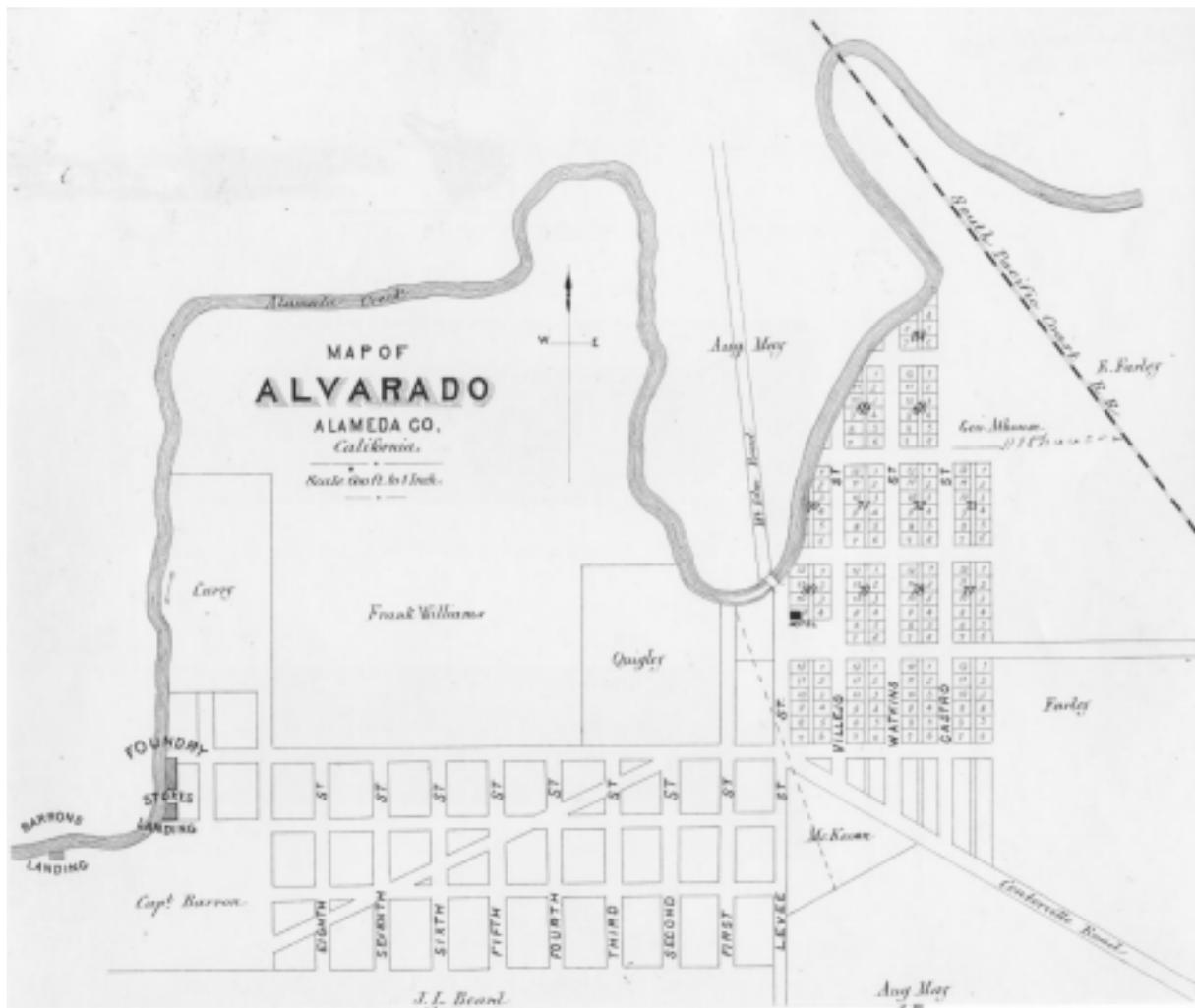


# Alvarado

(New Haven & Union City)

## 1850 - 1870



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## **Introduction**

The west side of present Union City was the town of Alvarado and it dates back to the 1850's. But, before there was a place called Alvarado, there were two small settlements, New Haven and Union City. The settlements were less than half a mile from each other, but they were started by different people and were considered individual towns for many years.

Union City was founded by John Horner and New Haven was founded by Henry C. Smith, both in 1851. When Alameda County was formed in 1853, New Haven took the name of Alvarado, which eventually became the same for the whole area. The name Union City was still only used for the businesses that were located at the landings on Alameda Creek. This explains the titles of the sections of this book.

In 1797, Mission San Jose was founded and was the first settlement in the East Bay and for many years it was the only presence of white people. When California became a state, people from the East Coast flooded into California. Those coming to the East Bay, came to Mission San Jose first.

For the very early years of Alameda County, the town of Alvarado ( including Union City and New Haven) was the center of activity in the County. There was no Oakland to speak of.

This paper covers the history of Union City, New Haven and Alvarado. This paper is derived from a number of sources, from books, newspaper articles, business directories, and the census. As much information as possible has been put into this document. Given that there are gaps in the documented history of Alvarado, there will be some gaps in this document.

## **Union City**

In 1850, John M. Horner purchased one hundred acres of land on a bend in Alameda Creek and called it "Union City", named after a small steamer ship that he had purchased called "Union." The steamer was built in New Jersey, shipped around the horn by Charles Minturn, and originally put into service making runs from San Francisco to Sacramento. John Horner purchased the steamer for \$18,000. The steamship, run by Captain Marston, then Capt. Trefry, made trips to San Francisco once a day, taking produce, and returning with passengers, mail, hardware, tools and merchandise. It was reported that as many as two hundred passengers were carried per trip. John Horner created a landing for his steamer and built warehouses. The rest of the property was used for farming and for the town of Union City. The first lots of land in Union City were sold on September 9, 1850.

In "History of Rural Alameda County", a history written under the Works Progress Administration in 1937, it states that the deed between Augustin Alviso and John Horner includes only a parcel of land of fifty yards wide along "the river upon which the present embarcadero of San Jose Mission is situated." The deed was dated July 15, 1850 and the price for the land was \$2,000. The WPA document also notes that John Horner was given the power of attorney to sell property in Union City, from P. H. Messmore, on December 10, 1850. Referencing Horners' biography, the WPA authors conclude that the "Union" was purchased in 1851, and that the name "Union City" predates the purchase of the steamship. It is possible that John Horner got his dates confused or that his biographic entries for 1851 that mention buying the steamer, might have been referring in the past tense to the purchase, meaning it was bought before 1850.

John Horner was a local farmer, one of the first in the East Bay and Washington Township. He started farming around Mission San Jose, and expanded his acreage using the profit from sales of his produce. To

sell his produce in San Francisco, John Horner established the business "J. M. Horner & Company" in San Francisco. His steamer was used to take the produce from his properties to San Francisco.

In 1851, there were three families in Union City. Dr. Buckland, in charge of Horner's warehouses, Captain Richardson and Captain Nowell. The first general store in Union City was run by Captain Bulmer and was operated out of a tent. Captain Bulmer built the first house in Union City, reportedly from packing crates. It was later owned by Joseph Ralph, Captain Marston, A. E. Crane, Ashley Cameron, John Miller, G. Platt, John Quigley, Captain C. C. Scott, and Dennis Harrington. Over the years the building was used as a residence, a saloon, gambling house, Men's furnishing store, a boardinghouse, a tavern and back to a residence. Capt. Bulmer's home originally stood on Veasy Street where the Alvarado pumping station was. It was later moved to a location just north on Veasy Street, opposite of where the foundry was located.

In this same year, John Horner and his brother surveyed the roads in the area, including one that went from Mission San Jose to Union City, through Irvington and Centerville. Cutting the road through the swamp toward Union City is reported to have cost \$1,500. The road was originally 100 feet wide, but it narrowed over the years.

The first hotel was built by A. M. Veasy. Another hotel was built by Andrew Forbes, who later sold it to Joseph Ralph. Another hotel was the Brooklyn Hotel (or Brooklyn House) open by William Liston.

Edward Clawiter settled in Union City with his wife, Mary, and opened a general store. The Clawiter's first child was the first child to be born in Union City, and was named Union. John Horner, hearing of the name, gave a plot of land to the Clawiter family.

In November, 1851, a post office, called Union, was established in Union City. The postmaster was B. F. Bucknell.

Ephraim Dyer came to California in 1850 and settled in San Francisco. Soon after arriving a cholera outbreak was going through San Francisco, which killed two of Ephraim's roommates. Ephraim knew that he should get out of the city, so he headed down to the wharfs and found the "Union" heading back to Union City. Ephraim caught the steamer, where he quickly offered his services to John Horner. Ephraim worked with John Horner for two years. In 1852, he thought that money could be made in bringing grapes to San Francisco, as there was an abundance of vegetables that were coming into the city. He traveled to Los Angeles, contacted with a number of local growers and shipped their grapes to San Francisco, making very good money.

In 1852, Joseph Ralph came to Union City and purchased a hotel from Andrew Forbes and purchased a house from Capt. Bulmer. Joseph ran the hotel for 2 years. That same year, Capt. C. C. Scott built a house in Union City, that was later occupied by the Curraghs and then John Moffit.

The road between Union City and Mission San Jose was declared a public highway and it became Road District #1. John Horner instituted a regular stage line between Union City and Mission San Jose. The stage connected with the steamer, allowing from Mission San Jose all the way to San Francisco.



*Early etching of John Horner*

In April, 1852, Charlotte Cornell, sister to James Hawley, arrived in San Francisco with her husband, bound for Mission San Jose to live close to her brother. From San Francisco, Charlotte caught a steamer to Union City and then the stage to Mission San Jose. When she arrived in Union City, she described it as "to consist of one large warehouse, with a store in one corner, a blacksmith shop, and two or three shanties."

In 1852, Asa Dyer, a trained ship builder from Maine, came to Union City, looking for his brother, Ephraim Dyer, but Ephraim had left for Los Angeles to get in the grape growing business. Asa was hired by John Horner to repair his steamboats. In a letter back home to his family, Asa had this to say about Union City:

*Union City, May 8, 1853*

*I have left the steamboat but am employed by the same man who owned her. Lately I have been building a bridge across the Alameda River which is nearly done. I shall work on the steam flour mill at this place. I have engaged to work for a year at \$100 per month with the privilege of doing better when I see a chance. I can lend all the money I have for 2.5 to 5 cent a month. My business will be - after the mill is in operation - to keep it in repair together with two steamboats which belong to the same man. He is a great farmer; he has 850 acres of wheat in this season and probably that amount of other grains and vegetables besides. The mill here is built entirely of redwood, it resembles cedar very much and grows very large, some of the trees being 12 feet in diameter.*

*Asa Dyer*

On November 27, 1852, Mary Clawiter gave birth to Edward, in Union City. He was the second Clawiter born in Union City. In December, Lewis Voorhees, originally from Andrian, Michigan, passed away in Union City, after being ill for 17 days. The illness was not specified in the newspaper report on his death.

In 1853, John Horner built a steam powered flour mill to turn his grain, and other grain from local farmers, into flour. It used 8 stone burrs and cost \$85,000. That same year, an agricultural fair was held and John Horner won a fifty dollar silver pitcher as a prize for the best flour, beating out seven other flour mills. The mill was run by C. J. Stevens, who was also the owner of the steamer "Anna Thillon", using it to ship goods to San Francisco.

In May, 1853, the steamer "Jenny Lind" was traveling near San Mateo, on its way from Alviso to San Francisco, when the boiler exploded. The explosion killed 18 passengers, including seven from one family, and up to 40 people were severely scalded. Luckily, the "Union" had just come out of the mouth of Alameda Creek. Capt. James Marston gave the orders to pick up the survivors of the "Jenny Lind", and take them to San Francisco for medical treatment.

Capt. Richard Benson built another landing just to the south of the Horner Landing. Capt. Benson drilled a well and found that it was an artesian well. The water from the well was diverted into a natural depression, which was first covered in rock and gravel, forming a small lake known as Benson's Lake. The lake was 300 feet in diameter and about 8-10 feet deep. The first artesian well was drilled by Henry Smith. John Quigley also found this wells to be of the artesian variety.

An advertisement for the "Union" appeared in "The California Farmer" on April 17, 1854:

### *For San Jose Mission*

*The fine steamer "Union", J. A. Trefry, master, will leave her berth in the basin, between Pacific and Broadway wharves, for Union City, on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday, connecting with the line of stages for San Jose Mission. Returning, will leave Union City on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.*

*For freight or passage apply on board, or to Horner & Co, Broadway Wharf*

From the "History of California" comes another description of early Alvarado and the ships that plied Alameda Creek:

*"Twenty five miles below the city, the steamer enters the Alameda Creek and proceeds south-easterly up its serpentine channel twelve miles, into the valley, to the embarcadaro, or landing place, at Union City.*

*Steamers and sail-vessels are constantly plying on this little stream; and, as it is very narrow, and hidden by long grass, and its course is very crooked, they appear to be moving like the figures of a diorama, mysteriously, yet gracefully, and on a vast green meadow."*

The Horner brothers built the first bridge over Alameda Creek just outside of New Haven on the road heading toward Niles, where Dyer Street now crosses the creek. The cost of the bridge was \$1,100, which the Horner's paid by themselves. They also build a bridge over Alameda Creek on the road leaving Alvarado to Mt. Eden. This one was paid for by the County

## **New Haven**

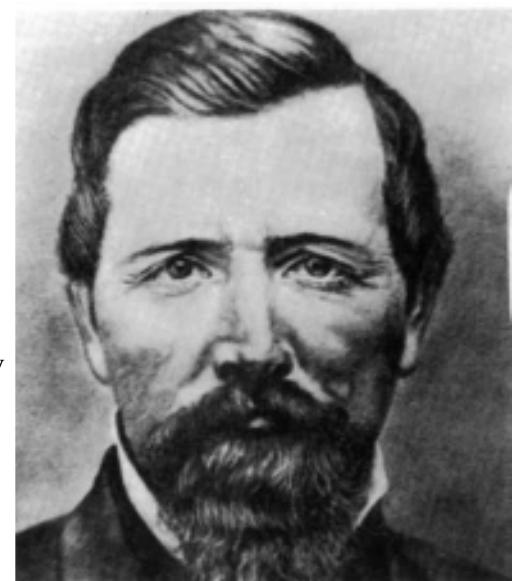
On December 27, 1850, Henry C. Smith bought 465 acres from A. Alviso and T. Pacheco, and Henry laid out a town he called New Haven, after his hometown of New Haven, Connecticut. The first plots in New Haven were sold on March 18, 1851. The western boundary of Henry's land was the eastern boundary of John Horner's land.

July 1, 1851, William Liston arrived in New Haven. He took charge of two warehouses owned by Henry C. Smith erected close to the creek in New Haven. By this date there were two buildings in New Haven, one of them being a small store. Liston built the third house on Maiden lane. It was later moved to Vallejo Street.

In 1852, Joseph Ralph came to the area, settling on a farm that sat between New Haven and Centerville. Also in 1852, Henry Smith built a home at the end of Vallejo Street. In the spring of 1852, August M. Church built a store in New Haven on the west side of Levee Street (Union City Blvd) and at the end of Smith Street. Henry Smith soon purchased the building from August Church.

Other families that arrived in New Haven in 1852 were; W. Param with his family, Edward Chinnery with his wife, and Mr. Hays with his wife.

On September 30, 1852, Mr. Strode and Mr. Jones, lawyers from San



**Henry C. Smith**

Francisco, purchased land from A. Alviso, just south of Union City and Alvarado, and planned to start their own town to be called Alvarado.

In early 1853, Farley B. Granger came to New Haven buying a farm at the west edge of town. His property is now the New Haven Unified School District Corporation Yard.

New Haven and Union City were part of Santa Clara County, with the county seat in San Jose. Starting in Hayward, Contra Costa County covered the rest of the East Bay with the county seat in Martinez. Henry Smith was elected to the State Assembly from Mission San Jose and local residents petitioned him to create a new county in the East Bay.

Henry Smith proposed the new county to the State Assembly on March 10, 1853. There was debate as to where the county seat would go, with Horace Carpentier trying to get the seat in Oakland, and Henry Smith proposing New Haven. The measure for the new County passed 19 to 17. The measure designated New Haven as the county seat, and Alvarado as the seat of justice. The problem was that Alvarado did not really exist.



*Middle Building is Courthouse (photo 1880-1890)*

The first election in Alameda County took place in May, 1853. There were three to six candidates for each position. August Church was elected County Clerk. A. H. Broder was elected Sheriff. A. M. Crane was elected County Judge, Reverend William Brier of Centerville was elected Superintendent of Schools, and William Chamberlain was elected Coroner.

The County Court house was in the second story of the store that Henry owned (having purchased it from August Church). Henry was given an allowance of \$200 for rental of the Court House. The first meeting of officials was on April 11, 1853 and the meeting minutes stated Alvarado, instead of New Haven. It is unknown exactly why the name change from New Haven to Alvarado. A map from April 1853, shows Alvarado and New Haven, but a map from May 1853 only shows Alvarado. Deeds for the area started using "Alvarado, formerly New Haven" starting in October 1853. For about 10 to 15 years Alvarado and New Haven were used interchangeably, but over time the name of Alvarado stuck.

On Monday, June 6, 1853 the first Court of Sessions was convened, with Addison M. Crane as County Judge, August M. Church as County Clerk, Andrew J. Broder as Sheriff, and William H. Combs as District Attorney.

The next day the Court of Sessions continued and a number of payments were made for establishing the Courthouse:

<i>D. L. Lord</i>	<i>blank book and stationery</i>	\$425
<i>A. M. Church</i>	<i>Books</i>	\$49
<i>Liberty Perhan</i>	<i>work on county desk</i>	\$33

<i>W. C. Weaver</i>	<i>work on county desk</i>	\$48
<i>J. L. Loag</i>	<i>2 days as Asst. Justice</i>	\$12
<i>A. Marier</i>	<i>1 day as Asst. Justice</i>	\$6
<i>A. W. Harris</i>	<i>1 days as Asst. Justice</i>	\$6
<i>J. M. Horner</i>	<i>lumber for county desk</i>	\$16.50
<i>C. J. Stevens</i>	<i>lumber for county desk</i>	\$9

In the first year the county payroll was \$4,500.

## Alvarado

When Alameda County was formed and New Haven became known as Alvarado, the original Union City was still referred to by that name, depending on the person talking. Some would use Union City and Alvarado, others would use Alvarado, meaning the whole area that used to be Union City and New Haven. The 1887 Sanborn fire insurance map stilled showed a dividing line between Union City and Alvarado. The last map that distinguished Union City from Alvarado was published in 1927.

On August 9, 1853, Henry Smith was appointed postmaster for Alvarado. The post office was in his store on Levee Street.

In 1853, a private school was opened in the home of Capt. Marston. The first class consisted of 5 students, with Mr. Warren as the teacher. Tuition was \$5 per month per student.

In 1853, James Hawley bought a farm in Alvarado, after living in Mission San Jose. A carpenter, he built the Red Hotel and the first frame buildings in Mission San Jose. He also built the Patterson House in Ardenwood.



From "History of Rural Alameda County" comes a description of Alvarado:

*"It almost seems incredible now in view of the quiet, little town Alvarado is that at one time it had an entertainment district that was equal to San Francisco's Barbary Coast. Its saloons, dance halls and brothels were numerous, ranging from the luxurious with chandeliers and plate glass mirrors to low class dives. What would now be called the 'night life' of Alameda County centered in Alvarado, which was larger and gayer than the Oakland of that day. The noisy gaiety of 'wide open' Alvarado drew miners from far away diggings."*

In 1854, August May arrive in Alvarado on October 24 and started work as a butcher with A. Main. Joseph Ralph purchased a 100 acre ranch closer to Alvarado, where his son, Ivens V., was born. Due to financial problems, the Horner Stage from Alvarado to Mission San Jose was discontinued. Edward Clawiter sold his general store and moved to Mt. Eden to raise cattle to sell to the hotels and restaurants in San Francisco.

Hubert Dyer, son of Ephraim Dyer, in an unpublished history of the Dyer family said this about Alvarado:

*"Alvarado is a new town. As Union City faded because John Horner no longer farmed so extensively so that the steamers running to San Francisco were no longer necessary, the levees were empty, the people moved away and the houses were hauled to Alvarado...."*

The flooding of Alvarado did not make it a popular County Seat. Getting to the courthouse during the floods was difficult. On December 30, 1854, an election was held to determine the location of the county seat, with 1,301 votes for San Leandro and 1,067 votes for Alvarado. In August, 1855, the county seat moved back to Alvarado, as the State Legislature ruled that only they had the authority to move the county seat. On August 16, the Board of Supervisors for Alameda County met in Alvarado.

In 1855, Richard Barron bought Union City Landing from Capt. Benson. He put an island in Benson's Lake (renamed to Barron's Lake), planted trees and flowers and rented boats. It became quite the spot for local residents to spend time and have a picnic. James McKeown arrived in Alvarado to join his brother Joseph. Joseph owned McKeown Ranch, a 150 acre ranch near what is now Union City Blvd and Lowry Road (then Marsh Road and McKeown Road). James opened a blacksmith shop in Alvarado.

Also in 1855, county funds, totaling \$7,156.44, was stolen from the County Treasurer J. S. Marston. The money was kept at the County Courthouse in less than secure circumstances. The funds were both county and state. In 1857, the county settled a claim with Marston for \$1,156.40 and acquitted him of any wrong doing. The state excused the funds it lost in the theft. Marston paid the claim with funds from his bondsmen, which included John Horner.

In June, 1855, John Horner sold the Flour Mill to J. J. Hoe. The following notification was placed in "The Daily Alta California" newspaper:

*To The Public:*

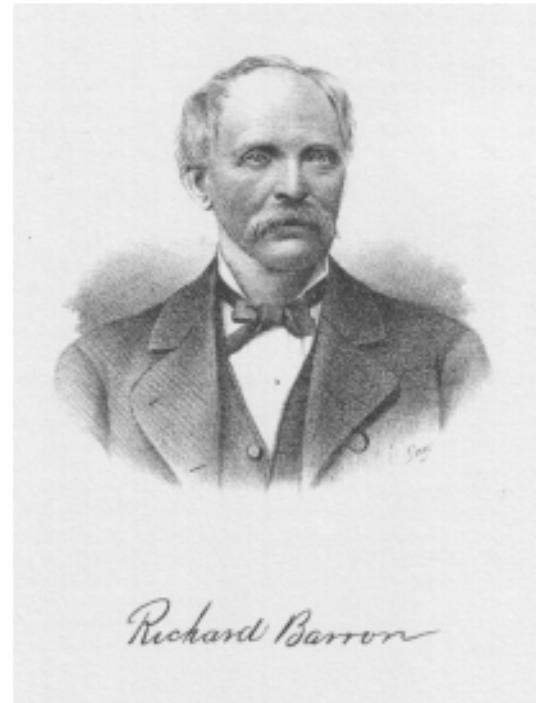
*The Flour Mills formerly owned by Mr. Horner, at Union City, are now owned by J.J. Hoe, and are ready for operation. Orders for grinding wheat will receive prompt attention at the mills. Terms low. Payment taken in wheat or cash.*

*J.W. Cheswill, Agent  
Union City Mills*

In November, 1855, two Americans and two Mexicans were arrested for cattle stealing. The sheriff took them to Alvarado and confined them to a room in the Brooklyn Hotel. During the night, the two Mexicans escaped. When the locals heard of the escape, the formed a mob, removed the two Americans, named Hill and Harris, from the custody of the sheriff and hanged them.

On February 8, 1856, the State Legislature confirmed that the original vote to move the county seat to San Leandro was valid, and the county seat left Alvarado for the last time.

On May 31, 1856, August Church was appointed the Postmaster for Alvarado, replacing Henry Smith. The post office stayed in the same location since August was partnered with Henry Smith.



*Richard Barron*

On July 21, 1857, the following advertisement for the Brooklyn Hotel appeared in "The Daily Alta California" newspaper:

**HOTEL FOR RENT – THE BROOKLYN HOUSE**

*Situated at Alvarado, Alameda County, on the stage route from San Francisco to San Jose, containing eighteen rooms, and being very eligibly situated for a country Hotel.*

**RENT LOW, TO A GOOD TENANT**

*Inquire of James B. Townsend, Nov 12th and 13th, Armory Hall, corner of Sacramento and Montgomery Streets, San Francisco.*

From the same newspaper, on December 21, 1857, there was a report of a "fandango fight" in Alvarado where Charles Chilson and an unknown Mexican were killed. A "fandango fight" is fight based on a quarrel. The term has fallen out of use in 150 years.

In 1857, Ephraim Dyer needed someone to assist him with this business, so he traveled back to Maine to offer the job to his brother, Ebenezer. Ebenezer came to California to survey the job prospects, then returned to Maine. In the Spring of 1858,

Ebenezer came back to Alvarado with his wife, Marion, and two daughters.

Ephraim rented a hotel for his brother, and bought supplies:

May 1. 1858

*Pd. Furniture & extras per Pedwell  
deducting E. H. Dyer \$150*

<i>Chamber set</i>	<i>\$50.00</i>
<i>Carpet (Parlor)</i>	<i>\$39.00</i>
<i>Do. Bedroom</i>	<i>\$12.37</i>
<i>Sundries per Pedwell</i>	<i>\$62.00</i>
<i>Oil Cloth Carpet</i>	<i>\$17.25</i>
<i>Matting</i>	<i>\$ 3.42</i>
<i>Provisions</i>	<i>\$15.68</i>
<i>Hotel Rental Joseph Ralph</i>	<i>\$10.00</i>
<i>Washing House</i>	<i>\$15.00</i>

In a letter to her family back in Maine, Marion Dyer (Ebenezer's wife) wrote this:



*Looking toward Alvarado from Union City (c. 1860-1870)*

Alvarado  
April 17, 1858

*The children seem to enjoy the weekly visit of the steamboat. The only water view we have is by going to the creek a few steps from here, at all times you can see vessels coming and going, they have the appearance of sailing on land, it is so level that we can see at a great distance. It is quite busy here now that the steam mill commenced operations. Farmers are bringing in their grain and peddlers of all kind pass the door with*

*fruits and vegetables. There is a butcher shop close by, a lager beer saloon, a school house, a store, etc. The school is kept the year around. They have a man teacher at the present, his wages are a hundred dollars a month.*

*Marion Dyer*

From "The Daily Alta California" of April 30, 1858, comes the following advertisement:

*GRAND BALL at the NEWMAN HOUSE, ALVARADO  
FRIDAY EVENING, APRIL 30th, 1858*

*All parties wishing to be conveyed to the above Ball, will be taken by Mr. P.B. Smith, in his coaches of the International Hotel, from their residences to Alvarado, and returned in like manner for the small sum of \$2 each. Coaches will leave by noon boat to San Antonio.*

*Orders sent to Mr. P.B. Smith, International Hotel, San Francisco, will receive prompt attention.*

San Antonio, listed in the advertisement, is now part of Oakland. Either the Grand Ball was not very successful or other financial matters hit the Newman House, for in December of that same year was this notice of bankruptcy:

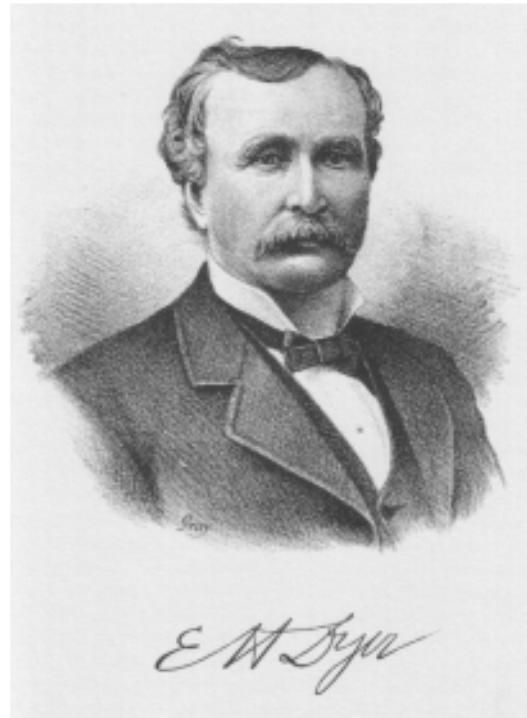
*Lewis W. Newman, formerly hotelkeeper at Alvarado, filed a petition for the benefit of the insolvent law, in the Twelfth District Court, at San Francisco, December 10th. His liabilities amount to \$4,000; his assets nothing.*

In 1858, Charles S. Eigenbrodt, who arrived in California in 1849 and was originally from New York, came to Alvarado and bought "one of the best ranches in Alameda County".

In 1859, Charlotte Cornell and her husband moved to Alvarado. Having failed at farming, Mr. Cornell wanted to go back to being a store keeper. He purchased the store from Henry Smith, the former Courthouse, and "fitted it up for a store and dwelling." Charlotte described Alvarado at the time:

*"Alvarado was a disorderly place. Many low, tough characters had collected there, and though there were plenty of saloons and similar establishments, there was no church or Sunday-school. The nearest church was at Centerville, five miles above. It was of the Presbyterian order, and we had assisted in building it and had united with it. The Pastor's name was Brier. It was the first Protestant Church in the valley. I felt that I could not live or bring up my children where gambling and horse racing where the favorite Sabbath occupations, and saloon keeping the most flourishing business, but must make an effort to reform the place."*

Alvarado was an important part of Alameda County. During the election of 1859, Governor John B. Weller and Honorable Charles L. Scott, a candidate for Congress, came to Alvarado, on September 4th, to address the local voters.



On November 26, 1859, Crusade Lodge #93 of the International Order of Odd Fellows was founded in Alvarado. Founding members were Charles S. Eigenbodt, Albert E. Crane, James Hawley, William M. Liston, William Morrison, William Hayes, W. H. Hawthorne, George Simpson, and N. B. Eldred.

After 1854, John Horners fortune turned for the worse. By, 1859, Horner was suffering from financial hardship, so he had to sell this steamer and flour mill. The mill, costing \$85,000, was sold for \$5,000. The steamer, costing \$18,000, was sold for \$7,000. It was about this time that James J. Stokes came to Alvarado and purchased the landing from John Horner, where Stokes built a brick warehouse.

Fall of 1859, Ephraim returns from the East with his new wife, Ellen, the younger sister to Marion Dyer. Their house is cross from the Methodist Church. Living in the same house as Ephraim and Ellen. Another letter from Marion Dyer to her family back in Maine:

*Alvarado  
December 11, 1859*

*I do not know if I ever described Alvarado to you or not. If not, it might interest you to know some of the feature of the place. It contains two churches, there or four stores, a blacksmith ship, butcher shop, an Odd Fellows Hall - lately established (Herrick is a Grand Noble) Ephraim also belongs to it. We have two hotels and one livery stable.*

*The people settled here are mostly western or Dutch. But there is a small circle here very pleasant to associate with indeed. The creek runs by our backyard. We have quite a pretty front yard with quite a variety of plants growing, some blooming now, head fore most of them all in the carnation pink. You know that this is a house plant at home. But in Alvarado, it is rather low, consequently rather muddy during our rainy season.*

*One very bad feature of our plains, I think, is the absence of grass. Unless the land is under cultivation, you can see nothing but salt weed as far as the eye can reach. But as if for atonement, the mountains are covered with wild oats which after a few rains, make the mountains appear green and pretty.*

*Excepting along the banks of the creek, there are no trees to relieve the eyes. Trees can be successfully transplanted here, so when the settlers feel secure in their titles, they can soon make up for the lack of them.*

*Most of the buildings here in Alvarado were hauled from Union City. The latter place is getting rather shorn of some of its ancient glory while the former is in the ascendant. Mr. John Horner was the founder of Union City and Henry Smith of Alvarado. They are now both poor.*

*Marion Dyer*

On December 14, 1859, John R. Wares was appointed Postmaster of Alvarado. It is not clear where the post office was located.

In 1859, Charlotte Cornell started a Sunday



***Smith House on Vallejo Street (taken 1940's)***

school, using an "old school house", with twenty five pupils of various denominations. This was the start of the Alvarado Presbyterian Church. Previously the only religious events in Alvarado was the occasional sermon of John Horner (Mormon) or Rev. Brier (Presbyterian) at the Brooklyn Hotel. A local Methodist preacher wanted to build a church in Alvarado, but could not raise the necessary funds.

Rev. Brier from the Centerville Presbyterian church suggested to Charlotte Cornell that she raise the funds for a Presbyterian church and he would help all that he could. The land for the church was donated by Mr. Jones, but the mortgage had to be cleared with the title holder, Mr. Murphy. Charlotte had to travel to San Jose to meet with Mr. Murphy and have him clear the mortgage on the parcel.

To raise funds, a festival was held at a brick warehouse (probably that of J. J. Stokes) and was decorated with bunting and evergreens. Meat, bread, cakes, pies, biscuits, pickles, preserves and fruit were brought to the festival. Books and toys, procured from San Francisco, were sold on commission. Admission to the festival was 50 cents. By the end of the festival more than 600 dollars was raised.

The next day, as they were cleaning up the warehouse, a ship came in from San Francisco, loaded with lumber and men. Then Charlotte heard that the lumber for a church, she thought that some great kind soul had donated the material for the Presbyterian church. It turned out that it was for a Methodist church.

Feeling slighted by the Presbyterians, the Methodists worked with others from their denomination in San Francisco and raised the funds for their church.

The Methodist church was finished first, and the Methodists suggested that the Charlotte's Sunday school should meet at their church. Charlotte decided to keep her Sunday school and told her students that a new Sunday school was starting at the Methodist church, letting them choose where they wanted to go. Given that Charlotte had started her Sunday school single handedly, none of the students went to the new Sunday school.

Soon enough the Presbyterian Church was completed. The church bell was procured from Brooklyn, New York. The church sent \$50 for the bell, and friends in Brooklyn contributed an addition \$100, and a bell was procured for \$150. The church was dedicated in May, 1861, with Rev. Dr. Hamilton of Oakland, giving the sermon and Rev. Brier assisting. The church was built on Horner Street, just west of Levee Street (now Union City Blvd).

Julia Thompson lobbied for the Methodist church, and Charlotte lobbying for the Presbyterian Church, one was named "Charlotte's Temple" and the other was "Julia's Chapel".

It is not documented where the Methodist Church stood, but a very early photograph of Alvarado, taking from the west does show two buildings with steeples. It is fairly clear that one of the buildings is in the right place and orientation to be the Presbyterian Church. The other steeple is to the north of the Presbyterian Church, closer to the Alvarado Hotel. There are no known maps of Alvarado from this time, so an exact location is hard to say. A later document states that the Methodist Church was eventually dissolved and the building was "sold, removed, and converted to a store."

The Census of 1860 listed 509 people living on the Alvarado area. The occupation of those employed was listed on the census form. Most of the people listed were farmers or farm laborers. Here is a list of other occupations and the number listed for that occupation:

Merchant (5), County Surveyor (Ebenezer Dyer), dairyman, hotel keeper (2), Deputy Sheriff (Abram Bowen), blacksmith (4), barber, notary public (John Wares), carpenter (6), butcher (7), baker, shoemaker,

restauranteur (3), assayer (John Engelvanst), Lawyer (Benj. Williams), saloon owner, teacher (Fred P. Dunn).

Of the Alvarado residents listed in the census, most were born in the United States or Canada. Here is a list of the countries of those foreign born:

Ireland	46	Norway	4
Mexico	37	Holland	4
Germany	36	France	3
England	12	Denmark	2
Sweden	9	Chile	1
Scotland	5	Portugal	1

In a letter from Ebenezer Dyer to family back in Maine, more details are revealed about Alvarado:

*Alvarado*

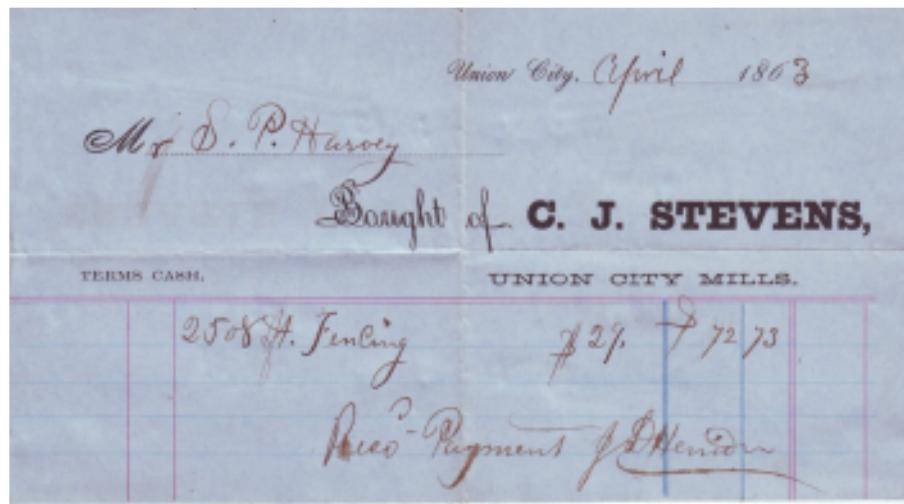
*October 28, 1860*

*We still live in E's [Ephraim's] house and in this place but I have rented a house a short distance from this and we will probably move into it about the 1st of December. I have to pay \$200 a year rent for the house alone and nothing except that.*

*This is getting to be quite a smart village, we have two hotels, about a dozen grocers and boarding houses (mostly German), a drug store, three doctors (in a starving condition), two blacksmith shops, two wheelwrights shops, three large stores well stocked with all sorts of goods, two churches and an Odd Fellows Hall, besides our share of officials; last but not least, the county Surveyor has an office here.*

*Ebenezer Herrick Dyer*

The house the Ebenezer is referring to was described in such, "When Ephriam bought his house, the lot extended from the Odd Fellows Hall Road to the creek."



*Receipt from Union City Mills, April, 1863*

On November 6, 1860, Charles

Eigenbrodt was elected to the Alameda County Board of Supervisors representing Washington Township. On November 4, 1861, Charles Eigenbrodt was re-elected to the Alameda County Board of Supervisors, with 423 votes.

In 1861, Farley B. Granger came to Alvarado and purchased 45 acres of land. He bought 100 acres of land on the other side of Alameda Creek and grew chicory. A few years later, he sold some of this land to Ebenezer Dyer.

Floods were a fairly common occurrence. In March, 1861, a flood hit Alvarado, overflowing the creeks, and was described this way in newspaper reports: "The town of Alvarado was overflowed yesterday, the water

running through the streets. The San Jose stage was compelled to turn back, the road being impassable."

On September 29, 1861, Azman J. Lowell was appointed Postmaster of Alvarado. It is unclear where the post office was located.

In 1862, Richard Barron moved to Mt. Eden, selling Union City Landing to his brother, James Barron, and established Barron's Landing just south of Mt. Eden. James came to California in 1861, and ran the landing selling building materials shipped from San Francisco. That same year, John Quigley started the Alvarado Salt Works on property just to the south of Barron's landing. The salt works were fairly small and crude, but production was as much as 2,000 tons a year. The salt from the Bay was moved into small ponds where it was evaporated. Wind powered pumps moved the salt water to other ponds where it evaporated more, creating a higher salt content. Eventually the water evaporated away, leaving a pond of salt crystals.

St. Anne's Catholic Church was built in 1862, on Watkins Street, facing west. It was dedicated by Arch Bishop Alemany of San Francisco. Father Fredi was the local priest.

In March, 1862, Alameda Creek flooded Alvarado as much as six feet deep. The residents fired guns in the air to attract attention to get help. Floods were also experienced in other locations in the East Bay. The San Francisco Herald has reported that thousands of citizens have been nearly bankrupted and losses may be as high as \$50 million.

In January, 1863, Charles Eigenbrodt joined a Calvary unit forming in San Francisco. Since any person joining the U.S. Army in California was to be stationed in California, those wishing to actually fight in the Civil War had to join a unit from a state in the East. A deal had been worked out between the State of Massachusetts and volunteers from California, where they paid their own way to Massachusetts and join a Massachusetts Calvary as a full unit. Charles, who had served in the California Guard as a Major, wanted to command a Company. He had to wait until 85% of the company was signed up for his "enlistment" to take place. This happened on March 13, 1863. Also joining the Company from Alvarado was John T. Campbell and Hirem Clark. The unit shipped out of San Francisco on March 23. Once in Massachusetts, the Battalion joined the 2nd Massachusetts Regiment and formed the second Battalion, Companies E, F, L, and M. Capt. Eigenbrodt was in command of Company E.

On February 12, 1863, Marion Dyer drowned in Alameda Creek, just steps from her house. It was reported that she was delirious from fever, and when she was left alone, she left the house and "jumped into the creek". Sometime after Marion passed away, Ebenezer married Marion's sister, Olive. The marriage was sometime between 1864 and 1868. The 1870 census shows Ebenezer married to Olive with 2 year old twins.

In May, 1863, two teachers from Alvarado attended a meeting at the State Institute. The two teachers were Robert Seymour and T. Orlando Hopkins.



*Liston House on Vallejo Street (taken late 1960's)*

On July 4th, 1863, the citizens of Alvarado wanted to celebrate the day with lots of noise. They collected \$150 and bought a canon. It was fired often, consuming a large amount of gun powder. On November 13, a fire broke out at the Smithurst home, destroying the entire home and contents. It was reported that a young boy, woke during the night, became restless, found a cigar, lit it to smoke it, and fell asleep in his bed with it.

In August, 1864, the Alvarado Guard was created as part of the State of California Militia Guard. The purpose of the Guard was to protect the local citizens during the Civil War. The first roll call had a list of 55 names. The first Captain was Farley B. Granger. And from the Minutes of Meetings:

*"Met at Templar Hall, September 25th with Captain F. B. Granger in the chair. Mr. A. L. Fuller elected Secretary and Senior 2nd Lieutenant. On motion a committee of three was appointed to confer with the Odd Fellows to see what can be done about securing a room for an armory and drill room. The company will agree to pay \$35 per month for an Armory at Odd Fellow Hall."*

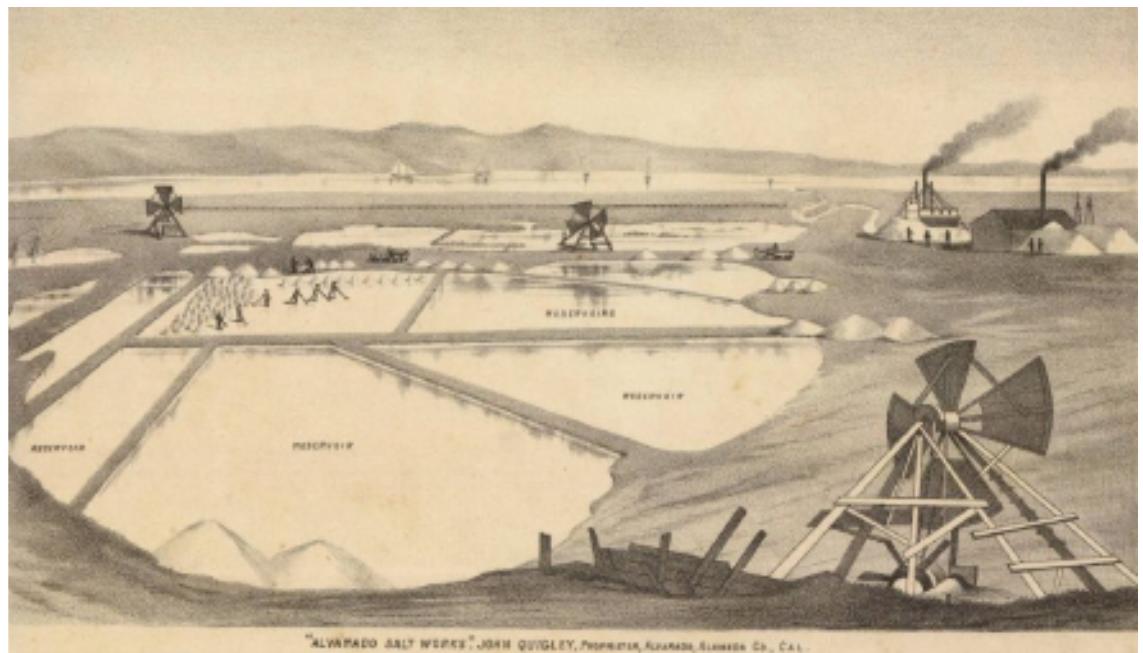
*"Lieutenant Johnson reported that O. P. Feasel would put the room over the blacksmith shop in order to receive the guns (armory) and take care of them for \$50 per month and that the exclusive use of Stokes Hall could be had for \$15 per month. November 24, 1863 met at Stokes Hall."*

*"A formal ballot was taken to elect a permanent Captain of the Corps. Ephraim Dyer was elected with 25 votes to 7 for T. O. Hopkins. A. L. Fuller was elected Senior First Lieutenant, with 21 votes to 12 for John Brizzee. Junior First Lieutenant was declared to be John Brizzee by a vote of 19 to 15 for T. O. Hopkins. The Secretary reported that he had purchased 150 pounds of ammunition in cartridges in San Francisco for the use of the Company. William Scarf was engaged as Armorer at a salary of \$15 per month."*

Ephriam Dyer was elected as Captain and Commander. Later, other officers for the company were; 1st Lieutenant C. P. Johnson, 2nd Lieutenant Joseph McKeown, and 3rd Lieutenant Henry C. Smith.

On November 23, 1863, a party of Mexican "desperadoes" rode into Alvarado, firing shots at buildings and individuals. The residents gave chase and was able to arrest one of the desperadoes. He was put under guard, but a mob over whelmed the guard, and took the Mexican to a bridge over Alameda Creek, and he was hanged.

In 1864, the Ladies of Alvarado sewed an American flag and presented it to the Alvarado Guard.



*Quigley Salt Works. On the right is Barron's Landing.*

The presentation was during a formal ceremony with one of the leading ladies making a small speech for the presentation:

"Capt Dyer

*Officers and members of the Alvarado Guard*

*Permit me in the name of the Ladies of Alvarado to present to your behalf this Banner bright and beautiful emblem of our nationality. May it be our pride and earnest endeavor to guard and protect it from insult and dishonor. May its folds never wave over a disloyal heart unless it be victoriously over the traitors and the enemies of our country. May our language ever be Hail! bright banner that floats on the gale. Flag of the country of Washington, Hail! Red are thy stripes with the blood of the brave. Bright are thy stars as the sun on the wave, Wrapt in thy folds are the hopes of the free. Banner of Washington! Blessings on thee.*

*You may not be called upon to take part in this mightiest struggle the world has ever seen, but if our country calls, I trust and know that you will stand by the Flag ready to fight the great battle of freedom with the watchword on your armor - God, Liberty and Right*

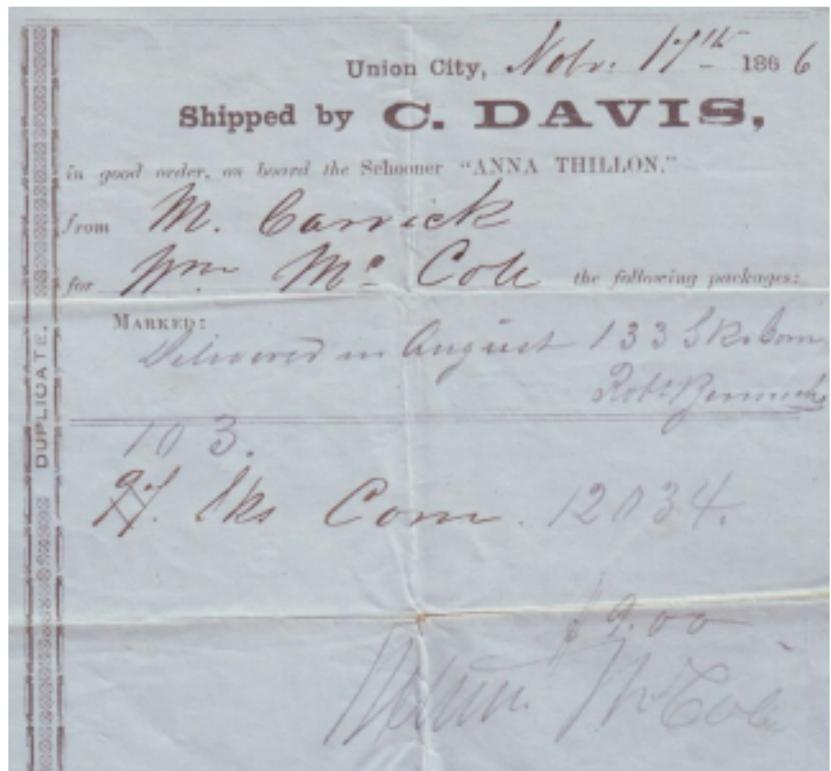
Captain Dyer said this in reply:

*"Ladies. In receiving from your hands this beautiful flag, permit me in behalf of the Alvarado Guards, to tender to you our warmest thanks. As you have remarked, it is the symbol of our nationality. Around its folds cluster the cherished memories of the past - the apprehensions of the present hour - the hope of a bright and glorious future. No truly loyal American can look upon his country's flag without emotions of peculiar love and reverence. But, this flag presentation by loyal ladies of this crisis of our country's history, while our fellow countrymen are pouring out their life's blood in defense of its honor .. will ever be regarded with more than ordinary affection. Although as an organization we may never be called upon to take part in this great contest, yet should our country call, I trust and believe that the honored recipients of this magnificent gift will never cause its fair donors to blush with shame that we faltered in its defense or proved recreant to those great principals of liberty bequeathed by our forefathers and, which it is our duty to aid in transmitting unimpaired to posterity. Ladies, we again thank you."*

Charles Eigenbrodt was killed near Hall, Virginia, on Sept. 2nd, 1864. The news of

Capt. Eigenbrodt's death came to Avarado, just as the Odd Fellows were building a new two story hall. The upper story of the hall was for Odd Fellows meetings and stored their material. The lower story was used as a meeting hall and a dance hall. The Odd Fellows sold shares to fund the cost of the building. A total of 400 shares were sold at \$10 per share to raise \$4,000.

The building was also used as an armory for the Alvarado Guards. On September 23, the Alvarado Guards



*Shipping receipt from Union City, Nov. 17, 1866*

held a dedication ball for the Odd Fellows Hall. The guests of honor at the ball were Col. Jackson and Lieut-Col. Rowley.

On March 17, 1865, St. Anne's Catholic Church held a ball to raise money to pay off the debt from the building of the church.

On New Years Day, 1866, the Alvarado Guard competed in a shooting match against the Hayward Guard. Thirty men from each Guard fired three shots each at a target. The shots were scored and the unit with the highest combined score was the winner. The Alvarado Guard has a score of 985. The Hayward Guard had a score of 1,030, beating Alvarado by 45 points. After the contest, a ball was held at the Hayward Hotel where "many lovely ladies were present to smile upon the gallant defenders of the state."

On January 11, 1867, Daniel C. Owen was appointed Postmaster of Alvarado.

In 1867, August M. Church, the first Clerk for Alameda County, was elected to the State Legislature, representing Alameda County. Also in that year, Henry C. Smith, moved to Livermore.

In 1867, two business directories were published for Alvarado:

#### **Pacific Cost Business Directory for Alvarado – 1867**

Alquire, Rodney	Harness & Saddlery
Biddinger, William	Boot & Shoemaker
Buteau, S.A	Physician
Dyer, E. H.	Surveyor
Fuller, O. P.	Brooklyn Hotel
Helwig, P.	Butcher
Heyer, August	Liquor – Retail
Huff, Edward	Liquor – Retail
Ingalls, B. F.	Carpenter
Lattin, W. H.	Liquor – Retail
Lee, Antonio	Hairdresser
Liston, William H.	General Merchandise
Lowell, A. J.	Stoves & Tin Ware
May, August	Butcher
McKeown, James	Blacksmith & Carriage Maker
Owen, D. C.	Wells Fargo & Co; Insurance Agent
Ralph, John H.	General Merchandise
Smithhurst, John	Liquor – Retail
Stokes, James J.	General Merchandise
Sumner, H. C.	Livery Stable
Tay, George H. & Co.	Foundry
Williams, B. F.	Attorney at Law

#### **McKenny's Business Directory for Alvarado – 1867**

Benson, R.	Warehouse
Bliven & Gleason	Saloon
Collins, John	Barber

Hahn, H.	Butcher
Hasting, Norman	Livery Stable
Heyer, August	Bakery
Johnson & Gregg	General Merchandise
Jones, S. P.	Warehouse
Livy, S.	General Merchandise
Lowell, A. J.	Postmaster & Tinsmith
May, August Sr.	Butcher
McCardy, James	Hotel Keeper
McKeown, Joseph	Blacksmith & Wheelright
McNamara, M.	Shoemaker
Meyers & Nauert	Prop's: American Exchange
Parker, George	Painter
Peirpont, Rev. James	Clergyman (Presbyterian)
Pratt, Charles H.	Physician
Putney, E. A.	Blacksmith & Machinist
Selfridge, J. M.	Physician
Stevens, C. J.	Flouring Mills
Stokes, James J.	General Merchandise
Vondergreen, F. O.	Physician

On October 21, 1868 at 7:53 a.m., a 7.0 earthquake struck on the Hayward Fault, causing cracks in the earth along the fault for most of Alameda County, starting at the border with Santa Clara County and going as far north as Berkeley. In Alvarado the brick shop of A. J. Lattin was destroyed. The store of J. J. Stokes was damaged with a large loss of goods. There were no reports of death in Alvarado. A local bridge was damaged enough to make it useless. Brick chimneys all through out Alvarado were damaged or destroyed. An 8-foot fissure opened up on the property of Ebenezer Dyer. Ebenezer described his experience with the earthquake:

*"At the time of the great earthquake of 1868, I was building the house in which I now reside. The first shock was sufficiently severe to ruin all the chimneys and to do great damage to other buildings. There was a 2000 gallon tank full of water on the roof of the ell. My house tipped enough to spill more than a third of the water over the top of the tank."*

In 1868, Phillip Hellwig organized P. Hellwig & Company, as a meat producer. Later the name was changed to Hellwig Meat Company, in 1903, by Phillips sons, Frederick and George.

Sometime in the early 1860's there was an accident at the flour mill. At the time Mr. McClure was part owner of the mill. His half brother, Joseph Lyndal, got caught up in a belt and was dragged against the machinery, causing severe injuries, and he passed away two days later.

In 1869, John A. Plummer purchased land from Lyman Beard and started the Turk Island Salt Works just south of Alvarado. He already owned the Crystal Salt Works, just south of Newark. The two works processed more than 4,000 tons a year.

Hubert Dyer, son of Ephraim Dyer, in a document reminiscing of years gone past, wrote this of the house of his uncle, Ebenezer:

*"the tyrant of their establishment was their old Chinese cook, Gung, his dictatorial ways compelled Aunt Olive to discharge him periodically and as often hire him back before the family regime was too upset. In time age overtook Gung and he retired to be the boss man of the extensive Alvarado China Town."*

In 1869, the Horner flour mill works equipment, that had been purchased by Calvin J. Stevens, was moved to Livermore, leaving the buildings empty.

In 1869, Ebenezer Dyer took an interest in sugar beets and the possibility of making a profit making sugar out of them. He ordered some seed from Germany and planted a few acres as test plots. In Wisconsin, three Germans, Andreas Otto, Ewald Kleinau, and A. Bonesteel, had started a small sugar beet factory. Bonesteel heard of Ebenezer's experiments and contacted him. Ebenezer sent 200 pounds of his beets to Wisconsin for testing in the factory. In reply, Bonesteel replied "Your beets are full of sugar and we are full of California."

In 1870, George Tay bought the flour mill buildings, moved them away from the landing and created a foundry, with an investment of \$75,000. Charles Nauert was the business manager and supervisor of the foundry for thirty six years. Charles's son, August Nauert was employed as a shipping clerk for a few years. The foundry employed 35 men and disbursed about \$4,000 a month in salaries.

Ebenezer and Ephraim Dyer, with the financial assistance of C. I. Hutchinson, B. T. Flint, W. B. Carr, J. N. Ridson, W. T. Garrett, E. G. Rollins, and E. R. Carpenter, formed the "California Beet Sugar Company, with a total of \$250,000. The three Germans moved to California and became the main staff of the factory, with Bonesteel as plant manger, Otto as superintendent, and Kleinau as chemist and assistant.

Ebenezer's farm was selected as the site for the factory. Groundbreaking was on May 9, 1870. Ebenezer's father-in-law, B. F. Ingalls, was a carpenter and he supervised the building of the plant. Parts were ordered from Germany, with additional machinery from the Union Iron Works of San Francisco. Others involved in the factory were Edward Dyer, son of Ebenezer, Harold Dyer, son of Ephriam, and Merrel Ingalls, son of B. F..

On November 15, 1870, the factory started processing the first sugar beets. After a couple days of processing, the first ton of sugar was available for market. Of that first ton, some was put into a special barrel of polished black walnut and brass hoops, and it was sent to President Grant.

By the end of the sugar beet season of 1870, the factory produced 293 tons of sugar. Of the 75 workers in the factory, 65 of them were Chinese. The factory built a boarding house for the Chinese on the factory property and staffed it with a Chinese cook.

This factory was the start of the sugar beet industry in America. Despite some setbacks over the years, the factory would continue to run for over a hundred years.

The census of 1870 listed 736 people living in the Alvarado area. Here is a list of the different occupations listed:

Carpenter (11), hotel keeper (4), surveyor (3), domestic servant, Supt. Of Sugar Factory (August Bonestall), sugar worker, salt worker, railroad worker, school teacher (James Jones), blacksmith (4), druggist (James Lively), carriage maker (5), shoemaker (2), butcher (8), lawyer (Benj. Williams), billiard saloon keeper, painter, retail liquor (2), physician (Charles Pratt), stage driver, steam boat pilot, and postmaster (Daniel Owen).

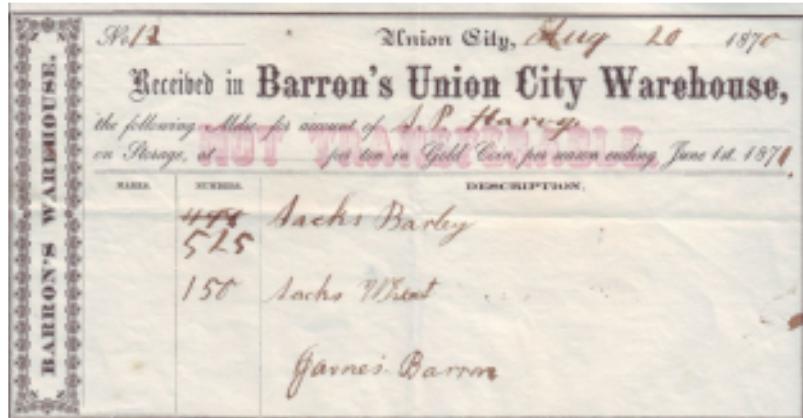
Of the Alvarado residents listed in the census, most were born in the United States or Canada. Here is a list of the countries of those foreign born:

China	106	England	9
Portugal	88	Scotland	8
Germany	56	France	5
Ireland	32	Chile	2
Denmark	22	Sweden	2
Mexico	9	Holland	1

Most of the Chinese worked as laborers for farms, salt works, and the sugar beet factory.

It was up till about 1900 that Union City was still used in reference to the area by the landing by the old timers in the area. Eventually, the name Alvarado would be applied to the area of both old Union City and old New Haven. In 1959, when Alvarado and Decoto were being looked at for annexation into either Fremont or Hayward, the local residents decided to create an incorporated town and merge Alvarado and Decoto. When it came time to put forth a name for the new City, the most popular name was "Union City".

As of 2010, the name Union City encompasses 19.3 square miles of the East Bay, with a population of about 74,000 people. The original Union City was located near the corner of Horner and Veasy Streets. Today, there is nothing left of the original Union City. All of the old buildings have been removed and there is no remnant of the landings that existed. All that exists is old pictures and old stories.



Receipt from Barron's Warehouse, signed  
by James Barron, Aug. 20, 1870

Early map of Union City showing the buildings  
near the bend in Alameda Creek



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