

\$1.00

SUTTER COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

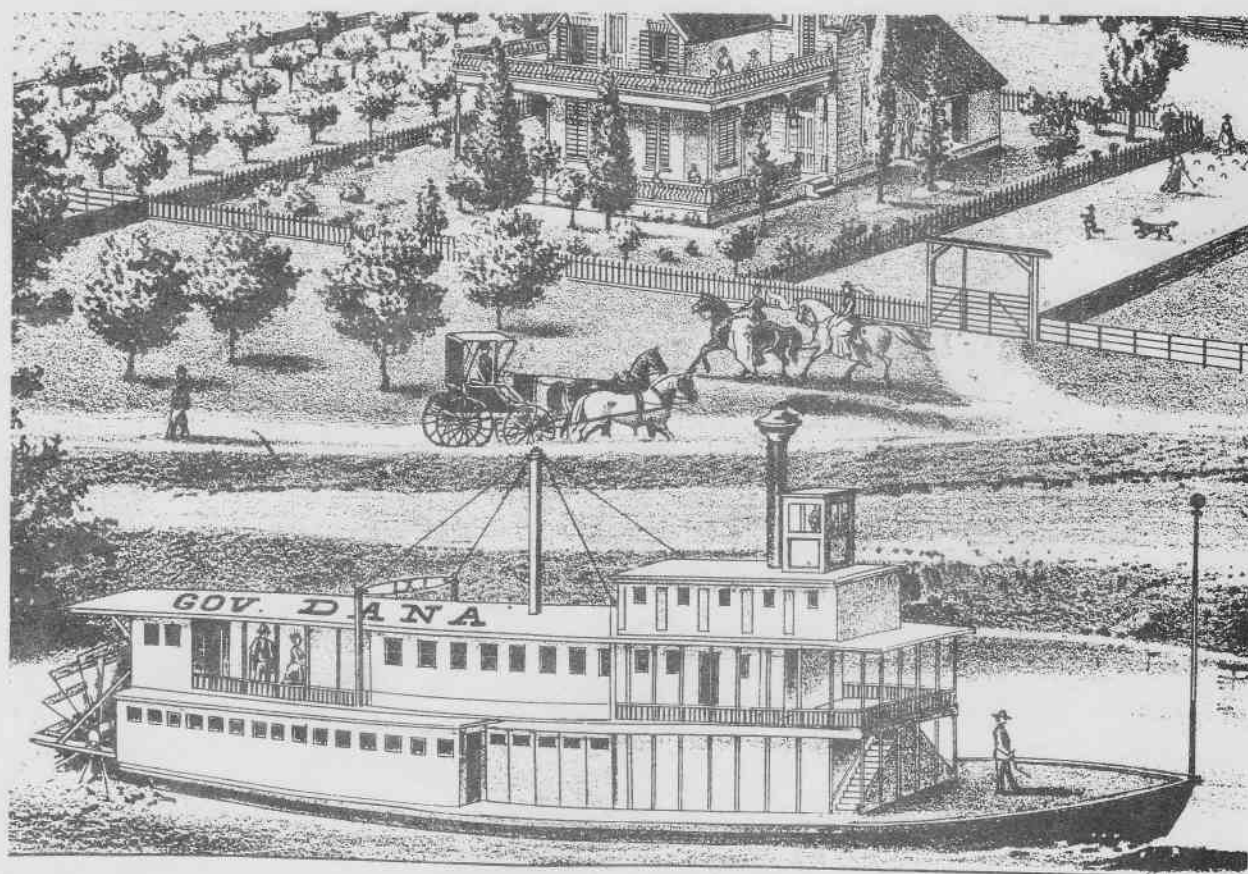
Save

NEWS BULLETIN

VOL. XVIII NO. 2

YUBA CITY, CALIFORNIA 95991

APRIL 1979



The Governor Dana, a well known steamer that plied on the Feather River for nearly twenty years between Marysville and Sacramento, California. She is shown passing along the ranch and residence of Joseph Girdner, Sutter County, California. Actually three successive steamers bore the name Governor Dana who was the governor of Maine. The first ship was dismantled in the East and shipped around the Horn to California, State Library, Sacramento.

IN THIS ISSUE: When steamers sailed the Feather by Wilbur Hoffman, Recollections: German Catholic Church in Marysville by Howard King.

SUTTER COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
NEWS BULLETIN

Vol. XVIII, No. 2

April, 1979

OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY

Randolph Schnabel, President
Donald Beilby, Vice President

Wanda Rankin, Treasurer
Barbara Rosso, Secretary

DIRECTORS

Donald Beilby
Celia Ettl
William Greene, Jr.
Dewey Greuning
John Heenan

Wilbur Hoffman
Indra Nason
Wanda Rankin
Edward Rosso
Barbara Rosso
Randolph Schnabel

NEWS BULLETIN EDITORIAL STAFF

William Dawson, Chairman
Jessica Bird
Winifred Greene
Earl Ramey
Lonnie Wheeler, Lithographer

Helen Schepman
Randolph Schnabel
Avis Strawn
Carol Withington
Alice Dawson, Secretary
Peggy S. Meyer, Typist

The NEWS BULLETIN is published quarterly by the Society at Yuba City, California 95991. The annual membership dues includes receiving the NEWS BULLETIN. JANUARY 1979 dues are payable now. Your remittance should be sent to Sutter County Historical Society, P. O. Box 1004, Yuba City, California 95991. To insure delivery of your NEWS BULLETIN please notify the Treasurer of any change of address. Dues are \$7.50 per person, \$10.00 per family, \$5.00 if over 70 years.

The NEWS BULLETIN is not copyrighted. Use of the material is invited, unless copyrighted by others. Mention of the source will be appreciated.

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

* * * * *

* ANNUAL DINNER -- APRIL 17, 1979 *

* Sutter County Historical Society dinner will be held *

* at Sutter at 7:00 p.m. April 17, Sutter Youth Organiza- *

* tion Recreational Building, corner of Butte House Road *

* and Acacia. *

* Speaker -- Mr. John Worsley, "The State Capitol Res- *

* toration Project." Phone reservations to 674-0461 or *

* 673-7566. *

* * * * *

FROM THE PRESIDENT

With the beginning of a new year, our Society needs suggestions and ideas from the membership as to the future goals of the organization.

What direction do we want Sutter County Historical Society to go in the coming months?

Members are asked to contact (either personally or by mail) the Board of Directors to present ideas for our continued advancement. Written suggestions should be mailed to the Sutter County Historical Society, P. O. Box 1004, Yuba City, CA 95991.

With the April issue of the NEWS BULLETIN, the editor of this quarterly is resigning. It will be very difficult to find a replacement for William R. Dawson, who since 1969 has served so generously and efficiently as head of the editorial committee. Largely through Mr. Dawson's diligent efforts, the BULLETIN not only has increased in size and scope, but has become nationally known among historical publications.

RANDOLPH A. SCHNABEL, President

EDITORIAL COMMENT

The Sutter County Historical Society election of 1979-80 directors took place at the Sutter County Community Memorial museum January 16, when the following were chosen:

Mrs. Indra Nason, Sutter; Donald Beilby, Rio Oso; Mrs. Wanda Rankin, Yuba City; Mrs. Walter Ettl, Meridian; John Heenan, Live Oak; Randolph A. Schnabel, Yuba City; Dewey Greuning, Yuba City; Wilbur Hoffman, Yuba City; Mr. and Mrs. Edward Rosso, Yuba City; William A. Greene, Jr., Live Oak.

At the same session Mrs. Nason, retiring president, introduced as speaker Mrs. Patricia Grieb, Auburn, a regional director of the Conference of California Historical Societies.

Initial session of the new Sutter County Historical Society directors resulted in selection of the following officers: Randolph A. Schnabel, president; Mrs. Rankin, treasurer and Mrs. Rosso, secretary. Appointment of a vice president was held in abeyance.

Mrs. Grieb was very well received and generated enthusiasm for the future. The Society has had several well-attended, interesting meetings including this one. Mrs. Nason and her officers, Mr. Beilby, Mrs. Cary and Mrs. Rankin are to be congratulated.

FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF
THE EDITORIAL STAFF

This is the last number of the BULLETIN to be produced by the present Editorial Staff under my chairmanship. I must admit that I am a little sad to terminate my part in producing the BULLETIN. I am proud of the quality we have maintained. It has given me great satisfaction.

But no one person could have produced the BULLETIN. It has been the product of the teamwork of the Staff. My main credit must come from the good judgment in selecting the Staff.

I am tempted to cite the special tasks of individuals, but I am reluctant because I might overlook some. All members have made valuable contributions for which I am grateful. Included are the authors and many supportive individuals in the community.

Aside from the satisfaction of producing a good BULLETIN, part of the reward has been the pleasant association with the Staff. Alice and I have enjoyed the business meetings at our home. We came to consider and value these gatherings as part of our social activities. Also the meetings called to put the BULLETIN together have been pleasant occasions.

Alice and I will be available to my successor for advice and information.

WILLIAM DAWSON

NEWS BULLETIN EDITORIAL STAFF
Beginning with July 1979 Issue

Jessica Bird
William Dawson
Mrs. William Greene Jr.
Jean Gustin

Ronna Hill
Wilbur Hoffman
Earl Ramey
Carol Withington

COMMUNITY MEMORIAL MUSEUM NOTES
TIPS FOR CLOCK CARE

Jean Gustin, Curator

If you are fortunate enough to be the owner of an antique clock, the information below may help to preserve this helpful, enjoyable, and increasingly valuable item. These tips are abstracted from "Caring for Clocks" by William Drost, Technical Leaflet No. 47, published by the American Association for State and Local History.

Place your clock in a location to keep it from excessive heat, moisture, and dust. To move a clock a short distance, tilt the clock backward and carry it with the pendulum resting on the back of the case. In tall clocks, or in packing any size clock, the pendulum should be removed for transportation.

Wind your clock at some regular interval and don't allow it to stop altogether. Do not move the hands of a clock backward to reset the time. Clean the inside of the clock occasionally with a vacuum attachment, the one with long soft bristles. Your clock should be cleaned and freshly oiled about every five to ten years by a competent repairer.

The National Association of Watch and Clock Collectors, P. O. Box 33, Columbia, Pennsylvania 17512, will help you identify your clock. Requests for information should include a description, photo, and a self-addressed stamped envelope.

* * * * *

Marysville Appeal

March 19, 1861

BATHS! BATHS! BATHS!

C. H. Anderson, Proprietor

Prices reduced! Warm, cold and shower baths 25 cents per bath on week days. Corner of D and Front streets. Ladies entrance on Front street, gents on D.
(Here was a valiant effort to break the old routine of the Saturday night bath. Note the gallant provision for screening ladies at this intimate institution.)

LIST OF DONORS TO THE COMMUNITY MEMORIAL MUSEUM TRUST FUND
November 1, 1978 through February 1, 1979

Ray & Lena Frye	in memory of Leonard Harter
Phydelia Wagner	in memory of Margaret James
American Association of University Women	outright gift
Mr. & Mrs. Lewis Philpott	in memory of Jim Nealon
Lt. Col. & Mrs. Wallace G. Walton	in memory of Zora L. Giddens
Mr. & Mrs. Loyd H. Wilbur	in memory of Elvie O. Smith
Caroline S. Ringler	in memory of John E. Morrison
Mr. & Mrs. James E. Hall	in memory of Goldie Mae Jackson
Mr. & Mrs. Guy Davis	in memory of Ray Gordon, Sr.
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Davis	in memory of Ray Gordon, Sr.
Mrs. Ivadell McBride	in memory of Goldie Mae Jackson
Evelyn Nims	in memory of Goldie Mae Jackson
John & Irminna Palmer	in memory of Leonard Harter
Josephine Tompkins	in memory of Goldie Mae Jackson
Marie Krull	in memory of Claire Beymer
Jessamine G. Powell	in memory of Mildred Graves
Bill & Wanda Rankin	in memory of Tom Peters
Edgar W. Stanton III	outright gift
Jack & Helen Heenan	in memory of Mildred Graves
Georgia & Wilbur Green	in memory of Mildred Graves
Fred L. & Marie Fillmore	in memory of Leonard Harter
Mrs. Charles E. Williams	in memory of John & Dora Stillwell
Mrs. James R. McBride	in memory of Lauren Bryan
Bud & Eunice Menth	in memory of Amanda Wagner
Mrs. Grace Ruth	in memory of Mrs. Ethel Williams
Leila Winship	in memory of Bernice Cheim
Yuba Sutter Business and Professional Women's Club	outright gift
Patricia Rich	in memory of Bernice Cheim
Richard & Elaine Tarke	in memory of Leonard Harter
Mrs. Ruth Metcalf	in memory of John Palmer
Mrs. Ruth Metcalf	in memory of Jack Carr
Mr. & Mrs. Larry Harris	in memory of Anna Rohleder
Caroline S. Ringler	in memory of John Palmer
Mr. & Mrs. T. S. Miller	in memory of John Palmer
Stella & Roy Anderson	in memory of John Palmer
Ivadell Burns	in memory of John Palmer
Mr. & Mrs. W. R. Dawson	in memory of John Palmer
Dr. William G. Seims	in memory of Gene Morrison
Mr. & Mrs. Mervin Lauer	in memory of Leonard Harter
Maude K. Roberts	in memory of Charles & Evelyn Craig
	in honor of Carrie Forderhase
Mr. & Mrs. W. R. Dawson	in memory of John N. Valenoti
Mr. & Mrs. John F. Ogburn	in memory of Charles Craig
Mrs. Virgil V. Walton	in memory of John Palmer
Bee & Dick Brandt	in honor of Ruth Voorhies' 80th birthday

Bud & Eunice Menth
Pat & Helen Burk
Maude K. Roberts

Mr. & Mrs. Frank W. Welter
Mr. & Mrs. Burwell W. Ullrey
Mr. & Mrs. James E. Hall
Mr. & Mrs. W. A. Greene, Jr.
Maude K. Roberts
Rotary Club of Yuba City
Ned & Laura Putman

in memory of Alma Tipton
in memory of Dorothy Easter
in memory of Gladys A.
Steininger
in memory of Myrtle Strachan
in memory of Alma Jane Tipton
in memory of Wilfred Carlson
in memory of Wilfred W. Carlson
in memory of Clara Fowler
in memory of Alma Tipton
in memory of Alma Tipton

DONATIONS GIVEN IN MEMORY OF
HOWARD HAIN HARTER

Mr. & Mrs. Gerald Allen
Fidelia Chapter #56, O.E.S.
Ruth Young
Mr. & Mrs. Albert Gray
Bill & Carol Hamon
Marjorie Hauck
Mr. & Mrs. Starr Poole
Mr. & Mrs. Elwyn Watkins
Mr. & Mrs. Dick Brandt
Mr. & Mrs. John Sheehy
Mr. & Mrs. F. M. Witt
Mr. & Mrs. Mario Del Pero
Phydelia Wagner
Mr. & Mrs. Lawrence Harris
Marian & Wes Chipman
Continental Can Company
Vince & Joan Haak
Mrs. Belle Dahlgren
Mrs. Roy Edward Cassidy
Mr. & Mrs. A. Brooks Cassidy
and family
Dr. & Mrs. Benjamin Franklin
and family
Dr. & Mrs. Ronald A. Kalayta
Art & Nancy Bristow
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Williams
Bud & Eunice Menth
Mrs. Virgil Walton
Sylvia M. Harrington
Elizabeth A. Yank
Ray & Lena Frye
Geraldine Carlile
Freda Parker
Ed & Jean Gustin
John & Connie Cary
Joe & Jane Roberts
Lt. Col Wilbur & Jessie Tracy

Caroline S. Ringler
Mr. & Mrs. W. A. Greene, Jr.
Mrs. Edwina Robbins
Harvey & Nancy Lawrie
Alice C. Berg
Mr. & Mrs. John F. Ogburn
George & Fumi Yoshimoto
Mr. & Mrs. Roy Welch
Mrs. Elizabeth Randolph
Mr. & Mrs. George Lathrop
Richard & Ivy Ernst
Gladys Estep
Emily Matti
Annabelle Martin
Maude K. Roberts
Dr. & Mrs. Francis P. Wisner
Edith Beeler
Harriet C. Harter
Mary Mulvany
Mrs. Edna Pelton
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Davis
Mrs. C. E. Sullivan
Bill & Wanda Rankin
Mrs. Eugene Glidden, Jr.
Marysville Commandery No. 7
Mr. & Mrs. Willard Will and
family
Henry & Esther Noreen
Mrs. Verna Sexton
Mr. & Mrs. Ulysses Frye
Laverne Grell
Erna & Barney Barnickol
The Steve Wisners
Mr. & Mrs. Carl F. Phillips
Cdr. & Mrs. W. H. Haeuser, Jr.
D. Emorine Edwards
Dried Fruit Assoc. of California

Mrs. Grace Smith
Sutter Orchard Supply
Mr. & Mrs. Eugene Lonon
Mr. & Mrs. Loyd H. Wilbur
Wallace & Dorothy Coats
Rosemary Redhair
Mr. & Mrs. Lon Renfrow & family
Mr. & Mrs. Dudley Igo
Mr. & Mrs. James M. McElroy, Sr.
Jack & Helen Heenan
Mattie Sims
Bruce & Gini Harter
Bob & Ruth Anderson
Elizabeth Naglee
Euna Proper Hall
Mr. & Mrs. Aylett Sparkes
Anna Ulmer
Oji Brothers Farm, Inc.
Mr. & Mrs. C. T. Northrop
Mr. & Mrs. Chris Bergtholdt
Emma N. Flint
George H. Bihlman
Elda & Gerald Frye
Mr. & Mrs. Loyal Tipton
Mr. & Mrs. Wayne E. Phillips
Ken & LaVerne Onstott
Walter & Gladys Burke
John & Margot Hauck
Shirley & Randolph Schnabel
Olive E. Page
Robert T. Coats
John T. Kenward
Mr. & Mrs. Leroy Davis
Mr. & Mrs. T. S. Miller
Kenneth & Juanita Gordon
Florence G. Arritt
Lola L. Case
Delta Chapter of Alpha Sigma
Mrs. Frieda Deddeker & family
Mr. & Mrs. Golden F. Fine
Rotary Club of Yuba City
Mr. & Mrs. Michael J. Fierro
Mr. & Mrs. Ernest Briick
John & Diane Alexander
Louis & Barbara Putman
Kenneth & Donna Dempsey
Perry Mosburg
Paul & Marilyn Hopkins
Mr. & Mrs. Frank Gilpatric
Velma Littlejohn
Georgia & Wilbur Green
Geraldine Hall
Mr. & Mrs. Walter Balfour

Willis & Elaine Chase
Chipman-Renfrow-Alexander-
Rudd-Reimers
Mrs. Gene Morrison
Helen A. Hewitt
Mr. & Mrs. Lewis A. Philpott
Mr. & Mrs. D. W. Brookman
Kenneth & Vivian Calhoun
Christopher & Emma Colombo
Frances & James Gentry &
Blythe
Mrs. Julia Reynolds
Ruth L. Vooheis
Mr. & Mrs. Joe McCarron
G. R. Mullins & family
Fred & Helen Covell
O. Clyde & Norma P. Harter
Mr. & Mrs. Claire Stevenson
Louis & Sandra Evans
Dr. & Mrs. Richard Boyer
Mr. & Mrs. Warren J. Hall
John & Irminna Palmer
Yuba City Refrigerating Co.
Maj. & Mrs. Victor Prarat
Christina & Marion Church
Ruth & Bill Hudson
Mrs. Ralph W. Rutledge
Frank & Dorothea Bremer
Woodrow & Dorothy Jang
Cecil Jane Roche
Annabel & Fred Onstott
Carmelita S. Brewer
Elsie T. Harter
Byron & Pauline Harter
Roy & Stella Anderson
Mr. & Mrs. L. E. Matchett
Mr. & Mrs. H. H. Bradley
Grady & Bette Lamon
Mr. & Mrs. Henry E. Nelson
Frank & Carolyn Garies
Alice A. Soderberg
Dr. & Mrs. W. E. Parker
Gillett, Harris, Duranceau
Associates
Mrs. Cecilia Gilpatric
Caroline Mathews & family
Fred & Marie Fillmore
Mr. & Mrs. David Lamon
Mr. & Mrs. John Monnot
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Frye
James F. Gilpatric
Patricia Rich
M. J. & Nancy Newkom

Richard & Elaine Tarke
Mr. & Mrs. Paul B. Forgy
Mr. & Mrs. Mervin Lauer
Tom & Marnee Crowhurst
Albert Shumate, M. D.

* * * * *

SUTTERANA

In a list of arrivals at the St. Nickolas Hotel in Marysville:

A. Sutter, Hock Farm

Mrs. Sutter, Hock Farm

Marysville Appeal, August 5, 1860.

One hundred years ago (1760) a military expert declared that to kill a soldier it required his weight in lead. One hundred years later (1860) the number of bullets fired and the number of soldiers killed at Solferino indicated that for each soldier killed 252 pounds of lead bullets were fired.

Appeal, January 26, 1861.

The editors of the rival Appeal and Express accused each other of allowing typographical errors to appear in the papers. The editor of the Appeal admitted that some errors could be found but they were the result of carelessness, while the errors in the Express were the result of ignorance.

Marysville Appeal, April 5, 1861.

Beginning tonight the prices at the Marysville Theatre will be as follows: Except Sunday night, lower floor 15 cents, balcony 10 cents; children under 12 years, any part of the house 5 cents. Sunday the prices will remain as usual. There will be a feature, comedy and ~~news~~ with every change.

Marysville Democrat, February 21, 1916.

RECOLLECTIONS

The German Catholic Church
by Howard Bihlman King

From the time of the installation of Eugene O'Connell as Bishop of Marysville in May of 1861 to his retirement in 1884, he was quite concerned for the spiritual welfare of the different nationalities which made up his congregation and throughout his diocese, the Spanish, Indian, Irish, and last but not least, the Germans.

We read from the local paper, the "Daily Appeal," he would bring different priests to hold special services from time to time for each nationality.

On October 12, 1862, according to the "Daily Appeal," we find the following: "At St. Joseph's Cathedral today, immediately after the morning mass, Rev. Florian Schwininger will address the German members of that church." Again on July 26, there appears a notice concerning Mass and sermon for the German people by the same priest; but on April 17, 1864, the Bishop brought the Rev. Andrew Audelskek, of St. Boniface in San Francisco, for a whole week to attend to the spiritual needs of his German parishioners.

The first attempt to gather the Germans together in order to have their own church was in June 1864. Again I quote from the "Daily Appeal" of June 19, 1864, the following: "New Catholic Church -- The Union Record is informed that the Germans in Sutter and Butte counties are active in making preparations to erect a Catholic Church near the lines of these two counties.

It is located near Bakeman's Ranch."

Reporters of the above notice either did not understand or were misinformed as far as this location of the church was concerned, because nothing came of that plan.

According to my research, services were held during 1871 and 1872 and the church was called Saint Teresa, with the permission of the Bishop, when he appointed a Father Herde as **Pastor.**

One of these Germans who was quite interested in the project was Mr. Henry Berg, Sr., who, in his kindness, gave the land to build the church. Mr. Berg was born in Germany on April 8, 1844, and died on June 15, 1946. He was the grandfather of Mrs. Clair Fuidge of Marysville.

On March 13, 1873, the "Daily Appeal" has the following: "German Church -- Work is progressing on the German Church. The inside is ready for the plasterer. A small gallery for the choir and organ is nearly completed, which is located over the entrance to the church and opposite the pulpit. When completed, the church will present a very neat internal as well as external appearance."

Although completed in 1873, dedication of the Immaculate Conception did not take place until the spring of 1874 due to inclement weather.

On May 7, 1874, the "Daily Appeal" recorded the following: "Dedication -- Yesterday we had the pleasure of witnessing the dedication -- St. Mary's (German Catholic) Church. In the absence of the Bishop, Father Herde, founder of the church and

at present pastor of San Andreas, Calaveras County, was delegated by him to take his place. Ceremonies commenced at 10:00 o'clock. Solemn High Mass was celebrated by Father Baker, pastor of Reno, Nevada, assisted by Father Clare, deacon, Father Coleman of Red Bluff, subdeacon and Father Kennedy, of Oroville, Master of Ceremonies. Father Herde preached in the German language, a most eloquent sermon in which he dwelt in particular on two points: The benefits derived by the faithful from the Church, and the gratitude due God for his favor. The sermon was listened to throughout with marked attention by priests and laity, and was pronounced by all who understood the language as an effort worthy of so grand an occasion.

"Mass being over, benediction was given and the ceremonies closed with a Te Deum (Grosser Gott) in which all the large congregation joined with a full heart. Rev. Father Meiler, pastor, wishes us to return thanks to Mr. Rohr for painting gratuitously the entire church, as well as the sanctuary and organ, which he touched in an artistic style; also to other members of the congregation who donated blinds, etc. He feels thankful to members and others who favored him with their presence at the ceremonies. To Miss Florence Readon, and the members of St. Joseph's Church choir, he returns his sincere thanks for the fine music rendered by them. Many present remarked they never heard this choir sing so well, but others suggested it was owing to the place and occasion, as well as to the extra efforts of the singers."

The German parish ceased to be a separate parish in 1884. From time to time, however, funeral masses were held in the

church. One of the last funerals held in the German Catholic Church was on January 28, 1884, that of Herman Henry Weidemier a great-grandfather of Mrs. Dorothy King of Yuba City and Mrs. Augusta Hill of Marysville. Father Michael Walrath, pastor of Colusa, moved the church to Williams, California in 1891 by railroad. The church was renamed and was used until 1977 when it was torn down and a new church was built by Father Nicholas Phelan, pastor of Maxwell, California. What is interesting -- the church in Williams was on the corner of 8th and F Streets, just as it has been in Marysville.

Some of the families who attended the German Catholic Church while it was a parish in Marysville, and who have descendants still in the two counties, were the Henry and Herman Bergs, the Krehe, Bilhartz, Hagermans, Vagades, the Bihlman family, Heidoting and Holmes families and many more.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Howard Bihlman King of Marysville, retired from the Pacific Gas and Electric Company after 28 years with the Company. He was born in 1920 in the Curran Hospital, Oroville, California and was the son of Norman and Genevieve Bihlman King of Live Oak, California and is, therefore, a descendant of the Bihlman and Krehe families, pioneers of Sutter County. The author went to Live Oak and Hedger grammar schools, and is a graduate of Grant Union High School of Sacramento. He also went to Healds Business College in San Francisco.

My thanks to Carol Withington of Yuba City and the staff of the "Morning Herald" for helping me put the article together and Mrs. Clair Fudge of Marysville for giving a picture of her grandfather.

* * * * *

Marysville Democrat, February 22, 1916

Big Rice Planting.

An event of interest in this county is the fact that the Luckhe tract of 400 acres four miles west of Live Oak, is being converted into a rice field by experts, who declare the land is especially adapted to the new industry. Other tracts adjacent to the Luckhe place will also be planted to rice during this season, including the Richard Powell place. The merchants of this place are welcoming the change, which with the rich alfalfa and fruit section surrounding Live Oak leaves no land about here idle.

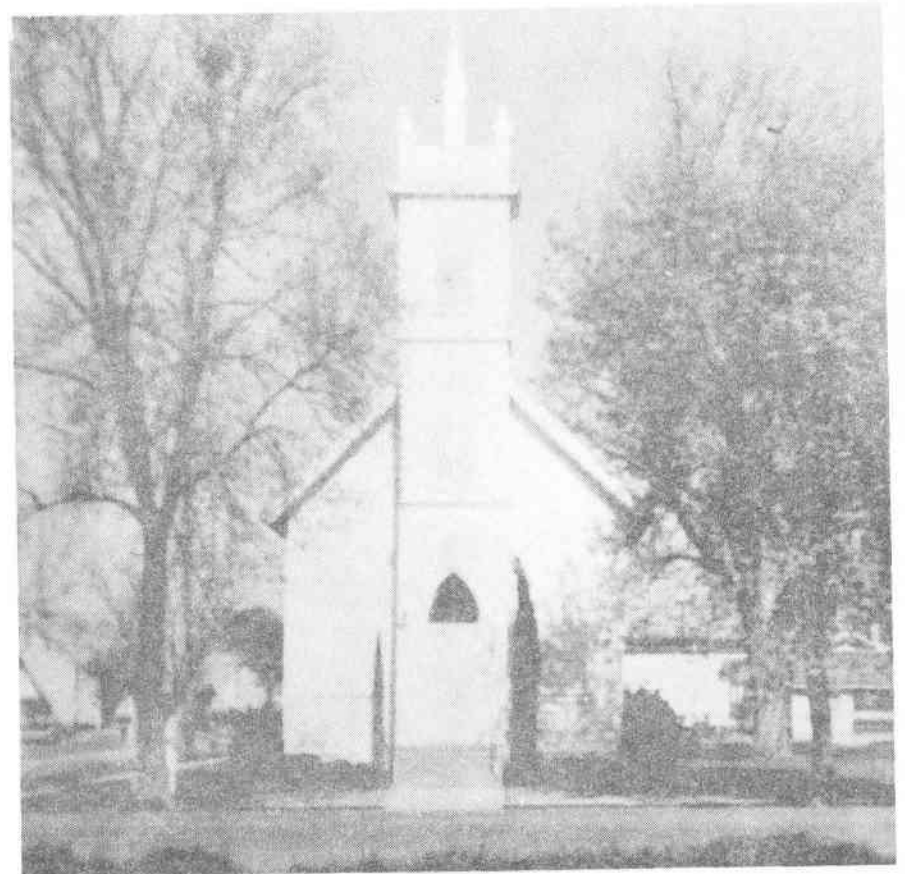
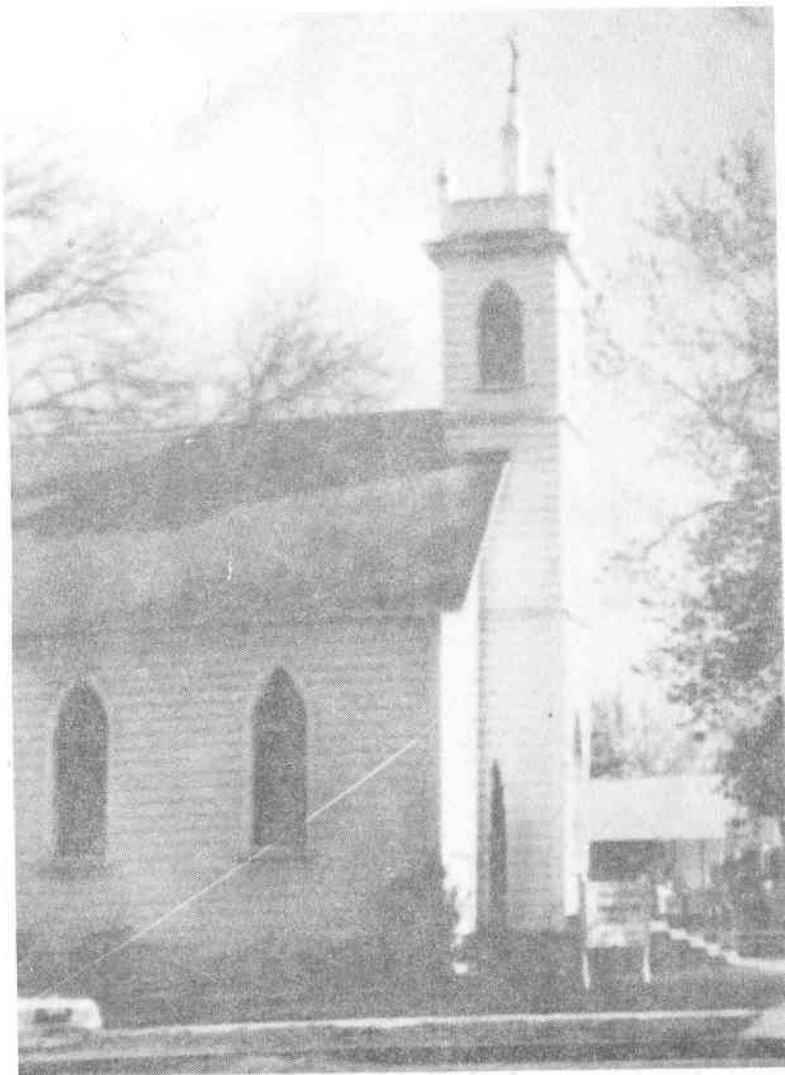
Marysville Democrat, February 22, 1916

Delivers In Ford.

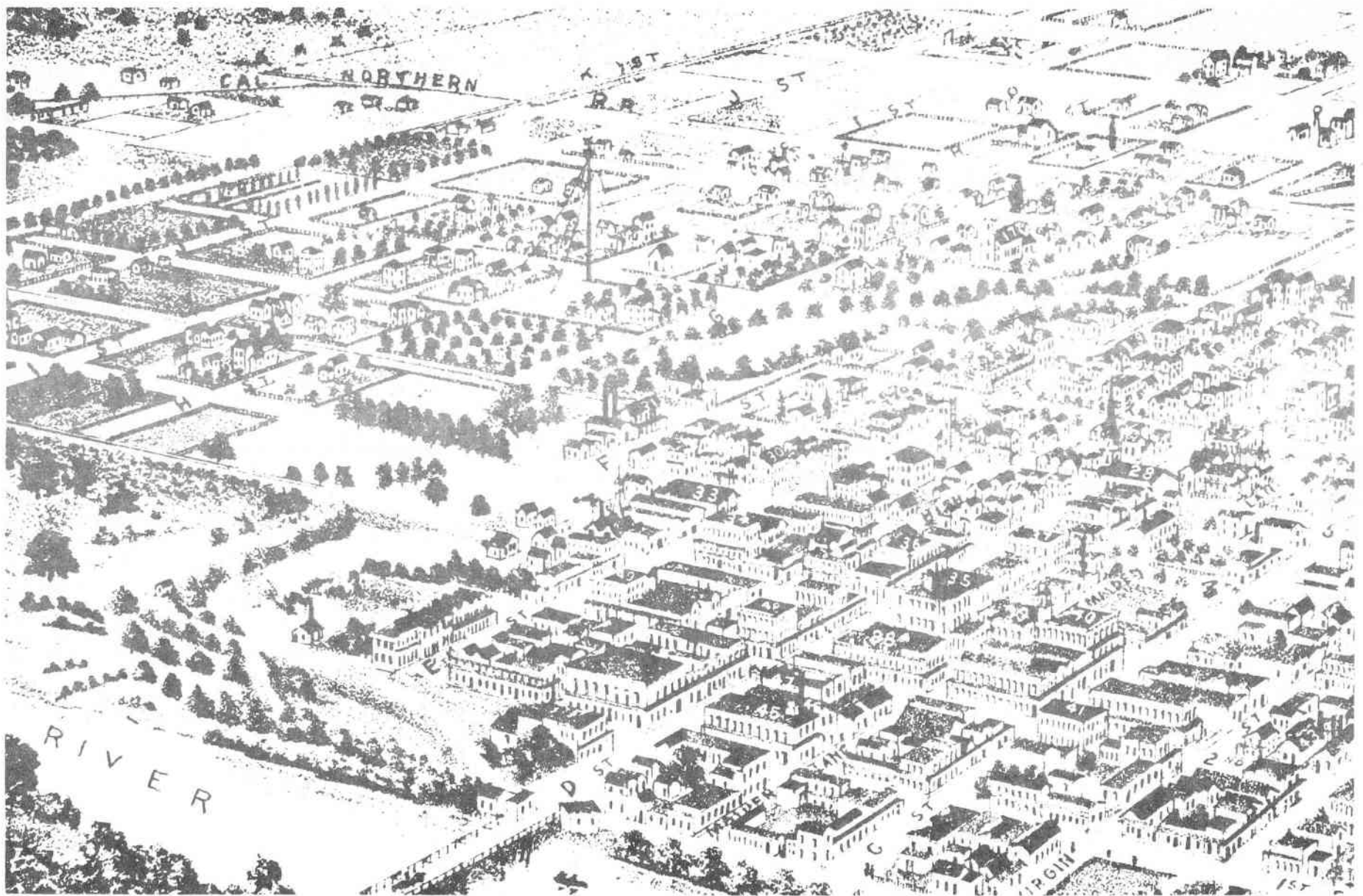
W. R. Brubaker, rural mail carrier out of Live Oak, has discarded his team, and is now delivering his mail in a Ford automobile. No doubt the mail patrons will be highly pleased with their quick delivery of the mail in the future.

Appeal, March 23, 1861

Our Lovely Home -- The S. F. Mirror refers to Marysville as "the beautiful City which nestles at the base of the towering Buttes.



German Catholic Church built in 1873 at 8th and Fst. Marysville, California. Later moved to Williams, where this picture was taken. Courtesy of Howard King



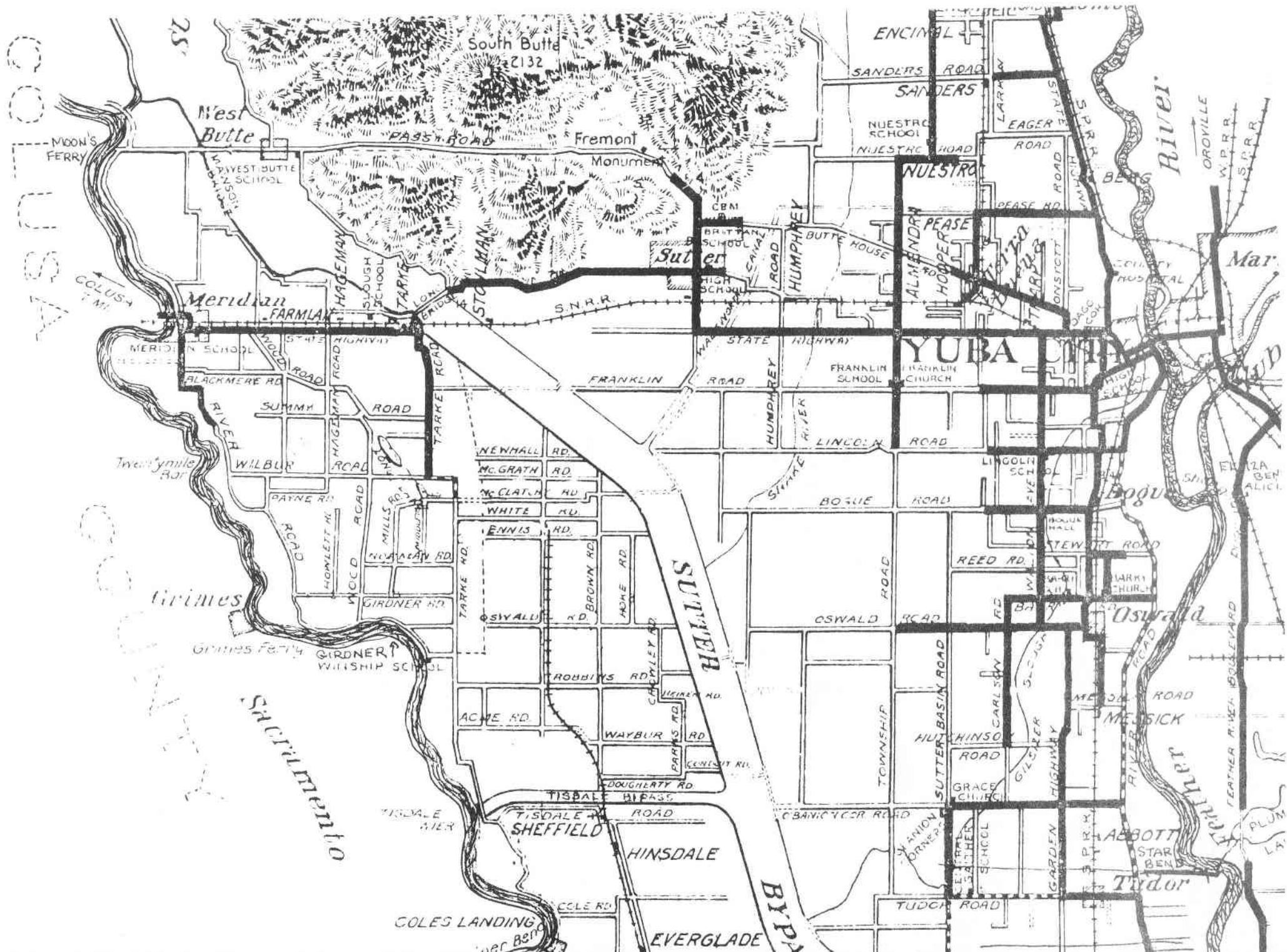
This is a photograph of an etching made from an artists pencil sketch. This artist has no way of reaching an elevation which is indicated as a point of view. He could only imagine what he might have seen. Some remaining landmarks can be identified by numbers. The German church discussed in this issue is number 17 at 8th & F. The old Presbyterian church at 5th & D is number 28. The old Methodist church at 4th & E is number 33. The mast holding the arc light can be seen at 7th & H, but which was abandoned when the electric bills became too great for the city budget. Other buildings can be identified by knowledge and memory.



HENRY BERG SR. 1844—1946 on his 100th birthday.
Courtesy of Claire Berg Fuidge, his Granddaughter

FOLLOWING MAP: Courtesy of Dean Chellis
vonGeldern Engineering Co. Yuba City

ETCHING OF MARYSVILLE (previous page)
Courtesy of Community Memorial Musuem
Photo by John Leith Lewin



WHEN STEAMERS SAILED THE FEATHER

by

Wilbur Hoffman

With the discovery of gold in the Sierra Nevada of California in 1848, thousands of gold seekers stampeded westward to dig their fortunes from the streams and gold-bearing strata in the foothills and remoteness of the Sierra Nevada. Until that time, California had been sparsely settled. A few huge Mexican land grants were scattered throughout California, controlled by Dons of whom John Sutter at Sacramento was one of the main moguls. Agriculture was limited; manufacture consisted of a few small blacksmith shops and handcrafts. San Francisco and Monterey were small, sleepy Mexican settlements that were suddenly awakened by the trauma of nearly one hundred thousand gold seekers bursting into the area in 1849. By the time California was admitted into the Union on September 9, 1850, its population was estimated at two hundred thousand. Few times in history have as many men converged on such a remote, lonely region in so short a time.

Supplying this vast multitude with food, clothing, and hardware was an unprecedented problem of logistics. Almost all supplies had to be procured from the East. And once merchandise was unloaded on San Francisco's Embarcadero, transporting goods to the gold diggings presented an almost equally baffling problem. Delivering supplies to California gold fields one hundred to two hundred miles eastward from San Francisco through unsettled, primitive, flat, hilly, and mountainous

country is a story of romance, of color, and of drama.

Several factors conspired to frustrate delivery. California's social and economic system of huge, feudal-like estates and the declining mission system were unable to cope with a gold rush economy. Then, as thousands of immigrants suddenly arrived, they rushed directly to the gold fields, leaving very few hands to handle and haul the freight. In addition, many miners hurried to these primitive, uninhabited areas in the northern Sierra Nevada with only meager supplies giving little thought as to how they would be replenished. And since no system of inland transport then existed except the backs of a few mules and the bottoms of a few small boats, starvation and extreme privation at times were a spectre in the Sierra Nevada during the winters of the early gold rush years.

Fortunately, rivers flowed into San Francisco Bay whose waters were sufficient to float boats upstream about one hundred twenty miles closer to the gold fields. The Sacramento River followed a northeasterly course from the Bay and the Sacramento's tributary, the Feather River, flowed from the north and the San Joaquin from the south into the Sacramento. Along the Feather, Marysville, Yuba City, and other settlements were established; on the Sacramento River, Sacramento; and on the San Joaquin, Stockton. Freight from San Francisco came to these towns and from them was carried into the Sierra Nevada gold fields by pack mules and later by freight wagons. Of the three rivers, the Feather was the least

navigable. Steam navigation on this stream required determination, courage, skill and innovation.

Prior to December 1849, navigation on the Feather was limited to canoes, whaleboats, and small sail boats that served the few local rancheros, trappers, and settlers in the area, who had received their land from John Sutter.

Sutter, who had settled in California in 1839 and had established a domain of some 48,000 acres, made his headquarters at New Helvetia in what is now Sacramento, but maintained his stock ranch, called Hock Farm, on the Feather River in Sutter County about eight miles south of Yuba City. In addition, he placed settlers on other parts of his holdings on a lease arrangement, partly to develop the country and partly to bolster the shaky title to his sprawling empire. One of these was Theodore Cordua, a native of Mecklenburg, Germany, who, in 1842 settled above Hock Farm on the north side of the Yuba River near the Feather River where Marysville is now located. Four years later he established a large ranch and trading post, calling it New Mecklenburg. Another settler who received land was Nicolaus Altgeier who lived on the Feather River about fifteen miles south of New Mecklenburg, a place now named Nicolaus.

These men maintained boats to bring supplies to and from their settlements. Sutter built an open yawl, the White Pinnacle, which was manned by six naked Indians who rowed and poled the boat up and down the river between Hock Farm and New Helvetia, with occasional trips to New Mecklenburg. Altgeier's

launch, which registered about fifteen tons, was propelled by oars and wind under the command of Jacob Walldorf with a crew of six Indians. Cordua built a large row boat in 1848, and manned it with twenty-five Indians to haul his own freight and that of his neighbors. He advertised in The California Star, a San Francisco newspaper on May 13, 1848, under the heading "New Mecklenburg and San Francisco Packet," that he hauled freight and passengers in both directions between New Macklenburg and San Francisco, touching at Nicolaus, Mr. Hardy's at the mouth of the Feather River, Sutterville, Montezuma, and Benicia City.

With the discovery of gold in the northern Sierra Nevada in 1848, changes were quickly wrought in the area. Cordua was unable to operate his rancho because the lure of gold made it almost impossible to employ help. He took in a partner, Charles Covillaud, but since this arrangement failed to be harmonious, Cordua sold his interest to Michael Nye and William Foster in January 1849, who in turn sold their share of the ranch later that year to Covillaud. In the meantime New Mecklenburg became known as Nye's Rancho and also Nye's trading post, because the store there began doing a brisk trade with gold miners. Shortly after Nye and Foster broke their partnership with Covillaud, the latter took in three other **partners**, Jose Ramirez, John Sampson, and Theodore Sicard. These four founded the City of Marysville in December 1849.

Increasing numbers of whaleboats, sailing schooners and sloops made their way up the Feather in 1849 with supplies

for the mines. However, not all of them reached Nye's Rancho, for some stopped at new settlements founded along the river or at Nicolaus. Prospects of profitable trading with gold miners had tempted speculators to establish these towns in the hope that their settlement would be at the head of navigation, the farthest point upstream where boats could navigate the year around.

Many were convinced that the head of navigation would be some point downstream from Nye's Rancho, because the dry winter of 1848-1849 resulted in continual lowering of the Feather River. Some even thought it would be as far downstream as the confluence of the Feather with the Sacramento. Such was Jonas Spect, a merchant and land speculator, who founded Fremont on the west bank of the Sacramento near the mouth of the Feather River. In order to expedite freighting to the mines, he operated a ferry across the river. Shortly thereafter, in April 1849, O. E. Crosby and John Sutter established Vernon on the east bank of the Sacramento across from Fremont. Several ships from Eastern ports discharged their cargoes at Vernon and immediately three or four wholesale stores were established. Miners from the Yuba and Feather River diggings came to Vernon with ox teams and pack trains for supplies. According to Jonas Spect the town grew rapidly with several hotels, boarding houses, butchers, smiths, launderers, and lawyers doing business. Sharing this sudden prosperity were eight saloons and numerous gambling and bawdy houses. Throughout the spring and early summer, sloops and

schooners sailed between San Francisco and Vernon. By July 1 the river had fallen so low, however, that these larger boats began grounding on "Russian Crossing," a shoal in the Sacramento about fifteen miles below Vernon.

Other speculators and merchants, not content to concede that Vernon or Fremont was at the head of navigation, selected their own sites upstream. Henry Robinson and Eugene Gillespie attempted to establish a town, which they named Kearny, on the Bear River at Johnson's Rancho. Later in the summer a group of Sacramento speculators and merchants, Messrs. Brannan, Reading, Chever (also spelled Cheever), Hensley, and John Sutter employed George Pierson and Tallman Rolfe as agents to lay out a town across the Feather River from Nye's Rancho and named it Yuba City. To supply the fledgling community, a full rigged brig sailed from San Francisco loaded with lumber and merchandise. While Yuba City was being established, members of the Kennebec Company rowed six small boats up the Feather as far as Nye's, but because of navigational difficulties caused by low water, they were not impressed with that place as a desirable location. They then went downstream about four miles to a point just below Shanghai Bend and established a town on the east bank of the river naming it Eliza in honor of Sutter's daughter.

While these towns were being founded, a few boats were stopping at Nicolaus and Rose's Rancho, located in 1848 on the south bank of the Yuba about two miles above its confluence with the Feather River. By 1849 Nicolaus had become a depot

for United States military stores for Camp Far West, located on the Bear River just above present day Wheatland. A government vessel from the East Coast had even sailed directly to Nicolaus in late 1849 to supply the depot.

Owners of whaleboats and sloops made quick fortunes by charging high cartage fees. For instance, Captain Coffin loaded a sloop with \$2500 worth of merchandise at San Francisco and charged \$5000 for hauling it to the south of the Yuba River near the present City of Marysville. But as population in the gold country exploded to over fifty thousand miners, demand for supplies at those gold diggings was insatiable. Whaleboats and sloops proved unable to move sufficient freight. Steamboats were needed.

In December 1849, a small scow-like steamer churned up the Sacramento to the mouth of the Feather River. Turning into that stream, she overtook two men rowing a whaleboat upstream, stopped and took them and their whaleboat aboard. The men, George Pierson and Tallman H. Rolfe, having been on the Feather before, piloted the steamer up the river. Many believe this steamer, the Linda, to have been the first on the Feather. On her initial trip she proceeded to the mouth of the Yuba River, and then up the Yuba about two miles to Rose's Rancho where she unloaded freight for a man named Ferguson of Barton's Bar. Rose now converted his rancho into a town he called Linda.

The machinery for the steamer Linda, owned by the Linda Mining Company, had been shipped around the Horn from Boston

on an oceangoing steamer also called the Linda. This machinery was unloaded in Sacramento and fitted onto a scow-like boat which was christened the Linda.

Two more steamers quickly followed the Linda up the Feather, the El Dorado and the Lawrence. The Lawrence, under the command of Captain Chadwick, arrived at Nye's Rancho, now named Marysville, in January, 1850, so heavily laden that the captain, as a safety precaution, asked her forty or fifty passengers not to walk about her deck. After attempting to negotiate the Feather upstream from Marysville, the Lawrence began semi-weekly trips between Sacramento and Marysville, the new town near the mouth of the Yuba. Shortly after the Lawrence arrived, the El Dorado also began making trips between Yuba City and San Francisco.

Marysville was now the terminus for two semi-weekly scheduled steamers, the Lawrence and the Linda. According to a handbill, the Linda made stops at Eliza and Yuba City on her run between Marysville and Sacramento.

Since California at this time lacked manufacturing facilities, many of these early steamers were built in the East. They were disassembled, loaded on windjammers or steamships and shipped seventeen thousand miles around the Horn to San Francisco. Here they were quickly reassembled. Usually only their machinery was shipped westward and the hulls were built in California. Lawrence and Linda were such vessels. An early Feather River steamer shipped around the Horn, the Governor Dana, an eighty tonner, was built in Maine and named after the

governor of that State. Shipping the S. B. Wheeler around the Horn illustrated the ingenuity of her owners. Since the steamer was 120 feet long, she was too large to be stowed on deck of a windjammer, but she was also too small to sail around the Horn. To solve the dilemma, her owners purchased a larger deckless bark and sank her. Then they ran the S. B. Wheeler over the sunken bark, refloated the bark, rigged her with masts and sails, and sailed her laden with the steamer to San Francisco. There the bark was demasted and sunk. The S. B. Wheeler floated free and was ready for service.

So great was demand for merchandise and so limited was the means of transportation that early steamer owners charged enormous freight rates and reaped enormous profits. The Lawrence, and presumably the Linda, hauled cargo from Sacramento to Marysville for eight cents per pound, a rate which amounted to \$160 per ton. Passage between Marysville and Sacramento was \$25 one way, while that between Marysville and San Francisco was \$35. Later in 1850, as more boats and steamers appeared on the Feather River, freight rates dropped to \$50 per ton. But the lower rate was still extremely profitable. Considering that steamers loaded from about 60 to 150 and even 200 tons per trip and were able to make two or three round trips a week between Marysville and Sacramento, it was possible to have a weekly gross income on freight alone of between \$6,000 and \$30,000. Since the average worth of Feather River steamers at that time was about \$25,000, this revenue yielded quite a return on the investment. Wealth was to be

found in ways other than panning for gold.

The first steamers were able to navigate the Feather with ease because heavy rains during the late fall of 1849 and winter of 1850 caused the river to rise almost to flood stage. While this condition benefited Marysville, Vernon suffered severely because steamers could now pass over the sand bar at the mouth of the river. Vernon, which had mushroomed quickly, declined almost as rapidly. Her population had dwindled to one hundred by October 1849, and she was all but eliminated from the contest to determine the head of navigation, although in the fall of 1850 when the level of the river declined, she again temporarily laid claim to this distinction.

Navigating the Feather River was a continuous struggle and hazard. During the dry season less than three feet of water flowed down her channel and less than that over her shoals. Steamer after steamer grounded or snagged on sunken logs. Many sank or were beached. Yet, it is a credit to the crews and boats that daily service was maintained to Marysville for nearly twenty years, except from August 1850 to November 1850, when only launches and small schooners reached the town. Steamer captains on the Feather could have paraphrased Admiral Farragut's famous statement into, "Damn the snags! Full steam ahead!" Eighteen Fifty was a particularly hazardous year for steamers plying the Feather. No fewer than ten, including the Governor Dana, were sunk by grounding or snagging. Since the river was shallow, most sunken steamers could be repaired, pumped out, and refloated. Other steamers,

however, straddled shoals and broke in two, a total loss. Valuable cargo was lost, but fortunately, no lives. For a few weeks during the fall of 1850 when no steamers could enter the Feather, Vernon then experienced a brief trade rebirth.

Resourceful Captain Farris of the steamer Marysville solved the problem of shallow shoal water by a unique method. On board he kept a large supply of shovels. When his steamer began scraping bottom, he shouted, "All hands (and this meant passengers also) overboard, shovel in hand!" Overboard they went into water surging to their knees and shoveled a path through the muck and mud.

To overcome this hazard to navigation, naval architects designed special shallow draught boats. So high sat they in the water that they looked like ducks. For instance, the Gazelle, was 120 feet long and drew only twenty inches when loaded with one hundred tons. The Benicia, in addition to being designed as a shallow draught vessel, was the first sidewheeler built for Feather River service. The sidewheels could be turned in opposite directions, a definite advantage on narrow rivers. Another Feather River steamer, the Pike, was 150 feet long and 26 feet of beam. Yet she drew only 12 inches of water empty and 24 fully loaded with over 100 tons. One little steamer, the Yuba, drew only 10 inches of water when laden with 10 tons. So little water did these low draught steamers draw that they were reputed to be able to "sail on dew." As a precaution against snags, some boats had

double sheathed bottoms. Another innovation to overcome shallow water was empty steamers towing laden barges. Loaded barges drew less water than equally loaded steamers and could float over shoals only two feet deep.

When low water again caused snaggings during the summer of 1851, a snagging committee, which had been organized in April by several prominent Marysville citizens, began to clear the Feather River of these fallen trees so dangerous to navigation. When merchants, who suffered most from boats snagging, were asked to contribute money for this work, Charles Covillaud donated \$1,500, perhaps the largest single donation. A contract was let and the river was cleared before the rainy season set in.

More steamers now sailed the Feather. Eight or nine ran between Marysville and Sacramento and three all the way to San Francisco. At times four or five arrived at once, crowding the levee and forcing some boats to wait before discharging freight. Marysville now became head of navigation.

More and more steamers appeared on the Feather and Sacramento Rivers until by 1854 competition became devastating. Freight rates at times dropped so low that profits vanished. Passengers frequently were carried free. Operators complained that their only profits came from the liquor dispensed in the steamers' saloons (indicating the prodigious amount quaffed by Westerners of the gold rush era). So intense was competition that colorful runners appeared on the streets of steamer towns lustily shouting to prospective travelers the superiority

NICOLAUS.

HEAD OF NAVIGATION!!

DEPOT FOR ALL THE NORTHERN MINES!

The advantages of this Town are now too manifest to be any longer denied or doubted. From actual survey on Saturday last, it was ascertained that the Bar which was last year at the mouth of Feather River had entirely disappeared, and that the only obstruction to navigation was half a mile above the mouth, where there was a narrow bar, on which was found in the most shallow passage, *three feet and two inches of water*. Between the Bar and Nicolaus *there was not found in any place less than five feet of water in the channel*; and as the river is now within six inches of its lowest stage last season, assurance is rendered "double sure" that boats drawing twice as much as the popular steamers Gov. Dana and Lawrence, can ply here constantly without the slightest obstruction.

The close proximity of Nicolaus to the rich *placers* on the Feather and Yuba Rivers, Deer, Dry and Bear Creeks, and the Forks of the American, ensures its continuance as the depot for the supplies for all the Northern Mines.

Four lines of Stages are constantly running hence to and from Marysville, passing through the projected Towns of ORO, EL DORADO, PLUMAS and ELIZA.

Tri-weekly Stages run to and from Washington, distant 60 miles, Nevada City, 42 miles, Rough and Ready, 35 miles, Auburn 25 miles, Nye's Crossing on the Yuba, 32 miles, and to the American Fork, 35 miles; in addition to which, Coaches can always be obtained to transport passengers to any other point.

Teams are in readiness on the arrival of every steamer to convey freight on the most reasonable terms to any of the Towns above, or to any of the Mines.

Nicolaus is located on the tract of land for many years known as "Nicolaus' Rancho," which has always been regarded as the most healthy point in California. It has never, in the recollection of the Chief of the Rancheria, been invaded by the turbulent stream which gracefully winds its devious way before the Town. That the climate is salubrious is evidenced in the fact, that, though several hundreds of persons have resided here for the last six months, none of them have been attacked with any of the diseases incident to other parts of California, and that there has been but one death in the neighborhood for several years.

To the Merchant, the Speculator, the Trader, the Mechanic and the Miner, we indubitably assert that Nicolaus presents greater advantages than any other place in California. We offer the unsold Lots at original prices, and invite all who are desirous of securing comfortable homes, or acquiring rapid fortunes, to visit the Town, judge for themselves, and make their investments before the most eligible of the unsold Lots are disposed of.

CHARLES BERGHOFF, Cor. Front and Sutter Sts., Nicolaus.

JOSEPH GRANT, Tehama Block, Cor. Front and J Sts.,

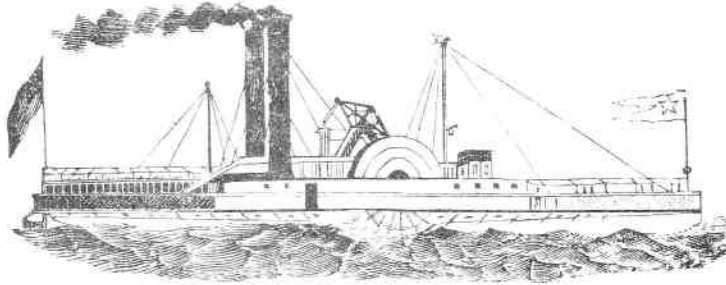
Sacramento City.

Nicolaus, August 4, 1850.

Agents for the Sale of Lots.

"Sacramento Transcript, Print."

THE STEAMBOAT



LINDA,

CAPT. WILLIAM TATE.

Will leave for

Marysville
YUBA CITY,
ELIZA

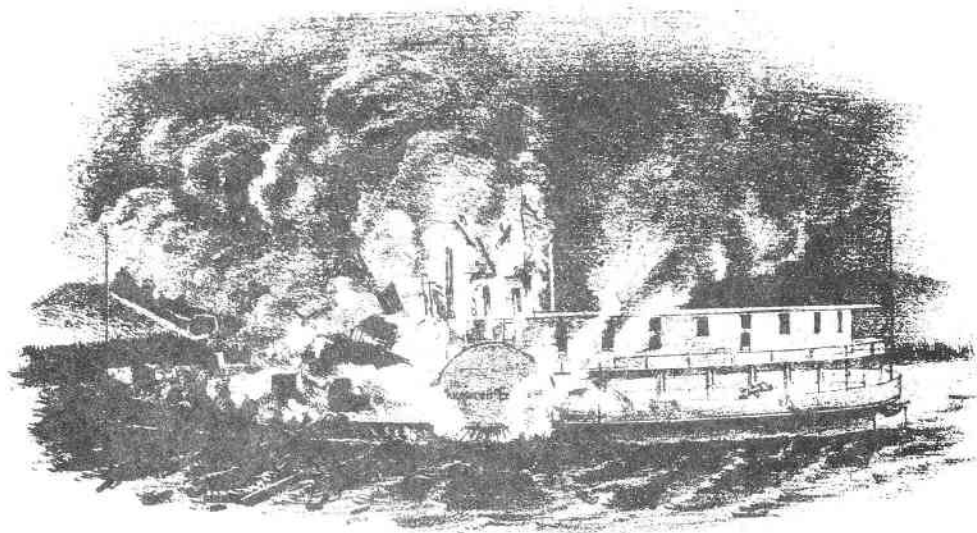
and intermediate points, from alongside the *Barque Linda*
foot of N. Street

on *Thursday* at *5 A.M.*

For freight or passage apply on board *Barque*
Linda or, to the Captain on board the steamer.

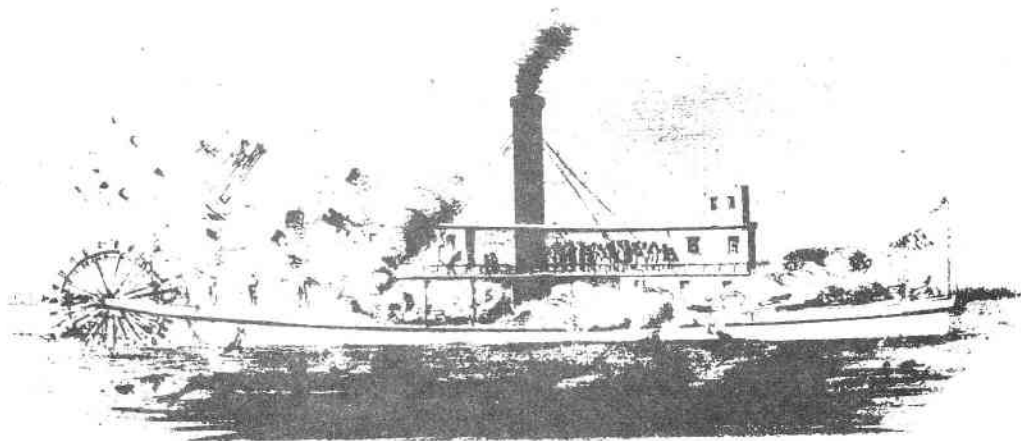
Sacramento City, *January 11, 1850.*

A broadside ad for the Feather River steamer that began sailing on the river in January 1850. The picture obviously is not of the little barge-like Linda that sailed the Feather. It could, however, be a sketch of the ocean steamer Linda that carried the machinery for the little Feather River steamer around the Horn to San Francisco. California State Library, Sacramento.



EXPLOSION OF THE AMERICAN EAGLE

On the San Joaquin River 2 1/2 Miles below Stockton Oct. 8 1853



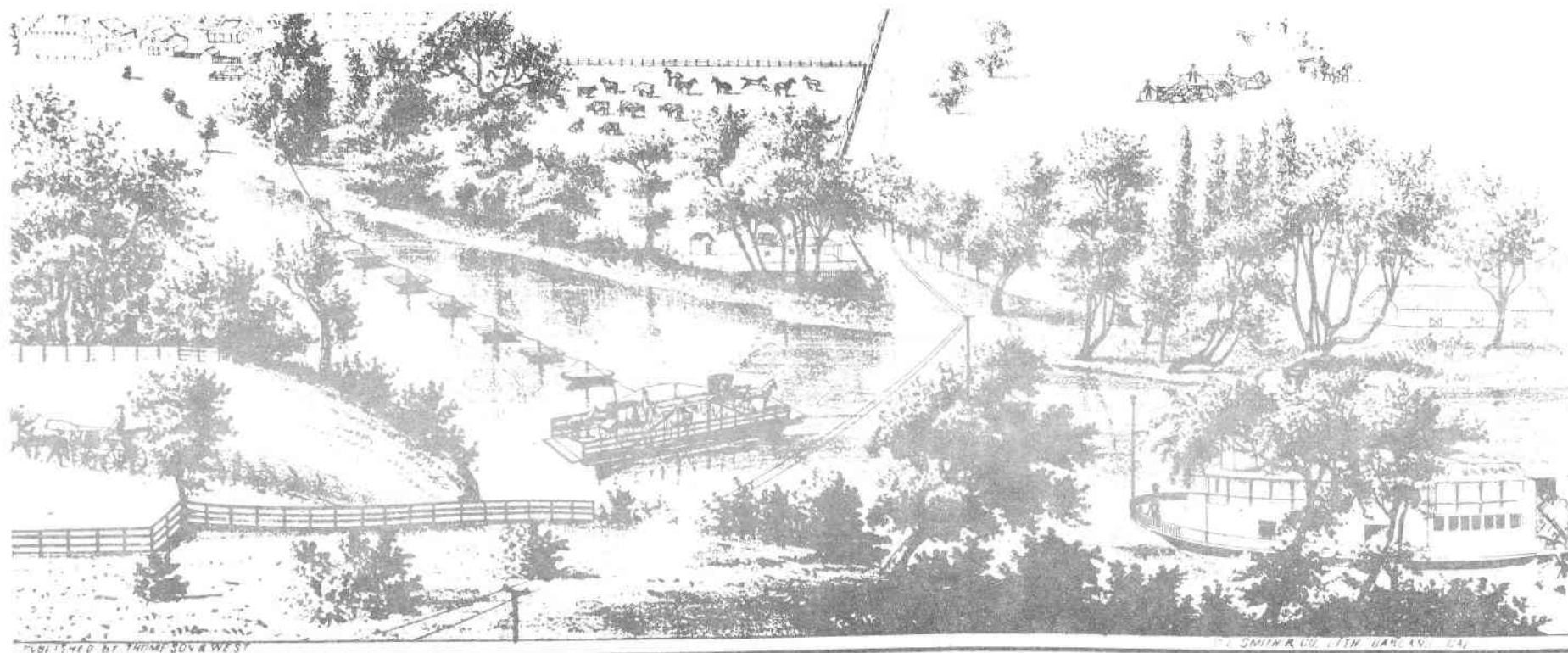
EXPLOSION OF THE STEAMER STOCKTON

On Suisun Bay Oct. 18 1853

Two California river steamers, the American Eagle and the Stockton, explode in 1853. Incompetent crewmen, weak boilers, or racing brought many steamers such violent destruction. California State Library, Sacramento.



The Weitchpec shown above was the last steamer to make the last run up the Feather River to Marysville in June 1914. She was a 150 net ton, 100' 4" craft built in 1904 and destroyed by fire in 1920.
(Courtesy of Community Memorial Museum)

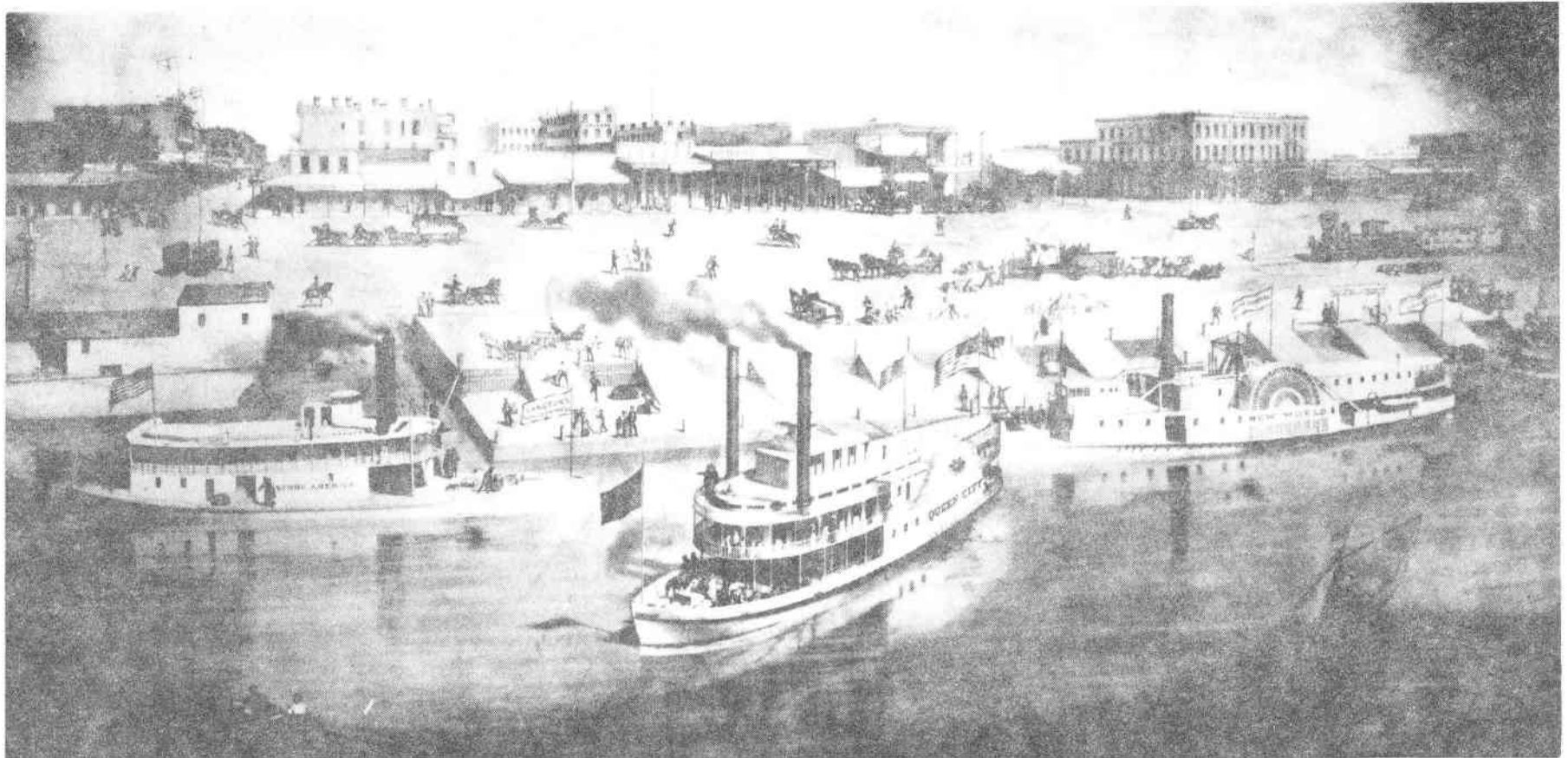


MOON'S FERRY,

AS SEEN FROM WEST SIDE OF SACRAMENTO RIVER, SUTTER CO., CAL.

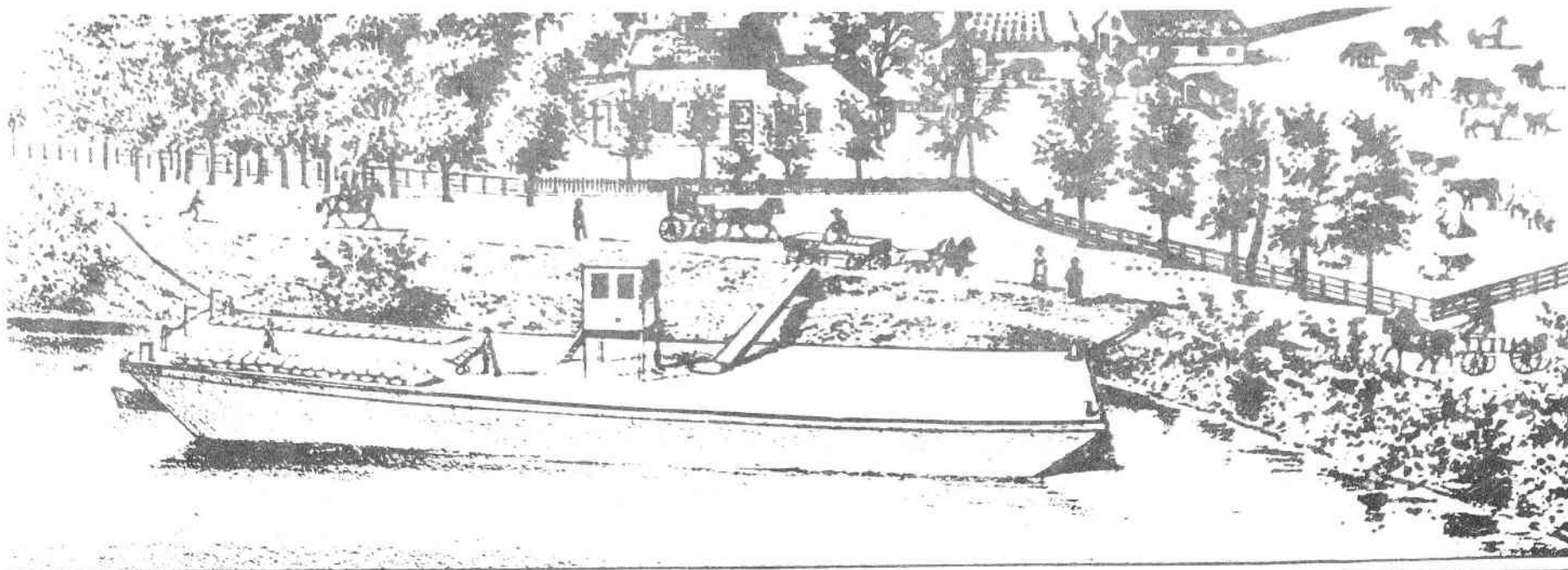
Boats such as Moon's Ferry swung on a long cable attached to a tree upstream. The cable floated on a series of pontoons. By proper angling of the ferry's rudder, the boat utilized the river current to cross the stream.

History of Sutter County by Thompson and West 1879



Sacramento's embarcadero in the mid-1850's showing the proud Queen City of Citizens Steam Navigation Company of Marysville drifting away from her berth; the Young America, a Feather River steamer, is docked off the Queen City's starboard bow.

Courtesy Wells Fargo Bank History Room, San Francisco



RANCH AND RES. OF **JACOB WEIS.** SUTTER CO. CAL.

Landings such as that of Jacob Weis were scattered along the Sacramento River where steamers and barges made unscheduled stops.

History of Sutter County by Thompson and West 1879

of their boats and sometimes dragging reluctant prospects on board. Even fistcuffs between rival runners were not uncommon.

Finally; steamboat operators decided to end this profitless chaos on the river. They met in San Francisco in March 1854, and formed the California Steam Navigation Company, a joint stock company capitalized at \$2,500,000 with 2500 shares of stock valued at \$1000 each. Cooperating boat owners turned their steamers over to the corporation in exchange for stock equivalent to the value of their boats. Most individual boat owners and small steamer companies united with the corporation, also referred to as the Combination.

Even though the Combination did not include all inland water steamers, enough joined to control shipping, creating a virtual monopoly. Freight rates were set at \$8 a ton between San Francisco and Sacramento and \$15 between San Francisco and points beyond Sacramento, such as Marysville. Passengers paid \$7 deck passage from San Francisco to Sacramento and \$3 more to further points.

Since these rates and fares were considerably higher than those charged heretofore, opposition to the Combination was immediate, virulent, and widespread. The Sacramento Union denounced it as a "Mammoth and Monster Steamboat Company." The Marysville Herald reviled it as "conceived in sin and born in iniquity." Others referred to it as a "soulless, heartless corporation." Agitation began for a transcontinental railroad

to offer the Combination competition. But, ironically, the same epithets that were hurled at the California Steam Navigation Company were later hurled at the Central Pacific Railroad.

Independent steamers did at times ply on the rivers in competition to the monopoly. And when they did, rates dropped -- sometimes drastically. But when no opposition steamers ran, rates doubled and even tripled. To combat competition, the Combination either ran their opposition out of business through rate wars or bought them off. Thus many independent captains decided that "if you can't beat them, join them."

Merchants of all shipping centers regarded the Combination as opposed to their best interests, because it eliminated competition and left freight rates at the whim of a monopoly. Marysville citizens held public meetings and stated that the \$7 per ton difference in freight rates between San Francisco and Sacramento and San Francisco and Marysville put them at a price disadvantage with Sacramento merchants in competing for the mountain trade. When they petitioned the California Steam Navigation Company for more favorable rates, the Company was said to have replied, "Mind your own business and we'll mind ours. If you keep complaining, we'll tighten the screws even more."

Marysville citizens decided not to complain but to take action. A series of meetings were then held and a committee appointed to raise funds to purchase a steamer. When the

committee reported on March 27, 1854, that \$47,000 had already been raised but that \$50,000 was needed, \$13,000 was subscribed immediately by those present. Directors were elected and empowered to raise an additional \$200,000 to purchase a second and possibly a third boat. Thus a new company came into being called the Citizens Steam Navigation Company, also known as the Opposition.

With the formation of this company, the Combination did "tighten the screws even more." It raised freight rates from San Francisco to Marysville to \$40 a ton, so high that it forced Marysville merchants to raise their prices to mountain storekeepers who found it cheaper to buy from Sacramento merchants.

The Citizens Navigation Company purchased a new 150 ton steamer aptly named the Enterprise which arrived in Marysville July 26, 1854, loaded with freight at \$12 a ton from San Francisco. Stores now had merchandise that could be sold competitively with Sacramento merchants, and local businessmen began to regain their lost trade.

The Combination reacted to this competition by drastically reducing freight rates from San Francisco to \$1 a ton. Opposition was forced to maintain the \$12 rate because it had no financial resources comparable to the Combination, nor could it lower rates on one river and make up the loss with higher rates on another as could the Combination. Not all Marysville merchants were loyal to their City's steamboat company, for several took advantage of the \$1 rate from San Francisco.

Nevertheless, the Enterprise made regular runs to San Francisco, returning with as much as \$2,000 in freight and passenger revenues in one trip. Her passenger fare was \$7 directly from San Francisco, \$3 from San Francisco to Sacramento, and \$4 from there to Marysville.

To be effective competition, however, the Citizens Steam Navigation Company needed another, larger steamer to ply between San Francisco and Sacramento, where the Enterprise could meet her. Arrangements were made to have such a boat built in San Francisco to be named the Queen City. In November 1854, she was put into service between San Francisco and Sacramento where her freight was reloaded to the Enterprise bound for Marysville; the Queen City, however, made occasional trips to Marysville during high water on the Feather.

She was described as a floating palace and a magnificent specimen of naval architecture. Designed on the lines of Mississippi steamers, her twin stacks towered forty-five feet **above** her hurricane deck just fore her pilothouse. She was 200 feet fore to aft and 31 feet of beam. Her nine-foot hold **stowed** up to 500 tons. Running water was piped to each state-room, rooms that were elegantly furnished and contained two berths. The ladies had their own lounge and in this lounge was a piano for their entertainment. Mark Twain would have been proud of her.

Early Californians relished special occasions and pulled out all stops when they celebrated one. Maiden voyages of steamers were considered special events. And the maiden trip of the Queen City proved to be a gala affair. She left San

San Francisco November 4, 1854, with 917 passengers. To add color, a squadron of the California Guards Flying Artillery in full uniform were aboard. They lashed artillery pieces on deck, barrels pointing outward through the rails, wheels resting in the scuppers. Steaming across San Francisco Bay, the Queen swept close by an anchored French naval squadron. With true Gallic gallantry, the squadron fired her guns honoring le magnifique Vaisseau. The California Guards appropriately returned a roaring salvo.

As Queen City churned up the Sacramento River, a brass band on deck played stirring marches and gay airs. Later she nudged to the dock at Benicia where shore batteries exchanged welcoming salvos with the Queen's heavy guns. Nine and one-half hours later she arrived at Sacramento where huge crowds cheered until they were hoarse. Bands played. Welcoming artillery thundered until a pall of smoke hovered over levee and docks.

When Queen City departed two days later, the Sacramento Bee reported that the largest crowd ever assembled in Sacramento bid her farewell. Brass bands blared; enthusiastic crowds roared. The steamer eased from her berth, but instead of heading south, she sailed north about a mile, then turned around. The Queen floated past the city proudly displaying her grace and beauty before her adoring crowds. Again the heavy guns roared on land and steamer.

Immediately after her initial trip, the Queen City was put on the run between San Francisco and Sacramento, leaving the former on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays at 2:00 p.m., connecting with the Enterprise at Sacramento. When it became

apparent that the Citizens line steamers would continue to run, freight and passenger rates on the Feather River were stabilized early in 1855 between the Combination and the Citizens line. Freight was set at \$12 a ton from San Francisco to Marysville and passage at \$11. These lower rates enabled all Marysville merchants to be competitive with Sacramento for the mountain trade.

In spite of the agreement and apparent success as a freight carrier, the Citizens Steam Navigation Company was experiencing financial difficulties by the middle of 1855. Sale of stock, part of which was to defray the cost of the Queen City; was lagging. Then, too, funds were needed for another steamer to give daily service to Sacramento in competition to the Combination. To bolster the Company's finances, the Marysville City Council voted in June, 1854, to authorize the city to purchase \$100,000 worth of Citizens' stock. However, in 1855 the California Steam Navigation Company procured an injunction against the City of Marysville that prevented it from purchasing the Opposition stock.

Deprived of this potential financing, the Citizens Company did what many other opposition steamboat operators in California were doing; it made a contract with the Combination on October 1, 1855, which gave the latter control over the Citizens' steamers for two years. Although the exact nature of the agreement is unknown, some arrangement was made whereby the Marysville Company received regular revenue in return for allowing the Combination to control Citizens Steam Navigation

Company boats. The Enterprise and Queen City were operated by the Combination when they were needed; at other times they were laid up with the reserve fleet.

As the expiration date of October 1, 1857, for the contract between the two companies approached, rumors were rife that the Citizens' steamers would again run opposition to the Combination. The Combination hinted that it was determined not to pay more "tribute" to owners of boats heretofore "bought off." Both companies started repairing their steamers for the late fall season. The deadline passed and in December cut-throat competition again prevailed on the Feather River with the Enterprise and Queen again running as opposition boats. Passenger fares between Sacramento and Marysville dropped to \$1.50, then to 25 cents, and the Combination steamers even hauled passengers free. Apparently both sides had been maneuvering for a bargaining position, for in January, 1858, they signed a new contract whereby Citizens' again let the Combination control its boats in return for periodic payments.

After formation of the California Steam Navigation Company and its settlement with the Opposition in 1858, the pattern of navigation on the Feather River for the next decade was set. The Combination remained the principal water carrier, although it was opposed periodically by independent boats.

Until 1864 the California Steam Navigation Company constantly maintained two steamers on the Feather River connecting with larger boats running between San Francisco and Sacramento. Each steamer ran on alternate days to the Capital city, providing

service for six days a week, Sunday excepted. Although the Company operated only one steamer after 1864, it still provided daily service, for the boat made daily round trips between Marysville and Sacramento.

Two new steamers were added to Combination's Feather River fleet in the sixties. The Swallow, with a length of 150 feet and a capacity of 175 tons, was built in 1860, followed in 1865 by the extremely light draught Flora. She had the appearance of a sitting duck, since she drew only 13 inches of water.

The extremely low draught of the Flora represented another attempt to solve problems created by the filling of the Feather River bottom with hydraulic mining debris. By 1855 hydraulic miners had begun sluicing debris into the Feather and Yuba Rivers, filling them with thick mud. Millions of cubic feet settled on the river beds because of insufficient fall to carry the debris to the sea, and because of the reduced flow due to diversion of water for mining purposes.

As more debris filtered downstream, the level of the river bed was raised, and more and higher shoals appeared. By the winter of 1861-62, the mouth of the Yuba River had become so clogged that steamers were unable to go up the Yuba to their regular landing at the foot of E Street. Instead they landed on the Yuba City side of the Feather. By July 1864, the shoal at the mouth of the Yuba had become so high that it changed the channel of the Feather delaying the arrival of steamers. To remedy this situation, the California Steam Navigation Company built wing dams at the mouth of the Yuba during the summer of 1864.

Upon completion of the dams, the Company widened and deepened the channel of the Feather and then dispatched its snag boat, the Rainbow, to remove the ever dangerous snags. By December 1864, steamers could again dock at their regular landings at the foot of E street for the first time in three years. However, another bar had formed by the end of 1866 again preventing steamers ascending the Yuba.

Snags and rising shoals took their toll of boats, for as the river bed was raised, snags lay nearer the surface. The James Blair ran afoul such a log three miles below Hock Farm, swung onto a snag and sank, but this time attempts to raise her failed. The Governor Dana rested on a shoal two miles downstream from Marysville for several days before she could be refloated in December 1862. The Swallow had a similar experience about the same time at the same location. And again in January 1863, as she was steaming away from Marysville, the Swallow swung on a bar and hit a tree that knocked down her stacks. Again in January 1863, the Governor Dana tore into a snag and was damaged to the extent that she had to be placed on the ways for repairs.

Navigational difficulties worsened as the mid-1860's approached. An exceptionally strong current in December 1864 and January 1865 was particularly troublesome. So strong was it that upstream steamers at times fastened lines to trees ashore to warp the boat for considerable distances. The current now formed new shoals and deposited more snags. Now steamers were snagged or grounded at frequent intervals, and by autumn

1866 boats made irregular trips. A year later when the water lowered, steamers again were unable to maintain schedules. Nevertheless boats had been running daily since November 1850, and continued to do so until 1871.

Of all opposition boats on the Feather during this period, perhaps the most colorful was the Defiance that steamed to Marysville in October 1860. This 110 foot sidewheeler, whose steam calliope heralded her arrivals and departures, made semi-weekly trips, meeting a line of schooners at Cache Creek because her burthen of less than 100 tons made it illegal for her to cross the Bay. The Defiance was well patronized bringing up as much as 200 tons a trip with her barge. Later she was able to increase her service to Marysville by making arrangements to meet the John T. Wright at Sacramento where through San Francisco-Marysville freight and passengers were transferred directly onto the Defiance.

On a Sunday in February 1861, the Defiance began a series of excursions to Hock Farm about eight miles downstream from Marysville. Loaded with 100 excursionists at 40 cents each, she floated down the Feather to the raucous strains of her calliope. At the Farm toasts were drunk to the American Union with Sutter's famed wine made from grapes grown on his farm. On her return, passengers danced on the upper decks to the accentuated rhythm of the calliope with Sutter's wine no doubt adding to the conviviality.

During floods river steamers also performed acts of mercy. Water at times was so high on city streets that steamers were able to navigate them. The steamer Defiance cruised up and

down D Street of Marysville on December 9, 1861, rescuing stranded inhabitants from second story windows. During the same flood, Young America sailed down the stagecoach roads performing duties normally restricted to land vehicles. Defiance steamed to other towns and villages including Oroville, carrying needed supplies to these towns that were normally miles from navigable streams.

A steam barge designed to haul wood to Oroville was built in Marysville in the spring of 1867 for the Union Lumber Company. Named the Larkin, she was capable of carrying sixty cords of wood. The Larkin never did reach the Butte County Seat, but did run as far as the Live Oaks wood farm about ten miles above Marysville. Beginning in the summer of 1867, the Larkin developed a regular procedure. It took on wood at the Live Oaks that was sold in Marysville and Yuba City for \$7 a cord. The Larkin then took 55,000 to 60,000 feet of lumber to the Union Lumber Company's branch in Colusa, returned to the wood farm and repeated the process, the whole procedure taking about three weeks.

In the spring of 1857, steamers ran for several months to Oroville about 35 miles upstream from Yuba City on the Feather River. After exploring the river between Yuba City and Oroville in November 1856, the California Steam Navigation Company decided to remove snags and attempt sending steamers up river. The little steamer Sam Soule began a tri-weekly schedule between Oroville and Marysville in March 1857.

At the latter point, she connected with larger steamers

for Sacramento because during high water Sam Soule could not pass beneath a wooden bridge that crossed the river between Yuba City and Marysville. In April 1857, after a series of groundings on sand bars, the Combination removed the Sam Soule from the river. Particularly troublesome was a sand bar 15 miles south of Oroville where water at times was only 12 inches deep.

Insufficient water flow and failure of Oroville citizens to donate \$3,000 they had pledged to clear snags from the Feather between Yuba City and Oroville undoubtedly influenced the Combination's decision to cease shipping to Oroville. During the fall of 1856 and spring of 1857, Marysville and Oroville, speaking through their newspapers, acrimoniously had harangued each other about which place was now head of navigation. The Oroville paper also had accused Marysville of sly intrigues to prevent steamers from running to Oroville. In September 1859, a contract was let to build a narrow gauge railroad between Marysville and Oroville; by 1863, trains were running and no more was heard regarding steamers to Oroville.

Competition between independents and the Combination and between independents engendered the dangerous sports of racing and ramming, activities that often resulted in injuries and death. Such events today would seem appalling, but Old Westerners were independent, free-wheeling, and aggressive, attitudes that were often reflected by steamer captains. The speed of a craft involved the honor of both crews and passengers. Bets were often made and passengers of opposing steamers

were known even to shoot at each other during the heat of a contest. Sometimes arrests were made and suits brought by victims that resulted in few convictions or settlements, and so the deadly sport continued for well over a decade.

Collisions and explosions, many the result of racing and deliberate rammings, took their toll of lives and injuries with such disconcerting frequency that a current joke described the terms "lucky" and "unlucky." One was unlucky if he missed the particular steamer he wished to take; he was lucky to be safe at home when he heard that this steamer had exploded.

An early disaster involving Feather River steamers and attributable to competitive racing occurred on August 16, 1851. When the Fawn and the Gabriel Winter left Sacramento for Marysville, a race was on. As flame and smoke spewed from her stacks, three Frenchmen on board the Fawn eyed anxiously the rising head of steam and retreated far astern as the safest spot should the boilers explode. Up the river they furiously raced; both engineers frantically threw fuel on their fire boxes building up an alarming head of steam. Suddenly the boilers of the Fawn shattered with a resounding roar ending the race. Several were killed and many badly injured or scalded. Among the survivors were the three French passengers cowering far astern. Cause of the explosion is not clear, but it is possible the Fawn's engineer tied down the safety valve, a practice not uncommon during the heat of a race, or the boiler may have been made of poor material,

also not uncommon on early steamers. Then too, passengers probably urged engineers to strain their boilers, for the Sacramento Daily Union complained that passengers all too frequently instigated racing.

On another occasion, Governor Dana and R. K. Page raced to disaster on March 22, 1853. Both steamers had left Marysville together that morning and, either by coincidence but most likely by prearrangement, raced down the Feather, stacks billowing smoke and paddle wheels churning water. Neither had the lead until they neared Nicolaus when the Dana, straining her boilers, eased ahead. A passenger on board the Page then bet her engineer a box of cigars that he could not pass the Dana. As an old Californian probably remarked afterwards, "That'ere engineer had his honor at stake and a whole box o' seegars too. Hardly pass up a bet like that." The engineer then eagerly sought a way to increase steam pressure. On deck was a keg of oil which he threw into the firebox and no doubt fastened down the safety valve. Steam pressure went up and the boiler blew up with a shattering roar. According to reports, only the bartender survived without injury. Several on board were killed or scalded. Three passengers completely vanished so violent was the blast.

The most heated races occurred between California Steam Navigation Company's steamers and opposition boats. One such race between the "monstrous monopoly's" Confidence and the Citizens Steam Navigation Company's Queen City almost resulted in fiery disaster in 1855. But it did provide real excitement.

In those days most steamers fired with wood, but some Company's steamers had started burning Philadelphia coal. Engineers on the Confidence had the advantage of this superior heat producing fuel but those on the Queen City did not; consequently Confidence gained the lead. In desperation Queen City's engineer forced her fires with pitch pine until tongues of flame roared from her 45 foot twin stacks like two enormous blow torches piercing the night sky. Showers of burning embers settled on the deck aft the pilothouse. Queen City's passengers, who were mostly Marysville citizens and faithful and true to their City's steamer, rose to the occasion by forming two groups, one to pass wood to the firemen, the other to pass buckets of water to quench fires caused by sparks from the fuel the first group helped stow into the fireboxes. But this mighty effort was in vain. The coal burner proved too fast, and in spite of the Queen's valiant but reckless effort, she dropped behind losing the race. Fortunately, after the fires had backed down the Queen's tall stacks and her boilers had cooled, passengers and steamer surprisingly were still intact.

Not so fortunate were passengers and crew in another race between steamers of Citizens Steam Navigation Company and the Combination. The Enterprise had left Marysville at 7:00 p.m., as had the Combination's Pearl, each with about 100 passengers. After both boats had cleared the mouth of the Yuba River and entered the Feather River, the race began. Paddle wheels whirled until water surged upward in spray and foam. Side by side the steamers strained for the lead until they neared

John Sutter's Hock Farm when the Pearl moved ahead. Undaunted, however, the Enterprise stayed in the race and both steamers churned down the Feather and into the Sacramento River. The Pearl approached the Capital City head of Enterprise. As Pearl was sliding into her berth near the south of the American River, her horizontal boilers suddenly vibrated violently and then thundered forward like a rocket through passengers crowding the forward deck waiting to disembark, ripping into them with splinters of wood and iron and showering them with scalding steam. Sixty-seven were killed and many injured.

A coroner's inquest that included much conflicting and acrimonious testimony was held. After Captain Summers of the Enterprise testified that the Pearl's engineer was incompetent, the engineer was arrested, but was released on \$10,000 bail. What caused the explosion is not clear. Perhaps the engineer, prior to docking, had neglected to let off steam as he shut down his engines, a necessary process to relieve boiler steam pressure that otherwise would have gone through the cylinders while running. Or he may have tied down the safety valve during the race to increase steam pressure. Either action can cause disaster; a combination of these procedures means almost certain disaster. The Marysville Herald remarked that Atlantic states courts would "deal stern justice" in a case such as this but how California courts would act was "more than we can predict." Words that indicate the more independent laissez faire theory held by Westerners as compared with the more strict control of business attitudes of Easterners.

After more than a year of peace on the Feather River, the California Steam Navigation Company became involved in a shooting incident with the Princess, an opposition steamer that began operating between Marysville and San Francisco in May 1859. The Combination's Martin White apparently deliberately rammed the Princess, which was loaded with 200 passengers and heavy freight, during the evening of May 16 on the Sacramento River. As the ramming occurred, a shot was fired from the Martin White wounding the Princess' captain. The case was taken into police court, but it was dismissed and became a civil case. Undaunted by these events, the Princess continued service to Marysville until June when she was pulled off the river, taken to Oakland, and moored. She could not sail on the shallow Feather during the summer; however, her owner promised to return with a new shallow draught boat, but he never did. It is thought the Combination bought him off.

Another boat well known on the Feather, McClelland, exploded in August 1861, near Knight's Landing on the Sacramento River with such fury that her pilothouse, including her pilot's barge driver, and another crewman, rocketed upward some distance and plummeted onto the boat deck without serious injury to any of the startled crewmen. Fifteen others were killed and eleven injured. Freight and portions of the wreck were strewn on both sides of the river. The badly damaged steamer's furnace door was flung 400 yards, and part of her boiler was hurtled 350 yards. The boat turned completely around and sank in shoal water.

The Marysville Herald indicated that McClelland's fulmination was the tenth explosion of small steamers on California's inland waters and, often as they occurred, the press had warned the public that most small steamers were instruments of destruction. Correctly alluding to their engines and boilers, the Herald contended that many were but "refuse stuff" sent out from the East on speculation.

In another race, rival steamers, Sacramento and Antelope performed like two maddened bulls battering each other in an arena. While this incident happened on the Sacramento, the boats were known on the Feather. One day in 1860 the Sacramento departed for San Francisco, and the speedier Antelope followed an hour later. Upon overtaking the Sacramento, the Antelope tried to pass her, but the Captain of Sacramento was determined that Antelope would not pass. He maneuvered his boat in the narrow channel of Steamboat Slough so as to force Antelope onto a mud bank. Her captain refloated her and pursued Sacramento. Passengers aboard the Antelope considered such behavior by the Sacramento as a personal affront to their honor. They drew pistols and prepared to settle such dishonorable behavior in an honorable manner. But Captain Fouratt of the Antelope convinced them that he had better plans. Upon reaching a wider channel, he jammed Antelope's bow into Sacramento's starboard quarter. Sacramento's captain then reversed engines hoping to slide down the Antelope's sides in order to remove one of her paddle-wheels. But instead the Sacramento wound up squarely in front of the

Antelope which bore down on her full speed and pushed her sideways down the river for several miles, an ungainly manner for a proud steamer to be underway. Captain Fouratt was arrested the next day and charged with malicious mischief, but, in keeping with the spirit of the times, nothing came of the arrest nor of the incident.

While racing, rammings, and explosions were abhorred by the press and presumably by part of the public, prevailing opinion seemed to be that since steamers were property of individuals, these individuals had a right to do with their property what they wished. Present-day concepts of responsibilities of public utilities had not as yet been accepted by these independent Westerners. The following excerpt from the Marysville Herald of October 20, 1855, epitomizes the philosophy of the times:

Captains and owners of steamers have a right to run their boats into one another, or anything else they may fancy; but to do so when the lives of hundreds of passengers are entrusted to their care, shows a recklessness and foolhardiness. . . .

Not all explosions were caused by racing. When steamers moving by themselves exploded, other causes were obvious. Sometimes engineers were drunk or incompetent, or boilers and equipment were faulty. Many on board the Belle met violent death or painful injuries on the Sacramento River half-way between Sacramento and Fremont in February 1856. As the steamer proceeded upstream, a passenger in the saloon huddled close to the stove with one leg on either side of it attempting to soak up warmth against the chill day. Suddenly the stove

shot through the overhead and over the hurricane deck, but the startled passenger sat there unharmed. Belle's boilers had exploded so violently that most of her upper works were shattered. Twenty lives were lost including her captain, and among the fifty injured was Major Bidwell, an early Chico pioneer, who was returning to that City from San Francisco. The steamers General Reddington and Governor Dana arrived shortly and rescued survivors. Passengers from the Dana erected a tent on shore, built fires, and cared for the injured and dying. Later Cleopatra, outbound from Marysville, returned the dead and wounded to Marysville. Repeated short blasts of her whistle as she approached the City heralded the disaster. A monument erected on the Sacramento in honor of the Belle's dead still stands as a grim reminder of the disaster.

The pattern of navigation on the Feather River changed significantly after 1869. The arrival of two railroads at Marysville, the passing of the California Steam Navigation Company, and relentless clogging of the river with hydraulic mining debris altered steamer service.

In May 1869, Central Pacific trains connected Marysville with Sacramento, San Francisco, and eastern United States. The California Pacific (also known as the Vallejo Road) began running trains between Yuba City, Marysville, Sacramento, and San Francisco. California Steam Navigation Company now faced competition it could not effectively deal with. Although both the Combination and railroads cut freight and passenger fares,

the railroads began carrying increasingly more freight and passengers. Railroads offered faster and more frequent service; in addition, Marysville now enjoyed a special terminal rate from the East. All of these factors worked against the steamer company. Finally, on April 5, 1870, the Combination put its steamers to Marysville on a tri-weekly schedule. Now, after nearly 20 years, Marysville was without daily steamer service.

A year later the Central Pacific Railroad purchased controlling interest in the California Steam Navigation Company and on April 1, 1871, notice was sent to the Company's Marysville agent to close his office as steamers were to be withdrawn from the Feather River. With the passing of the California Steam Navigation Company and its opposition from the Feather, a colorful era of steamboating disappeared. Gone were the devil-may care, freewheeling days of races, rammings, and "damn the snags" attitude. On the Feather at least, steamers from now on hauled only freight in a relatively safe, sane, work-horse manner. Occasionally an opposition steamer ran on the Feather, and then the Central Pacific would respond with one of its boats, but would withdraw its steamer when the opposition disappeared. An independent boat was built in Yuba City by Orr Brothers during the summer of 1874, and by fall this 70 foot, 80 ton sidewheeler, christened the Yuba City Belle, and her barge were ready for work. She steamed up and down the Feather for a number of years hauling produce and lumber. This steamer made no scheduled trips, but took freight wherever and

whenever she was called.

The coming of railroads to Marysville ended an era when the Feather River was the main artery of transportation for the region surrounding the river. For many years thereafter steamboats still played an important but secondary role in serving the area.

While daily or even tri-weekly steamer service was not warranted on the Feather River in late 1873 and 1874, sufficient business was certainly available for a boat to run at least once a week between San Francisco and Marysville to service intermediate points which had no contact with the railroad. To be beneficial, service would have to be regular and dependable. In March 1874, to meet this need, the Marysville Steamer Company was organized by three prominent Marysville businessmen, W. T. Ellis, Sr., D. E. Knight, and N. E. Rideout. They purchased a 110-foot steamwheeler of 150 ton capacity, the C. M. Small. She was of very light draught, because the river had by this time become so choked with hydraulic mining debris that such a vessel was needed. In 1875 Feather River levees had been raised eight feet above their height of eight years previous to compensate for the rise of the river bed.

The C. M. Small arrived in Marysville every Thursday from San Francisco carrying freight for \$4 a ton between these points. Later charges were reduced to \$3 compared with \$5.25 charged by the railroads. The downriver freight rate on grain was \$2.25 delivered mostly at Port Costa where it was reloaded

into ocean-going vessels. The Company steamers, which carried no passengers, handled freight from Feather River points only; they did not compete on the Sacramento River. The company owned three barges of 350 registered tons each, one of which was towed behind a steamer when freight loads warranted.

During low water, steamers were unable to dock on the Marysville side of the Feather River. They could, however, dock on the Yuba City side where the company built a wharf and shed. Steamers, however, did dock at the foot of E Street, Marysville, when the water was high.

Since the company had more business than one steamer could handle, in 1875 another boat was purchased. The D. E. Knight, a specially built 199-ton vessel with a draught even lighter than the C. M. Small, was put into service in June 1875. With two steamers the company now offered twice-a-week service during the peak summer months when large quantities of wheat, flour, hides, wool, and lumber were shipped downstream.

Increasing downriver wheat shipments demanded still another boat by 1885. Early in that year the company built the Knight No. 2 at Marysville that was especially designed to tow heavily laden barges in shallow water but that could also navigate the bays. In spite of her 153-foot length and gross weight of 248 tons, she drew only 12 inches of water. Perhaps the largest load on the shallowest water was hauled by the Knight No. 2 and her barge. She had on board 9,000 sacks of wheat, 30 bales of

hops, and 38 hogs and sailed on only 20 inches of water, losing neither wheat nor hops nor hogs!

During the years from 1874 to 1893 that the Marysville Steamer Company dominated the Feather, other craft occasionally appeared on the river. The railroad sent the Flora and Dover to Marysville in 1875, and that year the Yuba City Belle and Constance made several trips, but the Marysville Steamer Company was the only one to offer regular service which was important to the Feather River area.

Mining debris continued to create navigational hazards. By 1893, river conditions had become so bad that insurance companies refused to insure Feather River steamers or their cargoes. In addition to previous such accidents, one steamer and two barges sank that year precipitating this action by insurance companies. Lacking insurance, shippers became reluctant to ship by water. Faced with these difficulties, Marysville Steamer Company was sold to the Southern Pacific Railroad. The railroad operated boats on the river until 1896 when it ended regular service. For the next 12 years, few steamers came up the river.

In May 1908, hope for renewed navigation was revived with the arrival of the Dover. In 1909 the Weitchpec arrived at Marysville, and again in 1911 and 1912. During these years low water and poor river conditions prevented her from maintaining regular schedules. In February 1914, the Weitchpec resumed weekly trips between Marysville and San Francisco. But in June she was again forced to stop and so ended the last run

of the last steamer to navigate the Feather River.

Few alive today can recall the last Feather River steamers; none remember the freewheeling days of early navigation. But if one were to stand on the levee and listen, perhaps he might hear the mournful sound of a steamer whistle, the churning of paddle wheels, and see smoke from a steamer gently drifting away.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Hoffman, H. Wilbur. History of California's Feather River. An M.A. thesis. California State University, Sacramento, 1963. All material for this article was taken from this thesis. More detailed information and an extensive bibliography are in this work. Many primary and secondary sources may be found in the California Room of the Marysville Library and the California Room of the State Library, Sacramento. Copies of the thesis are in area and Sacramento libraries.

AUTHOR

The author, Wilbur Hoffman, is a retired teacher living in Yuba City. A more detailed biographical sketch about him appears in the October 1978 issue of the Sutter County Historical Society News Bulletin.