

one members. An assessment of five dollars on each member was then made. Another meeting a few days after was called at Shaws' Flat, to induce the people of that Camp to co-operate in the enterprise; and Caleb Dorsey, our present District Attorney, took an active part in favor of the scheme. Another meeting was called, at Columbia, in which P. Mc. D. Collins was active in urging the importance of the work. At this meeting the Company was fully organized, and the 1st day of July was set as the day on which operations should be commenced, and at 11 o'clock, P. M., on that day the work was commenced at Summit Pass. The Company persevered under great difficulties on account of the want of means, but were prevented from being obliged to suspend operations by the pecuniary assistance afforded by D. O. Mills & Co., Bankers, of Sacramento, and who afterwards established a House in Columbia.

The Company succeeded in turning the water of Five Mile Creek into Columbia, on the 1st day of May, 1852, and in August of the same year, the ditch was fully completed to the South Fork.

In the Fall the town was laid out on the present site, and the prospect of water afforded by the "Tuolumne County Water Company" caused a large influx of population, and the place was suddenly built up. The buildings mostly composed of clap-boards.

A newspaper, called the Columbia "STAR" was started by W. Gore., but after the fifth number it died a natural death. The first copy that was struck off of this paper, sold for one ounce, and is now in the possession of Mrs. DeNoielle.

In the Fall of 1852, the Columbia "GAZETTE" was established by Col. Falconer. At the Fall election in that year there was 1229 votes polled in this precinct, which then included Saw Mill Flat, Yankee Hill, and Gold Springs.

In May 1854, the town was incorporated, and town officers elected under the General Incorporation Act. The first Board of Trustees was composed of Samuel Arnold, Sewell Knapp, F. F. Bartlett, Alden Sears and James McLean, Jr. Finally Capt. Haley was chosen Marshal, C. Brown, Treasurer, and P. G. Ferguson, Assessor.

On the 10th day of July, 1854, about three o'clock in the morning the town was almost totally destroyed by fire, which was the work of an incendiary.

Every store in the place was destroyed, with the exception of Donnell & Parson's, which was the first fire-proof building, & the only one at that time, with the exception of Mr. Alberding's. The loss was estimated at \$500,000. The place was speedily rebuilt by much better and more permanent buildings, quite a number of which were substantial fire-proof edifices.

In the Fall of '54 the "Columbia and Stanislaus River Water Company" was formed, the object of which was to bring in the water of the main branch of the Stanislaus river, so as to afford a constant supply during the whole year. Little however was accomplished until the "Miners' Strike," which was in March, 1855. At which time the popular sympathy became enlisted in favor of the new work, and some three hundred men, or upwards, shouldered their picks and commenced operations on the work,

taking stock in payment for their labor. This ditch is now completed to the South Fork, a distance of 35 miles, at a cost of about \$150,000. The Company are now extending it beyond the South Fork, and it is expected the ditch to the Main river will be in readiness to receive the water by the time the water falls in the South Fork, next Summer. In the meantime the "Tuolumne County Water Company" have erected large reservoirs to retain surplus water sufficient to supply their ditch for six weeks or two months after the water in the South Fork gives out. They have also constructed twelve miles of new ditch, for the purpose of doing away with five miles of fluming, which, from its situation was liable to frequent accidents.

The town has been, and is still supplied with pure spring water by the "New England Water Company," which first brought the water from Spring Gulch, in wood pipes; they have since laid down iron pipes of sufficient dimensions to supply a population of 20,000. They have also placed Hydrants at the corners of the streets, and having a head of 80 feet they can throw water over the highest building in the place, thus affording one great safe guard against future conflagrations.

In May '54, the "COLUMBIA CLIPPER" was established by John Heckendorn & W. W. H. Gist.

In the Summer of '52, Mrs. Haley established the first school in the place, which continued several months. The next school was established by Mrs. C. H. Chamberlain, who taught until July 1855. After the close of her school, a school was established by Mrs. Whitman, also, one by Miss Sears.

Robert Porterfield commenced a school in the month of July, '54, and his school and that of Miss Sears, are still in operation.

The first Church established in Columbia, was that of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. The Rev. Mr. Malone, of Sonora, preaching here once a week. The Rev. Mr. Long was the first Minister that settled here, the Church which is now owned by the Presbyterians, but formerly by the Church South, was built during his ministry. He was succeeded by the Rev. Dr. Moore, who was followed by Mr. Pendegrass, and he by the Rev. Mr. Lockley.

The Methodist Church North was established in '53 under the pastoral charge of the Rev. Mr. Gibbons. The present house of worship was erected that year. Mr Gibbons was succeeded by the Rev. Mr. Brier, and he by the present pastor, the Rev. Mr. Reasoner. The Presbyterian Church was organized in the Summer of '55, under the charge of the Rev. Mr. Brodt. They purchased the Church of the Methodist Episcopal Church South. Mr. Brodt's health failing in the Summer of '55, he was succeeded by the Rev. Mr. Hamilton, who is the present pastor.

The Masonic Fraternity organized a Lodge of their order in August, '52, and erected a Hall over the Church, which they occupied until the completion of their present splendid brick edifice, at the corner of Broadway and Washington st.

The Independent Order of Odd Fellows organized in 1853, and built their present Hall at the corner of Broadway and Jackson st.