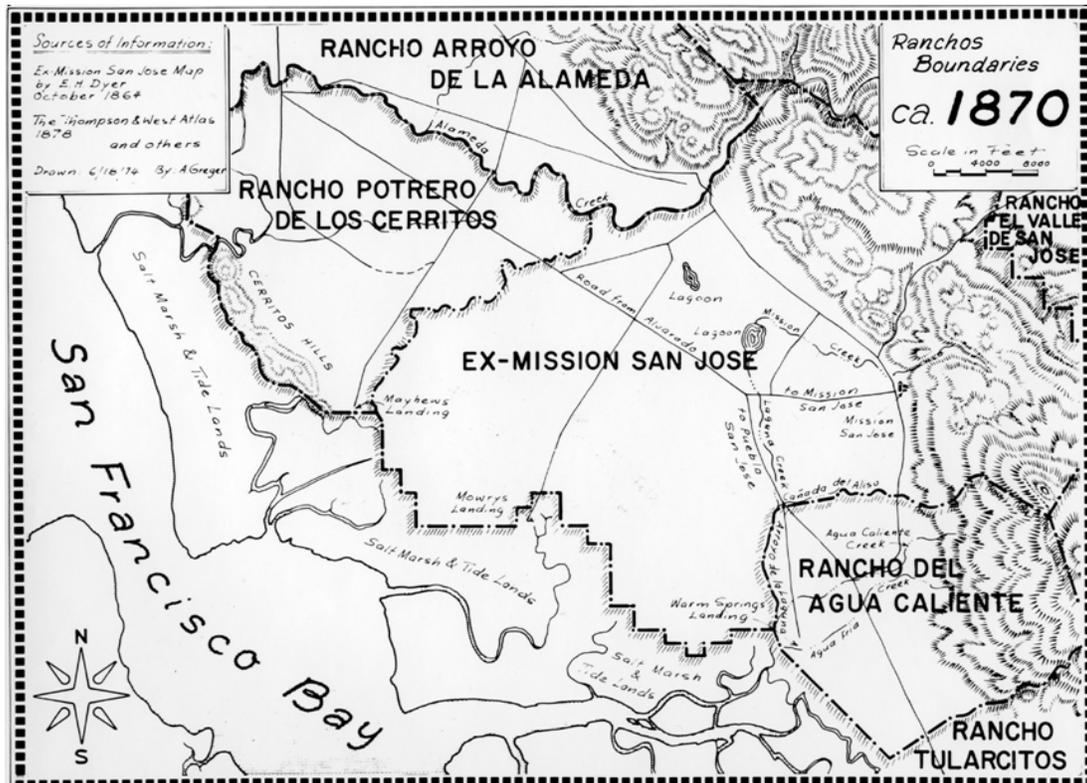


GUIDE TO MORMON HISTORICAL SITES

IN WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP, ALAMEDA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

Lorin K. Hansen



Ex-Mission San Jose, later became a central part of Washington Township. Washington Township today includes Fremont, Newark, and Union City, California.



**Guide to Mormon Historical Sites
in Washington Township, Alameda County, California**

Copyright 2017 Lorin K. Hansen

To obtain copies of the Guide, please visit the Washington Township Museum of Local History website at
museumoflocalhistory.org/store

To obtain copies directly from the Museum, contact them as follows:

Washington Township Museum of Local History
190 Anza St.
Fremont, Ca 94539
Phone: 510-623-7907

Hours:

Wed. and Fri. 10:00am - 4:00pm
Second weekends of the month (Sat. and Sun) 10:00am - 4:00pm

INVITATION: I am sure the MUSEUM would also be pleased
to have you come and view their exhibits. - LKH

Guide to Mormon Historical Sites in Washington Township, Alameda County, California

Lorin K. Hansen

PERSONAL REQUEST: I have written this GUIDE to be read by all without cost as software on computers, iphones, etc. and to be distributed unchanged on such devices as you wish. However, I would ask that you join me in supporting the Washington Township Museum of Local History by obtaining hard copies of the Guide only by purchasing them from either the Museum (see contact information on the oposite page) or from Amazon. In both cases, all proceeds go to the Museum. So, I am asking you to not print your own hardcopies. The software version of the Guide is in full color; purchased hardcopies will be in black and white.

Thank you, Lorin K. Hansen

TABLE OF CONTENTS

(Numbers indicate the sections discussing Washington Township historical sites.)

PREFACE: THE LANDING OF THE <i>BROOKLYN</i>	1
1) MORMON BEGININGS NEAR MISSION SAN JOSE	7
2) UNION CITY: THE EMBARCADERO	19
3) CENTERVILLE: HALF-WAY POINT FROM UNION CITY TO THE MISSION	26
4) MOWRY AVENUE: CONNECTING MISSION ROAD TO MOWRY LANDING	35
5) DRISCOLL RD.: CONNECTING MISSION ROAD TO WASHINGTON CORNERS	41
6) ALONG THE FAULT LINE: CLEAR LAKE TO STIVERS LAGOON	45
7) HOMES OF SOME EARLY SETTLERS	59
8) OTHER COMMEMORATIVE MONUMENTS	63
CONCLUSION: WHAT HAPPENED TO THE MORMONS?	65

The Mormon story in California, as it relates to Washington Township, begins with the arrival of the ship *Brooklyn* at Yerba Buena, San Francisco Bay, in July 1846 with some 230 Mormon colonists. The story begins there, because several of those colonists settled in early Washington Township, that is, in the area covered by present-day Fremont, Newark, and Union City, California.

(For a broader story of Mormons in California, William B. Ide and Thomas Rhoades came overland and were in California shortly before, but they are not part of the present story.)



Yerba Buena in 1846 (from *Deck and Port* by Walter Colton, 1852)

There were no docking facilities at the small hamlet when the *Brooklyn* arrived. In fact the beach at the Yerba Buena cove was a shallow, long-sloping beach which kept ships far from shore. The only point where a ship could approach close to land was at a location called Clarke's Point on the cape, north of the cove. That is where the *Brooklyn* unloaded the passengers, equipment and supplies into boats, which then carried all to the nearby Point. As a result of the Mexican-American War, Alta California had been declared U.S. territory just three weeks before. So this was the first ship load of families into American California. The landing of the *Brooklyn* passengers more than doubled the population of the hamlet, and the passenger arrival had a major impact on social, civic, and commercial activities.

Plaques Commemorating the *Brooklyn* Landing

As Yerba Buena (soon to be known as San Francisco) grew in size and activity, long wharves were built to reach ships wanting to unload at the port. The shallow cove was eventually filled in, eliminating the need for the long wharves. Because of that filling-in, the point where the ship *Brooklyn* unloaded is now inland in San Francisco, next to China Town. A plaque has been placed by the Daughters of the Utah Pioneers on a building near this spot (at 120 Broadway, between Battery and Front Streets).

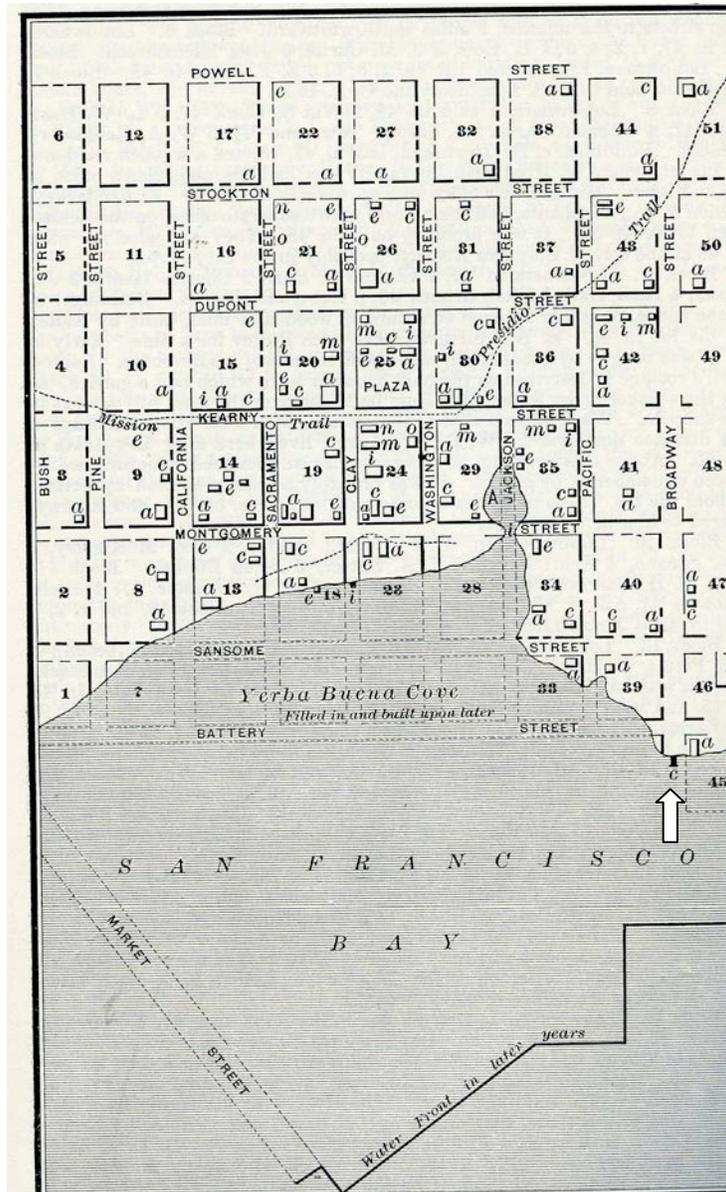


Ship *Brooklyn* Plaque in San Francisco

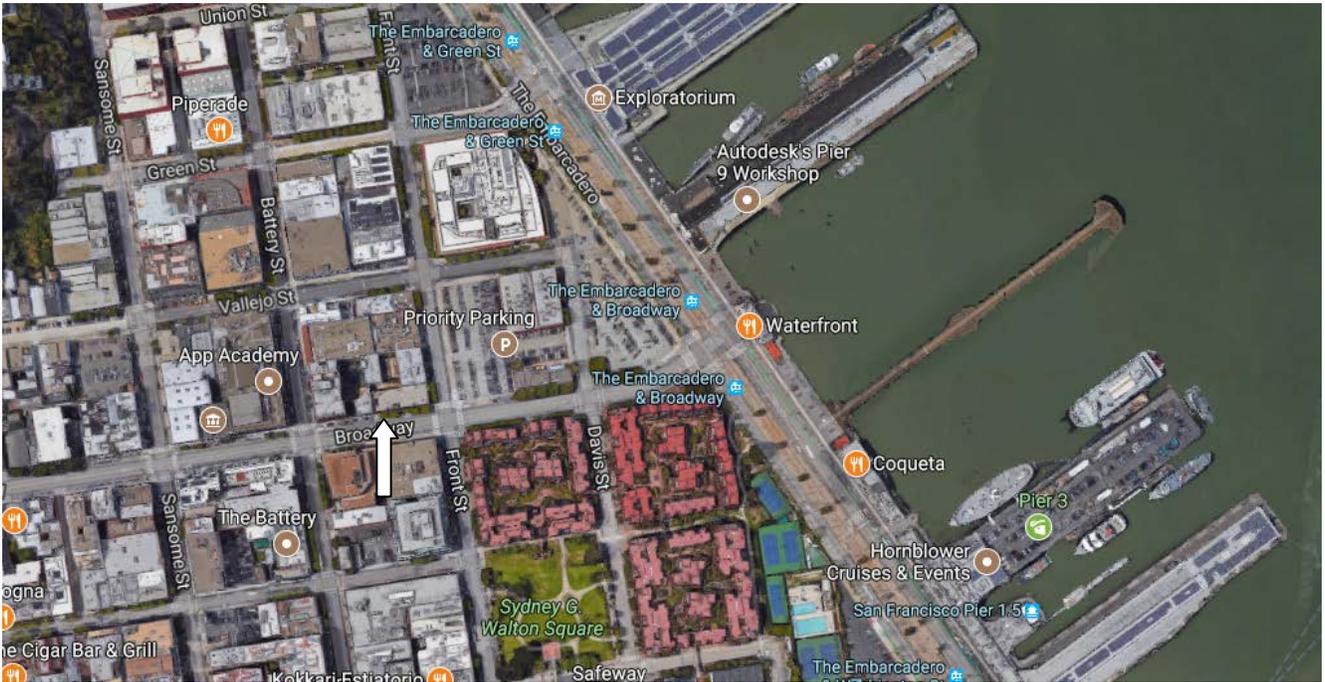
The *Brooklyn* plaque reads:

Commemorating the landing at this point of the ship Brooklyn July 31, 1846, a 370 ton vessel carrying Mormon colonists and crew of nearly 300 under the leadership of Samuel Brannon. In the hold was a printing press, 179 books for educational purposes, two complete flour mills, plows, harrows, and a supply of implements for settling a new country.

[Corrections: The *Brooklyn* actually registered at 445 tons. Only Mormon colonists and their non-Mormon cook and steward, and not the crew or non-Mormon passengers, were under the leadership of Sam Brannon. There were on board a known 230 Mormon passengers (plus a cook and a steward and uncertainty about a few more Mormons), 2 non-Mormon passengers, and a non-Mormon crew of 14.]



**Water front at Yerba Buena for 1846/1848 and at present
 [Clark's Point is indicated as Pont C, to the right (arrow added).]
 (Bancroft, *History of California*, vol. 5, p 677)**



**Location of Ship *Brooklyn* Plaque with respect to the present Waterfront
(Courtesy of Google Earth, arrow added)**

Another plaque commemorating the landing of the *Brooklyn* has been placed on the grounds of the Oakland Temple of the LDS Church, high on the Oakland foot hills. This plaque overlooks the site of the *Brooklyn* landing from across the Bay to the east.



Ship *Brooklyn* Plaque on the grounds of the Oakland Temple

The Oakland commemoration platform and plaque are a short distance south of the Visitors Center and just west of the west entrance to the temple.

The inscription on the plaque reads in part:

The voyage of the Brooklyn began on February 4, 1846. On board were members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints who had the provisions, equipment and skills to settle a new land. Under the leadership of Samuel Brannan, they were part of a general exodus of Church members to the West, where they hoped to find peace and establish Zion.

After departing New York City, the vessel sailed south, rounded Cape Horn, then made two stops, the first at Juan Fernandez (Robinson Crusoe) Island and next at Honolulu. Before the arduous six-month voyage ended, eleven passengers had died and two babies, a boy named Atlantic and a girl named Pacific, were born. On July 31, 1846, the Brooklyn arrived at Yerba Buena, California, which had recently come under United States control as a result of the U.S. war with Mexico.

The disembarking pioneers doubled the population of the village that was later named San Francisco. Their arrival marked the beginning of unprecedented immigration into California. Many Brooklyn passengers made significant contributions to California's commerce, industry and agriculture. Some would eventually leave and make history again as pioneers in settling other regions of the American West.

The ship Brooklyn was a typical three-masted, full-rigged Yankee trader built in 1834 by Joseph H. Russell at Newcastle, Maine. Abel W. Richardson was part-owner and captain.

The generous account on the plaque is mostly correct; except that the builder of the *Brooklyn* was the firm of J. & M. Madigan of Newcastle, Maine, not Joseph H. Russell who built ships in Nova Scotia. However, that error raises another interesting story. Russell joined the LDS Church and offered Brigham Young one of his ships to take a second shipload of Saints to California, following the *Brooklyn*. That offer was declined. The Church eventually had another task in mind for Russell. The two stories sometimes get mixed up in the literature, and an error in the literature is no doubt how the error came to appear on the plaque.

This error appears, for example, in what is regarded as definitive works on the ships of the Mormon migration:

Sonne, Conway B., *Saints On The Seas* (Salt Lake City: Univ. of Utah Press, 1983) 162.
Sonne, Conway B., *Ships, Saints and Mariners: A Maritime Encyclopedia of Mormon Migration, 1830-1890* (Salt Lake City: Univ. of Utah Press, 1987) 33.

For a full account of the *Brooklyn* voyage, see Lorin K. Hansen, "Voyage of the *Brooklyn*," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 21:3 (Autumn 1988): 46-72 and "“Every Book...Has Been Read Through” The *Brooklyn* Saints and Harper's Family Library," *BYU Studies Quarterly*: Vol. 43: 4 (2004) 39-56.

Joseph H. Russell, instead, assisted in bringing the first sugar beet factory from England to Utah. The factory was set up in Salt Lake City, but could never be made to operate successfully. It was moved to Sugar House (a suburb of Salt Lake City) and eventually converted to other purposes. The first successful sugar beet processing in Utah came with help from Alvarado, Washington Township, California. E. H. Dyer and others had formed the California Beet Sugar Co. and had operated a successful sugar beet plant by late 1870, the first in the U.S. They were contracted by the LDS Church to build and **operate for two years** a sugar beet factory in Utah. The Alvarado company did so, and the Mormons thereby finally learned how to refine beet sugar successfully. So, in a roundabout way, one could say that Russell and the old Holly Sugar Co (formerly the California Beet Sugar Co.) in Alvarado are also a part of the Washington Township Mormon story.

Schmalz, Charles L., "The Failure of Utah's First Sugar Factory," Utah Historical Quarterly 56 (Winter 1988).

Swenson, Timothy, *Alvarado Sugar Beet Factory and the Dyer Family that Founded It* (Fremont California: Washington Township Museum of Local History, 2015)

Van Wagoner, Richard S., "The Lehi Sugar Factory—100 Years in Retrospect," Utah Historical Quarterly 59, number 2, (Spring 1991)

As seen from the numbered sections of the Table of Contents, the present essay organizes the Mormon historical sites by discussing them with respect to three communities, two cross roads, and a fault line, the line connecting two bodies of water, Clear Lake and Stivers Lagoon. The essay ends the treatment of historical sites by discussing surviving homes of early settlers and commemorative monuments.

1) MORMON BEGINNINGS NEAR MISSION SAN JOSE

Since the Mormon colonists needed immediately to establish a food supply, and since the Yerba Buena (San Francisco) peninsula was not suitable for agriculture, groups immediately set out to find land suitable for farming. One group went by schooner into the San Joaquin Valley and began farming at the confluence of the San Joaquin and Stanislaus Rivers, at a place they called New Hope. John Horner and James Light (and their wives) went to the farm of John Marsh on the lower San Joaquin River, planted some wheat with Marsh, and began circling the San Francisco Bay for other possible farming sites. Horner planted a sample variety of crops near the abandoned Mission San Jose in what is now Fremont.

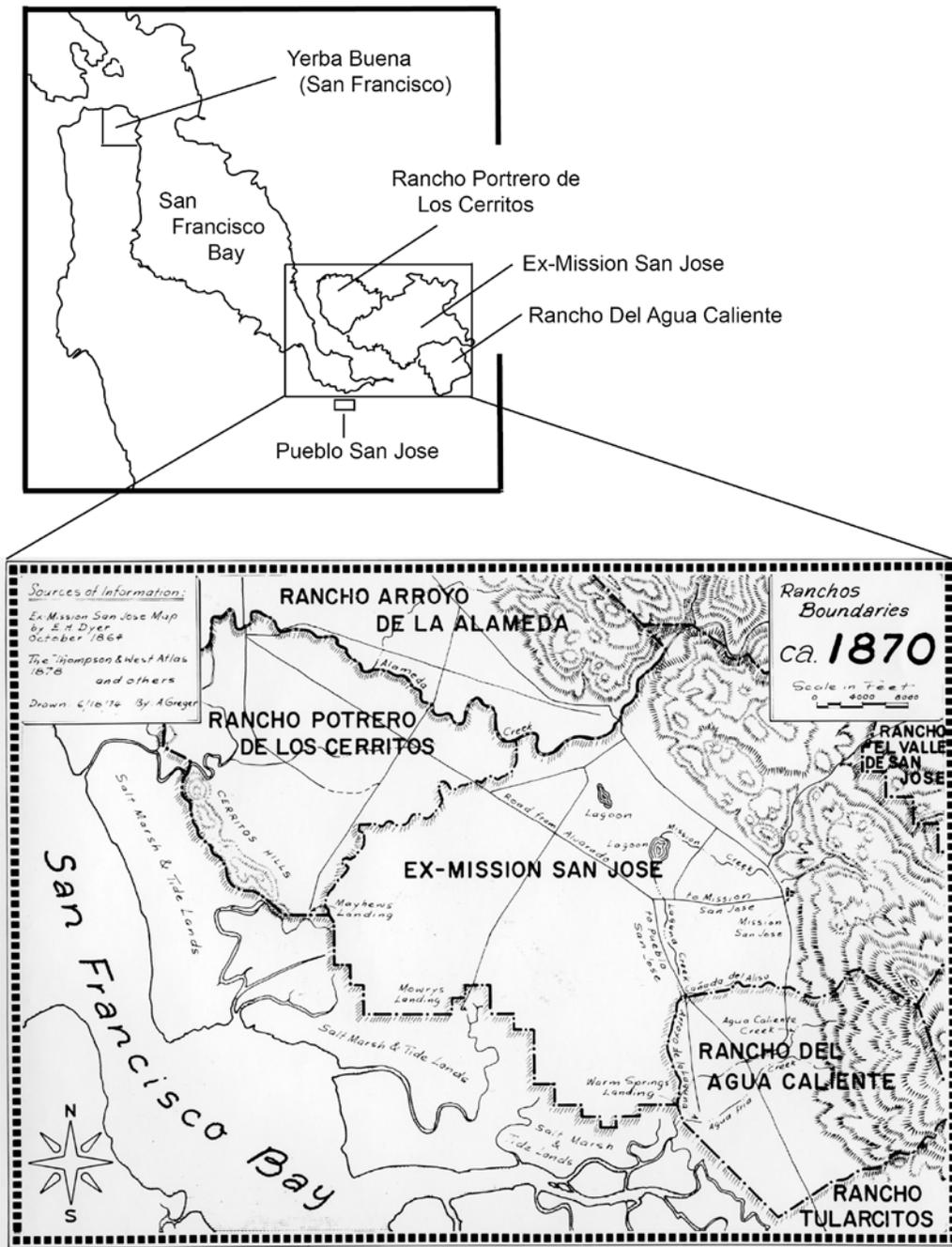
For a description of the New Hope effort, see:
Nash, John D., *In a Goodly Land: Latter-Day Saints of the Stanislaus* (Fresno, California: Linrose Pub. Co, 1997)

The New Hope farms were flooded out and abandoned. Horner and Light were cheated out of their wheat planted with John Marsh. However, the sample plantings of Horner on the former lands of the Mission did well. Therefore, Horner and his wife moved to the abandoned Mission and then to a nearby adobe to continue farming the area. The remaining former lands of the Mission (Ex-Mission San Jose) had good soil, had been well fertilized by roaming animals since prehistoric times (and cattle since Mission and Ranchero days), and were watered near the Mission by Mission Creek. There was a

small community about the Mission, the only settlement in the East Bay at that time. So it was an ideal spot to begin farming.



John M. Horner, as a young Farmer in California
From book by John M. Horner, *National Finance and Public Money* (Hawaii, H.I.: Hawaiian Gazette Co., 1898)



Land Grants in the lower East Bay as they existed in 1846, at the time of the occupation
 For reference, they are here superposed on a map of roads that came to exist 20 to 30 years later.
 (Courtesy of Al Gregr)



**The abandoned Mission San Jose as it probably appeared in 1847
(*First known photographic image, by C.E. Watkins, 1853*)**



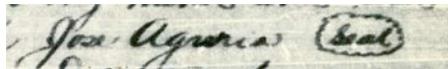
The Modern Reconstructed Mission San Jose (*Photo courtesy of Lila Bringhurst*)

The Mission is one of the great historical landmarks of the community, and was important long before the Mormons came. But since the Mormon story begins here, the Mission takes on a small additional relevance for Mormons in particular.

The Mission was founded in 1797, nearly fifty years before the *Brooklyn* arrived. It became one of the larger, more prosperous in the coastal chain of missions. At its zenith, it had in residence over 2,000 Indians. The original mission lands covered the whole East Bay and extended east over the Contra Costa Range and through the Livermore Valley to the Diablo Range. (Mission cattle grazed on Mount Diablo.) However, the Spanish government stopped supporting the missions and the Mexican government secularized them starting in 1833, thirteen years before Horner arrived in California. After Mission San Jose was secularized, most of its lands were dispersed as land grants to local Mexican residents. Some of these are shown in the above map. A large parcel of land about the mission and extending to the Bay, however, called Ex-Mission San Jose, was left in an ambiguous state of ownership. The original intent was for this land to be given to the native Indians released from service at the mission, but that transfer had not taken place.

After being secularized, the mission fell into a state of disrepair and most of the inhabitants left. A small community continued, however. What Horner found at Mission San Jose when he arrived in 1847, in addition to the rich soil, water, and an ideal climate, was acreage that might be rented or purchased. And he found natives around the Mission that might be hired for labor. Horner rented from the caretaker Padre a small plot of farm land a short distance down Mission Creek from the Mission. He built (or had built) a small adobe home near the Creek and there began his career as a California farmer.

As Horner began farming, an Indian came and said that the land Horner was farming had been promised to him. Horner paid him for his rights. Then an American came and said that he had already purchased the land Horner was farming. Horner also paid the American for the land and took the Indian and the American to the Santa Clara recorder's office and had a deed recorded to Horner. (At that time, Washington Township was part of Santa Clara County.) The deed was signed October 1847 by the American (apparently J. F. Reed) and signed with a mark by the Indian (the recorder writing his name). He had apparently taken the name Jose Aguria. The Indian reserved the right to live on the land for the rest of his life, and remained a good friend of John Horner.

A close-up photograph of a handwritten signature in cursive script, which reads "Jose Aguria". To the right of the signature is a circular seal or stamp, partially obscured by the ink.

Horner, in his autobiographies, tells of an experience (or two separate experiences) living in his humble new adobe home during their second year in California: Concerning the adobe, Horner writes,

There were two rooms, and a chimney was built up with the division wall, which accommodated a fireplace in each room. One dark, blustery, rainy night in December, a company of Indians ... were caught from home in the storm, and knocked at our door for shelter. We welcomed them in, and let them occupy the outer room. No, we did not fear them ... We knew only one of them, but the happy indications of the remainder on being admitted, convinced us that all was well. We closed, but did not fasten, the door between us. Having had our experience in the mines, we bade them farewell, and thus ended our second year in California. . . .

During the night an ox with long wide spreading horns, with others of his race, was getting what comfort they could by sheltering themselves on the lee side of the house, there being no trees, no rocks, no fences or anything else behind which they could get for shelter; but this particular ox not being able to get close enough to the wall on account of his long horns, stood with the side of his head at the window, and by slipping

his horn through between the wall of the house and the muslin window into the house a foot or two, he could then stand close to the wall and thus be better sheltered. We could not see him nor he us, but we gently felt his horn; and did not molest him ...

Despite Horner buying his farm twice, from the Indian and Reed, in 1850, two former Mexican governors, Juan B. Alvarado and Andres Pico, through an agent, told Horner that they had the deed for the whole of Ex-Mission San Jose, including his farm. They offered to sell the entire 30,000 acre tract to Horner. With partners, John Horner purchased even those lands. Horner (to meet mortgage payments) immediately began selling parts of the land to others, many non-Mormons and in particular some of the *Brooklyn* and Mormon Battalion Saints. All began farming the land.



John and Elizabeth Imlay Horner (Courtesy of Elizabeth H. Wagner, Sonoma, California)

Farming at first was incredibly prosperous. However, because of a gold panic and dropping food prices (because of overproduction), Horner and many other farmers eventually went bankrupt. Also the deed for the Ex-Mission San Jose lands that Horner purchased eventually proved fraudulent. After many years of litigation and an appeal to Congress, the farmers were able to buy back their farms for \$1.25 per acre. Horner ended up with just 72 acres. The John Horner final property is shown on Mission Creek in the *Thompson & West Atlas* of 1878:

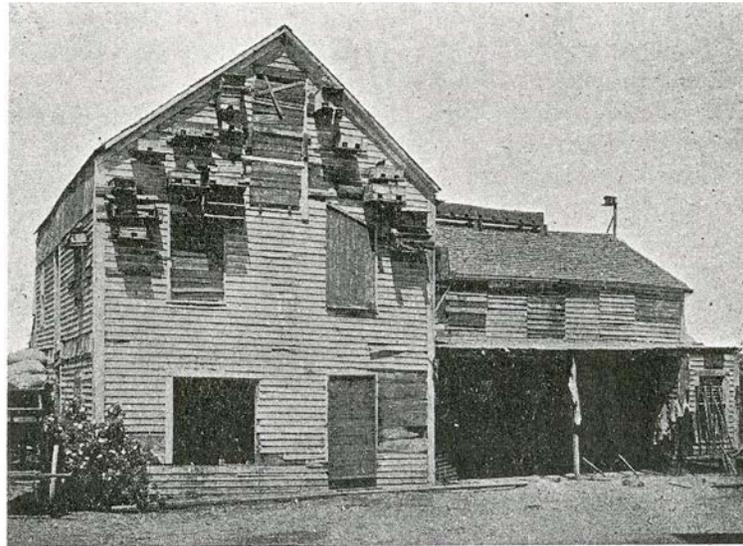


Land along Mission Creek, from near the Mission to the Lagoon, as shown in the Thompson & West Atlas of 1878. Horner's property at that time is shown as the 72 acres as Mission Creek crosses what is now Driscoll Road.



Aerial View of the locations of Mission Creek (along the line of vegetation between Palm Ave. and Driscoll Road, indicated by arrows), and the final farm of John Horner (where Mission Creek crosses Driscoll Road). A trail, Mission Creekwalk, follows along Mission Creek. About

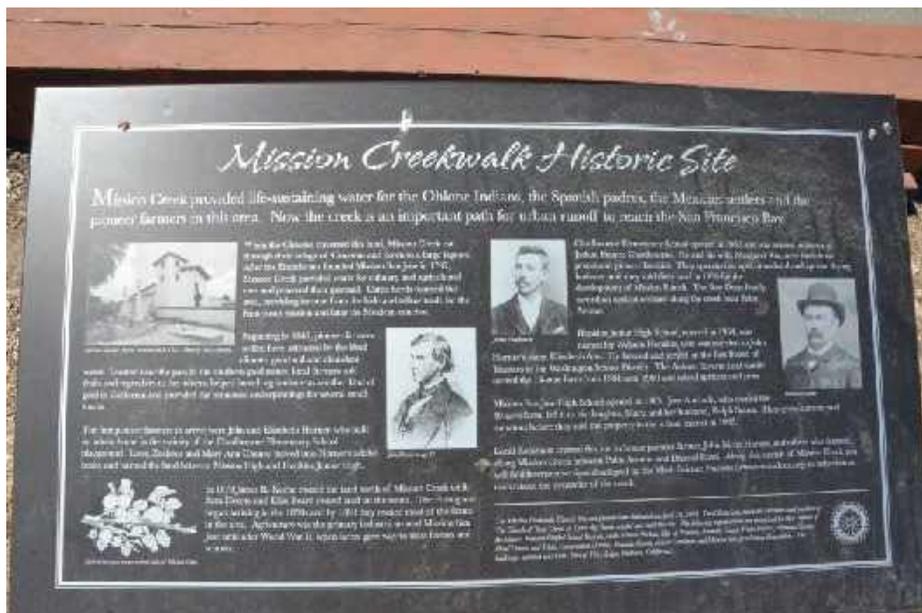
half way along the trail would be the location of the land Zacheus Cheney of the Mormon Battalion farmed for a few years. (Courtesy of Google Earth, arrows added)



The John M. Horner house on Driscoll Road as it appeared in 1904, before it was torn down (Picture from *History of Washington Township* by the Country Club of Washington Township Research Committee, third ed., page 116)

Mission Creek Creekwalk:

Local Rotary clubs worked with other organizations to add interpretive plaques to the walking trail along Mission Creek from Palm Avenue to Driscoll Road. The plaques inform the classes and joggers who use the popular trail of the history of the creek and the surrounding area. Two of these plaques are as follows:





Plaques that the Rotary Clubs in Fremont dedicated on April 18, 2008 on the Creekwalk, near the site of the first Horner adobe and the home of Zacheus and Mary Ann Cheney. The plaques are in recognition of Horner's accomplishments and his importance to the history of the area. (Courtesy of Washington Township Historical Society)
<http://www.washingtontownshiphist.org/WTmarkers.pdf>

The inscription on the latter plaque reads as follows:

John Meirs Horner was one of the most prominent pioneers in Alameda County. He was born in 1821 on a farm in New Jersey and became a teacher and part-time farmer. He joined The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in 1840.

He married Elizabeth Imlay shortly before sailing from New York City on February 4, 1845, with other Mormon pioneers on the ship Brooklyn. They left as part of an overall exodus of their church from the United States, to escape religious persecution. They planned to settle in Mexico's Alta California, but by the time the ship arrived in Yerba Buena (San Francisco) on July 31, 1846, California had just become part of the United States.

John and Elizabeth came to Mission San Jose in 1847 and bought land near Mission Creek. Because of the unsettled land titles, they had to pay for it several times. They built an adobe home near the present-day Chadbourne Elementary School playground. William, their first of eleven children, was born on December 26, 1847.

Using water from the creek, they grew wheat, barley, peas, potatoes, onion, turnips, cabbage, tomatoes, beets, pumpkins, carrots, watermelons, and muskmelons. They also

raised pigs and cattle and had horses, mules and oxen. They built strong fences to protect their crops from wild animals and wandering ex-mission cattle.

Horner led the way in California for large-scale agriculture and modern farming techniques and had some hundreds of acres under production. He became wealthy by selling his farm produce to wholesalers in San Francisco and locally to gold miners. John won an award for his outstanding produce at California's first agricultural fair in San Francisco in 1851 and is recognized as one of the state's first pioneer farmers.

At one time John and his brother, William, owned most of the land in what is now the city of Fremont. They built a flour mill and operated a stagecoach and steamboat called Union. Horner founded Union City, named after the boat. They lost much of their wealth in the bank panic of 1854, but through hard work they recovered and continued to farm.

Horner encouraged other pioneers to come to Washington Township (now the tri-cities area). In Centerville, John built the first schoolhouse in Alameda County. The Mormons, Presbyterian, and Methodists also used it as a church on Sundays and as a social gathering place during the week. It was later moved to Irvington.

John established Driscoll Road and built a Victorian house near the creek for his family. He built another Victorian house for William, who returned to New Jersey in 1852 to bring other family members to California. William's home still survives on Driscoll near Washington Boulevard.

In 1879 the Horners moved to Hawaii where they operated a sugar cane plantation for Claus Spreckels on a shares basis. Ever the entrepreneur, John soon had his own plantation and helped develop the sugar cane industry on the islands. Before the revolution he served in the Queen's House of Nobles. John died May 14, 1907, at his ranch in Kukaiiau on the Island of Hawaii.

This plaque was dedicated on April 18, 2008 the 25th anniversary of the Rotary Club of Mission San Jose. The other clubs involved were from Area 3, District 5170 of Rotary International; Rotary Club of Niles, Rotary Club of Fremont, Rotary Club of Fremont Senior; Rotary Club of Newark; Rotary Club of Warm Springs and Rotary Club of Fremont, Union City and Newark (F.U.N.)

Zacheus and Mary Ann Cheney

Zacheus Cheney was a member of the Mormon Battalion. The Battalion was a group of 500 enlisted men that the U.S. government asked of the Mormons while they were on their exodus west to the Rocky Mountains. They were asked to be part of the Mexican-American War, not to fight, but to forge a wagon road across the southwest, so the U.S. could have a winter route to the West Coast.

Ricketts Norma, *Mormon Battalion: United States Army of the West, 1846-1848* (Utah State University Press, 1997)

After Zacheus performed that service and was discharged from the army in Los Angeles, he went to San Francisco and made bricks for a while. While in San Francisco, Zacheus met and fell in love with Mary Ann Fisher, who had come on the *Brooklyn* with her brother Joseph. Since so many had fled the city for the gold mines, the couple had to go to the mines to find someone who could marry them. After marriage, Zachus and Mary Ann bought and farmed land on Mission Creek, upstream from where Horner had made his permanent residence. Mary Ann became pregnant, but died in childbirth. The baby survived, however, and Zacheus eventually married another *Brooklyn* passenger, Amada Evans. When Brigham Young asked the Mormons in California to come to Utah in 1857, Zacheus, Amanda and child left for the Salt Lake Valley. Cheney was chosen captain of the company of Mormon pioneers that assembled in Centerville and left for Utah in August 1857. They went up what is now Fremont Blvd. and then Washington Blvd. to the Mission. Near there they went over the pass toward Stockton and on to the Salt Lake Valley.

Two touching letters, originating at this time, have survived to give us an insight into the lives of those early Saints. After marriage Zacheus and Mary Ann had settled on their little farm on Mission Creek (between what is now Mission San Jose High School and Hopkins Jr. High School). While there, Mary Ann had apparently received letters from her home in Pennsylvania, the first telling of the death of her brother and the second telling of the death of her father. She writes with a touch of homesickness. [Some spelling corrections have been added in the letters.]

[Mission] San Jose August 21, 1850

Mother,

Dear brothers and sisters I take this opportunity of sending these few lines to you to let you know that I am well — hoping that you may all enjoy the same blessing. I received your letter the last of June. I had given up hope of hearing from you any more for I have [w]rote several times and received no answer [for] some time. I thought you were all dead and then again thought you might have started for California and have been looking for you all for more than a year but alas the one that I expected to see here first is no more. Little did I think of hearing of his death so soon as this. I never have received but two letters from you. Both have been sorrowful letters to me. God only knows whose turn [is] next. I have wrote to you about the mines several times and sent in one of the letters some of the gold dust just as I had washed it out my self — something like \$2 — so that you might see it. You might all have done well if you had come out here when the mines first broke out. There is still a very good chance for people that are industrious and saving. There are all sorts of people in California. The mining is not so good as it has been. We have moved from San Francisco and have been farming this summer. Things were very high last winter in this place. Potatoes were \$6 and \$8 a robe (that is, about 25 pounds) cabbage \$2 / head and hens from \$4 -\$6 for one. I sold eggs for \$6 a doz last winter.

I should like if you all were here but you must do as you think best. We think we shall stay here some time as there is still a good chance for us. I was married 2 years ago the 11th of July to Mr. Zacheus Cheney, and I have never had any cause to regret it yet. He has been a kind companion to me. We have no children yet. He has been to the mines several times. The first time he went he did very well. He can tell you better than I so I shall leave off. Joseph [Mary Ann's brother] was well the last time I heard from him. He lives about 15 miles from me and still works at his trade. Write as soon as you get this. The one that I received was more than one year getting here. Send your letters by the mail and then they will be more apt to come safe. Give my love to all of my friends and relations both old and young, especially to Uncle Thomas Davis if he is still living.

[Mary Ann Fisher, Letter, 21 August 1850, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley]

Mary Ann writes, "God only knows whose turn is next." What she doesn't realize is that it is her turn next. On Christmas day in 1850, she gave birth to a little girl and died of complications about a week later. A second letter, from Zacheus Cheney back to her family, has also been preserved.

[Mission] San Jose Feb. 10, 1851
John V. Fisher,

Kind sir I received your letter Feb. 3 dated Nov. 29 and it was with much satisfaction and pleasure to me to hear from you and your family and friends. I have written but a short time ago to you which would enform you of Mary's death and the circumstances attending, but I feel impressed to write this in answer to your last...

I have always been very much delighted with the country and felt satisfied and content but as I am situated at present, ther is no place like home. I am alone without a relative in this country. I have none to see to now but myself and my little girl which is quite a comfort to me. She is now very smart and healthy. She has learned to suck the bottle and is doing finely. She is not only smart, but is pronounced by good judges pretty. That is boasting but however, she is a very nice little girl. If her mother had lived she would have been a great enjoyment for us both, but as it is she must be brought up by others or at least till she is old enough so that I can see to her myself. I call her name Mary. I had several applications for giving her away, but it seemed like tearing my heart in pieces. I could not consent to do so if there was any other chance. So I offered Mrs. [Earl] Marshall \$500 a year for three years if she would take her. She said that she would do it for nothing before she would see her given away.... [Zacheus Cheney, Letter, 10 February 1851, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley]



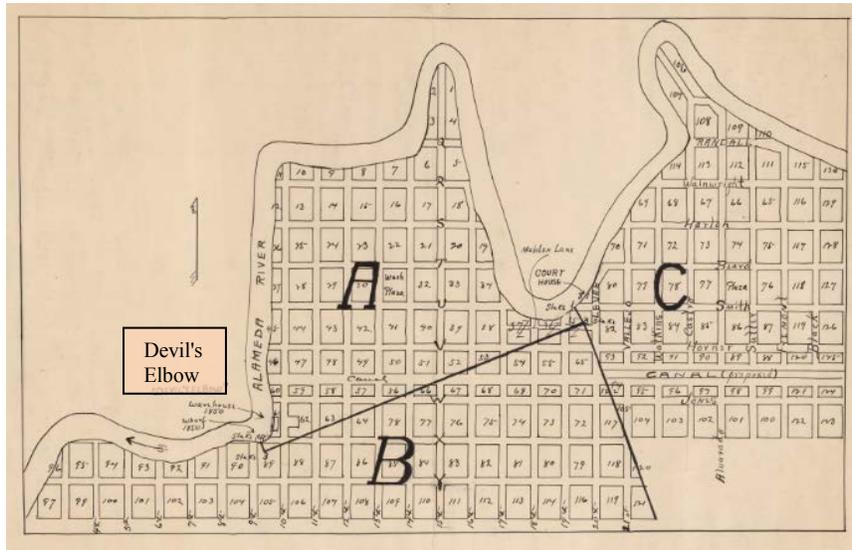
Zacheus Cheney, Little Mary, and Mary Ann Cheney (Courtesy of David Gardner, Salt Lake City, Utah)

Before leaving the discussion of the Mission area, it should also be mentioned that Isaac Goodwin and his large family farmed for a short time on land behind the Mission. The Goodwin family came on the *Brooklyn*. Isaac's wife Laura died on the voyage, leaving Isaac with seven children to raise on his own. The family moved very early to San Bernardino.

2) UNION CITY: THE EMBARCADERO BETWEEN MISSION SAN JOSE AND SAN FRANCISCO

Horner invested most of the money he received from land sales to pay off the mortgage of the Ex-Mission San Jose tract and to invest in community projects. For many years, the Fremont/Newark area was the breadbasket of San Francisco. And the community needed a way to get their produce to markets, especially San Francisco. One of Horner's first investments was establishing an embarcadero on Alameda Creek, at a point to which the Creek is navigable from San Francisco Bay.

The most direct route for Horner and the other farmers of Washington Township to get their produce to San Francisco was down Alameda Creek. At that time the Creek was navigable from the Bay up to what is now Alvarado, and probably further. Horner bought land there, bought the shallow draft, iron-bottom, 87 ton sidewheeler steamboat, the *Union*, and set up an embarcadero. He called the location Union City, named after the steamboat. The *Union* had a lively business carrying people, produce, and supplies back and forth between San Francisco and Washington Township.



Map of Union City, New Haven, and Alvarado by early surveyor William F. Boardman. Section A is the original Union City of John Horner (1850). Section C is the original New Haven of Henry C. Smith (1851). Section B is the original Alvarado of James and Strode (1852). Alvarado gave its name to New Haven in 1853 and gave its land to Union City in 1858. So very early sections A+B became the new Union City and section C became the new Alvarado.

Eventually the whole became Alvarado.

Note the "Devil's Elbow" in Alameda Creek ("River"), where Horner built the embarcadero, associated warehouses, and eventually a steam-driven grist mill.

(Image courtesy of the California Historical Society, caption added)

Union City was an immediate success and Henry C. Smith and the San Francisco law firm of James and Strode bought up adjoining properties. The area therefore began as three communities with three separate names, Union City, New Haven, and Alvarado.

The story of this early beginning at the embarcadero is told in the following:

Bowman, J. N., "New Haven and the Two Alvarados: Early Towns of Alameda County,"
California Historical Society Quarterly, Vol. 12, No. 2 (Jun., 1933), pp. 173-175.

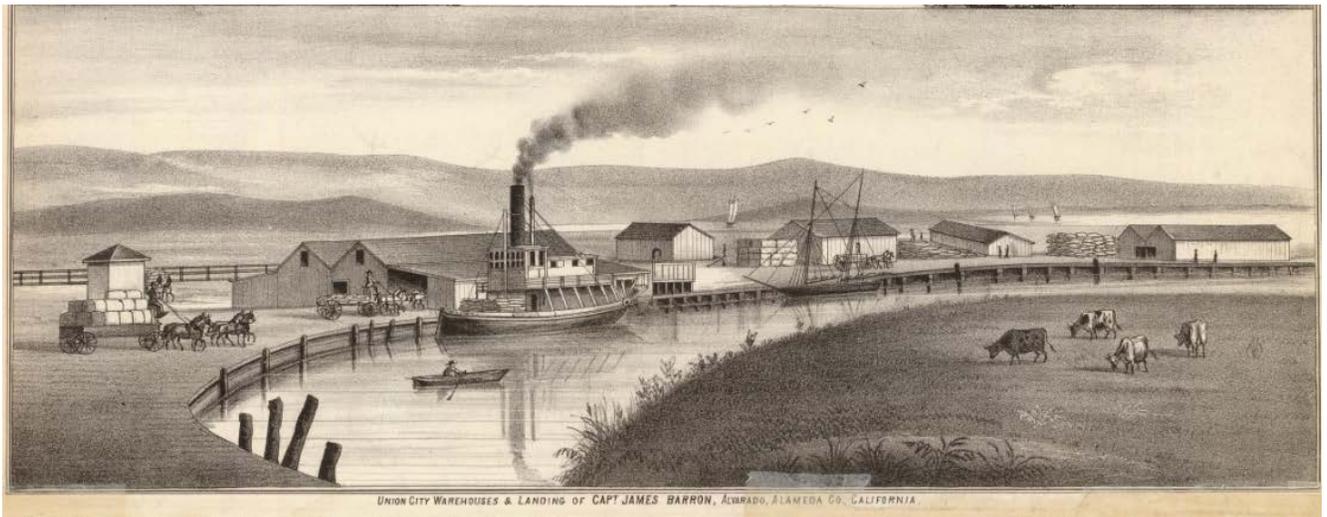
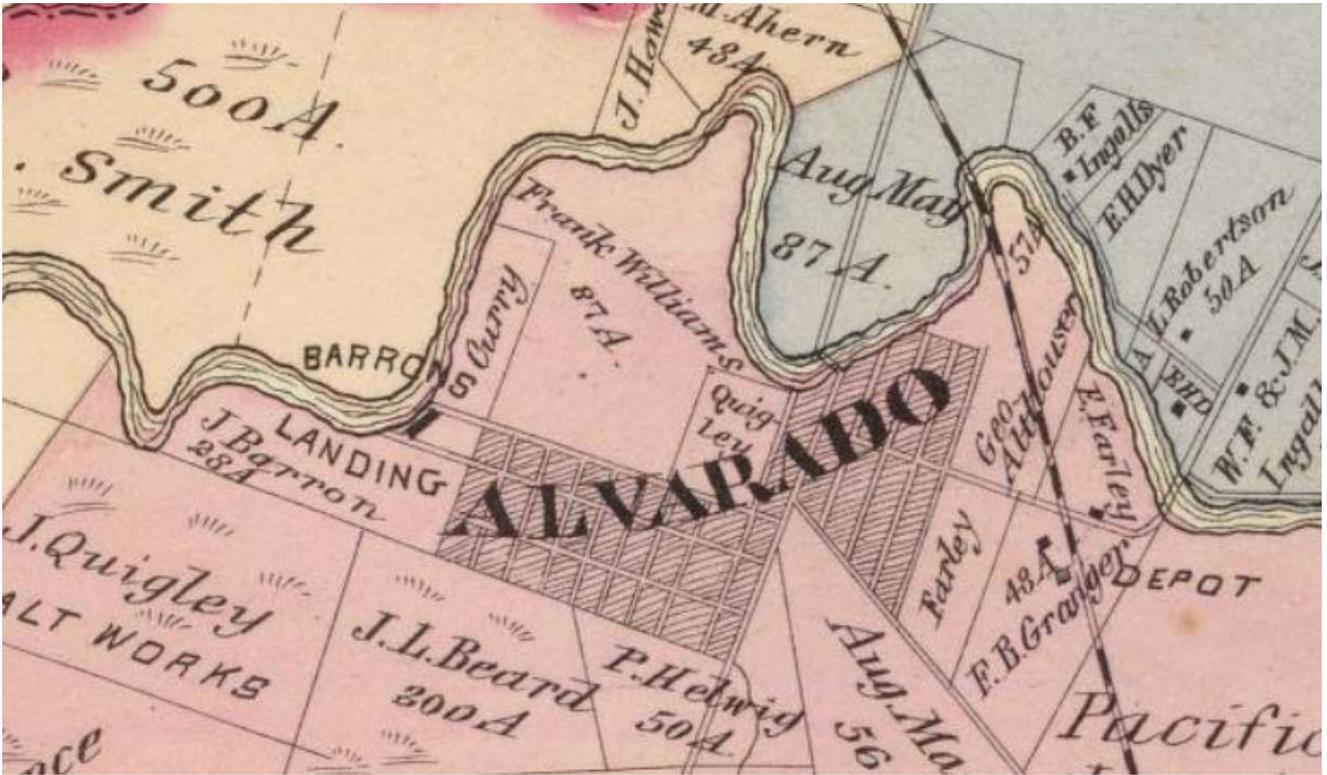
Swenson, Timothy, *Alvarado (New Haven & Union City) 1850-1870*, (Fremont, California: The Museum of Local History, 2010)

A Rev. Franklin Langworthy, who was recording his impressions of California for the people of the East, also made first hand observations of coming upon Union City and traveling into Washington Township. In the spring of 1853 Langworthy climbed aboard the steamboat Union at San Francisco scheduled for Union City. The Union moved out through the harbor crowded with deserted ships (monuments to the mass hysteria of the gold rush) and began the slow passage down the bay. The *Union* finally came to the mouth of Alameda Creek and entered the slough or tidewater portion of that stream. Langworthy wrote in his journal:

April 2nd—Embarked on board a small steamboat, for Union City. We ran for forty miles on the Bay, and then entered a creek, which we ascended seven miles. The stream is difficult to navigate, on account of being so crooked. In the seven miles, we ran towards every point of the compass, winding our way through level, sandy land, covered with native clover. The prospect from the deck of the boat is delightful. On one side are the flashing waters of the Bay. Around us, a vast level lawn, dotted here and there with country houses, painted white, while in the background rises an amphitheater of hills of the most vivid green [still green from the winter rains], forming a semi-circle around the Bay. Union City is a small place at the head of navigation on the creek. Here I landed, and walked seven miles up the valley. Each way from the road, are continuous fields of grain, or potatoes, and other crops, growing with rank luxuriance. In this valley are produced those vegetables, of unusual size, with which the markets of the country are supplied, and which have been exhibited as specimens at the Agricultural State Fair. (Langworthy, *Scenery of the Plains* (1855) 204-6.)

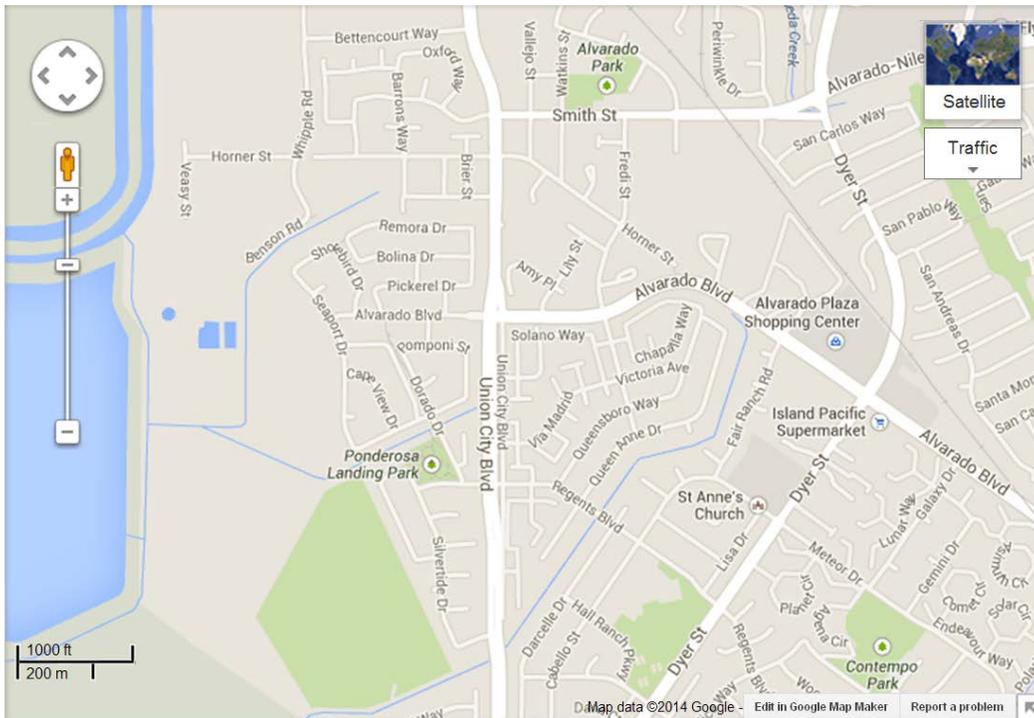
Isaac Nash, a Mormon, lived in Union City, if only for a while. He was not on the *Brooklyn*. However, he went overland to Salt Lake City and there married Hester Elvira Poole. Hester's mother, Mary Poole, had come to California on the *Brooklyn*. So shortly after Isaac and Hester were married they went to California to bring the mother back to Salt Lake City. Isaac worked as a blacksmith in Union City to earn money for the trip across the Sierra. Also, Fanetta Horner Ralph, John Horner's sister, was baptized and became a member of the LDS Church in New Jersey before coming west. She married Joseph Ralph and also lived in Union City.

Horner built his landing and warehouses about 1851, but because of his financial problems soon lost his holdings in the Union City area. The embarcadero was taken over and operated for many years under the ownership of Richard and James Barron. A James J. Stokes also operated a business at the landing. By the time of the 1878 Alameda County Atlas of Thompson & West, that embarcadero apparently was in the possession of Capt. James Barron and the three communities had become one, Alvarado. A map of the Barron embarcadero location was included in the Atlas. The Atlas also has a sketch of the Barrons Landing. It probably didn't look much different when Horner was operating the Landing..



**Map and Sketch of the Barrons Landing at Union City and Alvarado as shown in 1878
Thompson & West Atlas**

Today the site of that embarcadero is adjacent to Veasy Street in present Alvarado. (Since Horner Street comes to a dead end coming off of Union City Blvd., one must reach Veasy Street by way of Bettencourt Way, Whipple Road, and the back section of Horner Street.)



Map of present Alvarado (Courtesy of Google Earth, Google Maps.)

An aerial view of the site can be seen using Google Earth. As the view below shows, there is little water in the Creek. Alameda Creek water is now diverted to another route to the Bay. This old branch of Alameda Creek ends shortly above the "Devil's Elbow" and this section is used mostly to carry excess run-off water of the community to the Bay. To accomplish this, there is a pump station shown on the Creek just below Cagwin & Dorward. Cagwin & Dorward extends to the full length of Veasy Street.



**Arial view of the site of the Union City Embarcadero at the elbow of Alameda Creek
(The site is now blocked by Cagwin & Dorward (landscape contractors), by locked gates on each
side of Cagwin & Dorward, and by the Union Sanitary District facilities below Cagwin &
Dorward.)
(Courtesy of Google Earth)**

Two more distant views of the scene are informative. In the second view, it can be seen that the pump station is only the tip of a very large Union Sanitary District facility. As can be seen, the entire embarcadero site is blocked to the public by Cagwin & Dorward and the Union Sanitary District facility. Also shown below are the gates on each side of Cagwin & Dorward. These gates lead up to the embankment but are kept locked, and going beyond them, we are told, is considered trespassing.



Aerial View of Veasy Street and Cagwin & Dorward (Courtesy of Google Earth)



Aerial View of "Devil's Elbow," the Union Sanitary District facility, and Cagwin & Dorward (Courtesy of Google Earth)



**Gate to the south of Cagwin & Dorward
The road leads to the Alameda Creek Levee.**



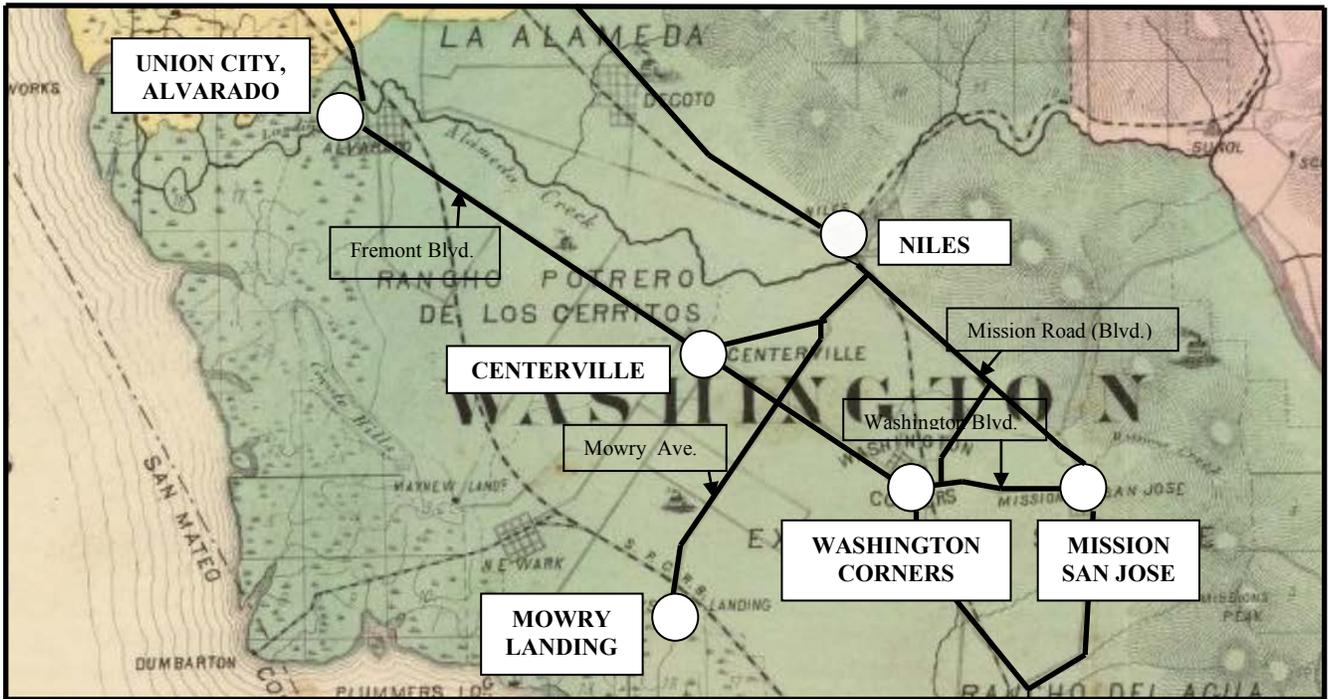
**Gate to the north of Cagwin & Dorward
The road leads to the Alameda Creek Levee.**

The gates, as indicated, block short roads leading up to the levee or embankment that has been constructed to better control the once flowing Creek water. Because of the levee, one can no longer stand on what was the banks of Alameda Creek as they were in the 1800s. Considering these two locked gates, considering the prospect of trespassing on restricted property, and considering the bureaucratic problems in getting legal access, one quickly resorts to Google Earth to visit this historic location. Apparently, access through the gates can be obtained from the Union Sanitary District or the California Department of Fish & Game.

It would be pleasing if the City or County could provide a raised, enclosed, gazebo-like viewing-platform at the levee (with posted information and pictures) so the public could easily visit and learn about this important historical site. A stairway to the raised viewing-platform could be reached if there was a short public passageway or if one of the gates was moved back to the levee.

3) CENTERVILLE: HALF-WAY POINT FROM UNION CITY TO THE MISSION

The first roads of the area were not much more than trails used by the natives of the Mission. When Horner arrived and purchased the Ex-Mission San Jose tract, he began to survey the area and lay out permanent roads. One trail along the foothills from the Mission to the Niles area became Mission Road and now Mission Blvd. Another trail went from the Mission to Washington Corners (Irvington) and then on toward San Jose. That branch between the Mission and Washington Corners became the road Washington Blvd. A trail from Washington Corners to Horner's Union City became a main road, eventually to be called Fremont Blvd. Horner built a road connecting Mission Road to Washington Corners, going past his and his brother's residences. That road came to be known as Driscoll Road. The residences of the area petitioned the county for a road between Mission Road in the Niles area and Centerville. That was called the Niles Road. It now leaves Mission Blvd. as Mowry Ave. and branches to the right as Peralta Blvd. The branch to the left became the continuation of Mowry Ave.



Map of Washington Township from the Thompson & West Atlas of 1878 with an overlay showing the Towns and main roads of the 1850s

Half way between Union City and the Mission, Horner established a new community which he called Centerville (a name it carries today). In Centerville, Horner built a one room school house, which was also used for church services on Sundays. The community also built what is now the Pioneer Cemetery there. Both are important historically for Mormons.

The Horner School House



The Horner School House, after it had been moved to Irvington (picture from *History of Washington Township* by the Country Club of Washington Township Research Committee, third ed., page 123).

John Horner built the schoolhouse in Centerville in 1850. The first school teacher was Harvey Green (actually born Hervy Green), a Mormon. The Mormons used the building for Church services on Sundays. The Presbyterians and the Methodists also used the building for worship services, sharing it on alternate Sundays. The schoolhouse was eventually moved to the Irvington area and used for church services by the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. Finally it was integrated into someone's home in the Irvington area. That home eventually was being demolished to make way for commercial operations, so it was burned down by the Fire Department for fire practice. One of the firemen saved a redwood board from the school, and it is displayed in the Washington Township Museum of Local History.

Centerville Pioneer Cemetery

Actually, the first cemetery in Centerville was not the present Centerville Pioneer Cemetery, but a cemetery on property owned by John Horner and on the banks of the Sanjon de los Alisos -- a land depression, once the creek bed of a tributary of Alameda Creek. "Sanjon de los Alisos" has been translated "Ravine of the Willows," and that ravine or creek bed became the boundary between the land grant Rancho Potrero de los Cerritos and Ex-Mission San Jose. This lost cemetery, at this creek bed, became known as "The Lost Mormon Graveyard."

One can easily see the route of the Sanjon de los Alisos on a map in the original Alameda County Atlas of 1878. Fortunately, a reproduction of this map can be seen in the Alameda County Map Collection of David Rumsey on the Internet (just Google-search "Rumsey Alameda County map collection"). The map to examine is Alameda County map #4. On the map, the route of the Sanjon is

The present Centerville Pioneer Cemetery was made possible in 1855 when George Lloyd donated a 2 1/2 acre lot to Rev. William W. Brier for the Presbyterian Church. Rev. Brier had a church built on the lot and in 1858 laid out the Cemetery on the same lot. After being destroyed by earthquake, rebuilt, and then destroyed by fire, the original church has now been replaced by a replica.



Centerville Locations of the Pioneer Cemetery (upper left) and the Horner School House (between the Cemetery and where the Southern Pacific Station now stands, at the right)

(Courtesy of Google Earth)

The Horner's School House was later moved to the Irvinton area. In this view, Fremont Blvd. is to the lower left, and the train station is at the far right.



Centerville Pioneer Cemetery as seen from Bonde Way

**The replica church is seen on the right. Because of the vandalism that destroyed the Church, it is not surprising that the Cemetery is now surrounded by a fence and locked gates. For entry, one should contact the local Presbyterian Church. Contact information is posted at the Cemetery.
(Courtesy of Google Earth)**

Mormons buried in the Centerville Pioneer Cemetery are the following:

Joseph and Jerusha Nichols, passengers on the ship *Brooklyn*.

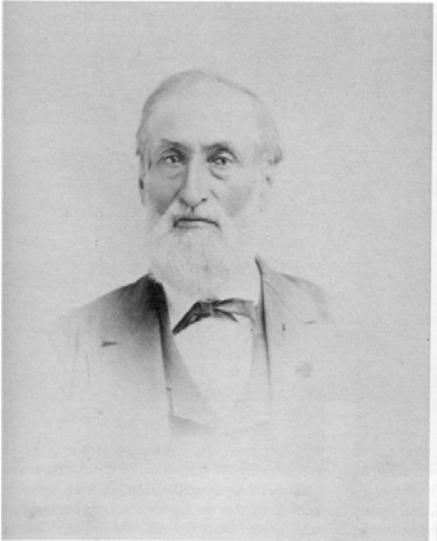
John Jacob and Ruth Riser. Jacob was in the Mormon Battalion. He married Ruth in Salt Lake City and brought her to California. She had come overland.

Stacy Horner, John Horner's father, was buried here, but was since moved by the family to the Irvington Cemetery.

Barton Mowry, who came on the *Brooklyn*, was buried here, and was also reburied at the Irvington Cemetery.

Jonathan and Sarah Griffith, who sailed on the *Brooklyn*, are buried here.

The Graves of the Nichols and Risers in the Centerville Cemetery



Joseph and Jerusha Nichols (Courtesy of Thomas K. Champion, Fremont, California)

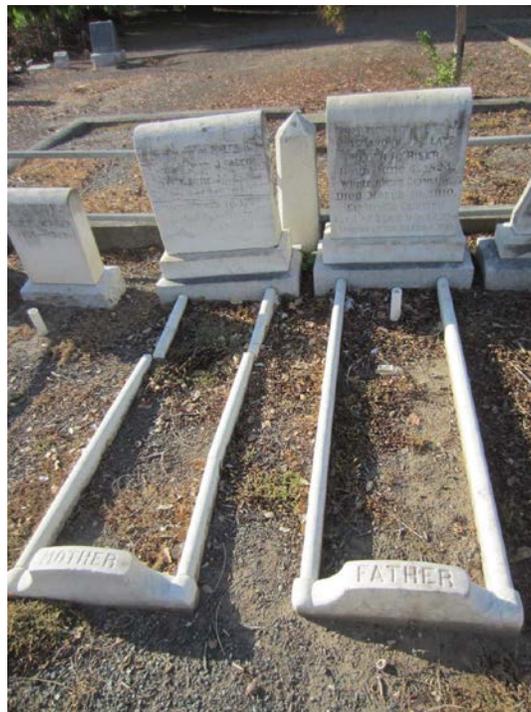


John and Jerusha Nichols grave markers

John and Jerusha are discussed later when their farm is discussed.



John Jacob and Helen Allen Riser and their Grave markers



John Riser and his parents had immigrated from Germany. In the early days of the Church, John joined the Church and served as a missionary in Ohio. He drove one of the first ox teams in the overland trek out of Nauvoo. He was eager to enlist in the Battalion. After the Battalion march, he also

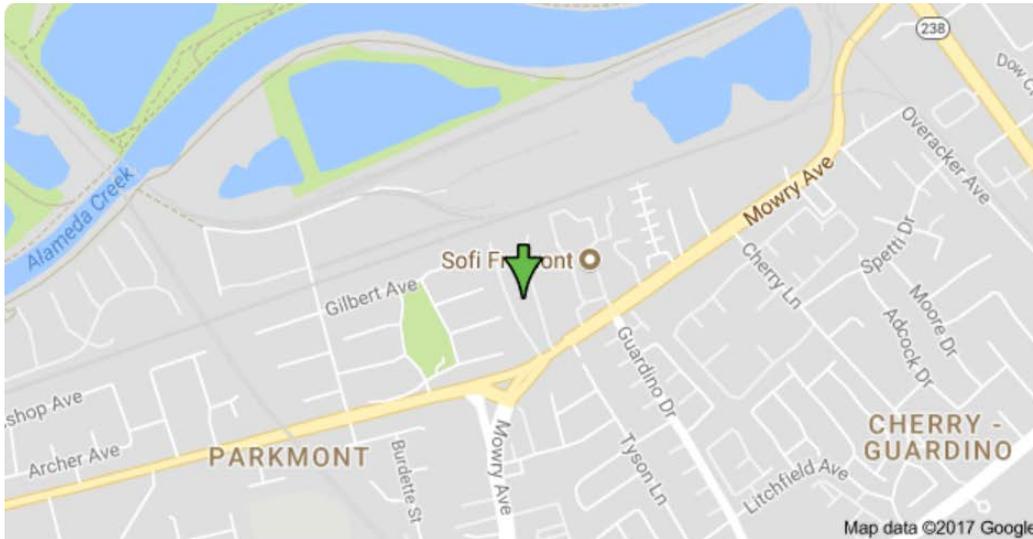
served in the Mormon Volunteers stationed in San Diego and went to Salt Lake City by the southern route when he was discharged.

Vurtinus, John F., "The Mormon Volunteers: The Recruitment and Service of a Unique Military Company." *The Journal of San Diego History*, Summer 1979, Volume 25, Number 3

Riser's pride in being part of the Mormon Battalion is shown by that being mentioned on his gravestone. Riser admitted in his diary (not available to the public) that he had a militaristic spirit in him, and was excited about being a part of a military unit of his country. In Salt Lake City he met Helen Allen, who had come overland with her parents. Helen lost her mother during the first winter in the Salt Lake Valley and her father during the third. John and Helen fell in love and decided to go back to California. They went to the gold fields for a while and then came to the Centerville area, living and working for a while with John Naile. Finally they earned enough to settle on a farm of their own, a nearly eighty-six acre tract outside of Centerville. (That land is now west of Blacow Road and between Central and Thornton Avenues. The present Nimitz 880 Freeway and interchange probably cuts through the corner of the area of the Riser farm.) Helen's brother, Charles Allen, ran the stagecoach for John Homer.



**Thompson & West 1878 Atlas showing the location of the Riser farm
The farm is shown in the lower left and the village of Centerville is shown in the upper right.**



Location of the Nichols farm, 1059 Mowry Ave. (Courtesy of Google Earth, Google Maps)



**Property at 1059 Mowry Ave. as seen from the back end
The Nichols home is to the back end of the property and, from this view, to the left in the corner.
The property fronts on Mowry Ave. at the top of the picture. (Courtesy of Google Earth, arrow added)**



**The Nichols home as seen from the back of Alameda County Water District property
The train at the left, after the back end of the property, is on the track operated by Capitol
Corridor line, Amtrak, and the Union Pacific Railroad. According to the 1878 Thompson &
West Atlas, the property in Nichols day went all the way back to Alameda Creek. (*Photo courtesy
of Lila Bringham*)**

And at the Other End of Mowry Ave., We Find the Mowry Family



Origin Mowry and Delina Cheney Mowry

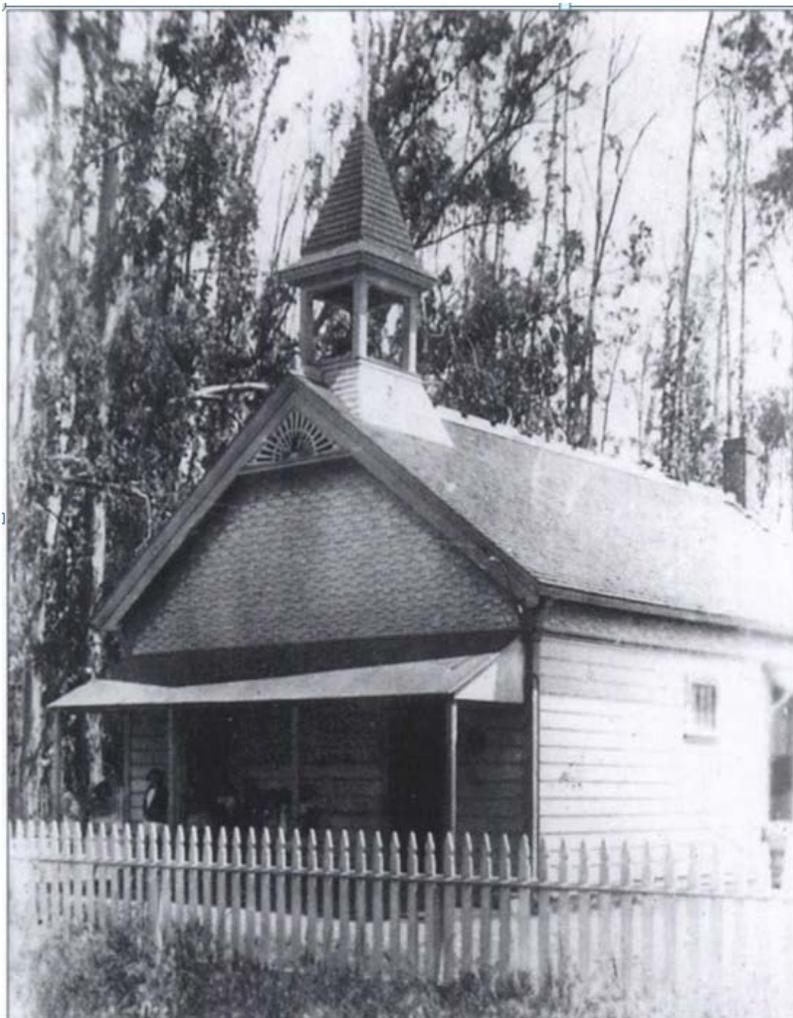
Origin Mowry (left, name originally pronounced Moe Ree) sailed on the *Brooklyn* with his parents, Barton and Ruth Mowry, and his brother, Rhanaldo Mowry. Origin had a farm near the west end of what is now Mowry Avenue. The rest of the Mowry family lived in San Francisco. Origin lost sight in one eye through an accident.

Delina Cheney (right) was not on the *Brooklyn* but came to San Francisco and Washington Township, perhaps to visit her brother Zacheus Cheney. She was married to Origin Mowry in San Francisco in May of 1854. [Photos courtesy of Margaret A. Smith, Alameda, California.]

Origin Mowry was a stonemason by trade and worked at various jobs until the discovery of gold. He mined gold for a while but, as the owner of a small sloop (the *Neptune*), he found an easier occupation was carrying passengers from San Francisco to Sutter's Fort. Origin took the gold he had mined and the money he made with his sloop and went to Chile to buy merchandise. He made a fortune by bringing the goods back to San Francisco and selling them at inflated prices. In 1850 he built a home on a farm of 225 acres in Washington Township (now near the end of Mowry Avenue.). He also built Mowry Landing, at a slough from the Bay. With the sloop and the Landing, he was able to keep contact with his family in San Francisco and also carry other passengers and various cargo back and forth between the Landing and San Francisco.

Origin and Delina Cheney had four children and lived out their lives in Washington Township. Delina's cape was handed down through the family and is now on display in the Washington Township Museum of Local History in Fremont.

Toward the end of Mowry Ave. of that day, one would come to the Mowry School. The school itself, much remodeled and deteriorated, was stored for a while at the Patterson Farm, but has now been destroyed.



Mowry School built in about 1854
(Courtesy of Washington Township Historical Society)

Today, lower Mowry Ave leads past a used auto parts store / car and truck salvage yard and to private property and a locked gate, so much of this historic area is presently inaccessible to the public. However, the following is a modern aerial view of Mowry Landing.



Mowry Avenue going out to Mowry Landing and the beginning of Mowry Slough, which empties into San Francisco Bay (Courtesy of Google Earth.)



Map in Atlas of 1878 showing the relative locations of Mowry Landing and the Mowry property at that time

An excerpt from a modern newspaper article about the Mowrys tells of the activity at Mowry's Landing in Mission and early Township days:

Early in 1850 Origin Mowry made a trip to Valparaiso, purchasing a stock of merchandise which he sold at tremendous profit in San Francisco.

Later that year he explored along the eastern edge of the bay and bought land at an old landing used by Mission San Jose padres to ship hides and tallow.

Mowry's Landing became a busy place. Warehouses were built to store hay and grain from the surrounding area and from the Livermore Valley from which coal was also brought by wagons.

Barges and small boats came up the Mowry's Landing slough to discharge cargoes of lumber and other goods to take on the produce grown on the rich black lands beside the bay until late in the last century.

(Patricia Looms, San Jose News, 8 Oct. 1976)

5) DRISCOLL ROAD: CONNECTING MISSION ROAD TO WASHINGTON CORNERS

A road connecting the Mission Blvd. directly to the Irvington area, goes past the properties of John Horner and William Horner (John's brother and partner). John Horner lived first at the abandoned Mission, second at an adobe on Mission Creek about half way between present Mission San Jose High

William and John both went with their families to Hawaii in 1879. In Hawaii they both worked in the sugar industry, but this time took independent career paths. Their parents remained in Washington Township and are buried in the Irvington Memorial Cemetery.



William Y. Horner



Home of William Y. Horner at 3101 Driscoll Road

Graves in the Irvington Memorial Cemetery



Burial Monument for Stacy and Sarah Horner, parents of John and William Horner
The location of the Horner grave marker can be determined by its location relative to the Irvington Presbyterian Church across Chapel Way. Stacy and Sarah Horner came to California after John Horner started to have farming success.

If one stands as this picture was taken, the grave markers of Barton and Origin and Delina Mowry are a short distance behind and to one's left.



The Mowry Family Grave Monument

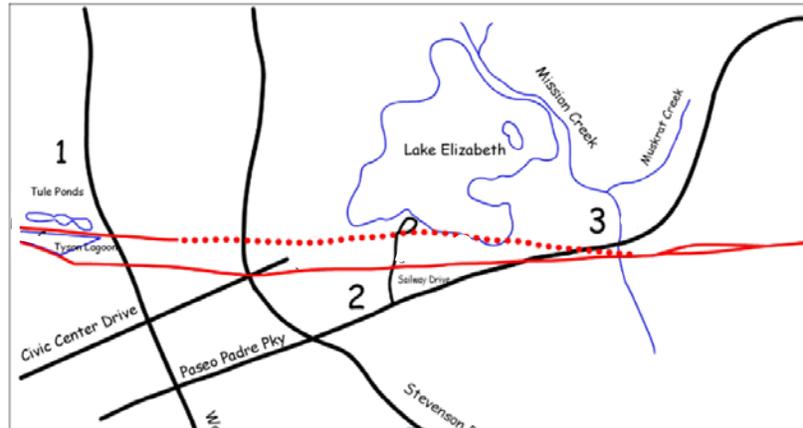
Barton's grave and horizontal marker is behind and to the left (half hidden) of the large family marker. Origin and Delina's graves and upright markers are behind and to the right of the large family marker. Barton and Origin came on the *Brooklyn*. Delina came later.

John Joyce, another *Brooklyn* passenger, lived for a time in Irvington and was buried in the Irvington Memorial Cemetery. He and his wife Caroline divorced. Caroline and their daughter Augusta went to Utah. Caroline was buried in St. George and Augusta was buried in Salt Lake City.

6) ALONG THE FAULT LINE: CLEAR LAKE TO STIVERS LAGOON

Two significant Mormon landmarks of Washington Township adjacent to the Hayward Fault that passes through the Township are the Tule Ponds and Lake Elizabeth (which replaced Stivers Lagoon). The fault passes midway between Mission Blvd. and Fremont Blvd. We use this Hayward Fault line, or the two lagoons it connects, as a reference line for discussing further Mormon historical sites.

The Tule ponds are caused by the sinking of the ground between two strands of the Hayward Fault.



Harward Fault (shown by the dashed and continuous horizontal lines)

The number (1) indicates the location of Tule Ponds at Tyson Lagoon; (2) indicates the location of the Fremont Earthquake Exhibit; and (3) indicates the location of the Stivers Lagoon Nature Area. Stivers Lagoon has been replaced by Lake Elizabeth. (Illustration courtesy of Math Science Nucleus) <https://msnucleus.org/haywardfault/location.htm>

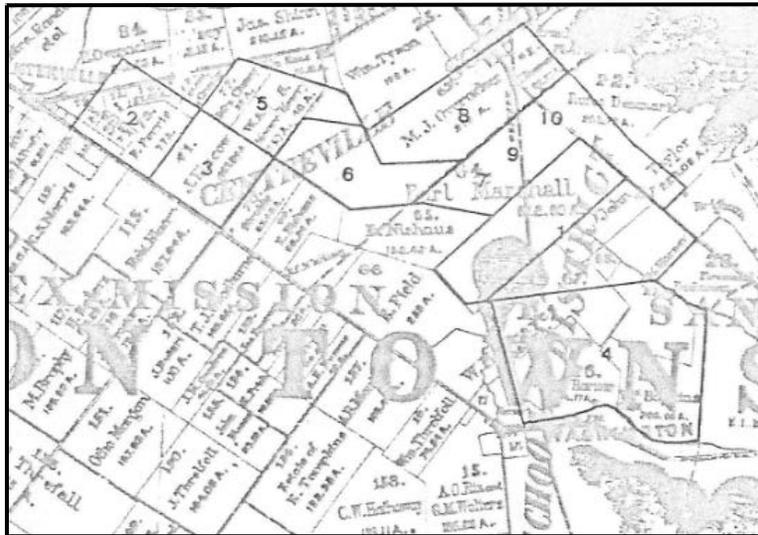
See also <https://msnucleus.org/watersheds/tule/history.html>

The Tule Ponds, or "sag ponds," receive storm water run-off from the surrounding area and Morrison Canyon -- as well, perhaps, of water percolating up through the fault from underground aquifers. At present, the ponds are next to the BART station, but in pioneer times the pond was larger and extended southeast beyond Walnut Ave. In those times it was often called Clear Lake. Driving along Walnut Avenue, the once extension of Clear Lake is noticed only as a slight depression in the road as one goes by the BART Station.

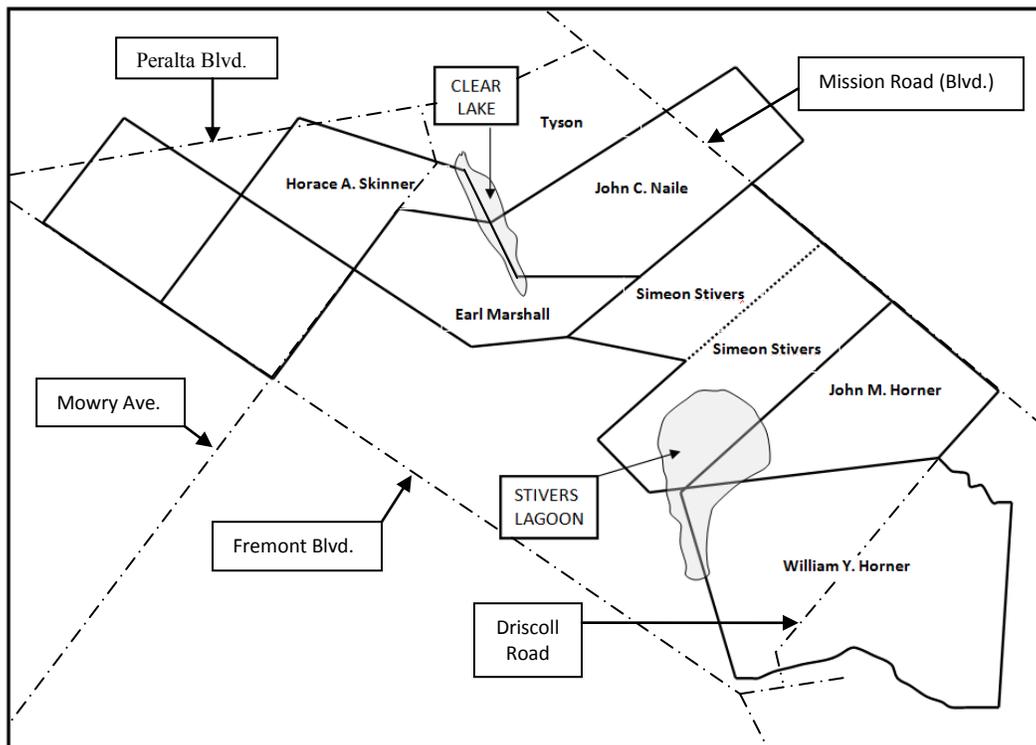
Lake Elizabeth is an artificial Lake, created in the 1970s to replace Stivers Lagoon. The original Lagoon was surrounded by marshes, which still exist as the Stivers Lagoon Nature Area. Stivers Lagoon was also affected by the land sinking between the branches of the fault line, and would collect run-off water. However, it received water primarily from Mission Creek.

Stuart Guedon has created an interesting "map" showing early property ownership in the area of our present discussion (i.e., along the Hayward Fault line, or Lake/Lagoon axis) by piecing together 1850/1851 deed surveys of individual properties. The overlay map of Stuart Guedon is found in the following:

Guedon, Stuart A., *Boundary persistence in southern Alameda County, California*, M.A. thesis, Cal State East Bay University, 1978. Map #7, page 36.



**Section of an 1874 survey of Alameda County by Allardt showing a section of Washington Township (Source of survey: Alameda County Surveror's Office)
 The numbered property overlays are from 1050/1851 Santa Clara County deeds. The overlay was performed by Stuart Guedon. The survey with overlays is found in the above reference, *Boundary persistence in southern Alameda County, California. (Courtesy of Stuart Guedon)***



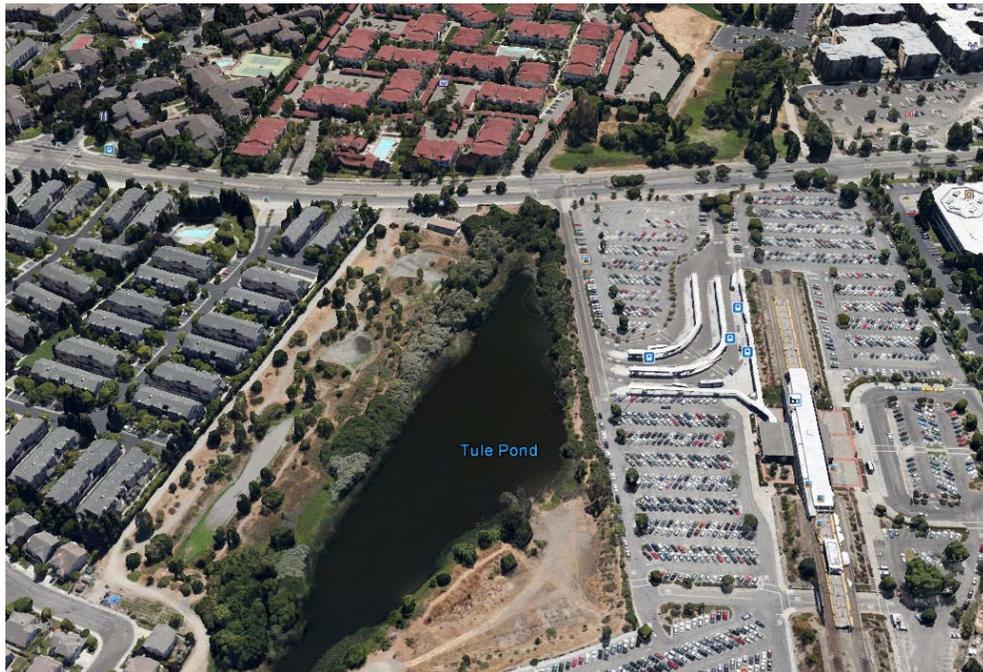
A map of early properties between the upper lagoon (Clear Lake) and the lower lagoon (Stiver's Lagoon), corresponding to the above map overlays, substrate survey deleted, property owner's names replacing the numbers, and with some main roads added for reference. The overlays were assembled by Stuart Guedon using (1850/1851) individual property surveys (The map shows the property of Simeon Stivers as it was fully extended soon after the initial surveys.)

**For some of the initial properties:
Skinner, survey date 1850, 160 acres;
Naile, 1851, 273.86 acres;
Marshall, 1850, 169 acres;
Stivers, 1850, 160 acres (before additional purchases);
John M. Horner, 1850, 497 acres;
William Y. Horner, 1850, 583.41 acres.**

From this map, we see that for a short period of time after Horner began selling properties, one could walk from what became Peralta Blvd. to what became Driscoll Road always on Mormon properties. Of course, that changed very quickly.

Mormon Life About Clear Lake, first the Skinners

Following the properties down the fault line in the above simplified map, we first come to the Skinner property. Horace A. Skinner, his wife Laura Ann, and son James H., all came on the *Brooklyn* and moved to the region of Clear Lake in Washington Township. (See *Let This Be Zion*, 20, 65, 76.]



Tule Pond (Tyson Lagoon) and Tule Ponds to the left of what the map designates "Tule Pond" Walnut Ave. is across the upper view. The original Clear Lake went from the Tule ponds and Tyson Lagoon across Walnut Ave. The Bart Station is at the right. (Courtesy of Google Earth)



Horace Austin Skinner (left), his wife Laura Ann Farnsworth Skinner (center), and their son James Horace Skinner (right), all passengers on the *Brooklyn* (Courtesy of Drusilla S. Speakman, Salt Lake City, Utah)

The Skinner son, James H. Skinner, was one of the first to attend the Horner School. It was not easy to go to school in those days. James H. Skinner, remembered the following incident:

“Not long after uncle’s arrival Father sold out and all moved to [the area about Mission] San Jose where they bought a farm of a hundred and twenty acres. I attended school again. The school house was about two miles from home, out on the open plain. When there were no wild cattle in the way I could make it all right, but when they were between our place and the school house I had to follow fences and [go] under a steep bank [Alameda Creek recession] until I got within some thirty or forty rods, then make a run for it. There were thousands of wild cattle when we first moved to San Jose Valley. Many times in going to school a fighting cow or bull would be on one side of a wire fence and me on the other, hooking and bellowing and trying to reach me. I tell you it made my hair pull more than once.” [James H. Skinner, “History of James H. Skinner,” typescript, 1915, 9-10, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.]

James also remembered the beauty of the area.

“This was a most lovely country — a God’s country to live in, neither too hot nor too cold, a live plain for miles covered with grass and not a brush or shrub, could see for miles, grass to your knees, with flowers of all colors by the thousands as far as the eye could see. I used to pick a bouquet for Mother every morning early while the dew was still on.” [James H. Skinner, “History of James H. Skinner,” typescript, 1915, 9-10, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.]

The Skinner family also went early to San Bernardino.

Earl and Letitia Marshall

Earl and Letitia Marshall, and their adopted son Simeon Stivers, came on the *Brooklyn*. They established an adobe home and dairy farm on the west and south side of Clear Lake. The Marshall adobe is where the local branch of the Church was organized in 1850 by Charles C. Rich and Amasa Lyman, LDS Church representatives from Salt Lake City. Driving down Walnut Ave. from Mission Blvd., as one goes through the dip in the road at the BART Station, the location of the Marshall adobe would be off to the left.

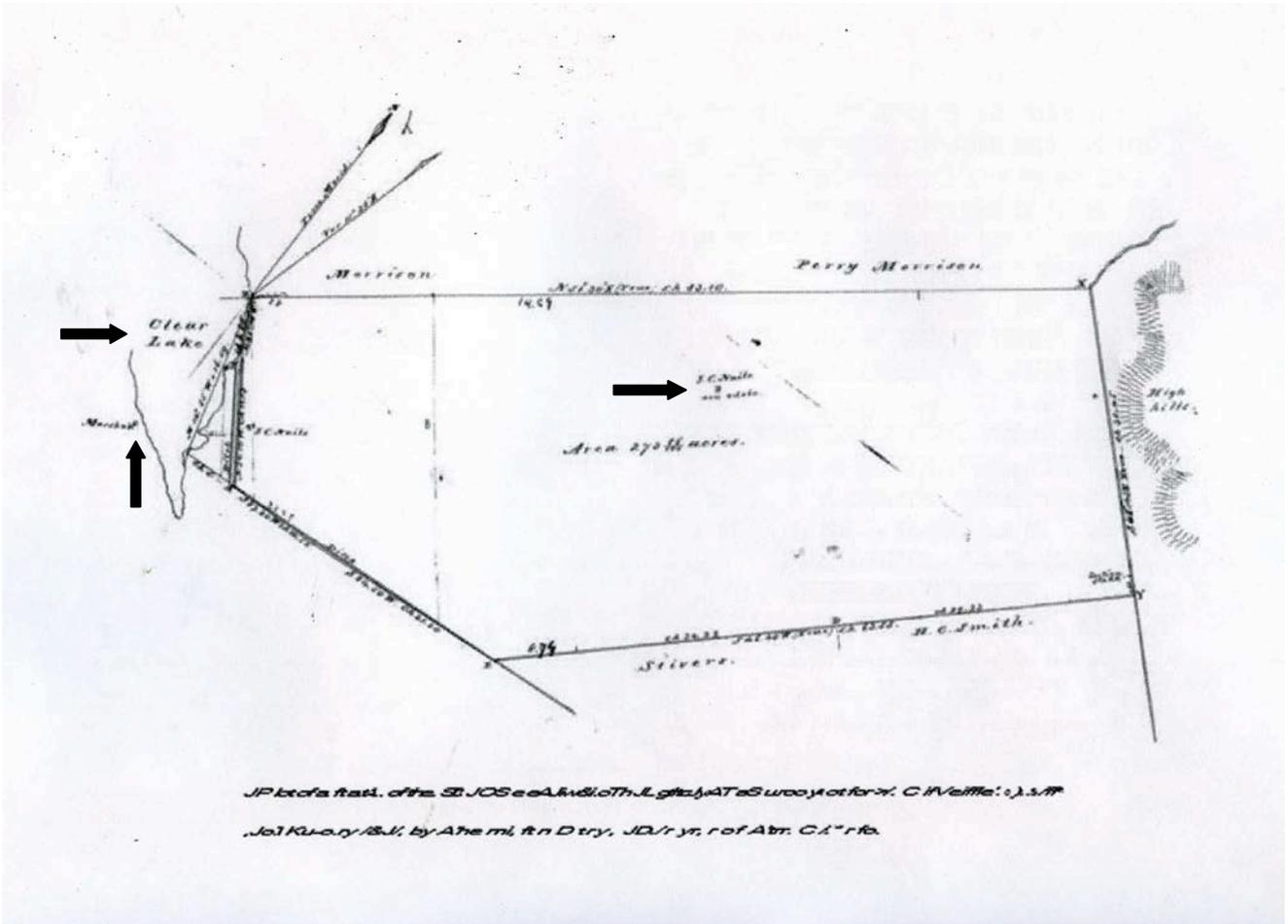


Earl Marshall

[M. W. Wood, *History of Alameda County, California*. (Oakland: M. W. Woods Publ., 1883), reprinted (Oakland: Holmes Book Co., 1969), 24.

John C. Naile (Naegle)

East of Clear Lake, extending to the foothills between Walnut and Stevenson was the ranch of John C. Naile (Naegle), formerly of the Mormon Battalion.



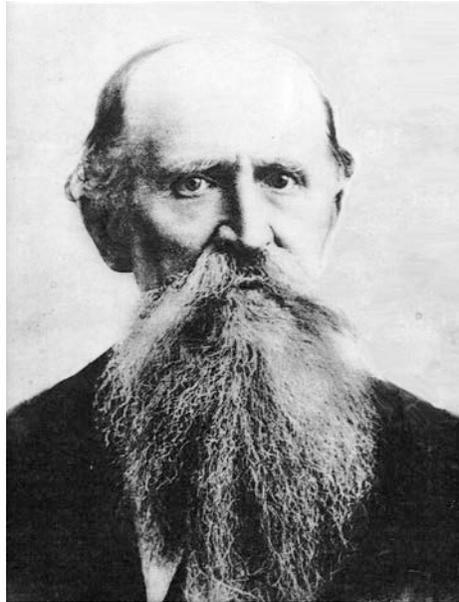
Surveror's Drawing of the John C. Haile (Naegle) Ranch

The Ranch is now the location of the state schools for the blind and and for the deaf.

[The upper boundary of the Ranch is now Walnut Ave.

The foothills to the north-east are shown to the right on the map.

Notice the location of the Marshall adobe (upward arrow), and Clear Lake and the Naile adobe (right pointing arrows).]



John Conrad Naile (Naegle)

Naile was born in Germany with the surname which in German means "nail." That is why he started to use the name "Naile" in America. When he moved to Utah, he switched to using "Naegle," a more common name, closer to his German spelling. (Photo courtesy of Heber and Genevieve Moulton, Bountiful, Utah)

John Conrad Naile (Nagle) was in the Mormon Battalion. After his discharge, he went to the gold mines and then to San Francisco to obtain shoes, specially made to fit his large feet. John Horner persuaded him to settle in Washington Township, and Naile bought a ranch stretching from Clear Lake to the foothills.

Johnathan and Caroline Barnes Crosby lived in the Naile adobe for a year while Naile went East to bring his parents west. Caroline kept a detailed diary, now published, so the interesting life in that period of Washington Township is well documented and quite accessible.. (See *No Place To Call Home: The 1807-1857 Life Writings of Caroline Barnes Crosby, Chronicler of Outlying Mormon Communities* edited by Edward Lyman, Susan Ward Payne, and S. George Ellsworth.)

Caroline speaks of the adobe shortly after they moved in:

Tues Sept 29th [1852] The house is in a very unfinished state, altho the lower part is quite comfortable. The masons are now at work on the second story. We have a pleasant room at the north end of the house with a large window fronting the east, over which is a verander running the whole length of the house. My husband is now employed painting the outside.

We must not think of these early adobes as dull and drab in appearance. On 1 June 1853 while staying in the Naile adobe, Frances Pratt (a niece) penned the following to her sister in San Bernardino:

“Oh Ellen you do not know how pretty the house looks. It is all painted and papered so pretty. The paint is pale liluck to correspond with the paper. My room has got the pretty

light colored paper in it... You had better believe it looks nice and feels nice too when I come in and sit down of a hot afternoon after my dinner work is done.” [Addison Pratt, Family Papers, LDS Historical Department, Salt Lake City, Utah.]

The Naile adobe became a center for many socials. On 5 March 1853, while living at the Naile adobe, Caroline Crosby wrote to her relatives, the Pratts, at the new colony of San Bernardino:

“We have had dancing parties here almost every week since New Years, our chamber [the upper level of the adobe] being all the convenient room in the neighborhood, we have several times let it to others for weddings and other occasions. About 2 weeks ago a Spanish wedding or rather affair was held here, the ceremony was performed at the Catholic Church. It was the greatest fandango that I ever saw. Feb. 22 being Washington’s birthday a very large social was given by Mr. Barnes, one of our neighbors, a very smart gentleman. Nearly everybody in the neighborhood and from Union City were present and a general invitation was given to the men. The chamber was so crowded that they divided the company for a while, a part of them danced below until some went home, We then all repaired to the chamber and danced until 3 o'clock in the morning. I get a good deal of credit for my dancing facilities. Uncle J_ [Jonathan her husband] is getting to be quite a performer, he with [Henry B.] Jacobs and John Cheney makes a regular band of music. They take turns at playing and dancing....

We have good meetings, several baptisms lately of backsliders. The gentiles begin to come in to our meetings, the school house has been considerably crowded for several Sundays past. Thursday evenings prayer meeting in our chamber, father Green’s schoolroom...” [Addison Pratt Family, Papers, LDS Historical Department, Salt Lake City, Utah] (Apparently Harvey Green was either still teaching a group at the adobe or had until recently been teaching there.)

One of the most popular activities seems to have been sharing dinners and socializing in each other’s homes. For example, the Risers had invited many of their immediate neighbors over to their home on 18 January 1854. Caroline Crosby wrote,

“accordingly we all went. They soon organized sort of a band. Mr C [Cheney] played the violin, Mr N [John Naile] the guitar, Alma [Crosby] the accordion, Frank [Rose (a Portuguese ranch hand)] used a tin pan for a tamborine, Henry Naile [John’s younger brother] kept time with bone clappers, which made more sport than music. We finally all retired to the large room, and the most of them commenced waltzing and dancing french fours and they kept it up until ten o'clock.” [Crosby, Diary, Utah Historical Society, Salt Lake City, Utah]

The Naile adobe is also the location where George Q. Cannon was ordained to replace Parley P. Pratt as the President of LDS Church's affairs on the west coast and in the Pacific. Pratt had left San Francisco to return to Salt Lake City. He had crossed the Bay to Oakland and had gone south as far as the Naile ranch. Cannon, arriving in San Francisco, only to find Pratt already gone, followed his route and caught up with him at the Naile ranch. That is why the ordination took place at the Naile ranch.

The area of this ranch is now mostly covered by the state schools for the deaf and blind. Dan Bodily, a local LDS member bought up properties in this area for the LDS Church, who were thinking

of establishing a branch of BYU. The Church eventually decided that they had a greater need to set up schools in Latin America, so they sold the land to the State of California for the schools of the deaf and blind, which wanted to move from Berkeley.

Stivers Lagoon and its remains as the Stivers Lagoon Nature Area



Simeon Stivers and Anna Marie Jones Stivers

(Photos courtesy of James Lovell Scott, Pleasant Hills, California and Gilbert B. Scott, Fremont, California)

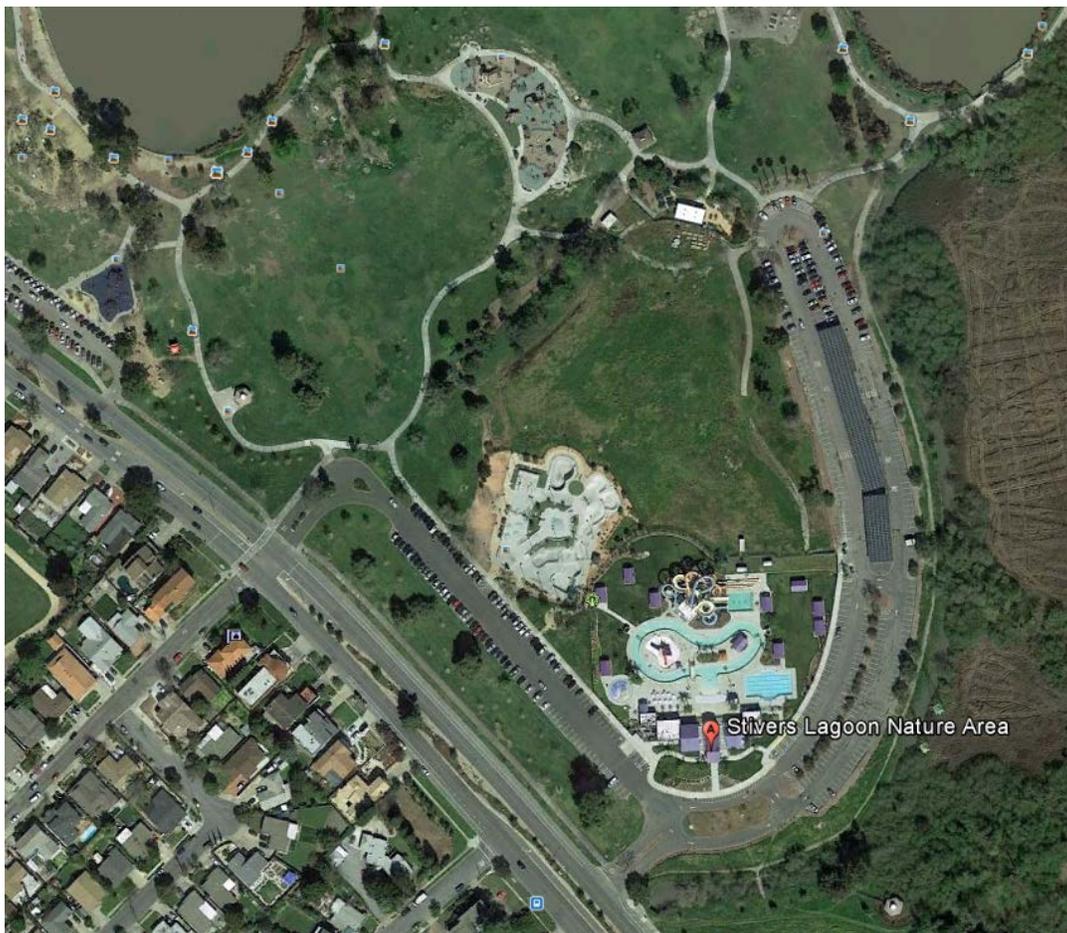
Simeon Stivers (left) was born 23 July 1826. While still a youth, he lost his parents (who went down with a ship at sea) and was adopted by his uncle and aunt, Earl and Letitia Marshall. Simeon came on the *Brooklyn* with the Marshalls and, after working as a carpenter for a while in San Francisco, in 1848 settled in Washington Township with the Marshalls. He helped them set up a dairy farm, sharing the land equally with them. When gold was discovered, Earl and Simeon went to the mines for a year, leaving Letitia to care for the dairy. They prospered at the mines, but it is said that Letitia did even better with the dairy. With their combined wealth, they expanded their land holdings to the south east to a total of 612 acres. That included much of what is now the Fremont Civic Center, Central Park, and Lake Elizabeth (Stivers Lagoon). The property remained intact until 1956

Anna Maria Jones Stivers (right), the wife of Simeon Stivers, came with her parents on the westward trek out of Nauvoo in 1846. The family stayed for a time at Winter Quarters, stayed two winters in Salt Lake City, and then came in 1851 with the initial colonizers of San Bernardino. The family made trips to San Francisco, where Anna Maria met Simeon. They were married in 1858 and she moved to be with him in Washington Township.

All that remains now to give memory to Simeon Stivers is the Simeon Stivers Nature Area, converted from the marshes about the once Lagoon.

The Lagoon was described by Rev. Franklin Langworthy in his book describing his visit to Washington Township:

Mr. Homer's house stands near the center of the valley, which is ten or fifteen miles wide. A lovely brook [Mission Creek] runs near the building, and falls into a small lake nearly a mile distant [Stivers Lagoon], Upon and around this sheet of water, swarm endless numbers of wild geese and ducks. When startled by crack of the hunter's rifle, they rise in dense clouds and fill the surrounding atmosphere with the clack of their clamorous voices. Hundreds are killed daily, and sent to the city markets, all of them being as fat as any epicure would desire. In a state of nature, this valley is covered with clover, and the low mountains on each side of it with oats. (Langworthy, *Scenery of the Plains* (1855) 204-6.)



Stivers Lagoon Nature Area adjacent to Lake Elizabeth and the Water Park on Paseo Padre Parkway. Lake Elizabeth is in the upper left. (Courtes of Google Earth)

<https://msnucleus.org/watersheds/stivers/stiverbrochure.pdf>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IPDvQVNaVKE>

<http://www.tricityvoice.com/articlefiledisplay.php?issue=2010-04-14&file=Stivers+Lagoon.txt>



Route to the Stivers Lagoon Nature Area

The left arrow shows where to leave the parking area, cross a bridge, and take the path leading to the Nature Area. The right arrow shows where to enter the Stivers Lagoon Nature Area, taking the path to the right of the gazebo. (Courtesy of Google Earth)



Entrance to the Stivers Lagoon Nature Area (Courtesy of Washington Township Historical Society)



Plaque in the Stivers Lagoon Nature Area telling the Story of the Area (Courtesy of Washington Township Historical Society)
<http://www.washingtontownshiphist.org/WTmarkers.pdf>

Near the entrance to the Nature Area one passes the above plaque which reads:

You are entering the Stivers Lagoon Nature Area, the only serving portion of what was once a freshwater wetland around two lakes. The first, Clear Lake, was near the present day Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) station, where the ancient Ohlones had a large village. Here at Stivers Lagoon, once called Tule Lake, the Ohlones gathered the tules to build their baskets, mats and boats. In 1846 Simeon Stivers came to California on the ship Brooklyn with his adoptive parents, Earl and Letitia Marshall, and other members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The family settled in Washington Township where they had a dairy farm near Clear Lake. After mining for gold in 1848, Stivers worked in San Francisco as a carpenter. There he met Anne Maria Jones, who was 12 when she and her parents, William and Mary Jones, trekked overland with other Mormon pioneers to Utah.

The family traveled on to San Bernardino, then moved to San Francisco in 1851.

Simeon was 32 and Anna was 20 when they married on September 12, 1858, and settled in Washington Township. They built their home near present day Mission Boulevard and Las Palmas Drive, where they raised nine children. They gradually extended their holdings to an area now known as Central Park. When Stivers died in 1898, he owned about 600 acres, encompassing Clear Lake and Tule Lake, by then called Stivers Lagoon. The Stivers Family kept the property until 1956.

In pioneer times, Mission Creek fed Stivers Lagoon from the north and Laguna Creek carried water from the lagoon to the San Francisco Bay near Warm Springs Landing. Because of the disastrous flooding, the pioneers built a levee to channel the creek past the lagoon, causing the marsh and lake to shrink. By 1960 the City of Fremont started buying land for Central Park and now owns about 430 acres. When Lake Elizabeth was built in 1968, engineers routed Mission Creek through the marsh and into flood control channels.

In April 2000, the Fremont City Council formally identified and named this Stivers Lagoon Nature Page Area. It encompasses about 40 acres, all that is left of the natural lake and marsh. Today it is home to both native and imported plants and wildlife, a mere reflection of its wetlands past.

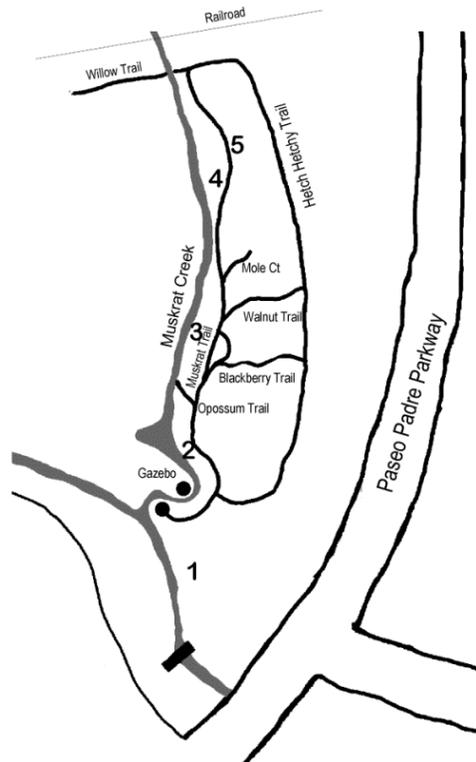
Stivers Lagoon Nature Area and commemorative plaque were dedicated September 8, 2001. This plaque was donated by local members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the Ship Brooklyn Association and the Fremont Community Foundation in honor of Simeon and Anna Maria Stivers, pioneer Fremont farmers.

A self guided tour of the Nature Area is available on the Internet:

http://msnucleus.org/watersheds/stivers/self_guided.htm

Self Guided Tour of Stivers Lagoon

click on station numbers on map



START - AT THE GAZEBO

A self guided tour of the Nature Area available on a Internet Website by Math Science Nucleus.
(Courtesy of Math Science Nucleus)

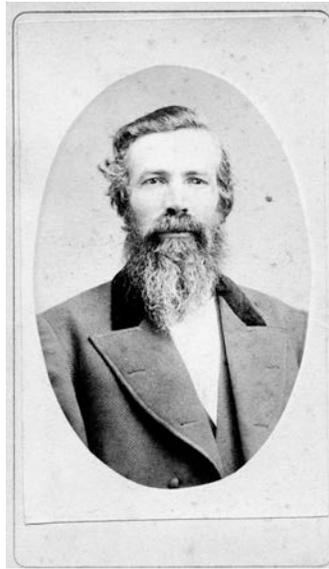
Clipping on the map to obtain station information must be done while viewing the map on the Internet.

http://msnucleus.org/watersheds/stivers/self_guided.htm

7) HOMES OF SOME EARLY SETTLERS

We have already seen homes of Nichols and William Horner, which are representative of the pioneer period. Unfortunately, many others no longer exist. Two others of note, however that do exist, are the homes of Hiram Davis and Thomas Benbow. In pioneer times, there wasn't much wood in Ex-Mission San Jose, or in the whole Bay area. The closest source for the Mission area was the redwood groves in East Oakland. As a result, many of the early homes in the Township came as "kits" from the East, shipped around the Horn. These homes were added to by available local redwood. This is probably true of the homes of Joseph Nichols, William Horner, Hiram Davis, and Thomas Benbow, as well as some of those that no longer exist.

Hiram Davis Home



Hiram Davis

Hiram Davis was born in New York in 1830. The family moved to Michigan when he was nine and shortly thereafter moved to Hancock County, Illinois. They lived there until 1847, when Hiram was 17. The Davis family joined the LDS Church, and in 1847 left in a Mormon wagon train going west. They reached Salt Lake City in 1848 and the next year left for California, where they worked in the Mariposa mines for about one year. Hiram then purchased a farm in Alvarado where he lived for several years. He returned for a short visit to Michigan, where he married Martha Fairfield in 1856. Hiram and his wife, then bought a farm in Irvington, where they spent the remaining years of their lives.



The Hiram Davis Home at 40846 High St, Irvington, Fremont, CA

The present home was already on the property when Hiram purchased it in 1870. The house has been beautifully restored to the best of 19th century living. The interior is a must-see, if only through available Internet pictures. As of this writing (Nov. 2017), the interior views were available on various Realtor websites, for example the following:

https://www.zillow.com/homedetails/40846-High-St-Fremont-CA-94538/58879035_zpid/

<https://www.trulia.com/property/3240962703-40846-High-St-Fremont-CA-94538>

https://www.realtor.com/realestateandhomes-detail/40846-High-St_Fremont_CA_94538_M16596-08103

Thomas Benbow Home



Thomas Benbow home at 43414 Ellsworth Street, Mission San Jose

One of the great missionary/conversion stories of the early LDS Church was when Brigham Young sent Wilford Woodruff to England to convert people to Mormon beliefs. Woodruff preached at the home of John and Jane Benbow in Herefordshire, England. John Benbow was part of a group called the United Brethren which had been expelled from a branch of the Methodists. John and Jane Benbow believed what Woodruff had to say and were baptised on their farm. The United Brethren, however, was a very large group, and soon swarms of their members were coming to the Benbow farm to hear what Woodruff had to say. Within thirty days, forty-five preachers and several hundred members of the United Brethren had joined the LDS Church, being baptised on the Benbow farm. Within four months, LDS membership in the area had reached over a thousand.

John and Jane Benbow were not able to have children, but when his brother died and his brother's widow remarried, they adopted their brother's children, Thomas and Ellen Benbow. It is this Thomas that eventually resided in the Mission San Jose area of Washington Township. John, Jane, Thomas, and Ellen emigrated to Nauvoo, Illinois. There Thomas married Sarah Holmes in 1845. Thomas and Sarah went with the Mormon migration west to the Salt Lake Valley. However in 1857, when Johnston's Army was approaching Salt Lake City, Thomas and Sarah decided to go to California, settling finally in Mission San Jose in 1859. They lived in the house on Ellsworth Street, which still survives.

Incidentally, 1857 was the same year that Brigham Young was asking LDS members in California to come back to Salt Lake City. Because of Johnston's Army, Brigham Young felt their support was needed in Salt Lake City and the LDS Church was no longer able to support all the outlying branches of the Church. The LDS branch of the Church in Washington Township was closed, and Zacheous Cheney led a group to Utah, assembling and leaving from Centerville.

Grebs, Gordon B. *The Benbow Family California Pioneers* (Chico CA: Self Published, 1994)

Mazariegos, Darla Greb, *The Plow and the Temple: Early Mormon Settlers in Fremont, California: A Personal History*, 2001

8) OTHER COMMEMORATIVE MONUMENTS:

(*Courtesy of Washington Township Historical Society. Pictures and inscriptions taken from: <http://www.washingtontownshiphist.org/WTmarkers.pdf>)*

Monument to the 1850 Horner School House



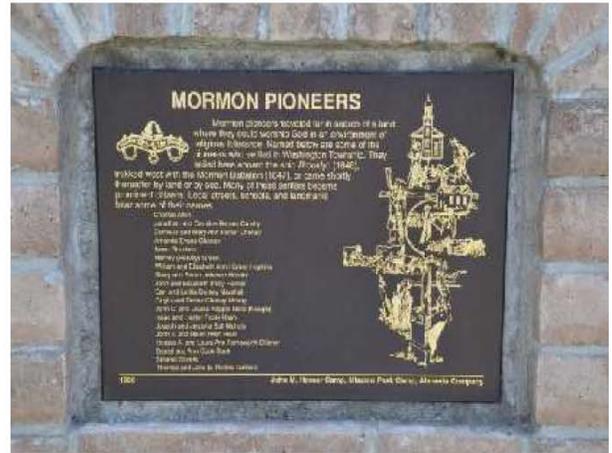
First LDS chapel built in Fremont (Peralta Blvd. and Temple Way) and the monument on its grounds

(*Courtesy of Washington Township Historical Society*)

Inscription:

Approximately one mile west John M. Horner built the first American schoolhouse non-Catholic chapel in Centerville, Alameda County, 1850. Said to be the first Latter Day Saint Chapel in California. A small structure with three windows in the side and a door in front. Later it was moved to Irvington. Harvey Green was the first teacher. Horner operated the first stage line and steamboat in the county and built the first road, bridge and fences. His son William was the first white American born in the county, 1847. Other passengers from the ship Brooklyn settled here.

Monument to the Early Mormon Pioneers to the Community



**Monument on the LDS chapel grounds at intersection of Walnut Avenue and Gallaudet Drive
(This chapel is referred to casually by Mormons as the "Walnut Building.")
(Courtesy of Washington Township Historical Society)**

Inscriptions:

Mormon Pioneers

Mormon pioneers traveled far in search of a land where they could worship God in an environment of religious tolerance. Named below are some of the pioneers who settled in Washington Township. They sailed here aboard the ship Brooklyn (1846), trekked west with the Mormon Battalion (1847), or came shortly thereafter by land or by sea. Many of these settlers became prominent citizens. Local streets, schools, and landmarks bear some of their names. Charles Allen • Jonathan and Caroline Barnes Crosby • Zacheus and Mary Ann Fisher Cheney • Amanda Evans Cheney • Isaac Goodwin • Harvey (Hervey) Green • William and Elizabeth Ann Horner Hopkins • Stacy and Sarah Johnson Horner • John and Elizabeth Imlay Horner • Earl and Letitia Dorsey Marshall • Origin and Delina Cheney Mowry • John C. and Louisa Kepple Naile (Naegle) • Isaac and Hester Poole Nash • Joseph and Jerusha Bull Nichols • John J. and Helen Allen Riser • Horace A. and Laura Ann Farnsworth Skinner • Daniel and Ann Cook Stark • Simeon Stivers • Thomas and Jane E. Rollins Tomkins.

Mormon Pioneer Adobes

The first local members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (the Mormons) arrived on the ship Brooklyn on July 31, 1846 at Yerba Buena (San Francisco). Several families traveled to Washington Township, the present area of Fremont, Newark and Union City, and established their homes. The Mormon Battalion

arrived in Southern California, January 29, 1847. Some men from that group traveled north and settled here. One of them, John Conrad Naile (Naegle), arrived in 1848 and built a large adobe home about 1/5 mile east of this marker. School, dances, and other social gatherings were held there. On April 23, 1850, Apostles Charles C. Rich and Amasa Lyman organized the first branch of the L.D.S. Church for this area in the adobe home of Earl and Letita Marshall [that is, ordained the leader of the new branch], located approximately 3/5 mile southwest of this marker. Church services were held on the second floor of the Naile adobe until 1850. At this time, John M. Horner built a schoolhouse in Centerville, which served as the first structure built especially for L.D.S. services in this area. The local congregation grew during the Gold Rush until 1857-58, when Brigham Young gathered members to Utah.

9) WHAT HAPPENED TO THE MORMONS?

The Mormon presence in early Washington Township gradually faded away. As already mentioned, the *Brooklyn* Saints and members of the Mormon Battalion believed that the LDS Church members coming west in 1846 would settle in California, particularly in the San Francisco Bay Area. When Brigham Young announced that the Church would settle in the Rocky Mountains instead, he also told those in the Bay Area that they could stay in California if they wished. The Church needed a way station in the Bay Area for members moving back and forth between the Salt Lake Valley and the Pacific region. Brigham Young later announced that they also needed a way station in the Los Angeles area for the same purpose. As a result, a large group of Mormons went south from Salt Lake City and settled the community called San Bernardino. Those Mormons in Washington Township who decided early to go to Salt Lake City and be with the main body of the LDS Church or to be with the large Mormon presence in San Bernardino included the Goodwin, the Skinner, the Tompkins, and the Stark families.

In 1857, President Buchanan sent Col. Albert S. Johnston and his army to the Salt Lake Valley to bring the Utah territory under stronger U.S. control. He did this without telling the Mormons of his intentions. The Mormons in Utah, having already experienced violence toward them in the East, therefore, considered that movement an armed invasion and the possible beginning of war. What occurred, however, was a stand-off, and then a compromise: Brigham Young would relinquish his governorship of the territory and Johnston's army would encamp themselves outside the Salt Lake Valley. No lives were lost, but the occasion is still referred to in histories as the "Utah War." At the beginning of this confrontation, with threats close to home, Brigham Young decided that the Church would not be able to support branches of the Church outside of Utah. So he officially closed outlying branches of the Church, including the one in Washington Township. He asked those members who wanted to be near Church support to emigrate to the Salt Lake Valley. That is when Zacheus Cheney was chosen to lead a wagon train leaving from Centerville for the Salt Lake Valley. The wagon train consisted of LDS members from Washington Township, but mostly from San Francisco. The Cheneys and Origin Mowry's mother and brother, Rhanaldo, were in this wagon train.

After the closing of the branch in Washington Township, the Mormons here did not have official LDS Church services to attend. In about 1865, the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints organized a branch of their Church in Irvington, which held services in the old Horner schoolhouse, then located in Irvington. The RLDS Church was a separate church formed among those Mormons who did not follow Brigham Young to Utah in 1846. It has always been a small segment of the "Mormon" movement. Since many of the teachings were the same in the two Churches, many of the Mormons in the area began attending and joining the RLDS Church. This would include

the Marshalls, the Stivers, Harvey Green, William and Elizabeth Hopkins (Elizabeth was John Horner's sister), and John Horner's parents, Stacy and Sarah Horner.

As already mentioned, John Horner and his immediate family emigrated to Hawaii in 1879. The rest of the Mormons in the Washington Township area simply lived out their lives unattached to any official congregation. When they passed away, the Mormon presence in Washington Township came to a close and a fascinating part of local history ended. It was not until decades later that Mormons began coming into Washington Township again, mostly coming for employment. An official branch of the LDS Church was again organized in Centerville in 1950. That has grown to several wards (congregations).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Patricia Schaffarczyk, Stuart Guedon, and Timothy Swenson, all associated with the Washington Township Museum of Local History, for reading the essay and suggesting many corrections and improvements.

SOURCES FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The Country Club of Washington Township Research Committee *History of Washington Township*, third edition (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1965)

Cowan, Richard O. and Homer, William E., *California Saints: A 150-Year Legacy in the Golden State* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1996)

Davies, J. Kenneth and Hansen, Lorin K., *Mormon Gold: Mormons in the California Gold Rush Contributing to the Development of California and the Monetary Solvency of Early Utah*, 2nd Edition (Salt Lake City: Granite Mountain Publishing Company, 2010)

Hansen, Lorin K., *John Horner: His Contributions to California Agriculture* (Fremont, California: Washington Township Museum of Local History, 2017)

Hansen, Lorin K. and Bringhurst, Lila J., *Let This Be Zion: Mormon Pioneers and Modern Saints in Southern Alameda County* (Salt Lake City: Publishers Press, 1996)

Thompson & West, *New Historical Atlas of Alameda County California, (1878)*, Reprint (Fresno, California: Valley Publishers, 1976) Full color maps of the original are available on the website of David Rumsey.

Woods, M. W. *History of Alameda County* (Oakland, California: Pacific Press, 1883)