed Bader he was going to kill him. Jackson pulled the trigger but the pistol misfired. Bader then reached for his revolver, but it was gone. He then ran to the house to get his shotgun, which he had loaded the night before, but both barrels had been fired.

In the meantime, Jackson had taken the horse Bader had been riding and rode away. Bader caught and mounted another horse and by this time fearful concerning the fate of his wife, he rode away to sound the alarm. Jackson by this time was trying to make his escape, but he was soon apprehended near Yuba City.

A search for Mrs. Bader resulted in finding her dead body in the slough near where she was doing the family wash. There were finger marks on her throat. Bullet holes were found in her left breast, on the right side of her back bone, and upon a "more close examination by three ladies present" a third bullet hole was found in her side.

Bader made a search of his house to see if anything was missing. He found that twenty or thirty dollars and his Colt revolver were gone. The money and the revolver were found on the person of Jackson. Obviously a clear cut case of murder in the first degree. Everybody agreed that Jackson was the murderer.

A local justice of the peace, Squire Speagle, who was present summoned a coroner's jury, who were duly sworn and proceeded to investigate the matter. But the people of the neighborhood were so enraged they decided not to wait for the cumbersome processes of law to get into motion. The justice of the courts was simply too slow for them. Satisfied there wasn't the slightest degree of doubt of Jackson's guilt, they threw a lasso around his neck and dragged him to a convenient tree, probably in the vicinity of the south end of Second Street and the present location of the Yuba City Airport. There they threw the rope over a limb. Jackson was then asked to confess the crime. He refused to make a confession, stating that he had nothing more to say. Without any further delay the order was given to string him up. On this first try the limb broke. The rope was then thrown over a stronger limb, he was hauled up some thirty feet and left hanging there "as an example of the execution of justice for one of the most heartless, unprovoked and fiendish murders that can ever disgrace the pages of a criminal record," as one of the local citizens put it, in reporting the event to the local press. To make sure the example was effective, Jackson's body was allowed to hang from the tree for several days for all to see.

No doubt this account of mob action will come as a surprise to the peaceful and law abiding citizens of Sutter county one hundred and ten years later. Even more surprising is the fact that on June 12, 1852, two days after the lynching of Jackson, a mob composed of citizens of Sutter county hanged one George Washington Rideout, who was on trial for murder. This hanging took place in Nicolaus, then the county seat.

At this late date there is little point in condemning or defending these manifestations of "lynch law" by the good people of Sutter county. Actually, Sutter County's record was exceptionally good during this lawless period. During the early eighteen fifties the people had lost confidence in the California courts because of the low percentage of criminal convictions. Even as late as 1855 it was reported that

forty-seven men were lynched during that year in the State of California. The record will show that Sutter county did not contribute to that number. The Jackson and Rideout lynchings are the only cases of record in Sutter county as far as known. I hope to relate the facts of the Rideout hanging at a later date.

References:

- Daily Alta California, June 13, 1852, 2:3
- Daily Alta California, June 15, 1852, 5:3
- Daily Alta California, June 15, 1852, 1:4-5
- Sacramento Union, June 15, 1852, 2:5

NOTES FROM THE CALIFORNIA HISTORIAN
Volume 7, No. 2
December, 1960

The Sutter County Historical Society is undertaking an interesting project to finance a motion picture film on the pictorial history of Sutter County which will take about twenty minutes and will use about two hundred still pictures. The film will have sound effects, background music, and the narration will be by a professional performer. The cost will be \$200 per minute of film and reprints of the film will sell for \$125.

The Tulare County Historical Society held the first of what has been proposed to be an annual dinner meeting on the evening of October 29th. Donald C. Biggs of the California Historical Society, was the speaker. His topic was "Presidential Pot Luck, The Tradition of Political Horse Trading." He dwelt particularly on the influence of matters of little real importance that affect the voting of many people. Those who heard him could not help but realize that in a close election, such as occurred ten days later, the winner may have been determined by some matter of little significance in itself.

The 1960 annual publication of the Shasta Historical Society, The Covered Wagon, edited by Mrs. Mabel Frisbie, has arrived at the Conference headquarters. This publication is outstanding in both appearance and contents and would receive top awards in any contest. Some of the outstanding articles are "Jedediah Strong Smith" by California Quint, "The Sagebrush War" by Marion Ludington, "The Allen and Jones Massacres and the Extermination of the Yana" by Ann Hunt.

Anyone interested in obtaining a copy of The Covered Wagon, 1960, should send \$1.00 plus tax and postage to the Shasta Historical Society, Box 1150, Redding.

The San Mateo County Historical Association has joined the ranks of historical societies throughout the nation in observing the centennial of some aspect of the Civil War by devoting the October issue of La Peninsula to the election of 1860 in which San Mateo County voted a plurality for Douglas instead of Lincoln.

Delegates to the annual meeting of the Conference at Columbia next June will receive a pleasant surprise when they visit the restored old red brick school house on Cemetery Hill. This old two-story building was originally dedicated on November 1, 1860. In 1955 the California Teachers Association adopted a program to raise the funds for the restoration of the old building and make it something of a shrine to pioneer education in California. Eventually \$52,000 was raised by contributions from the pupils, teachers, and friends of education throughout the state and turned over to the State Park Commission. On November 5, 1960, the restored building was dedicated at impressive ceremonies featuring leaders in both education and history.

MEMBERS OF THE CONFERENCE OF HISTORICAL SOCIETIES

Reports from our historical society members in Sacramento indicate that the month of January will be a critical time for a decision by the State Highway Commission on the construction of the proposed freeway between second and third streets through the planned zone of historical preservation in old Sacramento.

This area represents the beginnings of the American period in California history and is of significance not only to the people of Sacramento but to the entire state. In this zone is located the building where the Big Four organized the Central Pacific Railroad, the Pony Express Station, the first newspaper in Sacramento, and many other historic buildings. The program for California Beaches and Parks plans to expend four million dollars on this project in order to preserve, restore, and interpret this significant part of early California history.

Consideration has been given to alternate plans for routing the freeway up the west bank of the Sacramento River in Yolo County and avoid entirely the proposed historic park. It is reported that unofficially some members of the Highway Commission have favored the Yolo route and that a flood of letters and telegrams at this time to the Highway Commission which is meeting in January might influence the members to decide in favor of the alternate route. The engineers were stopped several years ago from building a reservoir at the Coloma gold discovery site by a concerted effort of historical and civic groups and a similar determined effort may save this project.

The Board of Directors of the Conference and the Northern California Symposium went on record as opposed to the freeway at the October meeting, but apparently "grass roots" pressure from member societies is necessary to get results.

Send protests in the form of letters and resolutions to your state legislator, the Sacramento City Council, and the State Highway Commission, Department of Public Works, 1120 N. Street, Sacramento. It would be appreciated if you would send a copy of your letter or resolution to Conference headquarters.

Sincerely,

R. Coke Wood
Executive Secretary

Taken from Program For California's Beaches and Parks

"OLD SACRAMENTO:

The Division of Beaches and Parks completed its survey of the "West End" of Sacramento and its recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature in 1959. The Division feels that the time is now for the State of California to take positive action on the preservation of that historic area, where Crocker and Stanford and Judah and Hopkins gave the impetus to the economic greatness of California, which got its start through the efforts of John Sutter and his friend, James Marshall. The State of California should restore to a living community that section detailed in the report as proper for State ownership. It must be State operated, with all accruing proceeds returned to offset maintenance and operation costs of the project. Including the extensive restoration that is needed, it is estimated that \$4,000,000 must be appropriated. So that land costs will not be speculated beyond reason, the appropriation for acquisition should be made within the next two years. The Legislature should give consideration to the return of full condemnation powers to the Division of Beaches and Parks, else the project will forever be stymied through lengthy court actions on each and every parcel."
