

COMMUNITY MEMORIAL MUSEUM
1333 Butte House Road
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Yuba City, CA 95991

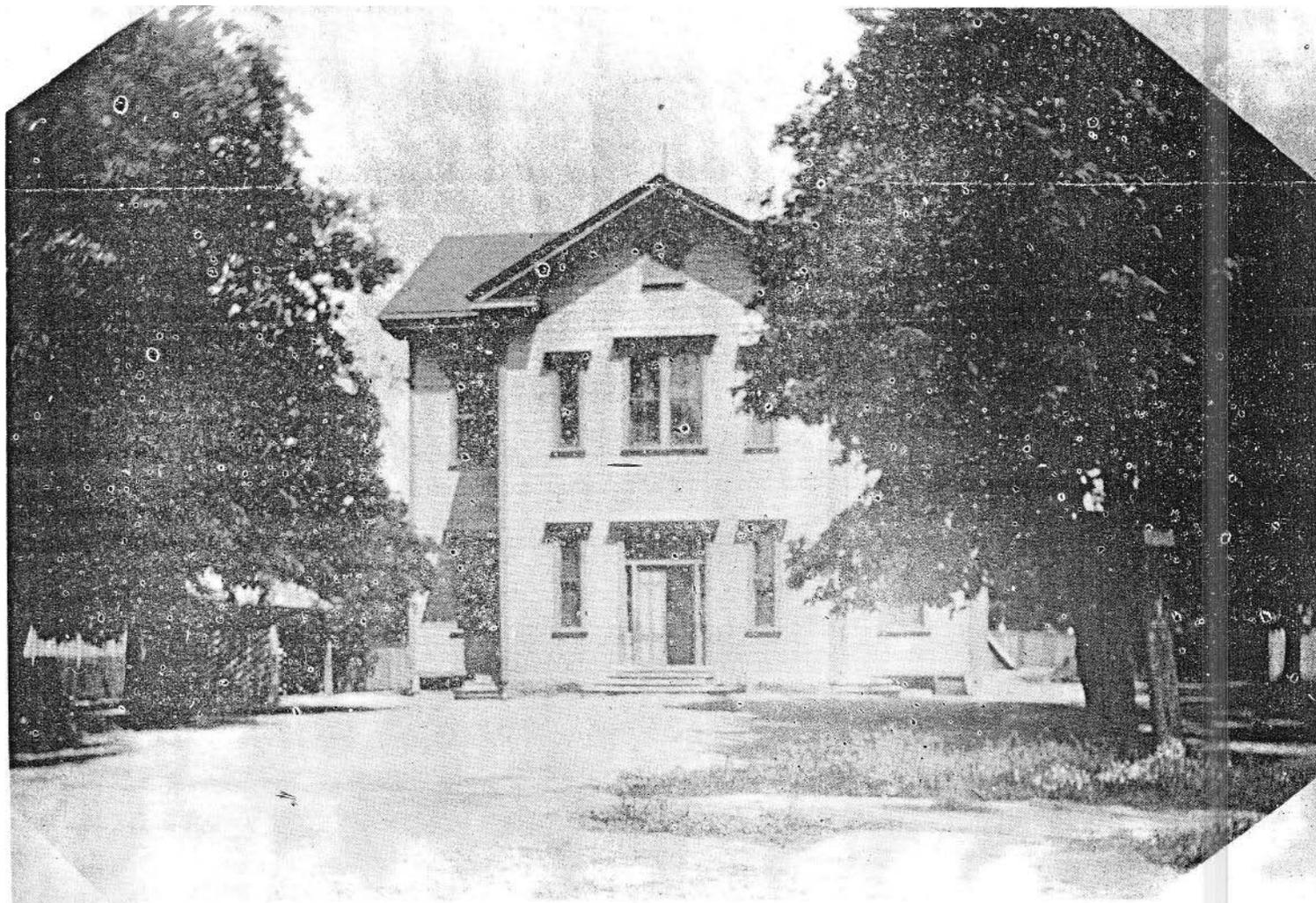
SUTTER COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWS BULLETIN

VOL. I. NO. 10)

YUBA CITY, CALIFORNIA

JULY 16, 1957'



YUBA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL C ST, YUBA CITY
BUILT BETWEEN 1855 AND 1860



WEST BUTTE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL- 1913

Teacher – Mrs. Assumption Lang Coats
Students – Back row: Pearl Hoke, Caryl Hoke,
Lova Hoke, Eldon Tarke, Mary Victorina, John
Victorina.
Front row: Victoria boy, Victorina girl, Lela Fisher,
Ruth Wilbur, Ernest Stewart, Anna Fisher



UNION ELEMENTARY SCHOOL- 1910

Teacher – Mrs. Assumption Lang Coats
Students – Back row: J. B. Lang, Laurence Lang,
Sydney Harris, Arthur Sullinger, Harvey Putman,
Francis Lang, Clarence Putman
Middle row: Nate Lane, George Gage, Alexis
Lang, Jimmy, Putman, Perry Gage, Albert Krull,
Gertrude Krull, Grace Mullet, Larene Griffith,
Patricia Lang, Eloise Best

SUTTER COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

SUMMER MEETING

July 16, 1957 – 8 P. M.

Board of Supervisors Chambers

SPEAKER: Noel C. Stevenson
First President
Sutter Co. Historical Society

Problems of Research and
Establishing Museums

MUSEUM NEWS

Two very attractive cases are in place on the first floor of the County Office Building. Changes in exhibits will be made from time to time. Thanks to Mrs. Ida Doty and her committee.

A CENTENNIAL OF EDUCATION IN SUTTER COUNTY

By Honora Laney

To present a brief history of education in Sutter county, beginning with the year 1849 and closing with the present year of 1957 is a monumental task, one in which the human interest aspect must be sacrificed in order that the survey may be systematically and concisely presented. For the sake of brevity many interesting sidelights of local history must be withheld at this time. Perhaps this sketchy presentation will stimulate interest in the study of the development of the local school districts which will result in an authentic and colorful story of the historical lore of Sutter county.

In order to better understand the beginning of the educational program in Sutter county, it is necessary to review the action of the first Constitutional Convention held at Monterey in 1849, concerning education. It is also necessary to follow the course of action of the legislators of subsequent sessions and its effect on the local school system.

In 1849 education was one of the major items on the program of this Constitutional Convention; and every year since 1849 education has continued to constitute one of the major issues on the legislative agenda. The educational problem then was as complex as it is now, it had many facets. The best method of financing schools, the determination of proper location of schools, the question of school supervision, the debate over the scope of the curriculum, the confusion concerning the training, qualifications, and certification of teachers, the alarm over the increasing enrollment - all current headaches - were headaches to our early day legislators, too.

To solve the financing problem, the legislators at this first convention of '49 set aside 500,000 acres of land to be appropriated for the establishment and support of a school program in California. But uncertainties and fears beset our legislators then, even as now. Educationally speaking, confusion and doubt were to plague the legislators for a few years and it was not until 1865, when the State Superintendent of Education John Swett formulated a satisfactory program of education and presented it to the legislators, that a sound program was at length adopted.

These first legislators were in a quandary over financing, and the committee on Education in its first report stated that it was not advisable to pass a bill taxing the people for the support of public education, and this suggestion was carried out by the members of the Legislature. On the last day of the second session of the Legislature, 1850-51, a bill was passed concerning the "common schools". The first "School Lawn was exceedingly imperfect and none of the lands set apart for school support were sold under its provisions.

The office of the County Superintendent of Schools was created in 1852 at the recommendation of Mr. John G. Marvin, the first State Superintendent of Public Instruction. In 1852 a report on the first survey of school age children in California was given, county by county, and the number and names of schools in existence. Yuba County in 1852 had one hundred and fifty children scattered throughout the county and one school in Marysville that boasted thirty students. This school was under the supervision of Mr. and Mrs. Tyler Thatcher. In Sutter county there were sixty-two children and according to the

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record a common school was being organized at Kempton's Crossing on the Bear River, and a school was being established at the Walker Ranch, south of Yuba City. Statistics are not satisfactory since they show only two students enrolled in school. The census showed a total number of school age children between four and eighteen of approximately six thousand. State-wide there was no organized school system and nearly all the schools were private as in the case of the Thatcher school in Marysville.

In 1852 an improved bill was passed at the State Legislature providing for the levying of a State school tax of five cents on each one hundred dollars of taxable property. Three School Commissioners were elected from each district, counties and the Common Council of incorporated towns could each levy a tax not to exceed three cents on each one hundred dollars. In 1853 a measure was passed making the county assessors ex officio County Superintendents. In 1855 County Superintendents were made elective along with the City Boards of Education and the City Superintendents.

Moving along rapidly, the Legislature in 1860 provided for the appointment of County Boards of Examination by the County Superintendents. At this time also the Legislature provided for a State series of textbooks. This action was repealed in 1861 to be again adopted in 1865. In 1861, also, thirty thousand dollars was appropriated for the building of a State Reform School in Yuba County. This school was located about seven miles north of Marysville near the Feather River. It was of short duration, lasting until 1868 when the property was turned back to the county and was purchased by James Strain for \$6000.

From 1865 - 1867 the basic foundation of our present school system was firmly established by John Swett, State Superintendent of Education. Provision was made for a State series of texts, the establishment of graded schools, State and county taxation for schools and the formation of the previously mentioned City Boards of Examination.

Every session of the Legislature faced the problem of the disposal of the school lands and eventually realized about \$600,000 on the 500,000 acres of land, a small percentage of the real value.

Locally speaking, a number of school districts were being formed in Sutter county, the first being the before-mentioned Bear River School in 1852 at Kempton's Crossing. This school was last listed in 1887. Also previously mentioned for 1852 was the school at the Walker Ranch. This school is not mentioned in the Sutter County School Journal and must be presumed to have had a short life. Old records may be in existence giving information about it but were not available for this report. In 1853 a small school opened on the Phil E. Drescher place at Nicolaus and was the ancestor of the present Nicolaus School which has an average daily attendance of twenty-four students and a faculty of two. Historically speaking, Nicolaus Elementary is the oldest elementary in the county. The next school was established in 1854 in Yuba City and was taught by Mr. C. E. Wilcoxon. Yuba City Elementary with its three branches, is flourishing today with an enrollment of well over 1800 students and a faculty of seventy-five. Therefore, Yuba City Elementary is the second oldest elementary in continuous existence.

In 1854 there were seventy-eight school age children in the county and there were four schools with a total enrollment of twenty-three students. In 1857 at Vernon was established another elementary school. Vernon was in operation until 1943-44 according to the Sutter County Journal. It was not listed in 1944-45; consequently, the district must have lapsed from lack of the necessary enrollment to maintain a school.

By 1879 thirty-eight school districts were functioning in Sutter County. The school age census showed 1,631 children, of which 1,316 were in school, better than 80%.

To briefly present the remaining thirty-four school districts in existence in 1879 and their status today the following list is presented. Dates of organization are not always included since these were not readily found.

The first school, alphabetically listed in 1879 in the History of Sutter County was Auburn, located in the eastern part of Sutter County near the Placer County line. Auburn is recorded in the 1871 Journal. It was consolidated with the Cottonwood and Eagle School Districts in 1920, forming the Pleasant Grove Joint Union Elementary with an average daily attendance of 109 and a faculty of [f]our.

Barry was active in 1868 and is still active and growing rapidly with a daily attendance of 236 and a faculty of eight. In 1920 Grant and Barry districts were combined to form the Barry Union District.

Bear River School was organized in 1852 and disappeared from the records in 1887. (The Journal for 1888-1895 is missing, consequently no exact account can be made.)

Browns, near Rio Oso, was first listed in 1871, and today is still going strong with an average daily attendance of 172 students and a faculty of seven.

Brittan at Sutter City is known today as Brittan Elementary. It was first listed in the 1868 Journal, but one of its first teachers was Mrs. Eugenia Posten, who later established the Posten Seminary for Young Ladies in Marysville in 1857. She taught a class of 13 students in Brittan School in 1856 while Mr. George Brittan was a trustee. In 1917 Brittan absorbed a portion of the lapsed Union District to the north. Today it has an enrollment of 302 students and a faculty of thirteen.

Central, in the central section of Sutter county, was recorded in 1868 and later in 1920 combined with Gaither to form Central-Gaither Union Elementary with a student body of 213 and a faculty of six.

Columbia in the northern part of Sutter county, was first listed in the 1868 Journal and last listed in 1886 with the notation that the district had "lapsed".

Clay still operates but under the name of Live Oak Elementary. It first appeared in the 1876 Journal and was last listed as Clay in the 1911 Journal. As Live Oak Elementary it has an enrollment of 588 students and a faculty of twenty. The district has a primary school, Luther Elementary, recently constructed in 1951-1952.

Eagle first appeared in the 1870 Journal and last appeared in the 1919 Journal. It was absorbed along with Cottonwood in the newly formed Pleasant Grove Union Elementary in 1920.

Fairview, 1868, in the southeastern part of the county was last listed in 1910.

Franklin was in the Journal in 1868 and is a busy school of 124 students and four teachers today.

Gaither, 1868, originally east of old Central combined with Central in 1920 to form Central-Gaither Union Elementary with 213 students and a faculty of six.

Grant, 1868-1920, functioned as a separate entity until 1920 when it was absorbed into Barry to be subsequently known as Barry Union Elementary.

Hill, first listed in 1880, located slightly north and west of Yuba City in the Tierra Buena district was last recorded in 1887. Later in 1908, a school was organized in this area. It was called Terra Buena, using this spelling of "land".

Illinois, recorded in 1868, is now absorbed into the Marcum-Illinois Union Elementary, located at East Nicolaus. The two schools combined in 1925 and at present have an enrollment of ninety students under the supervision of four teachers.

Jefferson appeared in the 1868 Journal and was duly recorded until July 1888. Knights, 1869, at Knights Landing at present has an enrollment of forty with a faculty of two.

Lee, first appearing in the Journal in 1869, was transferred to the Marcum-Illinois district in 1940 and its name is no longer entered in the records.

Lincoln, appearing in 1863, 3 miles south and west of Yuba City has steadily increased in size with a present average daily attendance of 378 students and a faculty of sixteen.

Live Oak Elementary, recorded in 1868, now functions under the name of Encinal (first listed as Encinal in 1915), (check Clay school district last listed in 1911). Encinal has 100 students and four teachers.

Marcum, appearing in 1869, merged with Illinois in 1925 and the combined district is known as Marcum Illinois. (Check Illinois for additional information).

Meridian, 1868, at present has an enrollment of 101 students and five teachers. It is located on the Sacramento River in the town of Meridian.

Murray, appearing in 1877 and being last listed in 1906, was located in the southern part of Sutter County, south of the Marcuse District near Garden Highway. The district was not recorded after 1906.

North Butte, 1873, absorbed the Buttesylvania School in 1874. It occupied the oldest school building in Sutter county until 1955. A modern school now serves the district with an attendance of twenty-six and one teacher.

Noyes, 1875-1927, midway between West Butte and North Butte, on the road skirting the western slope of the Buttes functioned until 1927 when its district was absorbed by the West Butte and North Butte districts.

Prairie, 1873-1902, situated west of Oswald near the tulle lands, lapsed for lack of students and was absorbed by Grant District.

Rome, recorded in 1868, existed until 1916 when it lapsed. In 1921 it was reactivated and in 1937 was transferred to the Robbins-Sutter Union Elementary.

Salem, 1868-1944, located on Steiner Bend of the Sacramento River south of Cranmore operated until it lapsed in 1944.

Slough, 1868, located slightly north and west of Long Bridge is still a busy little school with one teacher and sixteen students.

Sutter, 1868, was combined with Robbins in 1943 to form the Robbins-Sutter Union Elementary located at the townsite of Robbins in the Sutter Basin.

Union, 1868-1917, located midway on the East Butte Road between Pennington Road and Butte House Road lapsed for lack of students in 1917 and was absorbed into the Brittan District at Sutter City and into the newly formed Nuestro District to the east.

Washington, 1875-1920, located south of the Lincoln school somewhere near Bogue and Reed Roads, lapsed apparently when its funds were transferred to the Brittan, Franklin, Grant and Winship schools. [Note added later: "Probably not correct - located Franklin between Humphrey & Clements."]

West Butte, 1868, had its last listing in the 1943-44 school year at which time it was classed as an "emergency" school during the war years.

Winship, 1868, located on the Sacramento River north of the Tisdale Weir today has an enrollment of fourteen and one teacher.

Willow Pond organized in 1874, was last listed in 1887 was located near the Feather River east of the Wilson Elementary. This district must have been absorbed into the Wilson District in the following years.

Other interesting schools not listed in Thompson and West's History of Sutter County, 1879, but recorded in the Sutter County School Journal as having had varying degrees of duration, some short-lived, some still active, should be mentioned to complete the account.

Buttesylvania, located west of the present North Butte School on the ranch of Dr. William McMurtry, was organized in 1868 and later in 1874 was absorbed into the North Butte School.

Myers, no location indicated was listed from 1871 to 1874. Its funds in 1875 were transferred to the Washington, Grant, Franklin and Prairie Schools.

Farmer Elementary showed up on the records in 1907 to 1923. There was no record indicating its lapsing or absorption.

Terra Buena (old spelling) was organized in 1908, apparently located near the older Hill Elementary which disappeared from the records in 1887. The "Terra" spelling was continued until the present spelling of "Tierra" was recorded. At present Tierra Buena Elementary has an enrollment of 290 and a faculty of eleven.

Sutter Union High School was first entered in the School Journal in 1901. It has an enrollment of 206 and fourteen teachers. The following elementaries comprise its district: Brittan, Franklin, Meridian, Nuestro, Slough and Winship.

Encinal at the site of the old Live Oak Elementary was organized in 1915 and at present has an average daily attendance of one hundred and a faculty of four.

Hedger, midway between Live Oak and Pennington on West Pennington Road, was organized in 1915. There are fifty students and two teachers.

Cottonwood, listed from 1903 to 1919, was located in southeast Sutter county. It was consolidated in the Pleasant Grove Joint Union Elementary in 1920.

Nuestro Elementary was organized in 1916. It absorbed the northern and eastern areas of the Union District, mentioned previously, and is located near the intersection of Broadway and Nuestro roads. There are thirty-one students and two teachers in 1957.

Live Oak Union High School was organized in 1920, and at present has an enrollment of 286 students and a faculty of fifteen. It is composed of the following school districts: Encinal, Hedger, Live Oak, and North Butte.

Yuba City Union High School was organized in 1922. It has shown the greatest growth with a present average daily attendance of 934 students and a faculty of fifty-two. The following elementaries constitute its district: Barry, Central Gaither, Lincoln, Robbins-Sutter, Tierra Buena, Wilson and Yuba.

Knights Elementary below Robbins, because of its proximity to Woodland High in Yolo county recently voted to go into Woodland High School District.

East Nicolaus Union High School first functioned as a branch of Sutter Union High District and was listed accordingly in the journals from 1927 to 1949. In 1950 it is first listed separately under its above title and functioned independently. There are 165 students and eleven teachers. Elementary schools within its jurisdiction are Browns, Marcum-Illinois; Nicolaus, and Pleasant Grove Joint Union. At the present time Yuba Elementary is composed of four separate schools under one superintendent for the district with each school having its own administrator. These schools are located as follows: Bridge, the oldest, at Bridge and Plumas Streets; Park, on Park Avenue on the southern fringes of the district; Gray on