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A GLANCE AT THE CITY'S HISTORY.



The territory now covered by the City of Oakland was, until 1853, a portion of Contra Costa County. In that year the Legislature created the new county of Alameda, with the boundaries as they still exist. May 4th, 1852, there was approved an Act of the Legislature incorporating the Town of Oakland. Prior to that time the history of the place is meager and unimportant. When it had first been seen that a city must necessarily be built somewhere on the Bay of San Francisco, a cursory exam-

ination was made of the Contra Costa shore. The village of Yerba Buena did not offer many flattering inducements to men seeking to found a city, because its steep hills came down to the water's edge, and the most casual observer could not fail to note the vast amount of labor that would be required to level off these hills and fill in the Bay so as to make room for the thousands of buildings that must be quickly erected. But the temporary difficulties on the eastern side of the Bay were still more grave. A flat extended out for a distance of two miles, timber suitable for the purposes of wharf-building was not easily obtained, and commanded an enormous price, and no hope was entertained of building the metropolis on the present site of Oakland.

The sandy peninsula was covered by a dense growth of oak trees, which subsequently gave to the place its name, and beneath the trees were numerous thickets of chapparal and tangled underbrush. Some four miles to the north was the residence of Vincente Peralta, and around it were settled a few other native Californians. The only use made of the peninsula of Oakland was to obtain from it the necessary supplies of fuel. At some remote period there had been Indian camps upon the northern banks of the San Antonio Creek, and the mounds, composed mainly of oyster shells, are not yet entirely obliterated. San Pablo was a flourishing