

### The Settlement of San Bernardino Valley.

Twenty-five years ago, the valley of San Bernardino, like most of the Mexican grants, was the habitation of a few Spaniards, Mexicans and Indians, if we except the countless herds of wild cattle and bands of horses which dotted the whole surface of the country. Its general appearance then was widely different from that of to-day, a dense forest of cottonwood and sycamore trees as well as an undergrowth covering the north bank of the Santa Ana River for miles in length, the remains of which only can be seen at the present time.

The ranch at that date was owned and occupied by the brothers Lugo—Jose Marie living in an old adobe building situated on the south side of the Santa Ana, and Carmel residing at old San Bernardino. A third owner, a brother-in-law of the Lugos, Diego Sepulveda by name, had his home at Yucupia. These men occupied their whole time in looking after and taking care of their thousands of cattle and horses, worth at that period from five to twenty dollars a head.

In the spring of 1851 Amasa Lyman and Charles C. Rich, apostles of the Mormon Church, accompanied by a small company of immigrants, arrived in the valley by way of the Cajon Pass, having been sent overland by Brigham Young to settle in this section of country in order, it is believed, to prepare a starting point for his European immigration, instead of sending it to New York or New Orleans and thence overland to Utah.

Shortly after their arrival, and through the influence of Col. Williams of the Chino ranch, negotiations were entered into by Lyman and Rich and the Lugos for the purchase of the ranch. The price was fixed at \$77,500 and was to include the entire valley, the Lugos claiming to the base of the mountains all round. Soon after the purchase a fort was erected for protection against Indians, there being an outbreak about that time, where the buildings occupied by Mr. Conn and the property of Dr. Wozencraft now stand. Active farming operations were then commenced by the Mormons; this for a period of one or two years included the building of roads, the digging of irrigating ditches and the erection of both saw and grist mills. The most arduous work, however, and which occupied about 1500 days work, was the building of the mountain road to reach the forests of pine timber on the summit of the Sierra Nevada range. This road is now unused, another further to the eastward and of much easier grade having been built within a few years past through the aid of private capital.

As population increased by new arrivals from Utah and the upper country, steps were taken to abandon the old fort, and to lay off a town. At one time its location was contemplated on City Creek, but this idea was abandoned, and in 1852 the present town of San Bernardino was surveyed by Henry G. Sherwood. The erection of buildings outside the fort limits then commenced, and the people generally moved out on their lots, sold to them for \$100 and \$125, the latter being the price charged for corner locations.

During this time much difficulty was experienced in raising money to pay for the ranch and a loan became necessary. This was finally negotiated with Picoche Bayerque & Co., of San Francisco, the interest amounting to \$1050 every month. The raising of this money kept the people in a constant state of poverty, and was a great drawback to the growth of the place.

In 1857 the ranch was surveyed under government instructions and the patent issued to the Lugos for 35,509 acres or eight leagues. This gave Lyman and Rich a clear title to their purchase and is the one upon which all sales of ranch land now made, is based.

Sometime prior to the issuance of the patent, and when the financial troubles were the greatest, Mr. Ebenezer Hanks, an Upper Country Mormon, came down and for a third interest in the ranch relieved Lyman and Rich from their embarrassments; this gave a new impetus to matters, and under his direction, principally, the whole grant was sub-divided. Under Hanks' administration of business affairs the condition of the people and place began to improve, and continued so to do until the fall of 1857, when a call from Brigham

Young, for the Mormons here to return to Utah, resulted in a grand break up and the selling out of homes for whatever could be procured for them. As a very large portion of the ranch was unsold Mr. Hanks remained to settle up the business of the firm and dispose of the balance of the land. This he shortly accomplished by making a sale to Mr. Conn and associates for \$16,000.

After the Mormon hegira, a condition of semi-barbarism, almost, existed for several years, San Bernardino, through its isolated condition, becoming the rendezvous for the worst characters from the frontier States and New Mexico. Their presence and acts kept the few peaceable citizens in constant dread, and as their homes and land had no specific cash value they were unable to sell and move away. At the close of the war, however, this obnoxious element began to float off, and in its stead a better class of citizens commenced to locate here.

Until within the past four or five years San Bernardino has made but little progress either agriculturally or commercially speaking, and the culture of semi-tropical fruits had prior to that date been almost wholly neglected. The settling of Riverside and the almost unprecedented growth of fruits, flowers and trees there, as also a few orange trees at Old San Bernardino, demonstrated that portions of this valley were superior to Los Angeles. These facts becoming known, and land being easy to obtain at low prices, gave the county a start in spite of the efforts of Los Angeles real estate men to prejudice new comers to the country against this county.

This growth has steadily increased in consequence of a wider dissemination of the fact, indeed, at no period since the settlement of the valley has a larger immigration taken place or greater prosperity attended the people, than within the past six or nine months. Real estate is still rapidly rising in value, the near approach of the Southern Pacific R. R. and the development of the mines causing scores of strangers from the East to come here seeking investment.—*San Bernardino Advertiser.*

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