

SUTTER COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
NEWS BULLETIN

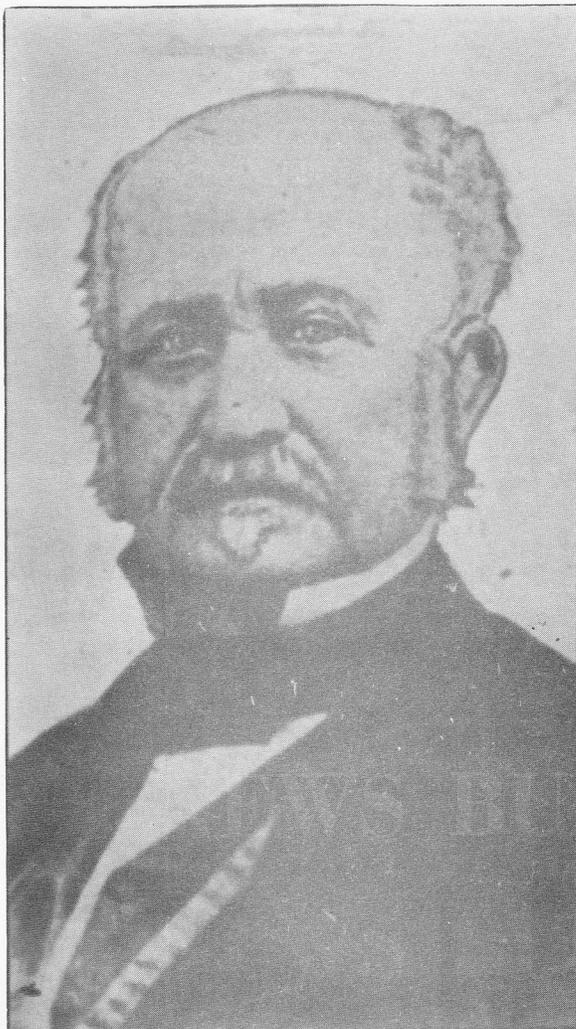
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COMMUNITY MEMORIAL MUSEUM  
1333 Butte House Road  
P. O. Box 1555  
Yuba City, CA 95991

VOL. IX, NO. 4

YUBA CITY, CALIFORNIA 95991

OCTOBER, 1970



JOHN A. SUTTER

SUTTER COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWS BULLETIN

Vol. IX, No. 4

October, 1970

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A NEW FEATURE

We hope to establish a section of the NEWS BULLETIN, which we shall call SUTTERANA, as a permanent feature. The objective of this section will be to give our readers some intimate glimpses of Sutter, his family and their affairs. We shall accept contributions from all members of the Society.

In order to keep within the bounds of the objective, we must limit the material to quotations from public documents, articles and notices in newspapers of the period, diaries and memoirs of contemporary acquaintances and, of course, letters and statements of the Sutters themselves. It would be wasteful to quote what historians and biographers have written about the Sutters because such material is available in libraries. We want to quote only what is not readily accessible.

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Cover picture courtesy of the Appeal Democrat

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Published quarterly by the Society at Yuba City, California 95991. Annual membership dues of \$2.00 includes receiving the NEWS BULLETIN. Life membership is \$25.00. Your remittance should be sent to Lola Case, Treasurer, P. O. Box 1266, Yuba City 95991.

THE SOCIETY'S AUTUMN MEETING

7:30 P. M., Tuesday, October 20

The place and the program will be announced in the  
local press.

DECLARATION OF ANNA SUTTER

I Anna Sutter wife of John A. Sutter of the County of Sutter State of California do hereby declare my intention to become a sole trader and to do business in my own name and on my own account according to the act of the Legislature of the State aforesaid passed April 12, 1852 entitled an act to authorize married women to transact business in there own name as sole traders which business will be ranching farming and gardening in the County and State aforesaid that the amount originally invested by me is less than five thousand dollars

Sutter County March 31, 1856

Anna Sutter

State of California County of Sutter

On this 31st day of March A D 1856 personally appeared before the undersigned a Justice of the Peace in and for said County Mrs. Anna Sutter personally known to me to be the person who has subscribed her name to the above declaration to be the wife of the said John A. Sutter and who signed and made

the said declaration and acknowledged on examination apart from and without the hearing of her husband that she executed the same freely and voluntarily without fear or compulsion or undue influence of her husband and that in good faith she intends to do business and I further certify that John A. Sutter her said husband afterwards appeared before me and acknowledged that he consented that his said wife should so declare and carry on such business as a sole trader.

Witness my official signature this 31st day of March A D 1856

C. N. S. Vaughan J. P.

Sutter County California

Filed for Record April 9 A D 1856 at 11 0 clock A M and forthwith Recorded in Book A of Miscellaneous Records of Sutter County at Pages 5 - 6 & 7

C. E. Wilcoxon

Recorder Sutter Co.

Note: This Book A of Miscellaneous Records is now (1970) labeled Book B of Mortgages.

HONORARY MEMBERS  
of  
THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Sutter County Historical Society late in 1969 established a new category in addition to the regular and life memberships of the organization.

This is an honorary membership, given gratis to any man or woman born in Sutter County who has attained the age of 90 or more. It is not necessary that the honorary members presently be residents of the county.

Already there have been 12 such members listed, including 10 women and two men. So far, almost all of the requests for honorary membership for these nonagenarians have been made through Mrs. Thomas Mulvany of Nicolaus, one of the directors of the Historical Society.

However, anyone who knows of an eligible person may contact the Society direct, by mailing information to Sutter County Historical Society, 114 Carriage Square, Yuba City, Calif., 95991. The full name, place and date of birth, parentage, present address and any other facts concerning the nominee should be given. If possible, a photograph or clear snapshot should accompany the information, but this is not required.

To date, the following honorary members have been listed:

EFFIE JANE ROSS, born October 23, 1877, in Pleasant Grove; daughter of Henry Klemp and Anna Klemp; has lived most of her life in Pleasant Grove, where she still resides.

AMELIA TYLER, born April 29, 1877, in Nicolaus; daughter of Charles Engasser and Ida Wessing Engasser; has lived most of her life in Nicolaus (11 years in Nevada); now resides in Nicolaus.

JESSICA SCHLAG WADSWORTH, born January 5, 1875, in Yuba City; daughter of John Schlag and Josephine Whyler Schlag; has lived much of her life in Sutter County or elsewhere in California; now resides in Yuba City.

EDWINA SCHLAG DEAN, born August 16, 1877, in Yuba City; daughter of John Schlag and Josephine Whyler Schlag; has lived all of her life in Sutter County; now resides near Sutter.

OBA G. ALGEO, born July 24, 1873, near Nicolaus; daughter of John Mahon Algeo and Amy Vestal Algeo; has lived most of her life in California, principally in Sutter and Fresno counties; now resides in Sacramento.

GEORGE WASHINGTON KEYS, born June 15, 1878, in Pleasant Grove; son of William Julius Keys and Laura Kate Foster Keys; has lived in Sutter County most of his life; now resides in Sacramento.

MARTHA MAHON DWYER, born May 3, 1877, in Verona; daughter of Roger Mahon and Mary Jane Mahon; has lived most of her life in Sutter and Butte counties; now resides in Durham.

PHILIP THOMAS McNAMARA, born April 23, 1880 in Nicolaus; son of Michael J. McNamara and Catherine Louise Claquez McNamara; has lived most of his life in Sutter County; now resides in Sacramento.

MARY MARGARET LEE RAPP, born March 5, 1878, in Nicolaus; daughter of Levi W. Lee and Mary Ellen Vahle Lee; has lived much of her life in Sutter County; now resides in Portland, Oregon.

ADA A. LEE WILLIAMS, born May 13, 1880, in Nicolaus; daughter of Levi W. Lee and Mary Ellen Vahle Lee; has lived much of her life in Sutter County; now resides in Sacramento.

ADDIS ROBINETT DAVIS, born July 2, 1880, near Pleasant Grove; daughter of Joseph Robinett and Eunice Robinett; has lived all of her life in Sutter County; now resides in Pleasant Grove.

FOLKA MICHEL HOWSLEY, born March 18, 1876, in Nicolaus; daughter of Adam Michel and Anna Michel; lived most of her life in Sutter County. (Mrs. Howsley died June 13, 1970, in Nicolaus.)

## CALIFORNIA MIDLAND RAILWAY

by

KIRBY M. HARRIS

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The development of the cross-country trolley line, or "inter-urban railway," was only logical for the era of its use. The automobile--less economical but more convenient than the electric railway--was twenty years in the offing.

What first appeared as a local passenger service...faster than the horsecar and not as expensive as the cablecar...had overnight turned into a nation-wide mode of cross-country travel, utilizing more than 15,000 mainline miles of trolley wire and electric third rail, this to the exclusion of the mileage of the manifold local trolley systems.

The interurban was primarily developed as a town-to-town extension of the local lines. The primary advantages it held over the steam railroads were the many wayside stops; but more important, the access held to the strategic downtown areas of cities through which it passed. Such a system in the California scene was the Key System transbay lines of Oakland. Again it is logical that many of these early systems provided baggage compartments in the passenger cars for local "milk runs" which were directly combined with the regular passenger stops.

Advancing this logical theory to another degree it can be seen that the interurbans would profit from carload freight on a short haul basis (remembering that the heavy duty highway

transport had yet to be developed). The lines could run passenger cars and small freight moves during the daytime; the otherwise idle nighttime could be utilized by mainline freights. By stressing "local" and interchange service, a service would thusly be provided that was definitely in demand but uneconomical for the larger steam railroads to perform.

The Northern Electric Railway had a slightly different viewpoint. Passenger/milk run service combined with a first-class freight service tapping the rich agricultural resources of Butte, Sutter, and Sacramento counties, placing itself in direct competition with the Southern Pacific lines in the same area, with the advantage of localized "interurban" operations.

As originally planned Marysville would only have been a branch connection on the Northern Electric. The agriculturally oriented line would have tapped Marysville as it was the commerce head of the area--the agricultural potential of Yuba County to be realized in later years. A line from Chico through Sutter County to Nicolaus and then to Sacramento would have imbedded the line in a solid farming belt. As it was, the free right of way from Stocking Jct. (where the present Sacramento Northern line to Sutter City diverges from the mainline) south proved unsatisfactory and the cost of land through the Cooper Tract would have been \$25,000. With the prospectus of Cline Bull's offer of free right of way through District 764 to the Bear River, the line never was to serve the lands south of Yuba City but took its agricultural service to the lands

south of Marysville on the east banks of the Feather River. During the turn-of-the-century period two other major railroads were projected through the area. The most promising of the two, the Western Pacific, had as its major goal the establishment of a transcontinental link to compete with the Southern Pacific's "Overland" route--definitely not as a local servicer on the order of the Northern Electric. The second was on the order of a steam road with interurban characteristics connecting Marysville and Yuba City to Grass Valley/ Nevada City and to Auburn. No direct connection with Yuba City was ever really planned for this route as by the time the planning had reached this stage adequate connection service was arranged for with the Northern Electric. As time was to prove the Northern Electric played no small part with this proposed route, the California Midland Railway.

By 1905 the prospect of obtaining electric railways in the North Valley area was becoming fact. The Chico Electric Railway Company, incorporated in August 1904, was the first local transportation system north of Sacramento to be developed since the Marysville & Yuba City Street Railway Company of 1889. The hydroelectric power potential of the foothills successfully tapped by John Martin and Eugene de Sabla had advanced to such a state that a ready supply of electricity would be available to any prospective railroad.

The proposed purchase of the Chico system by Henry A. Butters, who, in association with John Hays Hammond, built the

first electric tram lines in South Africa at Capetown (1895), then in Geneva, Switzerland, and in Mexico City (with the financial backing of Wernher, Beit & Company) marked the beginning of the interurban era in the Sacramento Valley. This agriculturally and industrially rich valley was then only being served by the Southern Pacific, thus the field was wide open for electric line speculation. John Martin having experience with electrifying the interurban lines of the North Shore Railroad (now Northwestern Pacific) in Marin County (1902), proposed a line that would link Sutter County, through Grass Valley/Nevada City, to Auburn. Butter's proposed line was to extend from Redding to Vallejo, then to San Francisco by water.

On 22 July 1905 Henry Mallock, right-of-way agent for the Martin interests, made a trip to the Yuba/Sutter area from his offices in San Francisco. The ensuing interview divulged for the first time the actual proposed points and distances on the line to Auburn, though no formal corporation nor survey was then extant. (In May, a survey of the Marysville area, the Yuba River Crossing, and the line to Grass Valley was roughed out but the line from Grass Valley to Auburn was vague as difficulties in seeking right of way were predominant.) Mallock continued and explained that the purpose of the road was to connect with the Southern Pacific at Auburn, and Marysville hauling cars from these connections to the various points along the line. The line itself would generate business from the farm lands of Sutter County. The type

of motive power was in debate (we can only assume that electric power was in Martin's mind from the beginning).

It should be here mentioned that probably Martin's true objective was to revive the old Colusa, Marysville and Nevada railroad plans of the 1870's. This can be substantiated to a degree by Martin's involvement with the turn-of-the-century construction of the Nevada County Traction Company, a local system which served the mountain communities of Nevada City and Grass Valley. At the time of its construction Martin explained that it was being built as the first section of the proposed road to Marysville. (A most excellent account of the Nevada County Traction Co. is to be found in the book Nevada County Narrow Gauge, by Gerald M. Best. We shall enter no deeper in the discussion of this line.)

On 11 September 1905 Mallock stated that the line would pass by Marigold and "Hammon City." This first of many revisions in the Marysville to Grass Valley portion was a result of talks between Martin and W. P. Hammon wherein Hammon expressed desire for Martin to obtain franchise in Marysville up to the Yuba Construction yards at 15th and F Streets where dredgers were being built for the Marigold goldfields. The first two dredgers were erected in 1904 at the Marysville plant, then disassembled and hauled out to Marigold by wagon teams, then reassembled--for a cost of \$190,000 each. With rail transportation the dredgers would only have to be partially disassembled before shipment and could be easily and quickly

transported. The Yuba Construction Company which was owned by and built the dredgers for the Yuba Company was eventually to have two smaller erection shops and yards patterned after the main plant in Marysville. One was built at Hammonton to reassemble and maintain the dredgers for the Yuba River operations and the other at Oroville for the Feather River goldfields. With the Yuba River operations being as successful as they then were, the railroad was being offered a handsome business prospect due to the exceedingly high ton-mile ratio for such a relatively short distance. (It might be well to note that Martin and de Sabla were supplying the electric power to the dredger operations.)

By mid-October the right-of-way agent was working out of Spenceville trying to get franchises in Nevada and Yuba Counties between Lime Kiln Ranch and Marysville. On 4 November the route name was made public...the California Midland Railway Company; and was incorporated in the State of California on 8 November in San Francisco. The articles of incorporation provided for \$3,000,000 in capital stock, \$70,000 of which was subscribed by the date of incorporation. The directors and amounts of stock held were John Martin, \$68,000; Eugene de Sabla, Leo H. Susman, Lawrence W. Pryor, and Walter J. McLean who held \$500 each. The line was described as being approximately 70 miles long running from Marysville in a generally northeasterly direction over a "practical route" to Nevada City, thence southerly to Auburn. It was also announced by

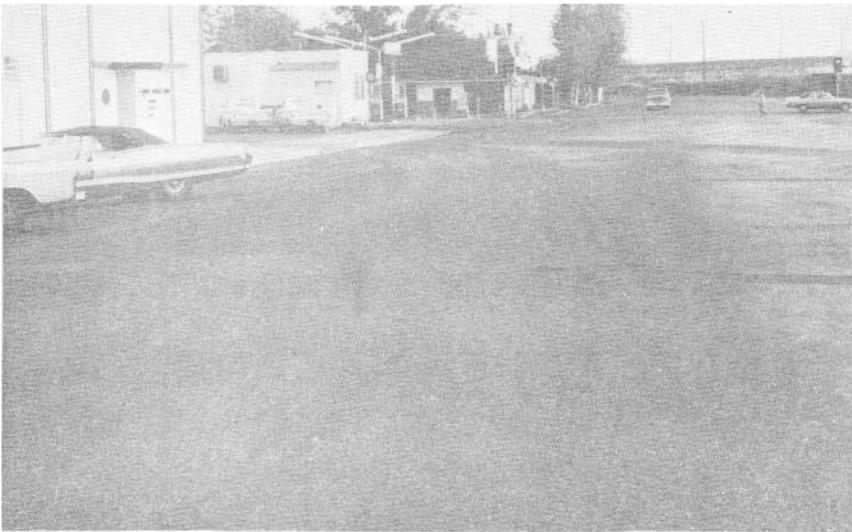
Martin, eight days prior to incorporation, that the Yuba River crossing would be at 8th and Yuba streets with temporary trackage from the D Street Bridge to Yuba Dam.

By mid-November the Linda landowners agreed that if the railroad would maintain the levee it could have track rights over it. Martin agreed to the proposal on the stipulation that the Linda landowners would give the railroad \$2500 towards raising the levee. The use of the Linda levees created a possible route change that would involve the Yuba River crossing.

On 8 December Henry Mallock made a trip to Nevada City and there stated that the ruling grade would be flat with no grades over 2 percent. If the line was powered by electricity, the motive power would be locomotives of the latest design. Mallock continued by stating that the power system in use on the Nevada Traction line was out of date and that the Midland locomotives would more than likely be powered by alternating current. (The majority of interurban lines at that date were being powered by direct current.) Mallock's main reason for his trip was to try to get a group of local citizens to help him procure the needed right of way for a reasonable price as the local landowners were holding out for exorbitant prices. Mallock was in Placer County on the 7th and stated that he was able to get the needed right of way on a gratis basis. The method of obtaining right of way with no first cost was

a common practice as the railline obtaining same would in turn increase the potential worth of the area it served by just giving the area service. The result of Mallock's talk was the formation of a committee of five appointed by the Nevada City Trustees whose duty was to try to talk down the right of way prices between Nevada City and Grass Valley. John R. Tyrrell was denoted as being the local attorney for the railway. The existing traction line was not acceptable to be a part of the Midland mainline.

(To be continued in the next issue)



THE CALIFORNIA-MIDLAND RAILWAY built tracks on the Linda levee as part of its route from Yuba City-Marysville to Grass Valley and Auburn. Top photo shows railroad spur where Simpson Lane meets Hammonton Road today. Bottom photo, looking south on J Street in Marysville between Fifth and Sixth Streets, shows in foreground where C. M. tracks curved to connect with the Northern Electric (now Sacramento Northern) line on Fifth Street.

## G L E A N I N G S

Collected by Winifred Greene

APPEAL

December 15, 1910

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Build Curbing For Passengers

Yuba City. Dec. 14--Owing to the fact that the mud at Second and Bridge Streets has been so deep of late, a crew of carpenters today installed a curbing for the passengers to stand upon and to board the cars from. This is one of the handiest and necessary pieces of work that has been done in the city for some time past.

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December 17, 1910

More Curbing Are Installed

Yuba City. Dec. 16--In view of the fact that the wood curbing or platform which was installed at Bridge and Second Streets in this city yesterday for the convenience of the street car passengers brought forth so much well merited praise, the city Trustees are having like curbing installed at every corner. These have long been a necessity during the winter months owing to the great accumulation of mud through which the passengers were forced to walk.

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APPEAL

December 18, 1910

Removing the Mud from Yuba Streets

Yuba city, Dec. 17--Owing to the fact that the recent rain has made the streets of this place nearly impassable on account of mud the city Trustees have engaged a crew of men to remove it. The work has been progressing nicely and the thoroughfares of the little city present a very neat appearance.

April 16, 1910

Change of Ownership

Yuba City, April 15--The Sutter County Hardware Store in this city has changed hands, Frank Bremer and Edward Starr having purchased the business from the former proprietors. It is understood that a new building will be erected and a complete new stock added to the present inventory.

June 17, 1910

Growing Coffee in Sutter

Yuba City, June 16--Manuel Gomez is experimenting with coffee growing on a tract of land near Encinal. He now has several hundred coffee plants well matured and laden with pods filled with plump grains. The successful outcome of

Growing Coffee in Sutter Continued

this crop will demonstrate that coffee can be profitably raised in fertile Sutter County.

An index and file of all of the past issues of the NEWS BULLETIN may be found in the Sutter County Library and in the Marysville City Library.