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HISTORIC SKETCH OF VACAVILLE

Geologists tell us that the coast country of California was once a part of the bottom of the sea. The mountains that divide the Sacramento Valley from the Napa Valley and San Pablo Bay contain numerous fossils of oyster, clam and other shells and skeletons of sea horses that bear out this history.

When the Spaniards came to California they chose the rich coastal valleys for the establishment of their vast rancheros, seeking wealth and contentment from the natural products of a kindly climate and fertile soil. The first of these Spaniards to settle in this portion of Solano County were Senors Vaca and Pena, who had received grants totaling 44,380 acres from the Mexican Government in 1841.

The newcomers from the south and from over seas found valleys filled with wild oats that grew in lush abundance and turned their cattle out to graze on the open ranges. They built adobe haciendas and lived in opulence on wild game, fish and natural products of the land.

On August 21, 1850, Manuel Cabeza Vaca deeded to one William McDaniel nine square miles of land, with the provision that on one of the square miles McDaniel would lay out a townsite and call it Vacaville. Senor Vaca received the sum of \$3000 for the deed and the stipulation that 200 lots of the town should be deeded back to him.

The first building was erected in Vacaville that same year. The plat for the town was recorded on December 13, 1851.

In 1869, The Vaca Valley and Clear Lake Railroad connected the town and township with the outside world, adding impetus to the steady growth of the region.

At this point we take the liberty of quoting verbatim, from "The History of Solano County" by J. P. Monro Fraser, published July 1, 1879:

"Let us glance at the Vacaville township of today!

"As viewed from the head of Pleasants Valley no more picturesque landscape can be found throughout the length and breadth of the Golden State than that stretching to the southward. This glorious glen, though comparatively prescribed in breadth is possessed of a soil of the richest kind of alluvial sediment, formed mostly from the debris of the adjacent mountain sides. Within the scope of vision there is nought to be seen but one vast orchard and vineyard, arriving at a perfection which could only, in less favored spots, be attained by the tenderest care of forcing and training. Passing below the above-mentioned natural conservatory, the eye wanders over the wider and more extended Vaca valley. Here the orchards become less large and vast fields of grain present themselves . . ."

With the advent of the first "Gringo" settlers, the history of Vacaville becomes prominently related with the history of the fruit industry for which California has gained world-wide renown. The Vacaville district soon became known as the producer of the earliest fruits each season. In the three fertile, sunny valleys (Pleasants, Lagoon and Vaca) great orchards came into being and fruit was grown even on the crests of the rolling hills above the valleys.