

SUTTER COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

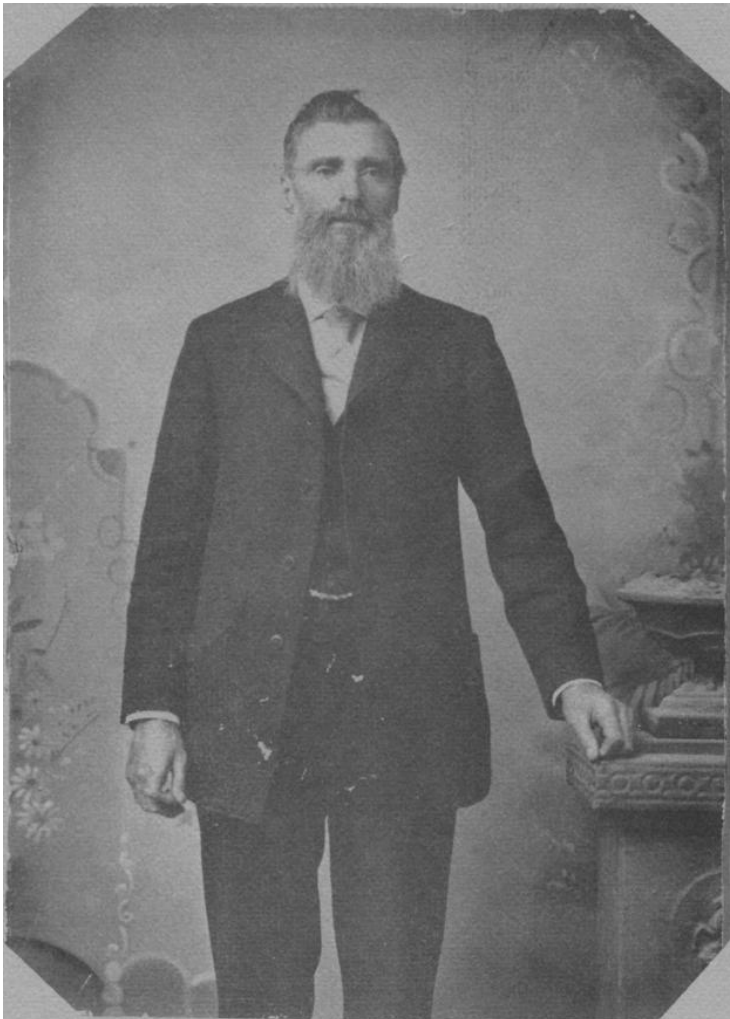
COMMUNITY MEMORIAL MUSEUM
1333 Butte House Road
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NEWS BULLETIN

VOL. XII, NO. 1

YUBA CITY, CALIFORNIA 95991

JANUARY, 1973



FRANK LAMB
1838 - 1909

SUTTER COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWS BULLETIN

Vol. XII, No. 1

January, 1973

EDITORIAL STAFF

James Barr

Earl Ramey

Jessica Bird

Irminna Palmer

William Dawson

Helen Schepman

Winifred Greene

Avis Strawhun

Typist - Peggy Schnabel

COVER PICTURE

Frank Lamb Sr. was a native of England who came to the United States in 1852. He came to California in 1861 and settled in Sutter County in 1863. He acquired land on the Sacramento river at what was then known as Southeast Bend but now Cranmore and became one of the leading farmers of the county. His original ranch has grown to include 3500 acres of the Sutter Basin and is yet farmed by his descendants.

Photo - courtesy of his son, Frank Lamb, who was the original vice-president of the Sutter County Historical Society.

The NEWS BULLETIN is published quarterly by the Society at Yuba City, California 95991. The annual membership dues include receiving the NEWS BULLETIN. Your remittance should be sent to Mrs. Wanda Rankin, Treasurer, 805 Orange Street, Yuba City, California 95991. To insure delivery of your NEWS BULLETIN please notify the Treasurer of any change of address.

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THE WINTER MEETING

The first quarterly membership meeting for 1973 will be held at 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, January 16 in the assembly room at the Sutter County Library in Yuba City.

The speakers will be Mr. and Mrs. John Leith Lewin. They will present an illustrated lecture on "Shooting the Rapids of the Grand Canyon of the Colorado River." Special reference will be made to the geology of the canyon.

Mr. Lewin is an instructor in history at Marysville High School. Mrs. Lewin is employed by the Yuba County Welfare Department.

SUTTERANA

(Editor's Note: The objective of this section is to give our readers some intimate glimpses of Sutter, his family and their affairs. We shall accept contributions from all members of the Society.)

"An Old Horse. - Last Wednesday morning Daniel Frazier's old horse, Dick died at the age of twenty-eight years. The following incident in his life, we believe, has but few parallels. In May, 1860, Mrs. Kirkpatrick, while riding old Dick, was taken with a fit of apoplexy and fell to the ground dead. When found the horse was standing over the body, so as to protect it from the sun, and although literally covered with flies would not move until it was taken away. Old Dick was formerly the property of GENERAL SUTTER."

From the Wheatland Free Press, October 10, 1874, p. 3.

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



PROGRESS REPORT #2

HAVE YOU SEEN
THIS SIGN?
or
THE SIGN
on
THE FOLLOWING PAGE?
These signs mark
our
MEMORIAL PARK
AND
MUSEUM SITE
on
BUTTE HOUSE ROAD

Since this report is, of necessity, prepared two months in advance of publication, you may understand why our list of donors can never be complete to date. It does, however, continue the list published in our last NEWS BULLETIN up to November.

Mr. and Mrs. R. Dawson in memory of Hazel Schnabel
Howard and Norma Harter in memory of Alice Powell Coats
The James Corbett Family in memory of Roy Rankin
Elsie Cassidy Walton and Carolyn Walton Williams in memory of
George Walton, Hiram Walton and Virgil Walton
Annabelle Christy in memory of Melvin Christy and Donald Christy
Mr. and Mrs. R. E. Schnabel in memory of Hazel Schnabel
Howard and Norma Harter in memory, of Gladys Johnson
Amelia Tyler (an honorary member)
Peggy Bartlett Allen in memory of Helen Andross Hinners
Mr. and Mrs. Jacque Sexton
Joyce Sexton Kirkpatrick and Hrs. R. Kirk Sexton in memory of
Rodney Kirk Sexton
Mr. and Mrs. Steve Wisner in memory of Aubrey M. Anderson
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Givens
Earl Ramey in memory of Thomas A. Gianella, Sr.

This shows that people are responding as they come to understand our project.

Landscape plans are now under consideration and more basic trees are being planted.

Here is our opportunity not only to remember others but to be remembered – to hasten the day when our museum and park setting become realities – to look back in pride at the part we played in its inception.

Remember – Your donation is tax deductible. Make checks payable to the SUTTER COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMORIAL MUSEUM PARK FUND.



MUSEUM SITE MARKER

NOW IS THE TIME!

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

or JOIN for 1973

What do you get for your money?

- a. Fellowship in a group interested in local history.
- b. Four meetings a year with worthwhile speakers (including the Annual Dinner at the cost of the dinner).
- c. The NEWS BULLETIN published four times a year and recognized throughout state as being one of the best publications for a county the size of Sutter.

For your convenience - tear out and send to the Treasurer.

To Mrs. Wanda Rankin, Treasurer
 Sutter County Historical Society
 805 Orange Street
 Yuba City, California 95991

Please renew my/our membership for 1973.

Please enroll me as a member for 1973.

Enclosed is my/our check for

- \$50 for a life membership
- \$10 for our firm/lodge/club membership
- \$ 5 for our family membership
- \$ 3 for my single membership/library/school

No charge if 90 years of age and born in Sutter County

Signed.....

Firm/Lodge/Club/School.....

Address.....

Post Office.....

State..... Zip.....

INTRODUCING OUR GUEST CONTRIBUTOR

Mr. William J. Duffy, Jr. was born in San Pablo, California, of pioneer parents and grandparents. He attended elementary school in the village of San Quentin and high school at San Rafael. He then attended the University Farm School at Davis where he studied agriculture. His first work out of college was foreman of an 800 acre ranch on Twitchell Island. Next he served as superintendent of ranches for the E. Clemens Horst Company out of Sacramento.

In 1920 he came to Sutter County and worked as director of a large farming tract for the Sutter Basin Company. During the 25 years he was associated with the company he served as leasing agent, public relations director, advisor to new farmers and land salesman. During this period he had acquired land of his own which he has farmed since his retirement in 1945. He now farms 1100 acres.

Mr. Duffy has served as director of the California Cooperative Research Foundation and of the Rice Growers Association for many years. He has also participated in many assignments at the University at Davis. In 1964 he received the Rice Award for distinguished contribution to the industry and the same year was honored by the University of California at Davis with an award as advisor to the college, as Alumnus of Distinction and as leader in California Agriculture.

Mr. Duffy has published a book entitled THE SUTTER BASIN AND ITS PEOPLE. The volume is just off the press and can be ordered from him direct. The cost is eight dollars which price includes the tax and postage. His address is P. O. Box 3045, El Macero, California 95618.

We are very much indebted to Mr. Duffy for this firsthand account of one of the biggest projects in the history of the county. Future students will value it as a prime document.

The Staff

THE SUTTER BASIN

by

William J. Duffy, Jr.

In our busy daily lives we seldom stop to appraise the importance of the rivers of the world in the development of our civilization. Man, naturally, endeavored to establish himself in an environment most suited to his existence, and which would enhance his survival and comfort. Rivers and waterways usually offered the more attractive areas. Aside from man's daily need for water, the valleys and river bottoms provided more lush vegetation, which he learned to use as a source of food and fiber. Here, too, game was more plentiful, including fish and wild fowl, which became necessary items for his survival. Rivers served as natural boundaries and also as barriers, which helped to establish isolation and security. They also provided the best means of transportation and also for irrigation of arid areas.

But the river was not always a friend and benefactor. Old an River could go on occasional rampages, spreading disaster, destruction and death in its path. This situation was quite the case in the Sacramento Valley, where the Sacramento Basin Watershed, an area of 26,000 square miles, poured its waters into a river system of 255 miles of meandering streams. Of these rivers, the Sacramento is the most important. It is supplemented by such tributaries as the McCloud, the Pitt, the Feather, the Yuba, the Bear, and the American, and dozens of mighty creeks that can, on occasion, become roaring torrents.

At the confluence of the Sacramento River and the Feather River, this mighty flow of water came together, and overflowing, created a vast inland shallow water lake. It is known that, many times during the past, before a

comprehensive plan was designed to bypass the excessive waters into artificial channels, over one million acres of some of the finest valley lands of California were under water.

The Sutter Basin, bearing the brunt of this vast and turbulent flow of water, could never be reclaimed in a practical manner without a comprehensive plan that would effect much of the surrounding area. Flooding was so consistent that vast areas in the lowest contours could not be farmed, and a dense growth of tule, cattails and willows developed.

When California became a part of the United States, these lands came into the possession of the government and in 1850, by an act of Congress, called "The Arkansas Act", the tule lands were transferred to the States. As far back as 1856, during the first session of the California Legislature, Surveyor General John A. Brewster made a report, suggesting "plans for the internal navigation of the State, for the construction of canals and aqueducts, for the draining of the marshes, the preventing of overflows, etc." His report said:

"I would propose to cut a canal from Sycamore Slough, down the edge of the overflowed land to the bay. Such reclamation should not be left to individuals or counties, but be general for the whole State where required, and under the care of a State officer. Now is the time for the determination of the State policy in regard to this matter, and when the proper system is once adopted, all direct legislation thereupon should be in accordance with it".

These far-sighted recommendations of Surveyor General John A. Brewster in 1856 were direct and to the point, but it was over half a century later before the State declared a settled policy for this reclamation.

On August 10, 1910, a report by the California Debris Commission for

the Control of Floods in the River System of the Sacramento Valley and the adjacent San Joaquin Valley of California was made to the Federal Government. This plan proposed concrete weirs regulating the amount of overflow from the river into by-passes.

In December, 1911, at an extra session of the California Legislature, an act was passed approving this report. It was estimated that the cost would be \$35,000,000 and that a fair division of the cost would be one-third to the Federal Government, one-third to the State of California, and one-third to the property interests directly affected. This act, approved on December 24, 1911, was looked upon as a long-neglected Christmas present to the people of California. The immediate plans involved a part of five counties and over half a million acres of land. This same act created the State Reclamation Board, as successor to the California Debris Commission. The first board consisted of V. S. McClatchy of Sacramento, W. T. Ellis of Marysville, and Peter Cook of Rio Vista.

In the interlude between the report of Surveyor General Brewster and the turn of the century, a factor of serious controversy developed that created great conflicts of interest and created long and bitter conflicts in the California Legislature. This was the development of gold mining in the mountains and foothills of the State by the hydraulic method.

Hydraulic mining, a method of washing down vast hillsides, flowing the debris over sluices to obtain the gold dust and gold particles, and washing the debris downstream, was quite profitable and very popular prior to 180. The water was put under extreme pressure, and through a cannon-like nozzle, was trained on the shale and soil of the mountains that lay below the Mother Lode. The resultant hundreds of millions of cubic yards of debris washed downstream, clogging the river beds, creating sand bars and washing sand

and rock out of the rivers and onto productive bottom lands, destroying orchards, vineyards and homes, and covering the good soil with sterile sand. This condition created hostility between the valley landowners and the raining companies. It is a long story, and it was many years before legislative and judicial acts completely restricted this method of mining.

The conflict between the valley landowners and the hydraulic mining interests went on at length and as damage to the valley lands continued to mount, feelings against the miners reached a high pitch. Vass meetings were held in Marysville and other towns and the state legislature was the scene of heated oratory and many suggestions for correction of the menace. Most of the valley landowners held out for complete abandonment of hydraulic mining.

In these debates and mass meetings, the names of prominent landowners were ever present. The early fight was spearheaded by James Keyes who held bottom land on the tear river that had been heavily damaged.

Parks, a large landowner in Sutter County, who had pioneered the reclamation of some of his land, was ever prominent in the controversy. He accepted leadership, but some of his ideas for compromise were opposed by many landowners.

Dr. D. P. Durst, a pioneer hop farmer on the Bear river near Wheatland was severely damaged by the mining debris. George Ohleyer, Campbell Berry and S. R. Chandler took prominent part in the fight. In later years William T. Ellis of Marysville took up the cause and it was a dominant factor in his life.

George Cadwalder, an attorney, was in conflict with Parks, particularly in relation to proposed compromised plans and they fought bitterly.

Finally, on January 7, 1884, Judge Lorenzo Sawyer, the Federal Circuit Judge, handed down a decision which struck down the hydraulic mining industry. The decision was hailed with great celebrating and rejoicing in Marysville, Yuba City, Wheatland, Sacramento, and even in San Francisco. It was a complete victory for the landowners.

But in the meantime, the rivers were clogged, much land was destroyed, and flooding became a greater menace. The navigation of the rivers was affected also. Paddle wheel steamers, which in the 1850's cruised to Marysville and to Red Bluff, could no longer enter the Feather river. The bed of the Feather river at Marysville became a higher elevation than the main streets of the town.

THE SUTTER BASIN DEVELOPMENT

With a comprehensive plan for the drainage of the entire lower part of the Sacramento Valley, business interests became interested in reclaiming the overflowed lands. Through State legislation, reclamation districts, as political subdivisions, could be incorporated, and a group of Sacramento business men, under the leadership of William L. Gerber, the president of the California National Bank, petitioned the State Legislature to form a reclamation district to reclaim the Sutter Basin. On April 30, 1913, an act creating Reclamation District No. 1500 was passed. The leaders of this group had induced J. Ogden Armour, head of the Armour Packing Company, to support the development financially and Mr. Armour, who was alert to put his surplus capital to work, entered into the project with some enthusiasm.

Work began on the building of the levees for Reclamation District No. 1500 and for the newly organized Sacramento-San Joaquin Drainage District No. 6. But soon organized opposition to the location of the Sutter

By-Pass developed in Sutter County. The county, backed by aroused people, sued the Sutter Basin Company and Reclamation District No. 1500 and obtained an injunction against the work.

The Sutter Basin Company had purchased much land in the "Overflowed or Tule Area" and had contracted to build the levees. There were 13 large clam shell dredgers at work on these levees when Judge Mahon of the Sutter County Superior Court issued a restraining order on the grounds that the work was a danger to Sutter County. The Sutter Basin Company had acquired title to 61,000 acres in the area, and there would be 13,700 acres of this on the floor of the Sutter By-Pass that would be the overflow channel.

When the case was brought to the Superior Court, Judge Mahon disqualified himself, and the case was heard before Judge Emmert Sewall of Santa Rosa, who presided in Judge Mahon's place. The petition for modification of the injunction was denied by Judge Sewall. This was in 1915. When the injunction held, eleven of the clam shell dredgers moved out of the Basin. It was pointed out that the Sutter Basin Company had already spent \$2,000,000 on levees and pumping plants, and that the reclamation would add 70,000 acres of productive land to Sutter County. Also, the State Reclamation Board had approved the location of the By-Pass and it had the approval of the engineers of the State of California.

An appeal reversed the opinion of Judge Sewall in 1917, but much time was lost and the lucrative years of high prices for commodities during World War I were lost to the Sutter Basin Company. The work was begun again and in 1918 the levees were completed sufficiently to exclude the flood waters. The controversy over the By-Pass created much bitter feeling that lasted for many years.

The Sutter Basin Company, owning over 45,000 acres of the 67,000 acres in Reclamation District No. 1500, entered on a program of developing of irrigation and drainage, of farming and subdividing, endeavoring to sell the land to people who would produce the higher priced crops, such as fruit and vegetables. Many orchards and vineyards were established and an intensive land sales campaign was inaugurated. Sales offices in Sacramento, Chicago and Southern California brought prospective settlers, some from the Mid-West by trainloads.

But all of these ventures met with severe reverses. The recession of 1920 following the high prices of World War I hit agriculture more severely than other industries, and also extended over a longer period. Land sales were difficult and expensive and the reclaimed land, with its bonded indebtedness and necessary high price, was not an attractive venture. At this time most people with money to invest were buying stocks and bonds.

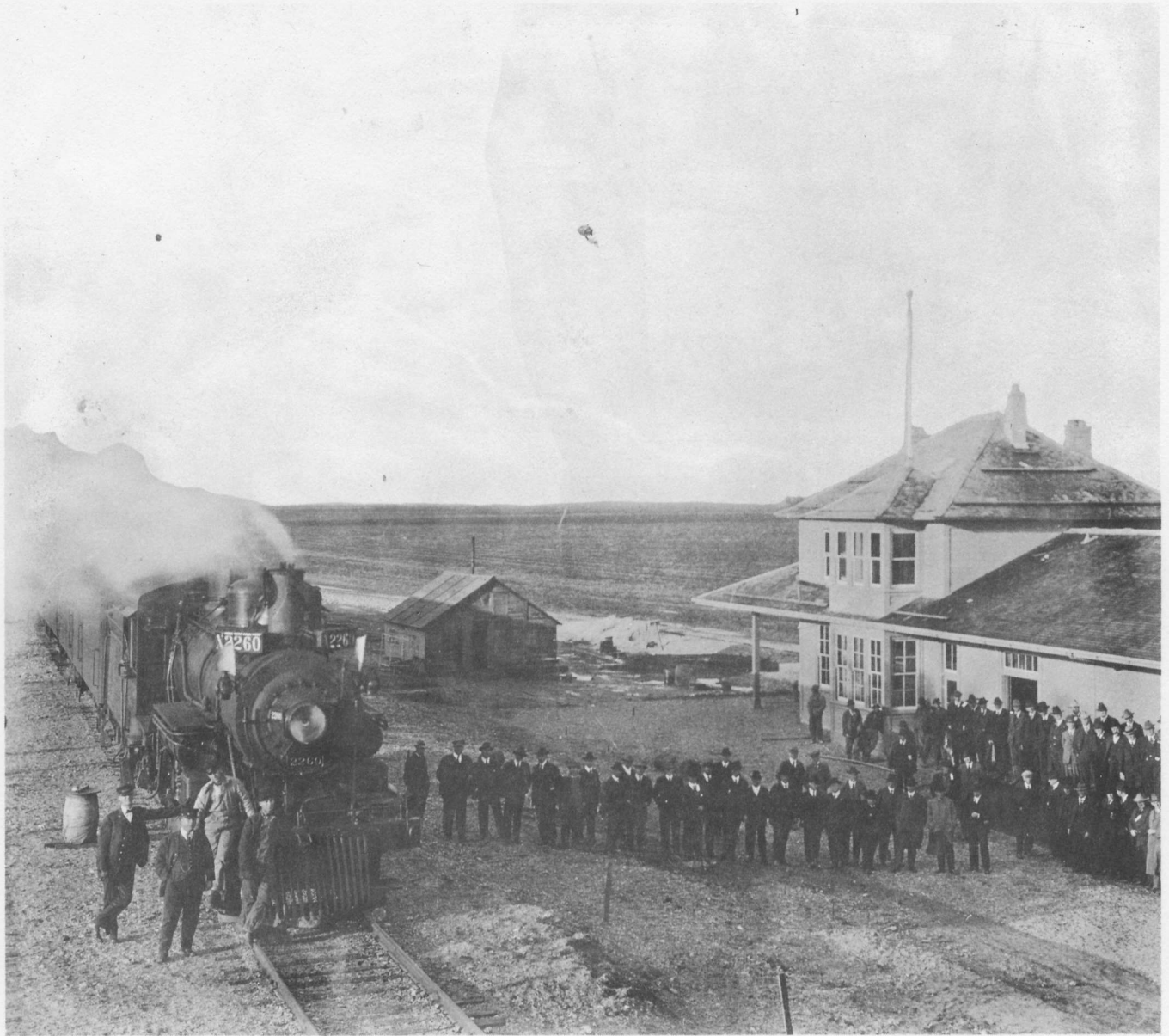
During this period J. Ogden Armour became very involved in nearly all of his many investments and industries. The Armour Grain Company, the world's largest, was bankrupt and Armour had lost millions in trying to stem the tide of losses on the Stock Exchange and the Board of Trade. The losses were too great and Armour & Company went into receivership in 1926. The Sutter Basin Company was involved, but although there were heavy losses in this company, it was not the deciding factor in the Armour debacle.

Through a very generous and unprecedented maneuver by Mrs. J. Ogden Armour, after the death of her husband in 1926, the Sutter Basin Company was excluded from the liquidating assets of the many Armour interests, and the property turned over to the bondholders of the company. Mrs. Armour was a wealthy person in her own right and was not involved in all of the Armour & Company losses. Her husband had given his personal guarantee to the investors in the bonds and Mrs. Armour wished to substantiate her husband's guarantee.

The Bondholders Committee, with over 45,000 acres of California land, decided on a plan of orderly liquidation. They engaged Edward Schranz, Jr., a man not yet middle-aged, to come to California to manage the liquidation. Schranz was the head of the bond department of the Continental and Commercial Bank and Trust Company of Chicago, which bank had handled the sale of the bonds of the Sutter Basin Company and some of the Reclamation District No. 1500 bonds. So Schranz had a clear picture of the situation. Thus it was that in 1927 Edward Schranz Jr. came to California with his bride, Mildred Williams, and he became president of the Sutter Basin Company.

Many of the more or less abortive land sale schemes of the company had failed and corporation farming had not been very successful, so the future of the company presented a problem. The financial crash of 1929, followed by the depression years were severe blows. Under Schranz the land was repriced on a realistic basis and plans were initiated to lease the land that was unsold to those who were buying land and owed money for its purchase.

With the buyer becoming a preferred tenant, and with the price greatly reduced, and with recognition by the Federal Land Bank of the Sutter Basin as an area where credit could be extended, things began to improve. The farmers planted field crops and as the depression had reduced prices on fruits to an all-time low, most of the orchards and vineyards were removed. Farmers who owed money on their lands were asked to pledge the net profits from the leased land toward their debt, even though it may not be due to the Sutter Basin Corporation, but rather to the Federal Land Bank. They were asked to pledge these profits toward their debt, whether it was due or not. This was an unprecedented situation



THE RAILROAD EXCURSION

Trainloads of prospective land buyers came to the Sutter Basin and were shown properties for sale. This picture shows the arrival of one of these trains at Maddock station in the center of Sutter Basin. These prospects were from the Middle West. Maddock was later changed to Robbins in honor of one of the presidents of the company.

but most of the farmers saw the advantages and proceeded to farm large acreages of rented land, often paying for their purchase in a short time.

Much of the bonded debt of the districts was being liquidated by maneuvering to buy the bonds during the worst years of the depression at very substantial discounts, and applying them against the debt at face value. Much maneuvering of debts through bondholders committees and through the financial genius of Schranz, resulted in the final retirement of the bonded debts that were a lien on the land and a very heavy burden on the landowner. The details of these maneuvers makes a very interesting and intriguing story.

The landowner who was able to pay for his purchase from the returns from his leased land, proved to be the very best prospect for an additional purchase. The corporation, urging those on the property to enlarge their holdings, gave them all of the help they could to accomplish this. This plan for buyers who owed money to become preferred tenants worked beautifully and with a gradual improvement in commodity prices prior to and during World War II, most of the farmers were able to pay for their land and become prosperous. When Schranz came to the Sutter Basin in 1927, the company held 45,000 acres of land. Eighteen years later in 1945, there were only 9,000 acres left unsold.

Thus, the Sutter Basin, free of bonded debts, and farming mostly field crops of rice, wheat, barley, safflower, tomatoes, sugar beets, beans and sorghum, appears to have a bright and robust future. The Basin farmers can look forward with confidence to a brighter tomorrow.

The development of Sutter Basin, well planned as an engineering project, is unique in that the physical features have proven to be very adequate.

There has never been a flooding of the district. The development of irrigation through pumping plants on the Sacramento river and distributed to 45,000 acres by gravity flow through well constructed facilities, is a mutual water system. It is the Sutter Mutual Water Company, and serves water to the landowners at cost. The drainage system is of necessity quite elaborate, as most of the lands are quite flat and of a compact subsoil. A main drainage canal bisects the center of the district, extending southward for over 20 miles to a main drainage pumping system. The drainage water from rainfall and from irrigation is discharged back to the Sacramento river. Hundreds of miles of lateral canals reach to every part of the district.

EARLY SUTTER BASIN SETTLERS

The early settlers in the Sutter Basin took up lands along the east bank of the Sacramento river in the mid-nineteenth century, shortly after California became a part of the United States. Much of the land was open for homesteading and "squatters" were common. In the days before hydraulic mining clogged the rivers, flooding was less frequent and not so severe. The land near the river was of a higher contour and could be formed to summer crops. Many of the farms established by these early "rim land farmers" are still held, at least, in part by the descendants. We will list a few of them here and give a brief identity.

Benjamin Samuel Jackson Hiatt came from Kentucky, via Missouri, crossing the plains in 1857. He settled in the Sutter Basin at Kirksville. In 1880 he built a substantial home here which at the time was one of the most pretentious homes of western Sutter County. His son, Perry J. Hiatt, farmed with him and they had interests in two river steamers. The Hiatt

Ranch eventually covered over 2000 acres. When Perry Hiatt entered the automobile dealership in Woodland, his son, Glenwood, took over the management of the farm. The Hiatt estate has been sold in part, having been purchased by Oji Brothers of Yuba City. Part of the ranch is retained by Glenwood Hiatt and is farmed by Glenwood, Jr.

The Kramer Family arrived in California from Germany in 1857. George Kramer settled a few miles from Knights Landing in Sutter County.

His son, Austin Kramer, married Virginia Sophia Bostwick and they acquired land about eight miles north of Knights Landing. Here they raised a large family. This farmstead is still owned and operated by the descendants, some being the fourth generation of Kramers in Sutter Basin.

Frank Lamb, Sr. came to California in 1861. He was born in England in 1838. He farmed in Sutter Basin and acquired his own farm at Cranmore. In 1885 he married Rosamund Epperson of East Butte, who taught school at Cranmore in the Salem School. The Lambs had three sons and five daughters. The original Lamb farm, together with several thousand acres which have been acquired, is farmed by Lamb Brothers. Gordon Lamb, one of the brothers, passed away several years ago and the partnership of Frank and Clifton Lamb is managed by Paul and Marilyn Davis, the son in law and daughter of Clifton Lamb.

The Ky Poffenberger Family were early settlers in the Sutter Basin and owned substantial acreage. Ky Poffenberger was one of the Big Five who owned the Big Ranch between Kirksville and Tisdale. The Big Ranch was purchased by Allen T. Spencer in 1910. The Poffenbergers built a fine Victorian home on the river near Coles Landing. The Poffenberger land was sold many years ago, but there are some descendants in Yuba City.



WINE GRAPE VINEYARD

The boom in wine grapes prompted Sutter Basin farmers to plant vineyards in the early 1920's. Making wine in limited quantities was legal during prohibition. Martin Siller, an immigrant from Budapest planted 40 acres and later traded it for 80 acres of land near O'Banion Corners owned by the Carpenter family. Bob Carpenter, shown in the picture, was the owner of this vineyard. He was a land salesman for the Sutter Basin Company and a brother-in-law of the late John Saunders of Tudor. This vineyard was two miles west of Robbins. Vineyards and orchards were nearly all abandoned in favor of row crops, rice and grain during the depression.

The Big Ranch, formerly owned by A. T. Spencer, is now the Broomieside Farm and is owned and operated by David and Beverly Lewis. The Cummins Ranch was settled by Tom Cummins, a pioneer farmer of western Sutter County. He was a cattle and sheep man and raised a large family in the Sutter Basin and in Woodland. Bruce Tolson, his great nephew, farmed the Basin land for many years.

Allen T. Spencer, owner of the Big Ranch, raised his family of five boys and two girls in the Sutter Basin. Al Spencer became a prominent sheep grower and breeder, and developed the Romelsdale breed of sheep. Jane Spencer, the wife of John Spencer one of the sons, is the granddaughter of William E. Gerber, the Sacramento banker who became the first president of the Sutter Basin Company. Al Spencer served on the State Reclamation Board for many years and was its chairman.

James and Ann Kirkup owned the land adjoining the Big Ranch on the north. The farm was devoted mostly to sheep raising. Ann Kirkup was the sister of Mrs. A. T. Spencer. They had a family of three girls.

Mary Kate Dean's father, Dr. Elisha Dean, settled on a homestead of 120 acres near State Ranch Bend in 1863. Significantly, the patent for this land was signed by President Abraham Lincoln. Buell Dean, the grandson of the settler, still lives on the property.

James Bartlett Bailey came to the Sutter Basin from Kentucky, crossing the plains in the late 1850's. He settled about two miles north of Knights Landing. His son, Bob Bailey, was born here and married Fannie Green of Sutter Basin. Their son, Clarence Bailey, became Chief of Police of Woodland.

Early settlers of Sutter Basin lands were George and Caroline Knox and Fred and Carrie Leiser. These men formed a partnership and they



POTATOES IN SUTTER BASIN

In 1920 the Sutter Basin Company planted 400 acres of potatoes and 300 acres of onions on their farming tract called Camp #6. This was located just south of the Tisdale By-Pass and two miles east of Tisdale Wier. The produce was shipped to the heavily populated areas on the east coast of the United States. Duffy was Superintendent of this tract.

married sisters of the other. They came to Sutter Basin in 1910. Descendants of these families still retain the original farm and have acquired additional acreage. Phil Leiser lives in Woodland and Mrs. Gordon Leiser and her son-in-law farm the land of her late husband. Gladys Knox Johnson holds the original Knox property.

Some of the other old-time rim land farmers were the Fred Van Lews, James R. Young, Russell "Cy" Young, Page Miller, Jesse Fretas, Bud Reel, the Pierces and the Pearts.

THE SETTLERS OF THE TULE

After the Sutter Basin was reclaimed, extensive efforts were made to settle the newly reclaimed "tule" to permanent farms. Land sales campaigns brought many prospects to the area. Times were difficult and the land was high priced, and under bonded debt. There were many failures. We will list some of the early settlers who survived the many depressions.

One of the early families was the G. Giusties, who were natives of Italy. They came to Sutter Basin in 1917.

Manusito Fava came in 1914 and farmed rented land for many years. The Favas were also natives of Italy. They later acquired their own farm. John Monnich and Martin Siller came in 1923 and planted vineyards. The Martin Sillers are the parents of the Siller Brothers. The mother and all twelve children are living, most of them in Sutter County.

Others who were early settlers are Leo Gunther, J. F. and Harold Benner, W. H. Swain, Jacob Richter, Kasper Hoffart, Miguel Alonso, James Shelley, H. D. Richter, Charles Richter, Wallace Richter, James Messick, Stanley Reische, Donald Tennis, Bert Kuipers, Michael Honig, Leo Matteoli, Orecchia Brothers, Antonious Paulsen, Anders Lund, Leathers Brothers,

Walter Raymond, Frank Eastman, Lawrence Wright, James Akin, Ham and Johnson, Felix Rossi, Cannan and Garner, William Crawford, George Van Ruiten, Roy Schreiner, C. Allec, W. C. Hildreth, and George Roantree.

Investors in large tracts are John Clauss, Eaton Magoon, Magoon Brothers, Siller Brothers, Earl Wallace and Son, The Pacific Lumber Company, and Oji Brothers.

Employees of the Sutter Basin Company who realized that their job would eventually be phased out by the liquidation of the lands, contracted to purchase farms for themselves. They are N. F. Dougherty, W. J. Duffy, Jr., B. W. Meister, George J. Henle, Jr., Ben England, E. M. Seamans and Wallace McWilliam. Most of these properties are still being farmed by the purchaser or the family.

EARLY EMPLOYEES OF SUTTER BASIN

William Gerber, first president of Sutter Basin Company

George Peltier, first chairman of the Board of Trustees of Reclamation District No. 1500

George F. Maddock, first general manager of Sutter Basin Company

Arnold Waybur, first general farm superintendent

Robert Jones, first head of engineering department

Rex A. Lundberg, first superintendent of Sutter Mutual Water Company

Jay Crowley, engineer of Reclamation District No. 1500

George Henle, Jr., office manager

William J. Duffy, Jr., leasing agent aril public relations and land sales

N. F. Dougherty, farm superintendent

B. W. Meister, master mechanic

James Bohanan, superintendent of Sutter Mutual Water Company

K. C. Laugenour, engineer

D. Bouton, manager of Reclamation District No. 1500 and Sutter Mutual Water Company

Those who succeeded William Gerber as president are George Peltier, Edwin T. Keiser, George B. Robbins, and Edward Schranz, Jr.

The Sutter Basin's center of life is Robbins, established as a town by the Sutter Basin Company in the mid-1920's. The Robbins school provides the elementary education for the children. There is a community hall, a fire department, store, restaurant, and airplane, implement and shop facilities. There are many residents living in fine homes.

The people of Sutter Basin are of the true pioneers that tackle any new venture, or the descendants of these pioneers, and their role has now always been without setbacks and disappointments. But today's outlook is better. Their district is well managed, is productive and is farmed intelligently. They are proud of their accomplishments and the abundant returns of produce from their land.

GLEANINGS

Collected by Winifred Greene

The Sutter Independent

January 8, 1920

FOR SALE

"4 1/2 miles southeast of Marysville. 250 acres in oats and wheat, and 60 acres summer fallow. Good set of farm buildings. Creek through the ranch. \$70.00 per acre. East terms. Lytle-Boyd Land Co."

FOR SALE

"10 acres in 2 and 3 year old Thompson seedless grapes. 1 10 inch well. For quick sale, \$2500.00."

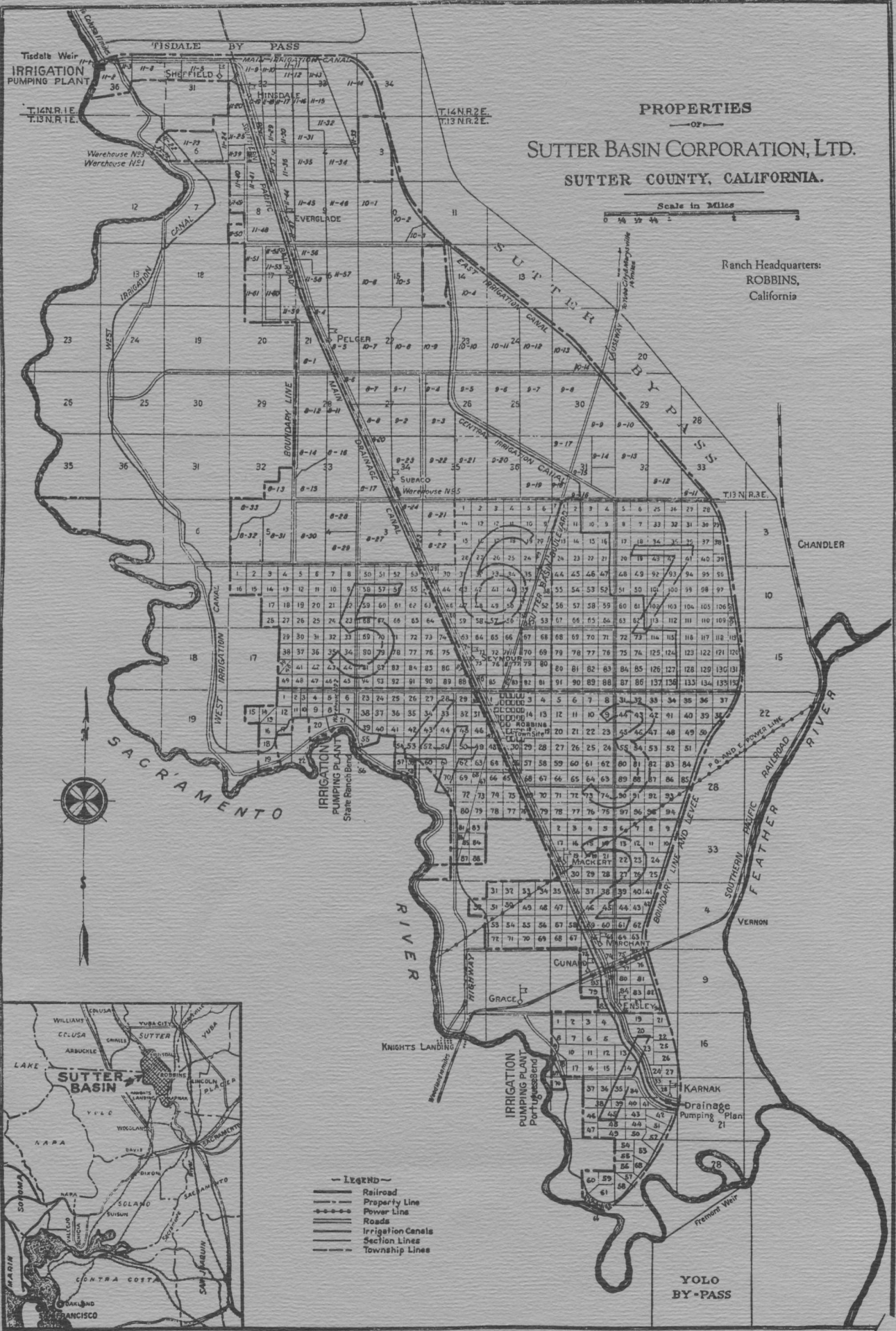
To Discuss Irrigation District

"At the next meeting of the Sutter Farm Center, the discussion of an irrigation district south of the Buttes to be served by the Sutter Butte Canal Company will be taken up. The Sutter Butte Canal Company manager will be asked to be present and deliver an address."

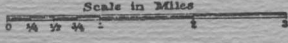
The Sutter Independent

January 22, 1920

"The Chamber of Commerce of Sacramento would have the road to be built through the Sutter Basin lead to Sacramento, and the bridge proposed to be built over the By-pass, built in the lower end of the district. It is estimated the entire highway will cost \$540,000 and that the bridge over the Feather River, to be of steel and have a draw span, will cost \$200,000. The estimate for the causeway over the By-pass is \$137,000."



PROPERTIES
 OF
SUTTER BASIN CORPORATION, LTD.
 SUTTER COUNTY, CALIFORNIA.



Ranch Headquarters:
 ROBBINS,
 California



- Legend —
- Railroad
 - Property Line
 - Power Line
 - Roads
 - Irrigation Canals
 - Section Lines
 - Township Lines

YOLO
 BY-PASS