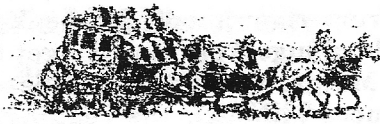


TEMECULA VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER

January 2003 Vol 3 Issue 1

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SNAPSHOTS IN TIME

In Part 4 of the history of the Temecula Valley, Myra Gonsalves presents the American Period. The years from 1850 to the beginning of the 20th century were years of great change; settlement brought amenities such as boarding houses and mail deliveries by stagecoach. With the gold rush over, heavier utilization of the land took hold.

See inside for Part 4, American Period.



THE DIARY OF A DESERT TRAIL *continues....*

This episode manages with sublime mirth to relate to city folk of the early 1900s what the last great cattle drive in American history was like. The author, Edward Vail, was educated in New Jersey and came west via the first excursion train to ever enter Arizona. The railroad was the thing...it made many men rich, and it sped travel from the east coast to several points west. Main lines and spurs developed to facilitate cattle shipments, to haul lumber, deliver mail and passengers, and to transport mining equipment in and ore out of Colorado, Arizona and New Mexico. It was a refusal to pay rate increases of 25% that prompted the adventure we retell for you as Part II inside this issue.

President's Corner

The Society has a website and we regularly receive emails or phone calls asking for help on research projects. It may be the press, high school or college students, teachers, or relatives of long-ago residents who seek information that we are able to supply. And when we can't help, we usually have the contacts and can point them in the right direction to continue their inquiry elsewhere.

One inquiry, which I'll call "the Rainbow Connection", was from a woman in Ontario, Canada. Some of her relatives were settlers near Temecula and co-founders of Rainbow, and she hoped to find burial records in the "little home cemetery", circa December 1899. The little home cemetery was referred to in some family papers, but its exact location was not given.

Thus began a most interesting history lesson in itself. Suffice it to say that at this time we do not have answers... but we continue the search.

It is a credit to the foresight of Jeffery Harmon that we have this website. He continually improves the graphics, readability and information on the site, as well as the number of links to other sites. Now, when new members join us from out of state, we have a colorful way to keep in touch...a rainbow connection of our own devising!

Charolette Fox





GOING TO SCHOOL IN TEMECULA

by Vernetta (Knott) Mackley

Being tutored all summer long by my oldest brother Charles, I was ready to start school! He was going into the 3rd grade, which meant he advanced to the bigger room where the 3rd, 4th and 5th graders went.

First day of school meant a new outfit, new shoes, girls with freshly braided hair and boys with a haircut. That day in September of 1944 was the start of friendships between Louise Roripaugh, Marilyn Kitch, David Barnett, Sherilan Ceas, Connie Rameriz, Billie and Carmen Navarro and myself.

At 9:00 the bell was rung by our principal Mrs. Myrtle Cantarini. We were met at the door by our teacher, Miss Rosetto. We shared that room with the 2nd grade class. I thought I was quite privileged to be able to watch the flash card quizzes that were given to the 2nd graders. The easels for poster paint artwork and fingerpainting were the treat of the week after the study of reading, writing and arithmetic. Our playtime was spent on the jungle bars and merry-go-round after a romping game of dodge ball, Red Rover or Flying Dutchman.

The real sign of being 'old enough to go to school' was not crying when we were sent to the nurse for our vaccinations! Oh, how we all dreaded that. Then came the realization that we could possibly have an earthquake or fire, so the drills began. Scared? Yes we were, but all the better for our growing up being aware of the danger of life in our quiet, loving community of Temecula.

Mrs. Cantarini retired and we were introduced to our new principal, Miss Nida Ashman (Thompson) at the start of our 3rd grade year, which was 1947. Miss Ashman remained our principal until our graduation in 1952.

Grades 3, 4 and 5 had the most intriguing studies for us when we were promoted to Mrs. Brunson's room. There we enjoyed the Social Studies of the area, state and world. We made an Indian hut in the corner of the room, made

paper from river reeds as the Egyptians had, and molded jugs from clay we got from our own Santa Margarita river. These were fun experiences although the reading, writing and arithmetic prevailed as the basis of our studies. I was lucky enough to be taught by my own cousin, Ann Louise Knott (Fleming) who had just moved to California from South Dakota to begin her teaching career. This was the first year that we were able to participate in the "play day" competitions that included Murrieta, Wildomar and Alberhill schools. No studies that day - just ribbon achievement contests. Friendships developed between all those communities, and still exist.

Rainy days couldn't have been more fun! The auditorium became a place for dancing the Virginia Reel, round dancing, singing folk songs or just listening to Radio Free Europe on the old Grundig radio. Our janitor, Al Otto, was instrumental in keeping the auditorium at a temperature comfortable for us all.

As I began writing this story, I was reminded that Nida Ashman had to have gone to school somewhere herself or she couldn't have been our teacher! I called her on the telephone and asked her where she went to school. I was quite surprised to learn that the 6th, 7th, and 8th grade classroom that we attended had been the original school house that she attended [when it was located] at the present Wolf Monument site. It was moved into Temecula to enlarge the school in 1932.

Our final three years in Temecula were a solid foundation for our continuation to Elsinore High School. We knew we were expected to do well, and we did! The experience of being with other grades and hearing their studies reinforced our own knowledge. History, archaeology, science and, of course, the three "R's" were made to be enjoyable with hands-on experiments, spelling bee's and sharing new ideas - [we were] a little community with views of the big world through the wisdom of our teachers.



The old schoolhouse situated on Santago Road is under restoration and preservation by members of the Temecula Community Church, the present owner of the building. When work is completed, the schoolhouse will be open for tours.

Historic Vail Ranch Site an update by Rebecca Marshall Farnbach

True, a tiny parcel of land surrounded by block commercial buildings is not what historic preservationists dream of when traveling on Highway 79 South in the vicinity of Redhawk Parkway. But, believe it or not, there is still great historic value in what is left. When the dust of the construction site settles and the mobile office is removed from its present location hiding the Wolf Store, what we have is a four-acre site that can be utilized as a community resource and an onsite teaching facility for state mandated local history curriculum.



Wolf Store
pen & ink rendering by Darell Farnbach

The Vail Ranch Restoration Association (VaRRRA) continues to work with the County of Riverside and the developer, Price-Legacy, regarding the site and the adjacent buildings. What has been achieved, besides retaining the land and five historic ranch structures, is the development of a plan for the historic district that will be inviting to the public and suitable for a multi-station learning setup for school children.

VaRRRA vigilantly watches the construction in progress. Price-Legacy has caught our vision for the ranch and is excited about incorporating several large horse-drawn farm wagons and implements around the ranch site and parking areas. Bill Stone, a Senior Vice President, is working with Wells Fargo to donate a historic stagecoach to the site.

He also arranged for us to present a program to thirty Price-Legacy employees so that we could share the site's historic significance with them.

In March, the ranch's implement barn will be rebuilt. With the highest roof and at a strategic location on Redhawk Parkway, it will be a welcoming center that entices the public to venture in. Two-thirds of the implement barn will be allocated to local vintners and one-third will house VaRRRA's first museum display. At the opening of the implement barn, VaRRRA will release a new children's book about 1920s life on the Vail Ranch.

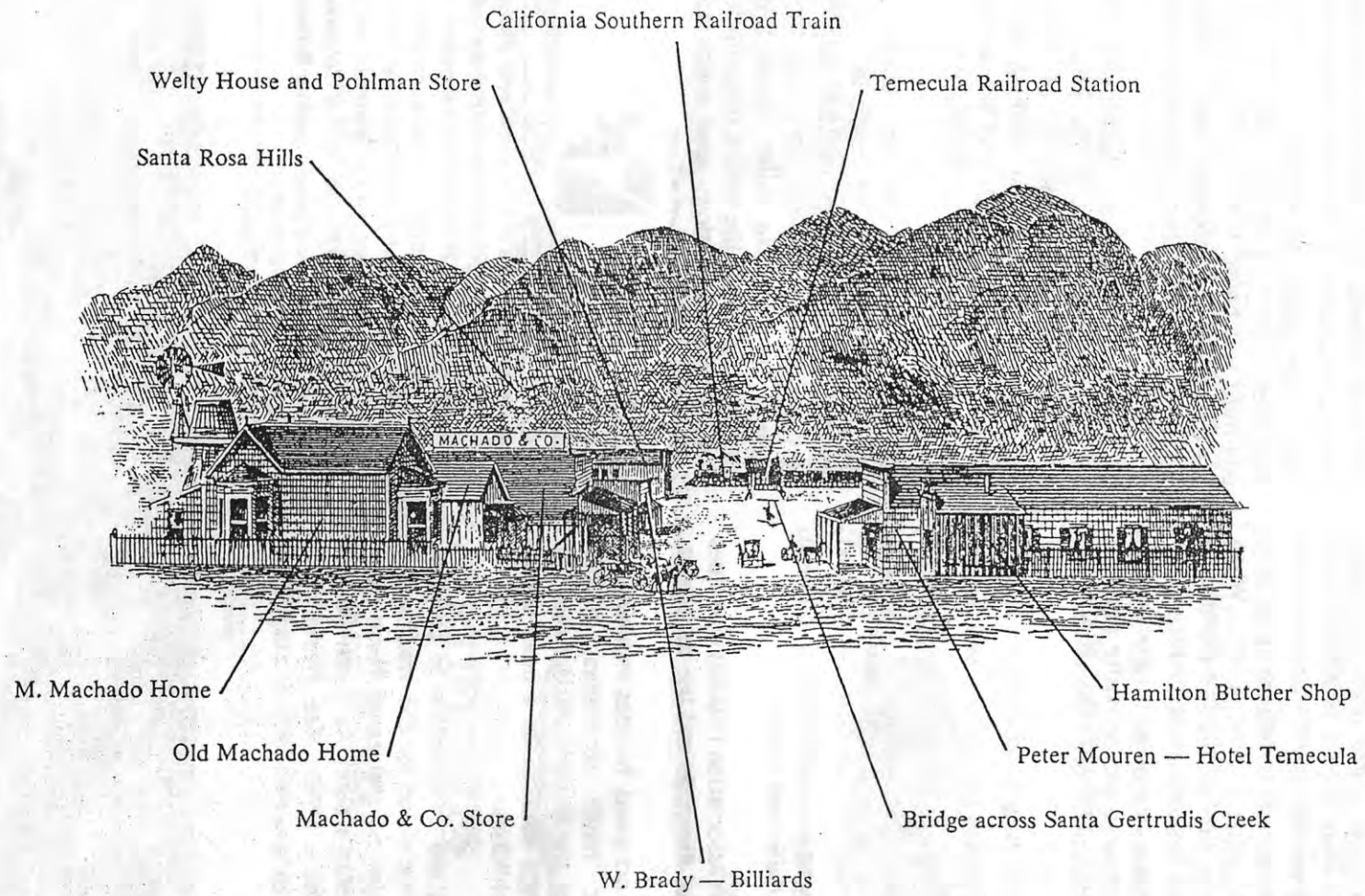
On its easterly-facing wall, Kohls Department Store plans to create a huge mural of the ranch. Store officials contacted VaRRRA for samples of ranch photos and selected one representing working cowhands of the 1920s. The artwork will lend yet another element of history and authenticity to the site.

Requests from schools for onsite local history presentations continue to come in, and these "living history" lessons with their multiple learning stations will be resumed once construction makes the site available again. The Temecula Valley School District has been contacted to review the earlier presentations to see what revisions and corrections need made to enhance the current local history curriculum.

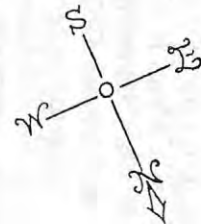


As of this writing, there are concerns over the hesitation on the part of the County of Riverside to deliver on some of their funding promises, but the Vail Ranch Restoration Association continues to plan and prepare for a successful outcome. The site has more than passing significance in American history and should be restored -- not just for Temecula, not just for Riverside County -- but for the State of California. If you wish to become more involved, please contact Rebecca or Darell Farnbach at (909) 699-5148.





Main Street Temecula III - looking south ca. 1889



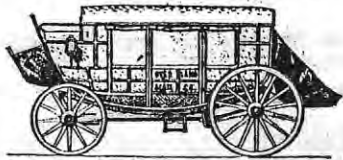
TEMECULA VALLEY HISTORY

by Myra Gonsalves

American Period

Statehood in 1850 had a dramatic effect on Temecula Valley. The 1851 tax roll of San Diego listed Apis having 225 head of cattle, 40 sheep, 50 lambs and 23 horses. He also had a small private vineyard and orchard. The first settlers into the valley were William Moody and Daniel Cline who came in 1853 settling on land called the Willows near present-day Murrieta. Agustin Machado, who owned Rancho Ballona in Los Angeles, purchased the Santa Rosa in 1855, and La Laguna in 1858. The two ranches were managed under his oldest son, Juan Machado, who made his headquarters at La Laguna. Juan recalled his early days in Temecula Valley to a newspaper reporter in 1889: "When I first came to this valley, it was inhabited by nothing more than Indians of a very hostile nature and wild animals of every sorts." Juan Machado was a typical rancher of his time setting up a feudal system to employ Luiseno Indians who did not enjoy the prosperity of this period.

The Butterfield Overland Mail Company ran a 2,600-mile stage route between St. Louis, Missouri and San Francisco starting in 1858 and ceasing operations in 1861 when the Civil War disrupted service. John Magee opened for business in the old Apis adobe and then in his own store to provide a way station for the mail company on its route through Temecula Valley. The Magee Store would become the second post office in the state in 1859, the first being San Francisco.



Barring an accident, sickness, hostile Indians and holdups by bandits, the stage was driven twenty-four hours a day, stopping only to change horses or mules, to keep an on-time schedule of twenty-three days between St. Louis and San Francisco. The driver would bellow "time's up" and passengers would wedge themselves in the coach trying to find room for themselves among mailbags and luggage. The passengers conditioned themselves to eat almost anything (with beans, biscuits, and coffee the usual fare) and to sleep in almost every contorted position possible. A good meal with meat and vegetables could be had at Temecula, and maybe apple pie, because of the availability of fresh food. One stagecoach was held up and robbed near Temecula. The stage driver was slain when he refused to give up.

The 1860 census showed the village of Temecula centered around the Magee store with less than twenty people and the Indian village with a population of three hundred eight. Cattle remained the valley's main economy until the drought of the 1860s. Juan Machado of Rancho Laguna recalled the valley was without rain for twenty three months and the air

was dark and hazy and the death rate among animals was beyond description.

During the years 1868 through 1883, the Louis Wolf Store, across Temecula Creek from the abandoned Magee Store, provided services to the settlers -- saloon, livery stable, hotel, general store, post office and school. If ranchers needed laborers, Wolf supplied them, especially Indian shearers for their sheep. Wolf was described as a big brawny fellow with a black beard who always seemed to have a drink in hand, but was never drunk. He was also the Justice of the Peace and held court with three law books on a round table near his bar. With the participants sitting in chairs around the table, Wolf would bring his fist down on the table and court was in session.



Louis Wolf — who served many functions in Temecula, including local postmaster, tax collector and justice of the peace — and his wife, Ramona Place.

Helen Hunt Jackson stayed with the Wolf's during her travels through the area in the early 1880s. Her classic novel "Ramona" was inspired by the 1875 eviction of the Temecula Indians from their ancestral homes and their trek to the hills along the Pechanga Creek. The Pechanga Reservation was established by federal executive order in 1882.

One of the white ranchers who sought the decree of ejection of the Temecula Indians from their land was Juan Murrieta. He had left his home in Spain at age eighteen and settled in San Joaquin Valley where he grazed as many as a hundred thousand sheep. When drought threatened his business, Murrieta and his partners purchased the Pauba and Temecula ranches in 1873, making them sheep ranches. He settled at the Willows, the former ranch of Cline and Moody. The City of Murrieta and Murrieta Hot Springs are named after him.

Employing large Chinese work crews, the California Southern Railroad completed its line from National City to Temecula through Temecula Canyon in 1882. The entire village of Temecula was moved three miles from its old center around the Wolf Store to a new location besides tracks where Old Town Temecula is today -- the third Temecula. The historic district along Front and Main

streets still has many of the original structures built between the 1880s and 1920s. Wolf formed a partnership in Temecula with his clerk Mac Machado, the son of Juan Machado, which lasted till Wolf's death in 1887.

The first business in town was a hotel, which was built by R.J. Welty. His wife, Mary Jane, had cooked for the Chinese workers laying track for the railroad through Temecula Canyon. The boarding house became a popular stopping place for travelers and had several names before becoming the Temecula Hotel in 1916. With the railroad came settlers and increased agricultural production. Towns like Temecula, Murrieta, and Elsinore developed along the railroad line.

Temecula and the surrounding areas would experience a real estate boom. Parker Dear, owner of the Santa Rosa in the 1880s, tried to cash in on the boom by subdividing portions of the Santa Rosa into town plots. The railroad also brought new settlers into the valley who bought small ranches to raise barley, wheat and oaks. Everybody wanted his or her own "ranch," even if it was only a few acres with cash crops like chickens or table grapes.

The Fountain House, across the street from the Murrieta train depot, served the social and business needs of the community. Visible for miles around, the three story hotel was famous for its excellent service and good food. Its name came from the fountain at its entrance. And the hot springs of Murrieta, which had been used by the early white settlers for doing their laundry, became a health resort claiming "valuable medical qualities of the waters."

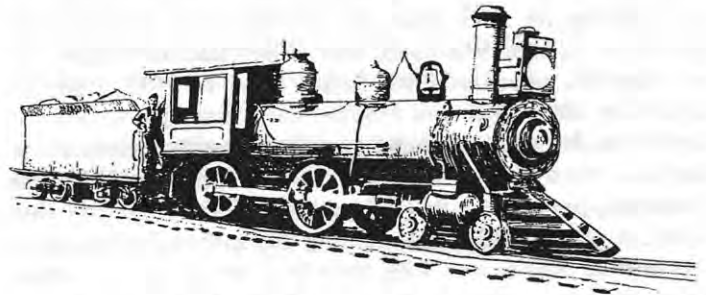


In 1884 a syndicate purchased the townsite of Murrieta along the new California Southern Railroad to San Diego. The following year the Fountain House Hotel was erected.

Parker Dear and his wife Elena Coots, the granddaughter of two notable Spanish dons, maintained the traditional hospitality and lifestyle of the ranch period on their Santa Rosa Ranch, which Dear called "The Little Switzerland of Southern California." Each spring when Elena's roses bloomed, they held a May Day picnic inviting people from all over Southern California, some arriving by train from Los Angeles. By 1888 the big boom of the eighties was over. "Linda Rosa" and "Rosita" of Parker Dear's dreams

became paper towns that only exist in old maps. The Dear's, like other area landholders, could not pay their accumulated debts and the ranches went into receivership.

Mother nature had other ideas for the railroad. After two washouts in Temecula Canyon, rail service between Temecula Valley and San Diego was abandoned in 1893. This was one of the reasons contributing to the creation of Riverside County in 1893. The line between San Bernardino and Temecula Valley would continue until 1935.



By the end of the 19th century, Temecula was a bustling little town and its principal businesses were ranching, farming and the quarrying of granite boulders that lay in the nearby hills. Murrieta and the surrounding area was a farming community with an estimated population of 800 people. A post office was established in 1881; however, a mistake was made in its name. For thirty-nine years the citizens of Murrieta received mail marked Murrietta. On October 1, 1929, the extra "T" was removed from the name.

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THE DIARY OF A DESERT TRAIL

by Edward L. Vail

PART II

With humor often as dry as the desert they were crossing, Edward, brother of Walter Vail, relates new tricks for changing a stubborn mule's mind, then tells of tangling with the Sheriff of Yuma while his cattle are free-ranging in two states at the same time! Chance meetings and a parlay with Indians bring Part II to an end. This part of the narrative bears re-reading to glean every bit of ingenuity required to deal with life's trials on the trail, circa 1890.

About thirty miles from Yuma, Jim Knight and one of his cowboys met us. Knight was foreman of the Warner Ranch and a cousin of Turner's. He brought us saddle mules and horses and they were all fat. These were to take the place of some of the horses we had ridden ever since we left the Empire Ranch.

There was one very important thing that Jim failed to do however -- and that was to find out if there was any water on the Colorado desert for our cattle, and where it was. I think he said he only watered his horses once between Carrizo Creek and the Colorado River, a distance of over one hundred miles, and he knew of no other water out there. As we were then only about half way on our road to the Warner Ranch, and the worst yet to come, Knight's report did not cheer us much.

The mules Jim brought were young and unbroken and as stubborn as only mules can be. It was hard to turn one around on a ten-acre lot. Two of our boys refused to ride them. We told them if they would go as far as Yuma we would pay their fare back to Pantano, as that was the agreement we made with our men before leaving the ranch. But I think they were homesick and I could not blame them much. So we paid them off and they took the next train for Tucson at the nearest station to our camp.

Those mules had a surprise in store for them, and I will admit it was new to me at that time. On the ranch when breaking colts we use either a hakimore or an American snaffle-bit until they become well reined, so that by pressing the rein to one side of the neck they will turn in the opposite direction. Tom took a piece of rope which was long enough to pass through the rings of an American Snaffle-bit, allowing enough slack for the rider to use as reins, and fastened the ends to the cinch rings of the saddle on either side. If one of those California mules got fresh and took it into his head to run through a mesquite thicket with you, all you had to

do was pull hard enough and you could double his nose back on the saddle on either side as the rope ran freely through the rings in the bit, which acted as pulleys. Before long those Warner mules were doing their share of the work, which helped us very much during the rest of the trip.

A few days later we reached Yuma and camped on the Colorado River, about three miles southwest of the town. The river was rather high owing to the unusual amount of water flowing into it from the Gila, which joins it on the north side of the town. The next day we let all our cowboys go to town to buy clothing, which some of them needed badly, and we gave them free rein to enjoy themselves as they pleased. Of course, they did not all go at once as some had to stay and herd the cattle. Among the last of our men to get back to camp that night was Servero Miranda, know among the cowboys as "Chappo," which is Spanish for "Shorty." He was somewhat lit up and made a short speech to Tom Turner in Spanish, which translated amounted to this: "Mr. Tom, I am sorry that I am pretty full tonight, but you know that no matter what you tell me to do I am always ready and willing to do it -- riding mean mules or anything else."

"Pa Chappo," as he is now called, commenced working at the Empire Ranch about 1880, and is still on the payroll. In February, 1922, his grandson was buried in Tucson, a victim of the World War. He had served in the U. S. Navy and contracted tuberculosis at that time.

Turner and I got a boat, with an Indian to row it, and spent the day looking for the best place to swim the cattle across the river. We rowed two or three miles up and down the Colorado and prodded the banks with poles to see how deep the quicksand was. We found it very bad, especially on the west bank where the cattle would have to land.

Finally we found an island near the west bank of the river where the landing was better. The water was not very deep on the other side of the island, with a good landing on the California side. We then returned to the Arizona side of the river and found it was impossible to drive the cattle into the river there, as the bank formed a ten-foot perpendicular wall above the water. So we hired a lot of Yuma Indians with picks and shovels to grade a road to the water. This work occupied a day or two. We were then ready to attempt to swim the cattle across. The herd had not been watered since the day before as we were anxious to have them thirsty. The current was very strong and the

river very deep, and because of the swift current we found it would be impossible for men on horseback to do anything in guiding the cattle across, so we hired Yuma Indians and three or four boats. We placed them so as to keep the cattle from drifting down stream. The idea was not to let them turn back nor land down far enough to miss the island. We got the cattle strung out and travelling as they had on the trail, with the big steers in the lead and men on each side to keep them in position to go down the grade which we made to the river. Most of the large cattle reached the island all right.

Then our troubles began! Two or three hundred of the smaller steers got frightened as the current was too swift for them and they swam back to the Arizona side. About this time the Sheriff from Yuma showed up and said he had orders from the District Attorney to hold our cattle until we paid taxes on them in Yuma County. I told him I thought the District Attorney was mistaken, but we were too busy to find out just then. Cattle were scattered all along the river on the Arizona side and as they could not climb the banks and get out, many of them were in the water just hanging to the bank with their feet. We hired all the Indians we could get and with the help of our own men we pulled all except two or three of the cattle up that steep bank.

It was then about ten o'clock at night. The Yuma Indians quit and said they were hungry and tired. I did not doubt them a bit, as we had eaten nothing since breakfast before daylight. So we made it unanimous and all quit and went to Yuma. We were all terribly dirty so we went to the hotel at the depot, got a bath, some supper, a bed and a good sleep!

In the meantime this is the way we were situated. Our chuckwagon, cook and blankets were across the river; our six hundred cattle were loose on the island in the river where we could not herd them; nearly three hundred steers were loose on the Arizona side in the thickest brush I have ever seen; and we were in the hands of the Sheriff of Yuma County!

The next morning, C. W. Gates, my brother's partner, arrived on the train from Los Angeles. He went down with us to the scene of the previous day's operations. The first thing we did was to pull out the two steers we had left clinging to the river bank. Then we told Mr. Gates that if he would take what men we could spare and start to gather the cattle we had turned loose in the brush, that Tom and I would go over in a boat to the island and swim the cattle over to the California side of the river. We threw our saddles into the boat,

led the swimming horses and soon reached the island. The cattle seemed to be alright. We did not have any trouble in getting them over as we found the big steers could wade across but most of the younger ones had to swim a short distance. When we got them all across, we looked up at the best place we could find to hold them, and made camp.

When we got back to where we had left Mr. Gates, we found him and Chappo sitting on a boat on the river bank. Mr. Gates said that we could never gather the cattle in that brush, and I admit it did not look possible. At that time Mr. Gates had been only a short time in the cattle business and had never worked with cattle on the range. So, Tom and I told him if he would go to Tucson and see his attorney about the tax matter we would gather the lost cattle, if possible.

I forgot to say that our Chinese cook left for Pantano on the train soon after we arrived in Yuma. He said that if he crossed the river he would never get back again. The day before he left he bought a large Colorado salmon alive from a Yuma Indian who had just caught it. John took the fish, which was over two feet long, up to Mr. Gondolfo's store and got permission to put it in a large galvanized water tank as he wanted to take it back to the Empire Ranch for Mrs. Vail. When John went to get his fish the tank was full of water. So with the permission of the owner the water was drawn off, but John could not wait for all of it to run out. When the water was still two feet deep he could see the fish and became so excited that he jumped in, clothes and all. I was watching and it was quite a circus. He grabbed at that fish several times before he caught it; then his foot slipped and he rolled over in the bottom of the tank, but when he got up he had the fish. If anything, I think he was wetter than the fish, but all he said was, "Mr. Ned that fish pletty dam quick, but I catche him allite." John wrapped the fish in his slicker and was soon on his way to the Pantano. When he arrived there, in his anxiety to present the fish to Mrs. Vail in good condition, he telephoned for a team to meet him.



Before Mr. Gates left Yuma he telegraphed my brother who was at the Empire Ranch that we were swimming the cattle and that I was in trouble over the tax matter. When the message reached Pantano it was transmitted over the telephone to the Ranch. The line was not working well and the only thing that my brother could understand was, "Ned trouble, swimming river." He at once concluded that I had been drowned

in the river. He saddled his fastest horse, "Lucero," and I am told, made the fastest time on record to Pantano. When he read the message and found the trouble was about taxes, he said: "That word never looked good to be before."

At first, we did not make much progress in gathering those steers. The brush was so thick we could not get through it on horseback. It was screw-bean mesquite which does not grow high but the limbs are long and drooping so that the ends lie on the ground. Between them arrow-weed was as thick as hair on a dog and higher than a man's head. We found that we could run some of the steers out of the brush afoot by starting near the river and scaring them up to the open mesa as the brush only extends back a short distance from the river. After a few days the cattle commenced coming out themselves and we soon had quite a bunch together.

In the meantime, Mr. Francis J. Heney who at that time was acting as attorney for Vail & Gates at Tucson, decided our tax troubles as follows; viz, That the taxes had been paid on our cattle before they left the home ranch, and that cattle in transit were not subject to taxation any place in Arizona. Mr. Heney also advised the Yuma attorney to read the Arizona Statutes and let Yuma County cattlemen alone.

Then the sheriff's deputy wanted us to pay him for holding our cattle but I told him we never hired him and as the sheriff put him there he had better collect from him. The deputy's name was Green. He had a livery stable in Yuma where we had kept our horses ever since we arrived. He was a pretty good fellow. I think Mr. Gates was in favor of paying him as we had worked him like one of our men holding the cattle. Tom and I were pretty sore by that time and said we would see that bunch of Yuma politicians in a hotter place than Yuma -- if there was such a place -- before we would pay any of them a cent.

After four or five days we had gathered most all the cattle on the Yuma side. Then I ordered cars and shipped them across the bridge. We made a chute of an old wagon box and railroad ties and unloaded them. It would no doubt have been cheaper to have shipped all our cattle across the bridge at \$2.50 a carload but we did not like the idea of depending on the railroad in any way on this drive.

We soon got all our cattle together on the California side and were ready to move. We were all glad to get away from Yuma and take our chances on "The Great

Colorado Desert," as it was then called. We followed the river and met a man, named Carter, who had a small cattle ranch from whom we bought a half a beef that he had just killed. Our cattle were too poor for beef and a whole beef was more than we could haul and as the days were warm we were afraid it would spoil before we could eat it.

Carter was said to know the desert well and I tried to hire him as a guide and offered him \$20 a day to show us where the water was on the desert but he said he had "not been out there for sometime. Sometimes there was plenty of water out there and often no water at all as it depended entirely on whether there had been rain." We decided that Mr. Carter was probably right about the water on the desert and what we saw afterward confirmed that opinion.

We did not travel very far down the river before we were overtaken by two young men with four or five very thin horses. They said they had been following us for some time and were anxious to cross the desert and heard we were driving cattle across to California and asked if we could give them a job. Tom Turner told them we had plenty of help for the cattle with us and they said they were afraid to cross the desert alone as they knew nothing about the country. We told them if they were willing to help us when we required help we would let them go along with us. Tom told them that they could turn their horses in with our horses and he would let them ride some of our mules which came from the Warner Ranch.

We were close to the line of Lower California at that time and soon after we had crossed it we came to a Cocopa Indian Rancheria. The men wore breech cloths and the women wore aprons made out of the bark of willow trees. They were fine specimens of Indians, the men all looking like athletes. I have been told that they came up from the Cocopa Mountains in Mexico in order to farm during the summer, raising mostly corn, pumpkins and melons, then in the winter went back to the mountain again. We had not been around their camp long before we got a message from the chief. He sent us word that we were on their land and had no right to pass through there with our cattle and that "all good people" who passed through gave them two steers. We sent word to the chief by one of the Indians who could speak Spanish that we would like to have a conference with him, so the meeting was arranged and we went to the Indian camp. After a parley in Spanish we told him that we were considered "good people" where we came from but that we did not own the cattle we were driving, therefore we would have no

right to give them away. We told them if they would send one of the men to the chuckwagon we would be glad to give them some sugar and coffee. We were very sorry that we did not have more to spare but as we had a long way to go and no stores along the trail we could not give them more than we did.

We followed the old stage road down to where it left the river. I have forgotten the distance but it could not have been over 20 miles. In this place there was quite a lagoon of water, so we camped there. Next day Tom and I followed the old road into the desert looking for water for our next camp. I never saw so many rattlesnakes in my life as we saw that day. They seemed to be of two varieties. One was the ordinary large diamond-back and the other was a little rattlesnake with horns over its eyes called the "side-winder." (to be continued)

Told and retold, this account from Edward Vail's diary has had several reprintings over the years. The Arizona Daily Star published the story in 10 short articles released February 22 to March 10, 1922. It was perhaps the very toughness of character seen through his writings that took Edward on to become a statesman and politico of note in the Arizona legislature. We shall read more of Edward the man and his achievements at the end of our series.

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Board meeting Jan 3 - Noon
Board meeting Feb 7 - Noon
Member program TBA

Active Committees:

Research & Preservation
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Board meetings and member programs are held in the Conference Room of the Temecula Library, unless otherwise stated. No RSVP is required.

Date, time and location of committee meetings or special events fluctuates. For information, contact committee or event chair.

When possible, member reminders are sent via email or postcard 10 days prior to the meeting or event. In addition, public service announcements are usually placed in local newspapers.

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Articles must include author's name and contact information. Historical research, biographies, and local history articles will be given preference.

All submissions are subject to editing. Some articles may be held for publication in the next newsletter or in a journal to be published at a later time.

Editor..... Charolette Fox
Assistant Editor..... Jeffery Harmon
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The mission of the Temecula Valley Historical Society is to identify, preserve and promote the historic legacy of the Temecula Valley and to educate the public about its historical significance.



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