LOS ANGELES WESTERNERS CORRAL

The Branding Iron

J. GOODMAN

SUMMER 1999 LOS ANGELES CORRAL NUMBER 216

Typical valley scene during the 1920s. Courtesy of the San Fernando Valley Historical Society.

Sketches of the San Fernando Valley

by Gloria Ricci Lothrop

(Edited Remarks Delivered at the Annual Meeting of the California Conference of Historical Societies.)

On Saturday, August 5, 1781, a small group of daring adventurers, including Captain Gaspar de Portolá and a Franciscan Friar, Fr. Juan Crespi, traveled three leagues north from the springs of El Berendo, through a pass and to a canyon's edge, where they beheld in the words of the diarist, Crespi, "...a very pleasant and spacious valley." He continued:

We descended to it and stopped close to a watering place which is a very large pool. Near it we found a village...the inhabitants offered us seeds in baskets and other things made of rushes...each of them brought some food to regale us, and we reciprocated with beads and ribbons.

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The Branding Iron
THE WESTERNERS
LOS ANGELES CORRAL
Published Quarterly in
Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter

Address for Exchanges & Material Submitted for Publication:

The Publications Editor, Robert Blew
12436 Landale Street, Studio City, CA 91604
The Branding Iron solicits articles of 2,500 words or less, dealing with every phase of the Old West. Contributions from members and friends welcomed.

Publication Design & Layout by Katherine Tolford

THE MONTHLY ROUNDUP

APRIL 1999 MEETING

Member Robert V. Schwemmer related the story of the sinking of the Pacific Mail Steamship Company's *Winfield Scott* off the coast of Anacapa Island to the Corral. Mr. Schwemmer is the cultural resources coordinator for the Channel Island Natural Marine Sanctuary and Santa Barbara Maritime

April Meeting Speaker Robert V. Schwemmer

Museum. He has spent many years studying the maritime history of the West Coast. One of the most unusual events of his studies, which have taken him from Cape Flattery, Washington, to the Yucatan Peninsula, was diving 1,000 feet aboard a two-man submarine in 1996 to study the remains of a tanker sunk off the coast of California by a Japanese submarine just 16

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Crespi concluded, "...we gave to this valley the name of Santa Catalina de los Encinos."

The dauntless explorers headed north to rediscover "the most capacious bay" extolled by Sebastian Vizcaíno a century and a half earlier, camped in the newly named valley near a great oak which remains on Louise Street, a scant two and a half miles from the Ventura Freeway. There the leather-jacketed soldiers and the Franciscan friar met with the local Totonga villagers and curious visitors from the outlying villages of Tacuenga, Juyunga and Mapipinga, among others.

Other travelers, including Gabriel Moraga returning from his exploration of California's central valley, described encounters with the valley dwellers, the probable creators of the animal pictoglyphs carved into the red rocks of the Santa Suzanna Mountains along what would later become the old stage coach trail.

For the next twenty-eight years Spanish colonization plans for California only slightly impinged upon the expansive valley, although in 1769 Mission San Buenaventura was established to the north and in 1771 Mission San Gabriel was dedicated at a site a few leagues to the northeast. The subsequent decade brought the settlement of the Pueblo of Los Angeles, whose future would be inextricably involved with the valley.

Finally, on September 8, 1797, the villagers witnessed the establishment of Mission San Fernando Rey de España, the seventeenth of the twenty-one missions established by Franciscan missionaries in Alta California. It was the eighth to be established by the second Father President, Fray Fermín Francisco de Lasuén, who officiated at the dedication ceremonies, the fourth in as many months. The mission site had been chosen for its proximity to water, good land and the docility of the Indians inhabiting the nearby village of Achois Comihavit. Fray Vicente de Santa María, a member of the original scouting expedition, noted in his diary:

> *...We found the place quite suitable for a mission, because it has much water, much humid land, and also limestone...Stone for the foundations of buildings is near by. There is pine timber in the direction of west-northwest of said locality, not very far away; also pastures are to be found...but there is a lack of firewood;...*

Upon the occasion of the founding of the mission, the land was blessed and a great cross was raised as part of the worship service, highlighted by the baptism of ten children from the nearby village of Achoicominga. Within two months a small church was completed and forty neophytes had taken up residence at Mission San Fernando.

At its height the Mission encompassed 121,542 acres extending from mountains to mountains on all sides of the valley. Under the initial ministrations of Fathers Francisco Dumetz and Juan Lupe Cortes and three Indian families from an older mission, the first fifty-five neophytes received training. By 1800, 310 Indians had settled within the mission complex where they learned the Europeans' way of work and received training in Christian doctrine. That year the mission produced 1,000 bushels of wheat and 526 cattle and 600 sheep grazed in the pastures. Despite a major locust infestation in 1805, the next year wheat and corn production reached 12,868 bushels. Utilizing the efforts of 1,586 neophytes, mission production, including corn, peas, lentils, garbanzos, wheat and even hemp, continued to grow, reaching a peak in 1810. It is worthy of note that Mission San Fernando wines were served at the welcoming reception for Governor Vicente Solá in 1815. An equal source of pride were the olives reportedly twice the size of the common mission olive.

By 1819 the herds of cattle, sheep and horses numbered 21,745, ranking the mission among the largest grazing operations in Alta California. It also became a thriving manufacturing center, producing shoes, soap, blankets and cloth, as well as olive oil, soap and iron work shipped to the soldiers at the presidio at Santa Barbara and to other

missions. Water from springs more than a mile north of the mission was channeled via a clay aqueduct, a portion of which is still visible, into a dam and carried from there into the mission garden.

The mission complex also grew. The first church, constructed with sturdy seven-foot-thick adobe walls, was completed in 1806. Its walls, measuring 166 feet in length, were accented by niches containing Indian art work. To the south a home was constructed for the *mayordomo*. Between these two structures the friars constructed a series of workshops containing a saddlery, a tannery, a weaving room and a blacksmith's shop. There were also granaries and a smokehouse. In 1810 the Franciscans initiated the thirteen-year construction of the Fathers dwelling or *convento*. The twenty-room building, measuring 235 by 65 feet, one of the largest mission structures extant, is memorable for its corridor facade supported by twenty-one Roman arches. The quarters for the Friars as well as mission visitors, included a *sala* or reception hall, a refectory, kitchen, a great fireplace for smoking meats, a wine cellar and a vat room. On December 21, 1812, known as *El Año de los Temblores*, the structures were significantly damaged, as they were again in the 1971 Sylmar and 1994 Northridge earthquakes.

As it flourished, Mission San Fernando also grew in population. By 1806 it claimed, along with Mission San Luis Rey, the largest Indian population among the California missions. At its height in 1819 there were 1,586 neophytes. Between 1797 and 1846, 3,188 baptisms were performed. The official registers list 842 marriages and 2,449 burials, mostly in the adjacent *Campo Santo*. While Mission San Fernando had one of the better records for survivorship of all the California missions, mortality of those under the age of two exceeded 40 percent.

In 1784, thirteen years before the mission was founded, the Spanish administration granted a parcel of land at the eastern end of the valley to Corporal José María Verdugo. On October 20, 1784, Governor Pedro Fages gave him permission to graze his cattle on lands lying between El Rio de Porciúncula and the Arroyo Seco and extending northward to the Piedra Gorda near the Indian village Haahamonga. Verdugo decreed that upon his death the lands would be divided between his son, Don Julio, and his blind daughter, Catalina. Unfortunately, Julio mortgaged the land, which resulted in a foreclosure and the redivision of the 36,403 acres of land among 28 claimants.

Verdugo's Rancho San Rafael, or *La Zanja*, was the second of the great Spanish land concessions, preceded by San Pedro. The Spanish crown conferred a relatively small number of land grants during the fifty-two years of colonial administration of Alta California. In the San Fernando Valley these grants included Rancho Encino awarded in 1785 to Francisco Reyes, future *alcalde* of Los Angeles. The *rancho* however, was taken from him in 1797 and given to Mission San Fernando. Other Spanish land grants were El Conejo awarded to José Polanco and Ignacio Rodríguez in 1803 and El Paraje de Las Virgenes.

The Franciscans' responsibility for the missions officially came to an end with the administration of Governor José Figueroa, 1832 to 1835, who implemented the Mexican government's secularization orders. From the vast California mission lands 817 *ranchos* were granted. Potential grantees petitioned the governor requesting a specific tract of land, accompanying the request with a *diseño*. If approved, the governor issued a *concedo* or official order to prepare the land title. Before the title was made final, the petitioner was required to erect permanent structures and somehow mark the boundaries of the land. The final act of possession was an official definition of the boundaries, the closest thing to a survey, but far short of it. Conditional boundaries were vague, often including the term *más o menos*. For example, Rancho Cahuenga, granted to the Indian José Triumfo, was located within Rancho Providencia. When the boundaries were measured, it was found the house was outside his one-fourth square league of land. The principle of *más o menos* was invoked as

Pío Pico. Courtesy of the San Fernando Valley Historical Society.

it was later when he found himself in need of additional pasture land.

The Rancho Sespe, later named Camulos, located in the Santa Clarita Valley was granted to Antonio del Valle. The magistrate went to the "place called sespe" which lay between "the mountains on the north" and "the high hills on the south." Boundaries were marked by a "...bullock's head on a bluff," a place where two roads crossed and a spot "...between two hills at the head of running water." Often markers were carried away, trees were cut down and rivers changed their course, leaving the *rancho* with no visible boundaries, an issue which placed the *Californios* at a disadvantage when, beginning in 1851, they attempted to justify their claims before the United States Land Commission.

Between secularization and the enforcement of the U.S. Land Act of 1851 the following *ranchos* thrived in the valley: five land grants, including 1,000 *varas* given to the Tatoviam Indian, Samuel, made to San Fernando Mission Indians between 1843 and 1845; Rancho El Encino granted to Vicente Ossa (4,461 acres); Rancho El Escorpíon (1,100 acres) granted in 1845 to three mission Indians and a mission soldier, Joaquin Romeroin; Rancho San Francisquito (8,894 acres) granted to Henry Dalton in 1845; Rancho Tujunga (6,661 acres) granted to Pedro López in 1840; and Rancho Cahuenga (117,752 acres) granted in 1846 to Luis Arenas. Mission San Fernando Church (77 acres) was restored for ecclesial purposes to the Bishop of Monterey/Los Angeles in 1864 by proclamation of Abraham Lincoln.

The U. S. invasion of California in 1846 led Governor Pío Pico in a blaze of oratory to declare that "...the department of California must be retained as property of Mexico forever." To secure funds to mount the needed defense, in 1846 he sold the lands known as the Rancho ex-Mission San Fernando (116,858.48 acres) for $14,000, or eleven cents an acre, to Eulogio Célis, who before the war was over had prospered by selling cattle and horses to both sides. In 1876 the U.S. Land Commission confirmed Célis' ownership of the largest land claim in California — over 116,000 acres in the heart of the San Fernando Valley.

Andrés Pico and Juan Mano, who had been commissioned in 1845 to inventory the mission buildings, filed a nine-year lease on mission lands for $1,120 per year. With Célis' permission, Pico occupied the twenty-room *convento* from 1853 to 1873. Pico later purchased an undivided half interest in the ranch for $15,000, which he then transferred to his brother, Don Pío, who subsequently sold one-half to finance the construction of the Pico House in Los Angeles. Other lands held by Don Pío were mortgaged at a rate of 2 percent per month, resulting in a phenomenal indebtedness. Similar financial situations caused the decline of many of the remaining California *rancheros*.

Although in 1847 John C. Frémont's troops were billeted in the *convento*, American occupation did not bring an immediate end to the arcadian life of the *ranchos*. Indeed, the population influx caused by the gold rush to the north resulted in renewed prosperity, clearly evident at the Rancho ex-Mission San Fernando. During a sketching trip across California in 1857 Henry Miller observed:

> *The church and the buildings in which the proprietor (Don Andrés Pico) lives, are in good condition, built of adobe and white-washed...the mission is a fine property, with a good management, the two beautiful vineyards and orchards, in which grow an abundance of grapes, pears, apricots, peaches, figs, pomegranates, oranges, quinces, prickly pears, etc., being surrounded by a high adobe wall, would prove a fortune to the proprietor...the gardener showed me six or seven ounces of gold dust which he had bought from different Indians, telling me that gold was found on all the surrounding hills on the surface, which being washed, when water was not wanting, yielded well. Long before he discovery of gold at Sutter's Mill at the American Fork, gold was washed here, and one house alone exported $30,000 of it.*

The 49ers provided a ready market for the herds of cattle which gave the *rancheros* and their families increased prosperity. Their manorial life was supported by cadres of Indian range hands, artisans and servants. As a result, each *rancho* was a self-sufficient realm unto itself, sometimes even supplying neighboring towns with the excess of flour, soap, candles, brandy, lard, sugar, cornmeal and other staples. Clothing, furniture and implements made by *rancho* artisans were also traded.

Cattle, however, were the mainstay of the *rancho* economy. After 1827 the enterprise was controlled by the *Reglamento sobre Ganados*, which among its provisos stipulated when branding could occur and when notification to neighbors and adjudication by *Juez de Campo* should occur. At the rodeos, *vaqueros* would claim their calves, marking them with the registered brand or *Fierro para harrar* and placing the *Fierro para venta* on those which had been sold.

Annually, the unsold three-year-olds were slaughtered at *matanzas* held in conjunction with the rodeo. Workers cured the skins, sewing some into bags or *botas* to be filled with cooled lard. Others trimmed meat into thin strips to be hung to dry as jerky or, first dipped it in chile and lard, to make *carne seca*.

In 1841 Navy Captain Charles Wilkes described the impact of the cattle culture upon the aesthetics of Rancho San Fernando:

> *There were many enclosures about the house, that it it gave the appearance of a farm-yard and slaughter house combined. Bones, hoofs, horns and pieces of hide, were lying in every direction and the ground was indented with the feet of cattle. Ducks, dogs and fowl were picking at the bones and offal.*

Along the broad trail which cut across the San Fernando Valley the products of the fast-breeding and self-tending herds headed for Boston trading ships anchored off the coast at San Pedro. By mid-century the lumbering *carretas* had hauled five million hides, along with tallow, to California's coastal ports in a profitable exchange, which in a quarter century reached the amazing total of twenty million dollars. In 1851 alone the *Californios* fetched $15 a piece for the 15,000 horned cattle they drove to the California gold fields. With their profits *Californios* purchased "...chinese [sic] fireworks, satins, music boxes, mechanical toys, chickenskin shoes, gilt spurs, exotic foods, new tools, ornate furniture, stockings of red, black and flesh-colored silk."

The halcyon life of the land-owning few was to decline markedly in the 1860s as the combined threats of cattle rustling, drought, flood, disease and infestation struck the southland with Biblical vengeance. Drought in 1856 resulted in the loss of 100,000 head of cattle. In July 1860, devastating fire rapidly consumed a square mile and a half of the

San Fernando Valley. Between 1862 and 1864 only eight inches of rain fell in the area. In his correspondence to the San Francisco *Bulletin* in February 1864, H.D. Burrows wrote:

> *Except one rain about the middle of last November, we have had no rain of consequence for nearly a year....thousands and thousands of cattle have died, and are dying, and those that are left, except in favored localities, stalk about like spectres. The heavens are as brass; the clouds all blow away and bring no rain.*

The extreme starvation rendered even the hides worthless. At a Santa Barbara auction in April 1864, the pathetic beasts fetched a mere 37 1/2 cents each.

Continuing the doleful litany, in January 1868 the Los Angeles *News* detailed the severity of the flooding which had disrupted the community:

> *It is almost impossible to give full returns of the disasters in this county occasioned by the late rains...the Los Angeles River commenced rising Friday night...it changed its course, overflowing its banks above the vineyard of Louis Wilhardt....on Friday last the Clear Creek Stage attempted to resume its regular trips, but was compelled to return, finding it impossible to pass through San Francisco Canyon.*

The decade was also marked by ruthless sand storms, a grasshopper infestation, an anthrax attack upon the cattle and in 1869, a smallpox epidemic which carried off many Indian laborers. The *Californios'* resources, already stretched to meet property taxes, legal fees in land patent cases and usurious rates on loans secured by their land holdings, could not withstand the losses. Their fortunes faltered as they vainly anticipated the arrival of the Southern Pacific Railroad, whose passengers, they hoped, would transform grazing lands into real estate bonanzas.

As early as 1834 Richard Henry Dana focused upon the economic vulnerability of the *Californios* in a brief reference to Don Juan Bandini:

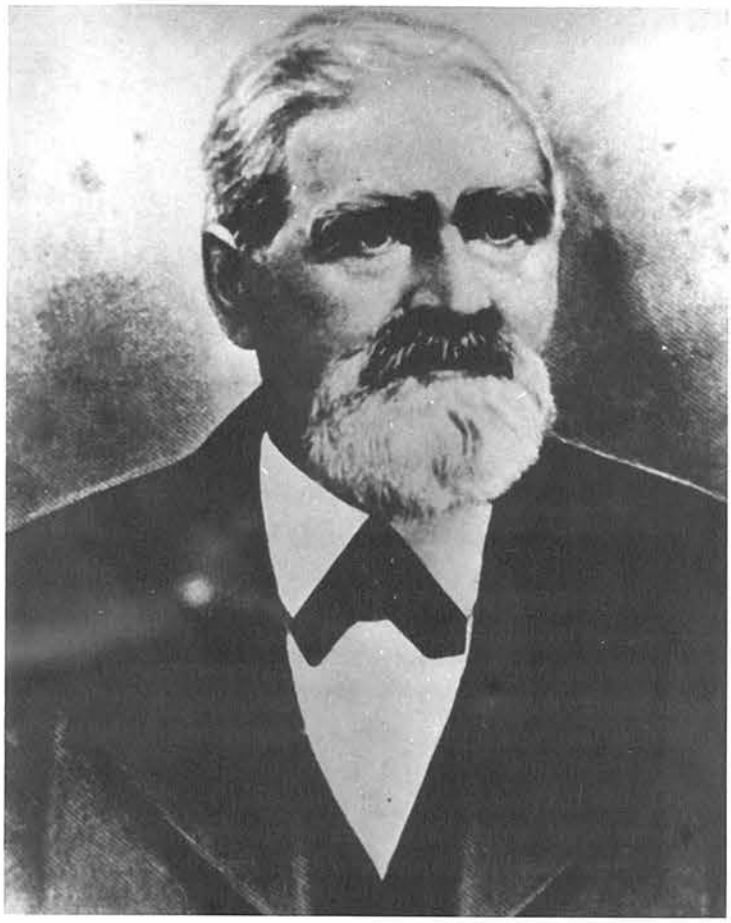
> *I could not but feel pity for him, especially when I saw him by the side of his fellow-passenger and townsman, a fat, course, vulgar, pretentious fellow of a Yankee trader, who had made money in San Diego, and was eating out the vitals of the* Bandinis, *fattening up their extravagance, grinding them in their poverty, having mortgages on their lands, forestalling their cattle, and already making an inroad upon their jewels, which were their last hope.*

The economic misfortunes of the *rancheros* led to change, to new agricultural enterprises and to the formation of a new power elite in southern California. Sheep herder Eugene Garnier in 1876 acquired Rancho los Encinos, building a two-storey limestone house designed in the style of his native France. That same year the Los Angeles Farm and Milling Company, headed by Isaac Lankershim and Isaac Newton Van Nuys, using dry farming techniques on 60,000 acres in the east San Fernando Valley, began harvesting huge fields of hardy, dark-grained Odessa wheat for export. The extent of these exports is suggested by the fact that the foundering of only one ship, the *Parisian*, represented the loss of 250 tons of wheat and 75 tons of flour from this one company alone.

In 1873 former state senator Charles Maclay, in association with George K. Maclay and B. F. Porter, purchased 56,000 acres of the San Fernando Ranch at two dollars an acre. On April 20, Maclay invited fifty of his friends to his newly acquired possession. It was proposed that a town of San Fernando be established.

> *Within a couple of weeks hundreds of lots were sold, and the well-known colony was on its way to prosperity. Boring for petroleum commenced in the San Fernando Mountains about that time, and the new town became the terminus for the Southern Pacific Railroad until the long tunnel was completed.*

For a time the Porter Land Company used the *convento* at Mission San Fernando to



Issac Lankersheim. Courtesy of the San Fernando Valley Historical Society.

house migrant laborers and store equipment. The former soldiers' quarters at the west end of the structure served from 1857 to 1861 as a station for the Butterfield Stage. As early as 1850 the Los Angeles City Council had authorized the expenditure of a thousand dollars for the construction of a stage road. Business leaders were asked to make additional contributions. As a result, in 1852 a wagon road had been built through the Cahuenga Pass. To stimulate support for the road, Phineas Banning transported folk to the San Fernando Pass, and then alone in the coach, he urged his team down the rocky, winding, perilous road to convince onlookers of the feasibility of the stage route. Enthusiastic observers soon raised enough funds to employ a group of Chinese workers to construct the road. From the late 1850s until 1905 the Coastline, San Juan and Los Angeles Stage Company operated along the route. But the steepness of the Santa Suzanna Pass forced stage passengers to deboard before ascent and help push the vehicles up the grade.

The pass, of course, presented a major obstacle in the construction of the railroad. Some 1,500 rail workers labored a year and one-half to construct a tunnel under San Fernando Pass. Finally, in 1876 at Lang Station in Soledad Canyon, where grizzly bear hunter, John Lang, managed the sulfur springs and the hotel, a golden spike made the final connection between the tracks built from Los Angeles to San Francisco.

The rails brought prosperity and an avalanche of settlers. The arrival of the Santa Fe Railroad was to launch a rail fare

competition, causing Southern Pacific rates to fall briefly to one dollar. Railroads, eager for passengers and ready to sell excess lands, widely publicized the real estate sales and the low fares, even providing special excursion trains which delivered optimistic investors to the unabashed promoters who, accompanied by brass bands or even a stray circus calliope, sang the praises of Alhambra, Tropico and La Ballona, "where the ships of the world lay anchor."

While the San Fernando Valley remained largely untouched by the frenzy of the real estate boom of the 1880s, local entrepreneurs did open several hotels to accommodate the health seekers and the excursionists.

In 1909, taking advantage of the expanding suburban transit system and anticipating increased supplies of water from the Owens Valley, a small group of developers and merchants, including Harrison Grey Otis, his son-in-law, Harry Chandler, Moses H. Sherman and Hollywood developer H. J. Whitley, established the Los Angeles Suburban Homes Company. They purchased 47,000 acres from Lankershim and Van Nuys for $2,500,000. Using their system of spreading out, "each of them getting about six helpers to put in a like amount of money," the group soon took over the southern half of the San Fernando Valley.

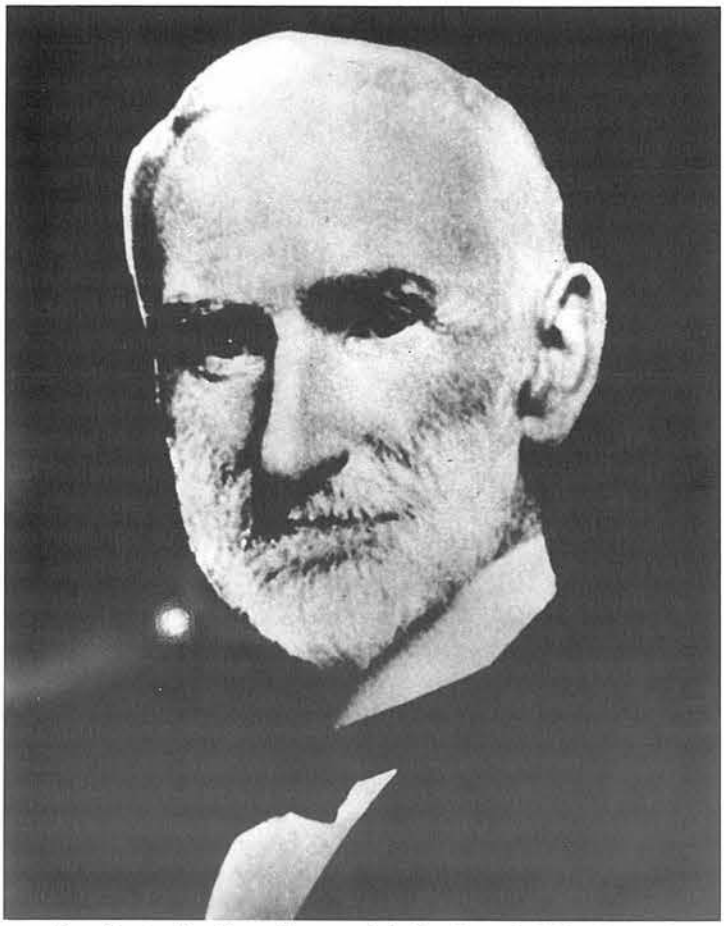
David Otto Brant, a recent college graduate and future partner, began grazing the world's largest herd of Guernsey cattle in the Valley. There also in 1911 another partner, William P. Whitsett, purchased an undivided half interest in the town site of Van Nuys, convinced that the lands were the richest and best in California. Whitsett, who saw the San Fernando Valley as the "valley of opportunities," shrewdly issued tickets for free auto trips to his proposed townsite. For the opening, nearly 2,000 scrambled aboard two excursion trains to participate in Whitsett's real estate promotion, leading the *Times* reporter to write: "Between dawn and dark, in the shadow of the encircling San Fernando hills and upon a bed that was a rough plank platform of a strident auctioneer, a city was born yesterday."

Describing Van Nuys as a town that "started right," Whitsett laid out symmetrical avenues planted with miles of trees. He also declared the town dry. The Pacific Electric red cars arrived in July 1912, and by July of the following year the streets were illuminated by electric lights. Possessed of an unwavering faith in agriculture, Whitsett was convinced that the valley would become "the valley of content" in which residents would derive an adequate subsistence on one-acre farms, their main cash crop being poultry. He confidently promised: "With chickens there is something for every member of the family." Van Nuys soon boasted of doing a million dollars in business, while also reaping a million dollar potato harvest.

In 1913 two events occurred which were to have far reaching consequences on the future of the San Fernando Valley. At his ranch in the northeastern section of the valley D.W. Griffith produced his epic motion picture, *The Birth of a Nation*. On November 5, forty-thousand southland residents traveled by carriage, train and motorcar to the terminus of the Owens Valley Aqueduct to witness the dedication of an engineering achievement designed by and constructed over a period of six years by William Mulholland. Two years later Los Angeles annexed most of the San Fernando Valley. The availability of Owens Valley water had transformed the range land into a garden spot conducive to the cultivation of a wide variety of agriculture.

In 1915 film maker Carl Laemmle purchased a chicken ranch in the east valley to serve as a movie studio. Much of its original backlot became Studio City and much of the more recent film making facilities are now part of the Universal City entertainment complex. By the 1930s the San Fernando Valley was devoted to agriculture, while also serving as a movie location for western films and such classics as *Robin Hood*. It even housed the Goebel Lion Farm which supplied the movie studios with the fiercest of jungle beasts.

As a result of the growing economic vitality of the film industry and the expand-



Issac Newton Van Nuys. Courtesy of the San Fernando Valley Historical Society.

ing industrial operations, especially aviation assembly, by the end of the 1930s the valley had added almost 80,000 residents, nearly doubling its population. In the following decade the region added another quarter million residents, many of them associated with the critical war industries. By the 1950s the San Fernando Valley had become a suburban utopia to nearly half a million residents, though orange groves still outnumbered suburban tracts.

Early in the postwar period aviation assembly plants transformed into aerospace centers were joined by auto assembly, brewing plants and light industries, which were located along the railroad lines near the Valley's axis. By 1960 the area's population had increased fivefold. An expanding freeway system allowed workplace integration with the rest of Los Angeles, permitted employees in far flung workplaces to return to bedroom communities in the San Fernando Valley. As a result, housing construction began to shift from single-family residences to blocks of multiple dwellings.

Between 1950 and 1965 Los Angeles County reported the creation of 661,000 new jobs. The burgeoning aerospace industry represented 60 percent of that total. It is important to note that by 1958 twenty-five percent of aerospace production was devoted to missile development. In the Valley nine out of ten of the largest manufacturers, including Litton Industries and Bendix Aviation, held Department of Defense contracts, increasingly devoted to the research and development in the aerospace program. The Industrial Association of the San

Fernando Valley, established in 1949, was an active supporter of the development of this industry. In its commitment to the Valley's economic growth the Association successfully lobbied, despite home owners' opposition, to have undeveloped tracts in the west Valley rezoned for industrial use. Such zoning variances in Northridge, Chatsworth and Warner Ranch permitted the development of facilities like Rocketdyne, North American Aviation's Jet Propulsion Center, agents in a new age of space, on the lands of the Tongva and the Tataviam, which Fray Juan Crespi had long ago named Santa Catalina de Bononia de los Encinos.

The seventeen thriving communities within the San Fernando Valley originated as Indian villages, cattle ranches, productive farms and town sites. Today, arrayed along ruler-straight arterial streets at repetitive half-mile intervals, they hardly reveal the rich and varied historic legacy bequeathed them by the Native American residents, the missionaries and settlers dispatched by the Spanish crown, the ranchers and real estate developers of more recent decades. The richness of the history of the San Fernando Valley is as hidden as its gold was to the Indians and its agricultural potential was to the earliest settlers.

William Paul Whitsett captured the promise of the valley best when he described it as "the valley of opportunity." The gradual fulfillment of the opportunity appears as a proud chapter of southern California history, a history which lives in the shifting fortunes of the San Fernando Valley's past.

Suggested Reading

Bearchell, Charles A. and Larry Fried, *The San Fernando Valley: Then and Now.*

Broesamle, John, *Suddenly a Giant: The History of CSU Northridge.*

Engelhardt, Zephyrin, *San Fernando Rey: the Mission in the Valley.*

Mayers, Jackson, *The San Fernando Valley.*

"Mission San Fernando Rey de Espana, 1797-1997: A Bicentennial Tribute," Special Issue *Southern California Quarterly LXXIX* (Fall Winter 1997)

Mulholland, Catherine, *Owensmouth Baby: The Making of a San Fernando Valley Town.*

Ripley, Vernette Snyder, "The San Fernando Pass and the Pioneer Traffic That Went Over It," *Historical Society of Southern California Quarterly,* March, June, September-December 1947; March, June 1948.

Robinson, John W., "The Taming of the San Fernando Pass," *The Branding Iron* (Summer 1997).

Robinson, William W. *Fabulous San Fernando Valley.*

Stewart, Maria, *Los Encinos: Past and Present.*

Weber, Francis, *Memoirs of an Old Mission.*

Weber, Francis, *San Fernando: An Historical Perspective.*

Williams, Michael Wayne, "From Orange Groves to High Tech in San Fernando Valley: Boosterism, Rezoning and the Emergence of a R & D Regional Economy," *Southern California Quarterly* LXXX (Fall 1998).

Sutter's Headquarters building, the only part of the original fort extant. Courtesy the author.

The Little Kingdom of John A. Sutter

by Steven Tice

The California Gold Rush has jumped back into the headlines across the Golden State. January 1998 marked the 150th anniversary of the discovery of gold at Coloma in the Sierra Nevada foothills, which triggered a worldwide stampede of prospectors. Gold Rush hoopla will be followed by Statehood Sesquicentennial hoopla that will stretch into September 2000.

It is a good time for another look at the man who owned the mill where gold was discovered—John Sutter. Using a combination of hard work, guile and bluff, Sutter built an empire in the wilderness. His story alone is a fascinating one.

Born in 1803, Johann Augustus Sutter was an ethnic German who left Berne, Switzerland in 1834 for New York. He had served for a time in the Swiss army, probably not in the elite Swiss Guards, certainly not as a captain, which he later claimed. His early life had featured a recurring theme—failure. When he left Europe he was fleeing business debts and an uncomfortable marriage.

On his grand adventure, Sutter became a curious mix of dreamer, pragmatist, hero, rascal and liar. In his 30s he sported a trim mustache and long, curving sideburns. He has been characterized as charming, buoyant and generous, yet he was guilty of abandoning his wife and five children.

For five years Sutter zig-zagged across frontier North America and beyond, with extended stopovers in St. Louis, Santa Fe, Oregon, Alaska and Hawaii. In those days of empire-building, Santa Fe was Mexican territory, Oregon was claimed by Great Britain, Alaska was a Russian colony and Hawaii was an independent kingdom.

In July 1839 he arrived in Mexico's Alta California. He asked for citizenship, and Governor Juan Bautista Alvarado obliged him. The three ways for a naturalized citizen to receive a land grant were marriage

into a *Californio* family, becoming a Roman Catholic, and settling at least twenty-five miles from the ocean. Sutter chose to begin a settlement well inland, near the confluence of the Sacramento and American rivers, 75 miles northeast of present-day San Francisco, then a village named Yerba Buena.

Writing of those days years later, Sutter summed up why he left Europe, sailed two oceans, and tramped across a continent—"I wanted to be my own master."

In 1840, California had been a Spanish, then Mexican, colony for just seventy years. The native American population had plummeted due to enforced changes in lifestyle, disease, maltreatment and occasionally, outright murder. The non-Indian population of around 6,000 was scattered along the coast and in adjacent valleys. As the farthest outpost of a newly independent and shaky government in Mexico City, Alta California was ripe for the picking, and at various times, France, Great Britain, Russia and the USA had designs on the area.

Land grants in 1840 and 1845 gave Sutter ownership of 33 square leagues of land 230 square miles—a territory roughly equal to the combined areas of Andorra and San Marino, two tiny nations of Europe. Sutter named his holdings '"New Helvetia" and, using Indians as serfs, set about during the early 1840s to build a fort and flour mill on the site of present-day Sacramento, and a lumber mill in the foothills to the east.

The fort was built on a knoll near the south bank of the American River two miles from its junction with the Sacramento River. The three-foot thick, 18 foot high walls enclosed an area 428 feet by 178 feet. (The restored outer walls seen today at Sutter's Fort State Historic Park have been scaled down. They are slightly lower and less extensive.) Inside, his headquarters building, the only original section of the fort still in existence, rose three stories and housed a dining hall, a business office, a medical dispensary and Sutter's private office. In the book, *The World Rushed In*, J.S. Holliday described it as "a lively place....at once a fortress, inn, granary, warehouse and retail store."

The Dictionary of American History says Sutter amassed 4,000 oxen, 1,200 cattle, 1,500 horses and mules, and 12,000 sheep. He planted grapes, wheat and extensive orchards.

In 1841, when the Russians abandoned their settlement at Fort Russe (later anglicized to "Ross") on the northern California coast, Sutter purchased their supplies, tools and a number of small cannon. He later had these weapons mounted upon the two towers at the fort.

Over the years many wagon trains stopped at Sutter's colony after struggling across the Sierra Nevada and dozens of expatriate Americans and Europeans, including a number of Swiss, worked for Sutter as hunters, herdsmen, craftsmen, cooks and bakers. Historian Doyce B. Nunis, Jr. called Sutter's Fort "the Ellis Island for early California."

At the height of his power, Sutter commanded a fair-sized army, both cavalry and infantry. In addition to his ranch employees, he could command one to two hundred California Indians and Kanakas from the Hawaiian islands.

Sutter's alliances tended to be swayed by whatever direction the military or political "winds" were blowing. He switched to the winning American side in the Mexican War (1846-48). Captain John C. Frémont used Sutter's Fort as a staging area.

After having seen Sutter's holdings, Frémont referred to them as "a principality," and biographer Oscar Lewis wrote: "Sutter was never so content as when he was playing the part of a gracious host."

On January 24, 1848, gold was found on Sutter land along the American River. Sutter tried to prevent the secret from leaking, but it did and spread through Alta California. Farmers abandoned their plows, soldiers deserted, sailors jumped ship. Inevitably, word of the find at Sutter's mill and subsequent strikes went out from California on sailing ships bound for the most distant corners of the world. Though it took months,

the news eventually reached the eastern United States. *The Baltimore Sun* was one of the first newspapers to report it in September 1848.

Before the spring of 1848, the non-Indian population of California is estimated to have been around 9,000. In 1849 alone, 90,000 hopeful prospectors from Ireland, Chile, Australia and China surged into Sutter's fiefdom. *The Encyclopedia of California* calls it "the greatest mass movement of people since the Crusades."

The new arrivals had come with one motivation—to get rich. In the chaotic days of 1849 and 1850, Sutter's lands were overrun, his herds were slaughtered, his fields plundered or set afire. What had initially seemed good fortune opened a Pandora's box of misery.

John Sutter had ruled in the Sacramento Valley as a legitimate governor, an uncrowned king or a dictator, depending on one's point of view. But California then passed into American hands and by the early 1850s everything he had built up over the course of a decade was in ruin.

New Helvetia was trampled by the Gold Rush.

Suggested Readings

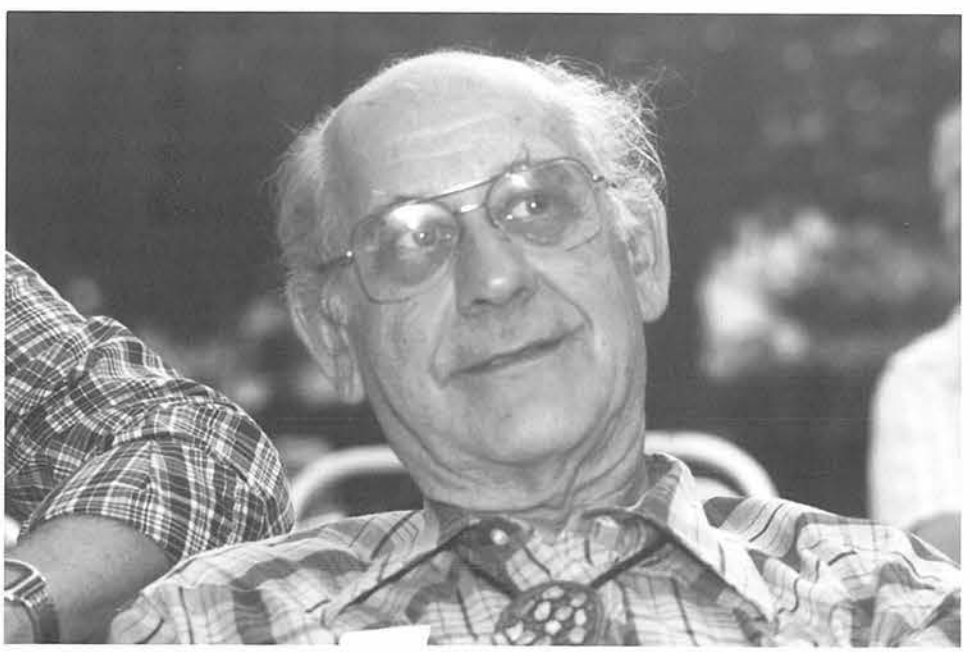
Bidwell, James, "Sutter's Fort" in Caughey, John La Ree, *California Heritage*, pp. 134-8.

Hart, James D., *A Companion to California.*

Holliday, J.S., *The World Rushed In: The California Gold Rush Experience.*

Lewis, Oscar, *Sutter's Fort: Gateway to the Gold Fields.*

Zollinger, James P., *Sutter: the Man and His Empire.*



ANTHONY FRANCIS KROLL, 1914-1999

"Tony," to those who knew him, died on May 15, 1999. Born to immigrant Polish parents in Chicago, November 5, 1914, he was educated in local parochial schools. On graduation from high school he matriculated in Lane Technical School where he studied architecture. To his dismay, graduating in the early stages of the great depression, he

found that there was no demand for his services since new construction was at its lowest level in decades. Fortunately for him, a local engraver convinced Tony to try another trade. Working under the tutelage of his employer, he began his etching career producing labels for perfume, foodstuffs, 1936 World's Fair stickers and whiskey labels, much in demand with the abolition of prohibition. To enhance his native talent, he took classes at the Chicago Academy of Fine Arts.

On the eve of World War II, Tony relocated to Pasadena where he found employment as a jewelry die maker specializing in lapel pins and hardware for military uniforms. Six months later he was drafted. After training he was posted to Lowry Field, Colorado Springs, where he served for the duration as an aerial photo mapper. There on September 4, 1942, he married his Chicago sweetheart, Clarese Bukowski, a nurse by profession.

After the war Tony returned to Pasadena and opened his own engraving/printing business in "Old Town" on Colorado Street.

In addition to the usual trade items Tony also undertook a number of commissions to design, engrave, and print bookplates. Among his notable efforts were bookplates supplied to the Pasadena Public Library, Pacific Asia Museum and the Archival Center, Archidocese of Los Angeles, Mission Hills. Individuals also sought him out to execute their personal bookplates.

Other commissions included designing the title pages and dust jackets for many of Msgr. Francis J. Weber's books He also collaborated with Weber on five miniatures.

Tony's talent did not go unrecognized. In 1976 he was the only American engraver to be selected to contribute to the third volume of *Artista de Ex-Libris*, the publication of the Fédération Internationale des Sociétiés d'Ex-Libris in conjunction with the XVI International Ex Libris Congress, held in Lisbon, Portugal, in August. However, his greatest honor—in his eyes—was the 1981 commission from the Vatican to design and engrave the personal bookplate for Pope John Paul II—a fellow Pole, the culmination of Tony's 50 years as an engraver. In the lower right hand corner is finely etched in Polish, "Anton Francieszek Kroll/Fecit."

Until deteriorating health intervened, Tony was active in a number of organizations. He was a director of the Historical Society of Southern California; president of the Collegium of Western Art; active in the Death Valley '49ers, the L.A. Corral, and the Zamorano Club. Retiring in 1986, having sold his business, Tony continued to offer advice and assistance to the new owner as well as undertaking special commissions.

His beloved Clarese died on April 1, 1987, having distinguished herself both on the national and international level for her nursing skills. Tony kept her ashes, and they with his own will now be commingled for burial in Forest Lawn, Glendale. The Krolls are survived by their sons--Linley, Gregory, and Dwight, and their respective families.

Doyce B. Nunis, Jr.

ALEX KERR
1913-1999

Alex Kerr passed away March 21, 1999. Alex suffered a massive stroke March 16th, just a week after attending the Corral's March 10th meeting. He was 86.

In the years Alex was a member of our Corral many members enjoyed his company. As a long time friend I can assure you he truly enjoyed being a Corral member and knowing its members.

Born in Chicago, Illinois, November 27, 1913, he and his family moved to Southern California where he attended school and graduated from USC. Alex founded Kerr's Sporting Goods of Beverly hills, one of the best stores of its kind in Southern California.

In World War II Alex served in the US Navy running its aircraft gunnery school at Alameda Naval Air Station in the Bay Area. He retired from the naval reserve as a lieutenant commander.

Alex was an incredible skeet and trap shotgunner. He was a grand national champion and set many records.

He was an indefatigable hunter and fisherman, and he supported these sports by serving with many organizations which supported them.

Alex was also an expert on the manufacture and use of glass containers. He served as an officer of Kerr Glass Company. His collection of glass fruit canning jars is one of the best in existence. He also collected an amazing number of the glass target balls once used by fast and fancy shooters such as Annie Oakley and Buffalo Bill along with the associated paraphernalia and literature associated with them.

After private family services Alex was interred at Forest Lawn, Hollywood, not far from the home he had built in the early 1940s, on March 25, 1999

Adíos Alex. You will be missed.

Konrad F. Schreier, Jr.

(Monthly Roundup continued from page 2)
days after Pearl Harbor.

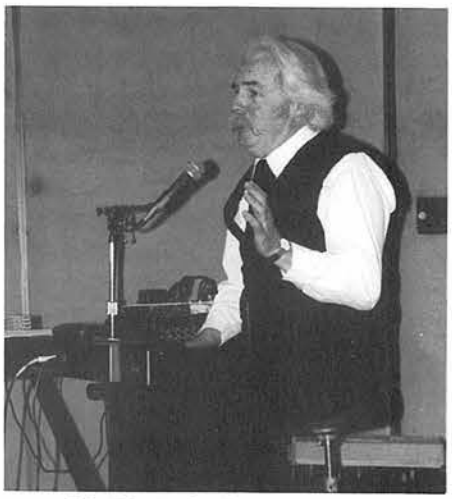
The *California*, launched on February 28, 1849, was the first steamship designed for the Pacific Coast. It was soon joined by the *Winfield Scott*, named after the famous general of the War with Mexico. The ship, built by Westervelt and Mackay and designed to carry 165 cabin passengers and 150 steerage, left New York on October 20, 1850, for service on the Pacific Coast, and arrived in San Francisco on April 28, 1851.

On December 1, 1853, Captain Blunt , on a return trip to Panama hoping to cut 12-20 hours off the voyage, decided to take the inside passage through the Channel Islands instead of swinging to the west as was customary. Unfortunately, the passage was not well charted and the ship struck a reef during the night just off Anacapa Island. The Captain encouraged calm and gentlemanly conduct by pulling his pistol and announcing he would shoot any man who tried to enter the lifeboat before all the women and children were removed. By the next morning, the crew had removed all passengers and the mail to a small beach on the island.

Because of the existence of several journals, the castaways' experiences can be reconstructed. On December 3, the *California* en route to San Francisco appeared and took some passengers aboard. The captain promised to go to the Golden Gate and return for the others which should have taken six to eight days. Before the ship returned the survivors had run out of provisions and were extremely low on water. Fortunately, a seal came on the beach and provided a few meals. On the seventh day, a storm provided water for the group, but they were now out of provisions.

On December 10, a cannon report announced the arrival of the *California* which had provisions and was able to remove the remaining passengers to San Francisco. This was a ship wreck with a happy ending; all the passengers and mail were saved.

Mr. Schwemmer concluded his presentation with a slide show depicting the wreckage and showing the problems with undersea research.



Photograph by Frank Q. Newton

May Meeting Speaker David Bourne

MAY 1999 MEETING

David Bourne, a member of the well known musical group, The Lobos Rangers, regaled the Corral with background information and examples of the music played on the saloon piano.

There is little literature concerning saloon piano music. Most of the pianists were classical trained and played the popular music of the day, which would have included Irish and Scottish tunes and dance music. Their standard instrument was the English Bird Cage piano which, with the possible exception of the square grand piano, was the worst piano ever manufactured.

Using his modern key board, which could reproduce everything from the sounds of the English Bird Cage piano to the tremolo of the player piano, Mr. Bourne gave a lively demonstration of the music. Starting with "Under the Double Eagle," he played music ranging from the 1850s until after the turn of the century.

Stephen Foster was the major composer of the period. Even though he died in his 35th year, poverty stricken and an alcoholic, he produced over 200 pieces and was the musical force of his time. Many of his pieces became classics, and some are so prevalent they are considered American folk music. Most of his works were homophonic which

means all parts did the same thing. Edwin P. Christy, George Frederick Root and Scott Joplin and others rounded out the roster of composers of the period.

Mr. Bourne played representative pieces of each composer in the style in which it would have been played when written. The selections ran the gamut form "Old Folks at Home" to one of Scott Joplin's original rags. The sign that actually appeared in a saloon, "Don't Shoot the Piano Player, he's doing his best" was not needed for this lively, enjoyable evening.

Corral Chips

Notice: Hard working bartender on the left in the photograph on top of page 19, BI 214, keeps insisting that he is **DICK THOMAS**. Although he has not provided any documentary proof, we will accept his word for it.

Among the Corral members noted at the Whitsett Lecture were **THOMAS ANDREWS, REESE BENSON, ROBERT BLEW, PAUL DENZEL, RAY PETER, JEAN POOLE** and **MARTIN RIDGE**.

STEVEN BORN, representing Platrix Chapter No. 2, E Clampus Vitus, made a presentation at the plaque dedication honoring the California Trail: Paths of the Forty-Niners. The dedication was in cooperation with the Gateway Chapter of the Oregon-California Trails Association.

Corresponding members **ROBERT E. LYNDS** and **DEAN A. PAINTER** have died.

The National Cowboy Hall of Fame awarded **PHIL** and **YOSHIKI KOVINICK** a Western Heritage Award for their book, *An Encyclopedia of Women Artists of the American West*.

Directory Changes

Status Changes
To Active
William Davis
Paul Rippen
To Ranger Active
Michial Nunn

New Members
Larry Boerio
6502 Corinne Circle
Buena Park, CA 90620

David Burton
c/o Autry Museum of Western Heritage
4700 Western Heritage Way
Los Angeles, CA 90027-1462

Elizabeth Dodge
1022 So. Bradshawe Ave.
Monterey Park, CA 91754

Jane Muller
435 No. San Gabriel Blvd.
San Gabriel, CA 91775

Hynda Rudd
103 Mountain Ave #E
Glendale, CA 91202

Jane Steward
19812 White Spring Lane
Yorba Linda, CA 92886

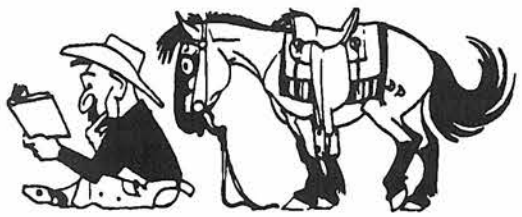
Carol C. Strayer
1010 Bradshawe Ave.
Monterey Park, CA 91754

Address Changes
Albert J. Galen
1345 East Center Court Drive
Covina, CA 91724

Sol J. Grossman
1215 Anchors Way #219
Ventura, CA 93001

Brad Riffle
2001 Willow Drive
Los Osos, CA 93402

Chuck Thonney
4426 Vista Largo
Torrance, CA 90502



DOWN THE WESTERN BOOK TRAIL . . .

In a very real sense, people who have read good literature have lived more than people who cannot or will not read — S.I. Hayakawa

THE YOSEMITE GRANT, *1864-1906: A Pictorial History* by Hank Johnston. Yosemite National Park: The Yosemite Association, 1995. 278 pp. Maps, Illustrations, Appendices, Index. Cloth, $29.95. Order from Yosemite Association, (209) 379-2648.

In 1864 Congress ceded Yosemite Valley and the Mariposa Grove of Big Trees to the State of California "for public use, resort, and recreation." Over the next forty-two years, this most beautiful mountain valley in America and the nearby grove of *Sequoia Gigantia* were administered by California through a board of nine appointed commissioners.

Johnston's book is a comprehensive history of Yosemite's preservation and development during the period of California's stewardship. He describes in detail the origin of the Yosemite Grant, the development of roads and tourist facilities, the efforts by private individuals to claim land in the valley and the eventual creation of Yosemite National Park and the re-ceding of the valley and big trees back to the federal government.

The twin objectives of preserving Yosemite's natural beauty and developing facilities for public use were at odds then as they are today. How do you preserve a marvelous creation of nature and still allow hundreds, later thousands, of tourists to trample all over it? This issue was faced—not always successfully—by the Yosemite Commissioners.

One of the first problems facing the commissioners was how to deal with nine preemptive land claims filed in accordance with the Preemption Law of 1841 (not to be confused with the Homestead Act of 1862). James Mason Hutchings, owner of the major hotel in the valley, along with the other private land claimants, vigorously defended their claims in the courts as well as before the State Legislature. The Legislature actually passed an act over the governor's veto supporting the claimants. Hutchings traveled to Washington, D.C. to lobby Congress on the claimants' behalf. The long, bitter struggle lasted until 1872, when a federal court decision rejected the private claims and unheld the public rights as specified in the Yosemite Grant. Had this decision not been made, Yosemite Valley today might be mostly in private hands.

Johnston details the history of the many hotels in Yosemite. Most of them were in Yosemite Valley: Hutchings', Black's, Leidig's, and the Stoneman House being the major ones. In 1899 David and Jennie Curry arrived, and the long saga of Camp Curry, Yosemite's most famous hostelry, began. Above the valley were Snow's La Casa Nevada, the Glacier Point Mountain House and Clark's Station at Wawona, later the Wawona Hotel. The author includes many illustrations of these hostelries and their proprietors.

Tourists originally made the long trip into Yosemite via horseback. In the 1870s three wagon roads were constructed into the valley: The Big Oak Flat and Coulterville

roads from the northwest, and the Wawona Road, with its spectacular view from Inspiration Point, from the southwest. Over the next three decades, most visitors came in via horse-drawn stage.

As Yosemite and the Big Trees gained in popularity, efforts were made to enlarge and better protect the scenic wonders. Many believed Yosemite should follow the example of Yellowstone, which became America's first national park in 1872.

Due largely to the writings of naturalist John Muir and to the efforts of Robert Underwood Johnson, editor of the influential *Century Magazine*, the vast mountain region around Yosemite Valley was set aside by Congress as Yosemite National Park in 1890. But the original Yosemite Grant remained under state control.

In response to growing public sentiment, the California Legislature finally passed a bill to re-cede Yosemite Valley and the Mariposa Grove to the federal government in 1905. On June 11, 1906, President Theodore Roosevelt signed an act incorporating the valley and the big trees into Yosemite National Park. So it has remained, with minor boundary adjustments to the present day.

Johnston ends his story with the re-cession of 1906. He did a magnificent job with a thoroughly researched and well written volume, profusely illustrated with rare photographs and maps. This belongs in the library of all with a deep interest in California history. It is truly one of the half-dozen or so best books on Yosemite, destined to become a classic.

John Robinson

BERKELEY: *A Literary Tribute*, edited by Danielle La France. Berkeley: Heyday Books, 1997. 240 pp. Paper, $14.95. Order from Heyday Books, P.O. Box 9145, Berkeley, CA 94709, (510) 549-3564.

Unlike most good-sized California cities, Berkeley is a company town, like Scotia. Only its downtown is not wagged by logs and lumber, but by a diploma mill, U.C. So it is that many of the selections in this volume are centered around Sather Gate.

This anthology is of writings about the Berkeley scene. So you will find some very Berkeley writers among the missing simply because they did not choose to make the burg their subject matter. Like long-forgotten Charles Keeler; almost forgotten Frederick Faust (Max Brand); the Bancroft Library historians Dale Morgan and George Hammond; and the campus's major literateur, James D. Hart.

The collection is very much of a mixed bag of old and new, prose and poetry, fiction and non-fiction. There is a sort of balance between celebrity writers (Kerouac, Ginsberg, ex-Poet Laureate Robert Hass) and little-known contributors. One weakness is the brevity of many selections—passing mention of Simone de Beauvoir (like Thomas Pynchon, also here), hardly a confirmed Berkeleyite; a snippet from U.C. drop-out Jack London; an annoyingly brief sample of Yoshiko Uchida's writing. The only sustained piece is an amusing tongue-in-cheek story of a prof named Wolfe who not only turns into a werewolf but thwarts Nazi spies in 1942! It is by the once well-known writer and critic of detective stories, Anthony Boucher. Oddly, the very ego of an occasional author (Lincoln Steffens, John Kenneth Galbraith) "carries" some of the short entries.

There is another balance in the contrast between the introduction, a love letter to Berkeley by a smitten Malcolm Margolin, and the sharp criticisms of city and campus by Steffens, de Beauvoir, Frank Norris, Philip Dick, Valerie Miner and others. There are some lame contributions, perhaps a shrill (and unreadable) polemic or so, but they are few, and good selections are many. For example, Hass's poem; Jimmy Hopper's undergraduate story (1901); the charming vignette by Gale Wilhelm; and much more.

The appendixed roster of contributors, with concise biographical data, is very useful.

While hardly impressive as "lit," this

collection is a nice tribute to the literary tradition of the East Bay town as distinguished by its bookstores as by its faculty of letters. It will especially appeal to Cal alumni, Old Blues, even those who still prefer the "staid" (??), but user-friendly, non-tacky, graffiti-free town of the 1940's (although there was only one restaurant worth a damn, Spenger's) to the Berserkeley of the riots 1960's and later.

Richard H. Dillon

THE ARIZONA DIARY OF LILY FREMONT 1878-1881, edited by Mary Lee Spencer. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1997. 277 pp. Illustrations, Appendix, Notes, Bibliography, Index. Cloth, $35.00. Order from University of Arizona Press, 1230 N. Park Avenue, Tucson, AZ 85719, (800) 426-3797

Staid, stout, and conservative, (Elizabeth) Lily Frémont was the oldest child and only daughter of the dashing, controversial explorer John Charles Frémont and the beautiful, intelligent Jesse Benton Frémont, daughter of the Missouri senator Thomas Hart Benton. Lily's status allowed her, even when family fortunes had waned, access to the privileges of her class: travel, education, and the association of the interesting and well known. Lily never married and remained in the family home though occupations such as librarian, governess or teacher that would have suited both her education and station. Keeping her role of daughter, she became the main stay of her family by running the household and "copying" documents and correspondence for her father as Jesse was often not physically able to do so.

Lily's diary is the result of the Frémont's years in Prescott where the General had secured the position of governor of Arizona Territory with the hopes of reinstating both personal wealth and reputation. The Arizona community likewise looked to Frémont's appointment with hope, anticipating development with capital secured by his eastern connections and ultimately statehood.

However, as Lily's diary reflects, Frémont's frequent absences for the pursuit of his own economic interests proved disappointing both to the Frémont family and the territory's citizens. Frémont angered fellow Prescottonians when he moved his residence to Tucson in 1881, a reflection of his changing economic interests. Resigning in November 1881, he cited his "...lack of authority, funds, and voice in forming policy, especially with respect to Indian affairs ..." With this, Lily left Tucson joining her mother in New York City having lived in Tucson for only a short while.

While not given to introspection, Lily's diary "indicates a concern for the poor and for the Indians, whom the settlers and Army were all against. In her diary she catches the pathos of a child's accidental death: the ceremonies of funerals, holidays and school; tensions between town and fort, and the fear of fires in Prescott, which had an inadequate water system and supply."

Lily's diary records her personal and family life filled with sewing, teaching French, reading, social gatherings, and her frequent weather observations. Family dinners, though often plain, were frequented by guests such as Judge Charles Silent, her father's business associate and her life long friend.

Organized by chronological chapters with notes, the detailed introduction and postscript provides readers with the necessary background and insight of Lily and her family. Whether read as a novel or by selected chapters, the diary should hold the reader's interest providing a refreshing change from the diaries of military officers' wives.

Jeanette Davis

TEXAS WANDERLUST: *The Adventures of Dutch Wurzbach*, by Douglas V. Mead. College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 1997. 210 pp. Illustrations, Notes, Bibliography, Index. Cloth, $29.95; paper, $12.95. Order from Texas A & M University

Press, Drawer C, College Station, TX 77843-4354 (409) 845-1436.

This is the story of the life and times of 19th Century Texas pioneer Emil Frederick "Dutch" Wurzbach as collected and related by his great-grandson, retired journalist Douglas V. Mead.

Eight year old Dutch and his family emigrated to Texas in 1846 fleeing the troubles which led many Germans to emigrate to the USA about that time. Young Dutch showed little interest in formal education or in following his father's civil engineering profession. As a teenager he was part of the Texas frontier society able to cope with the wild and violent west of the time.

In the early 1850s Dutch drifted into teamstering, mostly for the US Army. By the end of the decade, many jobs and wild adventures which led him many places including Arizona, Utah and Old Mexico had made him a well regarded wagon train man.

When the Civil War began Dutch joined a Texas Confederate Army unit. He served in campaigns in Arkansas, Louisiana and Missouri in the "war on the western border" which is not nearly as well known as the war east of the Mississippi River. His war included many fights, much boredom, and privations and hardships as bad as any Johnny Reb ever experienced.

Dutch's war ended when he was invalided out of the service after the Red River Campaign in the spring of 1864. He was a physical wreck when he returned to his San Antonio, Texas, home, wife and family. He was no longer the wild young frontiersman he had once been.

The rest of Dutch's life was successful if anticlimactic. He regained his health by 1870 and was a solid and respected citizen of San Antonio until his death in 1930 at age 92.

This book is based on Dutch's memoirs written about 1915, family recollections and a great deal of careful research on the events surrounding Dutch's life in the 1850s and 1860s. Woven into Dutch's story is that of his brother, Charles Louis Wurzbach, along with much well documented historical background against which it all happened. Unfortunately the book has no maps which would have been a great help in following the trails of Dutch's adventures.

The book reads well, and it will be of interest to those interested in Texas of the 1850's or the little known Civil War on the western border.

Konrad F. Schreier, Jr.

SANTA CRUZ ISLAND: *A History of Conflict and Diversity*, by John Gherini. Spokane: Arthur H. Clark Company, 1997. 269 pp. Maps, Illustrations, Appendix, Bibliography, Index. Cloth, $39.50. Order from Arthur H. Clark Company, P. O. Box 14707, Spokane, WA 99214-0707, (800) 842-9286.

There has always been an alluring yet inaccessible air about the four Channel Islands located off California's shoreline at Santa Barbara. Geographical isolation undoubtedly accounts for much of the mystery about the peaks of that ancient mountain range whose valleys have been inundated since Pleistocene times by waters of the Pacific Ocean.

On clear days, Santa Cruz, largest of the insular chain, stands out clearly on the horizon, about twenty miles due south of the coastline. The island's graceful, violet-hued peaks appear to float on the rim of the waterline, changing color tone with each successive alteration of the sun's descent. Limu, as the Indians called their home, a mountainous terrain approximately twenty-two miles long and five and a half miles in average breadth, has an area of about 64,000 acres.

The aborigines inhabiting Santa Cruz, possibly a branch of the ancient Toltecs, were considerably superior to other California Indians in both physique and intelligence. Their earliest association with Christianity dates from the visit of Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo in 1542. An affidavit, made eighteen years after that voyage, testifies to the presence of a priest with the expedition, though neither in the document nor else-

where is anything given concerning his identity. Periodical visitations by European adventurers in subsequent decades further ensconced the Christian tradition of that area which Sebastian Vizcaíno designated *Isla de Gente Barbudo.*

The island's current appellation seemingly originated with the Juan Pérez landing in 1769. It is related that a chaplain inadvertently left behind a staff with a cross on it. When the Indians returned it, the grateful cleric and his companions bestowed the Spanish equivalent of "Holy Cross" on the island to commemorate the incident.

From the earliest years of the mission era, the friars fully endorsed the Spanish government's policy of forbidding the forced removal from the Channel Islands of any Indians born there. At the same time, Fray Junípero Serra exhorted his confreres to exhibit every courtesy to the natives of that area during their occasional journeys to the mainland. In addition, Serra suggested to Teodoro De Croix the usefulness of exploring the islands for possible sites of a future missionary foundation.

In his report for 1805, Father Estévan Tápis pursued his predecessor's thoughts about inaugurating a mission on Santa Cruz to accommodate inhabitants living in that island's ten *rancherias* as well as the seven on neighboring Santa Rosa, a population he estimated at 1,800. The Franciscan *presidente* noted that the naked and superstitious, though friendly, natives "were not disposed to join a mission on the mainland, yet caused friars trouble by their intercourse with the channel neophytes." According to Tápis, the Indians were envious of the good fortune enjoyed by their counterparts on the mainland and had expressed a desire to have similar facilities in their own midst, unwilling as they were to leave their insular habitat. Had such a project materialized, Tápis gave assurances that the residents of Santa Rosa would move to Santa Cruz.

The friar also pointed out that an insular mission would serve as an additional defense against the interloping otter hunters who even then were a cause of anxiety to civil authorities. The proposal was approved by Governor José Arrillaga, but before it could be implemented, a series of epidemics reduced the population below that necessary to support an autonomous foundation. From then onwards, religious instruction for the Indians was limited to that received on rare visits to the mainland and from neophytes occasionally journeying out to the islands.

The disintegration of the native race on Santa Cruz occurred more rapidly than it did on the mainland where the missions stood between the Indians and foreign rapacity. Depopulation of the islands accounts for the use of Santa Cruz as a penal colony in 1830. Thirty men, sent out with a supply of cattle and fishhooks, were left to live as best they could. Most managed to escape within a few years on crude rafts built of hide-covered tree trunks water proofed with asphaltum.

Since the Indian era, Santa Cruz Island has fallen under the flags of three nations. Spain, Mexico and the United States, and two families. In more recent time, the island's history has been dominated by the Caire, Gherini and Stanton families.

In 1869, the island was purchased from its second owner since California statehood by ten men, one of whom was Frenchman Justinian Caire (1827-1897). Together they formed the Santa Cruz Island Company as equal shareholders in the largest privately owned island in the continental United States. Later Caire, then the sole owner of the island, was the mastermind behind its development. Under his direction, a variety of agricultural and ranching endeavors were implemented, including development of a large winery and the raising of sheep and cattle.

During the centennial year of Justinian Caire's death, John Gherini, a great great grandson, published this fine book in which for the first time, family issues, conflicts and diversities are discussed in light of their historical context. While much has been written about Santa Cruz Island, this book ranks near the head of the list. Its author, a lawyer by profession, has woven many hitherto

unknown facts from obscure court records and untapped primary sources into a magnificent and fascinating historical tapestry.

A new era has begun for Santa Cruz Island, a time when the National Park Service and Nature Conservancy will share direction of what the late Carey Stanton called "an islandic paradise."

Msgr. Francis J. Weber

Briefly Noted

A paperback edition of GALVESTON: *A History of the Island* by Gary Cartwright, first published in 1991, has been issued by Texas Christian University Press. Cartwright traces the history of the island from its first Indian inhabitants to the present day. Among the many fascinating events in Galveston's history was the hurricane of 1900 which killed one sixth of the town's population. There's more than this tragedy, however, and Cartwright tells a story in an engaging style. 345 pp. and illustrated; in paper at $15.95. Order from University Publishing, Drawer C, College Station, TX 77843-4354, (800) 826-8911.

Guidebooks are always fun, especially if you're willing to get off the couch and use them. *50 Best Short Hikes in California Deserts* by John Krist, takes the reader on a tour of Death Valley, Joshua Tree and the Mojave Desert. Krist provides historical background essays, descriptions of plant and animal life, and information on campgrounds, accessibility of the hiking sites, and relevant phone numbers. Each hike is rated as to level of difficulty, and Krist even lets you know the "child rating"—the minimum age at which a child can go on the hike without complaining too much about it. All of the information is provided in a very readable narrative which makes this one of the best guidebooks for the area it covers. 204 pages with illustrations and maps; in paper at $12.95. Order from Wilderness Press, 2440 Bancroft Way, Berkeley, CA 94704 (510) 843-8080.

From a bit farther north comes *Bay Area Backroads* by Doug McConnell, billed as "the best adventures in northern California." The book generously defines "northern California" and "Bay Area" to take in San Luis Obispo and the Klamath Basin. It features fifty scenic locations that are ideal for scenic outings by car. The book is generously illustrated with dozens of color photographs. If you are up north and have the time for checking out areas you have not previously visited, this book points the way. 166 pages in a sturdily bound paperback format; $16.95. Order from Chronicle Books, 85 Second Street, Sixth Floor, San Francisco, CA 94105, (415) 537-4257.

First published in 1976, *Sierra Nevada Wildflowers*, by Elizabeth L. Horn, is now available in a new paperback edition. Sturdily bound with heavy paper stock and loaded with color photographs, this guidebook makes it really easy for the visitor to the Sierra Nevada Range to identify the wildflowers and where to find more than 300 species. Horn writes in nontechnical language, and the flowers appear in alphabetical order. 225 pages; $16.00. Order from Mountain Press Publishing Company, 1301 S. Third Street W., P.O. Box 2399, Missoula, MT 59806, (800) 234-5308.

Abraham Hoffman