

ALAMEDA COUNTY

Its Resources and Attractions.

Alameda County has an area of 512,000 acres or nearly 800 square miles. It stretches for 40 miles along the famous bay of San Francisco and extends eastward 50 miles to the line of San Joaquin. It contains within its boundaries all varieties of soil and climate and unmeasured resources in every line of material development.

The County is traversed by two ranges of mountains or rather hills—the Contra Costa and Mt. Diablo—which converge at the south. These ranges form an impassable barrier to the ocean winds from the west and the icy breezes from the Sierras on the east, making the great Livermore Valley the natural home of the vine and the fruit tree. All the tropical fruits, vegetables and flowers flourish in luxuriance as well as those of the temperate zones.

Nature made it a Garden of Eden in possibilities and the intelligent efforts of a highly cultivated and progressive population have developed those possibilities until nowhere in the world can there be found a more prosperous or contented people than here.

HISTORICAL.

The first settlement by white men in the County was at Mission, San Jose, in 1797 (June 18th).

The party that founded the Mission came overland from Monterey and seems to have been made up of men of unusual judgment and energy. At least this, the eleventh settlement founded by the Mission Fathers, soon outstripped all the others in influence and prosperity, its herds of cattle and sheep grazing unchecked from the warm springs of the south to San Pablo and Martinez. The cultivation of the soil was here carried

on in a very primitive style, but the exceeding fertility of the soil and perennial returns of grain and vegetables as the reward of moderate labor made poverty or hardship unknown.

But the war came in 1846 and then annexation accompanied by the hustling Yankee. He came to Alameda County in large numbers. He always knows a good thing when he sees it. To get to the gold mines of the interior, many crossed Alameda County, and of the many, not a few then or later came to stay and make here their homes surrounded by fruits and vines and embowered in flowers more luxurious and beautiful than grow in the Vale of Cashmere.

Alameda County was carved from Santa Clara and Contra Costa Counties by an act of the State Legislature, passed in 1853, approved March 28th. The act was introduced by Henry C. Smith, who lived at Alvarado, then called New Haven, and under the act New Haven was designated as the County Seat.

The duties now performed by the Board of Supervisors were delegated to a "Court of Sessions" composed of the County Judge and two Justices of the Peace. The first meeting of this body was held at Alvarado, June 6th, 1853. Its members were Addison M. Crane, County Judge, and I. S. Long and David M. Lacy, Justices of the Peace. Their first business was the division of the County into Oakland, Contra Costa, Clinton, Eden, Washington and Murray Townships. This division was changed December 12, 1853, and Contra Costa Township was incorporated into Oakland Township.

On January 5th, 1878, a readjustment was made by the Board of Supervisors and
