

Life in 1860s flows along on land and water

By Kristin Delaplane

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In 1866, the county offices were held by the following people: County and probate judge was W.S. Wells; senator, L.B. Mizner; assemblyman, James M. Lemon; Sheriff E.F. Gillespie; County surveyor, John Woolaver; coroner, A.F. Knorp; public administrator, Joseph Hewitt. In 1866, Hewitt declared himself insolvent.

The post offices in Suisun City, Benicia, Vallejo, and Vacaville all qualified to issue money orders.

There was a new town in Berryessa Valley. Parties who had purchased the Shultz tract mapped it out. The town's location was about two miles from the upper and last crossing of Putah Creek on the Knoxville Road. They were offering town lots and 160 acre parcels. R.C. Gillaspay of Green Valley and Nicolas and P.T. Gomer of Suisun and many others of the area were locating there.

The final report of contributions from Solano County school children to aid in building the Lincoln Monument was \$17.60.

At Christmas the Suisun Sabbath School was going to have a Christmas tree, a festival at the Union Hall Christmas Eve and a concert and supper on Christmas. In Fairfield, the children were going to have a Christmas Eve festival. A festival and tree were planned at the Rockville stone church. Over \$60 had been gathered for purchasing presents.

The new water for Fairfield and Suisun was nearly in operation.

Collinsville

There was a fire at the stable of Col. McDuff, which destroyed several sets of fine harness, and the hay and grain stored there.

Thomas A. Hooper ran the Collinsville Wharf Store & Hotel. He had recently leased the property and had made repairs to the wharf. In addition to his duties as "wharfinger," he kept a country store with groceries, hardware and liquor and bought country produce. At his hotel, he offered well-furnished rooms, spring mattresses, clean bedding and he supplied meals.

Rio Vista

William K. Squires ran the Squires Hotel, opposite the steamboat wharf. His hotel featured a stable and he served meal. He sponsored a purse of \$50 at the horseraces on Nov. 24. It was a one-mile heat, the best two out of three winning.

Martin Pendergast was arrested when the Chrysopolis arrived in San Francisco. Pendergast came on board at Rio Vista and was permitted by the passenger to share his stateroom. When the passenger fell asleep, Pendergast went through his clothing and stole his \$300.

Maine Prairie and Binghamton

The steamer Solano with Joseph C. Merithew as captain was running between San Francisco and Sacramento from the landing at Cache Slough.

W.L. Munson was building a store at Binghamton.

Snow's Hotel Maine Prairie was operated by George F. Snow. He billed it as one of the best and cheapest in Solano County. A stable and corral provided and stages left daily for Rio Vista and Silveyville.

Deak & Co., on the east side of the slough, had an extensive warehouse for storing hay and grain and they shipped and dealt in lumber, windows, blinds, nails, etc. They also had a large supply of dry goods, groceries, hardware, boots, shoes, etc.

Silveyville

There was to a grand ball at Blum & Bros., a new brick store in Silveyville. The supper was at Mrs. E. Marsh's new boardinghouse.

E.S. Silvey gave a ball at the Washington Hall on Christmas night.

Meanwhile Silvey had Silvey's Saloon up for sale, which included the building and fixtures. His ad stated that: "Silveyville is well known as one of best business towns in Solano County situated on the telegraph road between Sacramento to Suisun and Napa City. The saloon is doing as good a business as any in the state."

There were two billiard tables. Situated in the heart of town, the lot was 33 feet across the front by 150 feet deep. The building was 30 by 55 with a hall over the saloon. The saloon was rented for a year at \$75 a month.

E.B. Palmer, who had purchased it from C.S. Loomis, operated the Tunnel Saloon, the town's other saloon.

Two former residents, John D. Duke and William W. Jenkins, returned. In 1860, they had sold their possessions moving to Mississippi. From there had gone to Texas and were there during the war. They returned to Silveyville finding it held the best prospects.

A new schoolhouse was built.

Tremont

The Tremont Township was reportedly prospering after battling adversity for many years. The land was starting to be appreciated and the area had withstood the drought of 1863 better than other sections of the county. There were two stores, one being Driesbach, & Wester, two blacksmith shops and a new schoolhouse.

Fred Werner lost a colt from his Putah Creek ranch. He ascertained that Daniel Dougherty who had worked for him had stolen it. Further information led him to San Francisco. He and the sheriff went there and found Dan one Friday night on Montgomery Street with a lager-beer girl.

Vacaville

The new structure for the Pacific Methodist College crowed the summit on the north bank of Ulatis Creek, directly opposite the site of the old building. It was two and half stories surrounded by comfortable cottages that housed the teachers and patrons of the school and a boardinghouse for the students.

A large fire in an apartment building owned by R.U. Gray caught the citizen's attention. The Joseph Folts family occupied the first floor and they were able to save some of their belongs. The upstairs tenants, C.H. Stevenson, Mart Wetzner, Dan Downey and Jeff Gordon lost all their property. The fire spread to residence of Jacob Blum destroying it completely, however, Blum was able to save most of his personal effects. About 150 people helped put out the fire.

Suisun Valley, Green Valley and Cordelia

C.W. Ish and family were at church when thieves entered their house taking with them quilts, blankets, butter and \$5 in cash. Fortunately, Mr. Ish had put what money he had, some \$300 or \$400, in his pocket before leaving.

Eunice, wife of L.B. Abernathy, died in April 1866. It was in 1865, that the cornerstone

for the Abernathy home was laid with a number of friends were present.

John W. Barton died in his 57th year. In the summer of 1858, John W. Barton declared himself an insolvent debtor. (The probability is high that this was the Barton who had been operating Barton's Store in the area that today is called Mankas Corner. A school had been flourishing at Barton's Store for several years and it was a regular stop for the stagecoach.)

G.H. Pangburn, "the prince of Suisun Valley fruit growers," presented a box of apples to the editors of the Solano Press.

James B. Townsend was offering half interest or total interest in the Green Valley Flouring Mill (Dingley's). The building was 40 by 60 feet and three stories high built of stone. There was a water wheel 64 feet in diameter.

Mrs. Pittman gave a party at Bridgeport Hotel on Nov. 26.

Vallejo

There was a firing practice on Mare Island when the Commanche went to the south side of the island and fired a 15-inch shell into the southern slope It exploded with tremendous force, throwing the ground wide open.

A large number of employees had been discharged from the naval yard.

The steam tug Monterey was in operation between Mare Island and San Francisco for the use of officers and for the transportation of building stone to the yard.

A marine, Charles Vraitlan, stole some clothing from F. Soldato's store. He was the first to be incarcerated in the new jail.

Butchers, M.S. Derwin & Jonathan Williams, dissolved their partnership. It appeared that M.S. Derwin was going to continue the business on his own.

The annual examination of teachers of Solano and Napa counties was held in Vallejo.

The ladies had a strawberry, ice cream and floral festival to benefit the Methodist Episcopal Church. Tickets were 50 cents

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